

Pre-Analysis Plan

Basic Information

Project Title: Relative effects of politicization and competence on trust in the police

Authorship:

Removed for the preservation of Anonymity.

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Introduction

This survey is part of a larger project examining the operation and consequences of verification (vetting) commissions in Poland in 1990. The commissions allowed the new democratic state to identify security service officers who were suitable to apply to work either in the new police force (and this was where the bulk of them would find employment) or in the new Polish security service. We argue that the verification commission considered both the competence and extremeness (allegiance to the ancient regime) of the officers when making decisions.

While we know that both were important for the new state, we do not know the relative importance of competence and extremeness for the citizens. In other words, we do not know, e.g., whether for the citizens the two are complements or substitutes and to what extent and what types of behavior does this trust translates into.

The goal of the survey is to adjudicate between two possible channels through which purges can affect trust towards police:

1. Through affecting police capacity and, consequently, crime levels □ effect of competence
2. Through removing those affiliated with the ancient regime □ effect of extremeness

Ideally, we would have performed a survey to examine these questions 30 years ago. However, the recent turnover in power in Poland offers a window of opportunity for examining this trade-off. Between 2015 and 2023, executive power in Poland was in the hands of populist Law and Justice (PiS). From the first year when it formed a government in 2015, it was suspected of engaging in democratic backsliding. One of the ways in which consolidated power was by politicizing law enforcement. Consequently, following last year's victory of the democratic coalition, the new government set out to depoliticize law enforcement.

This decision presents us with the opportunity to simulate a situation resembling the 1990s: Poland is again democratizing (although, obviously it never became as autocratic as under communism) and police loyalty and competence can once more be the focus of public attention.

The specific questions we intend to address are:

- 1) What is the effect of different combinations of competence and loyalty on trust towards police?
- 2) What is the effect do different combinations of competence and loyalty on support for a hypothetical verification process?
- 3) How do (1) and (2) vary with political allegiance and history of repression under communism of the respondent?

Ethics

The study received of IRB approval from the authors' institutions.

Study Design

Methodology and Data Collection

We will use a survey experiment to test our hypotheses. Participants will be blinded to their treatment status.

The survey will be fielded in April-May 2024 and administered by CBOS (Centre for Public Opinion Research).

Power Analysis

Using the “pwr.anova.test” function of R package “pwr”, and given our experimental setup (Full sample is $N=3000$, divided into five groups (one control group and four treatment groups) of $N=600$ each.), we have sufficient power to predict a moderate effect both in terms of Cohen's d and f (ANOVA) ($d=0.27$, $f = \sqrt{0.27^2 / (1 - 0.27^2)}=0.28$).

Experimental Intervention and Randomization

Our experiment is conducted in the same survey questionnaire as another experiment that considers the effect of experiences of resistance and repression (one's own or one's family's) under the Polish communist regime on resilience to democratic backsliding. The core experiment aims to measure the inter-generational transmission of pro-democratic resistance values.

Our experiment, which is orthogonal to the core experiment, aims to uncover the determinants of the respondents' trust towards the police and preferences for screening out politicized officers. We are particularly interested in the evaluation of the relative importance of competence and politicization of police and the possible trade-offs between the two.

We provide the respondents with basic information about the police force in a hypothetical Polish wojewodztwo (district) X, common to all 5 groups:

Wojewodztwo X is fairly typical in terms of the levels of criminality. The funding of its police is in line with the nationally-determined formula, its ratio of policemen to the population is average, and the police working conditions are in line with national standards.

This is then followed with one of 4 types of additional information about the police force (treatment groups (1-4)) or no additional information (control group(5)).

The vignette-experiment consists of five groups:

1. Information about competence and politicization of the force
2. Information about competence and lack of politicization of the force
3. Information about lack of competence and politicization of the force
4. Information about lack of competence and lack of politicization of the force
5. No additional information (control group)

The respondents (N=3000) are randomly assigned to one of the five groups (with each group N=600). Randomization will be constrained to ensure that each subject will observe exactly one message from each cell in the 2X2 matrix or no additional information (control group).

The basic design is a straightforward 2×2 factorial design where the police force in a wojewodztwo can be either competent or incompetent and politicized or non-politicized.

The underlying 2x2 design of our experiment is as follows:

Table 1. 2x2 factorial design of the experiment

	Politicized	Not-politicized
Competent	T1	T2
Incompetent	T3	T4

After obtaining information about the police force in a hypothetical wojewodztwo, each respondent answers questions about trust towards police, willingness to report specific crimes, and about preferences for verification (a screening mechanism to remove politicized officers).

Consent Procedures and Deception

We have filed for IRB approval at our institutions.

We are not using deception in our study. In the instructions, we ask respondents about a hypothetical wojewodztwo (district) X. We do not claim that it is representative of any real wojewodztwo.

Variables

Variable Measurement

Primary outcome variables:

1. Trust towards police:

Q1. Would you trust police in wojewodztwo X? 1 = definitely yes, 2, 3, 4, 5= definitely no; 88=no answer

2. Support for verification:

Q4. Do you think that police in wojewodztwo X should be verified to identify and remove functionaries who are not politically neutral in their actions and are motivated by the interests of political parties? 1 = definitely yes, 2, 3, 4, 5= definitely no; 88=no answer

Secondary outcome variable(s):

1.a. Crime reporting (non-political)

Q2. If you witnessed a robbery in wojewodztwo X, would you call the police? 1 = definitely yes, 2, 3, 4, 5= definitely no; 88=no answer

1.b. Crime reporting (political)

Q3. If you saw a homophobically-motivated beating, would you call the police? 1 = definitely yes, 2, 3, 4, 5= definitely no; 88=no answer

2.b Support for verification (competence highlighted)

Q5. Highly qualified functionaries might lose their job as a result of verification, as a result of which police may become less effective in fighting crime. Do you still think that police in wojewodztwo X should be verified? 1 = definitely yes, 2, 3, 4, 5= definitely no; 88=no answer

Covariates: List of covariates to be included in analysis.

1) Personal history of political resistance:

Question B1: During the communist regime in Poland, did you participate in any illegal activities aimed at overthrowing the communist regime? Yes/No

- 2) Personal history of political engagement: Question B3: Were you a member of the following organizations? Yes/No [For each item]

NZS (Niezależny Związek Studentów)

ZMP (Związek Młodzieży Polskiej)

Other youth organizations (besides NZS, ZMP)

PZPR (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza)

ZSL (Zjednoczone Stronnictwo Ludowe)

SD (Stronnictwo Demokratyczne)

OPZZ (Ogólnopolskie Porozumienie Związków Zawodowych)

NSZZ "Solidarność"

- 3) Personal history of repression:

Question B4: As a result of opposition activities, were you: arrested, convicted by court, interned (Where?), sentenced to imprisonment, dismissed from work, deprived of the opportunity to be employed in your profession (i.e., received a so-called "WILCZY BILET")

- 4) Family history of political resistance: Question C1a. In your family, were there any persons who participated in opposition activities before 1989? Yes/No

- 5) Family history of repression:

Question C3: Was this person a member of the following organizations? Yes/No/I don't know [For each item]

NZS (Niezależny Związek Studentów)

ZMP (Związek Młodzieży Polskiej)

Other youth organizations (besides NZS, ZMP)

PZPR (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza)

ZSL (Zjednoczone Stronnictwo Ludowe)

SD (Stronnictwo Demokratyczne)

OPZZ (Ogólnopolskie Porozumienie Związków Zawodowych)

NSZZ "Solidarność"

- 6) Family history of political engagement:

Question C4: As a result of this opposition activity, was this person: arrested, convicted by court, interned (Where?), sentenced to imprisonment, dismissed from work, deprived of the opportunity to be employed in your profession (i.e., received a so-called "WILCZY BILET")

- 7) Voting history (participation): On 15th October 2023 Poland held its elections to Sejm and Senate. Did you participate in them? Yes, No, I don't remember, No answer

- 8) Voting history (vote choice): Which party did you vote for in the Sejm elections held on 15th October 2023?

- Komitet Wyborczy Prawo i Sprawiedliwość
- Komitet Wyborczy Koalicja Obywatelska PO .N i PL Zieloni
- Komitet Wyborczy Nowa Lewica
- Komitet Wyborczy Konfederacja Wolność i Niepodległość

- Komitet Wyborczy Trzecia Droga Polska 2050 Szymona Hołowni – Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe
 - KWW Koalicja Bezpartyjni i Samorządowcy
 - Polska Jest Jedna
 - Other
 - I don't remember
 - No answer
- 9) Preference strength: How strongly do you identify with this political party? (1=Very strongly, 4= not at all; Difficult to say; No answer)
- 10) Left-Right placement: The below line represents political preferences from left to right. Please identify the one that corresponds mostly closely to your political preferences. (1=Left, 7=Right; difficult to say; no answer)
- 11) We would like to know your opinion about political parties/party coalitions and politicians in Poland using something we call a feeling thermometer. Ratings from 50 degrees to 100 degrees mean that you have a favorable attitude towards a given party. Ratings from 0 to 50 degrees mean that you are not unfavorably disposed towards this party. A rating of 50 degrees means that you are indifferent towards this party.
- Prawo i Sprawiedliwość
 - Platforma Obywatelska
 - SLD/Razem/Lewica
 - Konfederacja Wolność i Niepodległość
 - Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe
 - Polska 2050 Szymona Hołowni
- 12) Age
- 13) Województwo (region)
- 14) Size of place of residence
- 15) Gender

Variable Construction:

To estimate how respondents trade-off police competence for politicization, we operationalize the two concepts through additional information about the police force in each województwo X. This information follows the introductory paragraph common to all respondents. To facilitate result interpretation (having two positive qualities), we focus on the opposite of politicization – political neutrality.

Competence:

1. Moreover, the police force is seen as effective in fighting crime. (Competence=1)
2. Moreover, the police force is seen as ineffective in fighting crime. (Competence=0)

Politicization:

1. Police in wojewodztwo X is known for favoring PiS, as events that featured PiS politicians were protected better than those featuring opposition politicians. (Neutrality=0)
2. Police in wojewodztwo X is known for political impartiality, as events featuring PiS politicians were protected equally well as those featuring opposition politicians. (Neutrality=1)

In different parts of the analysis, we use both Politicization and its reverse, Neutrality (where neutrality=1 if politicization=0 and neutrality=0 if politicization=1). This is because for the two dependent variables, politicization is likely to be negatively correlated with the first (trust towards police) and positively correlated with the second (support for screening of the police). To keep the correlations consistent, we use neutrality when discussing trust and politicization in the analysis of support for screening.

We also include a control group to be able to estimate the baseline levels of trust towards police and support for verification.

Secondary outcome variable(s):

To understand more concrete implications of competence and neutrality on trust in the police, we ask the respondents to estimate the likelihood of reporting different types of crime: politicized and non-politicized one. Under the PiS government, the LGBTQ+ community has been one of the more politicized and thus polarizing issues in Poland. In light of PiS's vilification of the LGBTQ community (Barczyszyn-Madziarz & Norström, 2022), in our survey we describe the victims of the politicized crime as members of the LGBTQ+ community.

In sum, the setup described above will allow us to distinguish between a respondent's not reporting a crime because they think that the police are incapable of solving it (incompetent) their belief that the police are unwilling to solve it (not politically neutral).

1.a. Crime reporting (non-politicized)

Q2. If you witnessed a robbery in wojewodztwo X, would you call the police? 1 = definitely yes, 2, 3, 4, 5 = definitely no; 88=no answer

1.b. Crime reporting (politicized)

Q3. If you saw a homophobically-motivated beating, would you call the police? 1 = definitely yes, 2, 3, 4, 5 = definitely no; 88=no answer

In asking about support for verification, we want to make sure that the respondents understand the possible trade-off between politicization/neutrality and competence. Hence, in one of the secondary questions, we highlight this trade-off.

2.b Support for verification (competence highlighted)

Q5. The process of verification may lead highly qualified functionaries to lose their jobs. Consequently, police may become less effective in fighting crime. Do you still think that

police in wojewodztwo X should be verified? 1 = definitely yes, 2, 3, 4, 5= definitely no;
88=no answer

Research Questions

We seek to answer three interconnected questions.

1. What is the relative influence of political neutrality and competence of the police on trust towards police?
2. How is political neutrality, competence, and the tradeoff between them correlated with preferences over verification?
3. How do (1) and (2) vary with political allegiance and history of repression under communism of the respondent?

Due to the number of hypotheses, we adopt the following structure:

For each expectation we provide a brief theoretical explanation, followed by the resulting hypothesis, the relevant regression, and an expectation of what the hypothesis means for the regression coefficients (including the number of the relevant regression in brackets).

Trust towards police

Importance of politicization and competence on police trust

Drawing on our theory, we consider political neutrality and competence to be valuable attributes of a police force. Hence, we expect that having them should increase the respondent trust towards police. We explore this point in a simple OLS regression:

H1: Higher police competence increases trust towards police.

H2: Higher police neutrality increases trust towards police.

$$1) X_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * Competence_i + \beta_2 * Neutrality_i + \varepsilon_i$$

For the above hypotheses to hold, β_1 and β_2 in regression (1) need to be positive.

Relative importance of politicization and competence on police trust - exploratory

While we know that competence and neutrality should be positively related to trust towards police, we have no priors about how respondents resolve the trade-off between politicization and competence. Hence, this part of our analysis is *exploratory*, rather than confirmatory,

This tradeoff will be captured by comparing trust towards the police in wojewodztwa where the police is described as competent but politicized, with wojewodztwa where it is incompetent, but politically neutral.

We will explore these questions using the core 2X2 factorial in the experiment (i.e., competence/incompetence and politicization/neutrality cue represented in Table 1) and our variables of trust towards the police. We will address each of them with the same regression run on different dependent variables. For each, we will use three core specifications – one with an interaction term, a full factorial model, and an ordered logistic regression.

These three specifications have three objectives and drawbacks, as discussed below.

Our first specification will consider the effects of the two characteristics separately, as well as the interaction of neutrality and competence on X_i (where X_i represents, in turn, trust towards police, reporting political crimes, and the reporting non-political crimes).

$$2) X_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * Competence_i + \beta_2 * Neutrality_i + \beta_3 * (Competence_i * Neutrality_i) + \varepsilon_i$$

Including the interaction term allows us to address the trade-off between competence and neutrality directly. However, naturally, because of the setup of the experiment, this tradeoff can only be assessed for a subset of the respondents who received some treatment (that, is not for the 600 in the control group). The power of this test is smaller, as it is only based on $N=2,400$. Here, β_3 is our coefficient of interest in understanding the effect on trust towards police.

Our second specification is a full factorial model evaluating the effect of being in each of the four experimental groups (as opposed to the control group) on the dependent variable X_i (where X_i represents trust towards police, reporting political crimes, reporting non-political crimes). The results here can be interpreted relative to the control group (that is the group that did not include additional information about the competence and neutrality of the police force).

$$3) X_i = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 * Group1_i + \gamma_2 * Group2_i + \gamma_3 * Group3_i + \gamma_4 * Group4_i + \varepsilon_i$$

The advantage of this specification is that it produces estimates in absolute terms (e.g., allowing to establish the level of trust for both the control group and each treatment groups) and it has higher power, as it includes the respondents in the control group. However, it does not address the trade-off between the key characteristics of the police force as explicitly. All the coefficients γ_j (where $j=1,2,3,4$) in regression (3) are of interest, as they will allow us to establish the relative importance of the two dimensions (competence and neutrality)

Finally, given that in each case X_i is ranked on an ordinal scale ($X_i = \{1,2,3,4,5\}$, where 1 = definitely yes, 2 = likely yes, 3 = difficult to say, 4 = likely no, 5 = definitely no), we will also check the robustness of our coefficients in an ordered logistic regression:

$$4) ologit(P(Trust_i \leq j)) = \alpha_j - (\beta_1 * Competence_i + \beta_2 * Neutrality_i + \beta_3 * (Competence_i * Neutrality_i))$$

AND

$$5) \text{ ologit}(P(Trust_i \leq j)) = \alpha_j - (\gamma_1 * Group1_i + \gamma_2 * Group2_i + \gamma_3 * Group3_i + \gamma_4 * Group4_i)$$

Politicized vs non-politicized crimes

To understand the implications of trust towards police, we check whether trust is correlated with crime reporting. We expect the relationship to be strong and positive, in line with research on the effects of trust on crime reporting (Kääriäinen and Sirén, 2011)

H3: Higher trust towards police should predict the reporting of non-political crimes.

H4: Higher trust towards police should predict the reporting of political crimes.

$$6) \text{ ReportingLikelihood}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * Trust_i + \varepsilon_i$$

For this to be the case β_1 has to be positive for regression (6) run on both non-politicized and politicized crime:

Q2. If you witnessed a robbery in wojewodztwo X, would you call the police? 1 = definitely yes, 2, 3, 4, 5= definitely no; 88=no answer

Q3. If you saw a homophobically-motivated beating, would you call the police? 1 = definitely yes, 2, 3, 4, 5= definitely no; 88=no answer

However, we also expect that the politicization of police (preferential treatment of PiS politicians) should negatively affect the willingness to report a politicized crime relative a non-politicized crime (where the gravity of the crime would be questioned by PiS-aligned police). (In other words, neutrality will make it more likely that the politicized crime is reported.)

H5: Higher political neutrality decreases the difference in reporting between politicised and non-politicised crime.

$$7) \text{ Difference}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * Competence_i + \beta_2 * Neutrality_i + \beta_3 * (Competence_i * Neutrality_i)$$

where $\text{Difference}_i = \text{ReportingNonPoliticalCrime}_i - \text{ReportingPoliticalCrime}_i$

For H5 to hold, β_2 in regression (7) has to be negative.

Importance of political preferences

Political preferences of respondents are likely to affect how important they find politicization/political neutrality as a determinant of trust toward police.

Given that politicization is defined with reference to Law and Justice (PiS), we expect that the supporters of this party (PiS_Support_i=1) will find politicization of the police less problematic and value political neutrality less. This is because, in this case, politicization means that the police are lenient toward crimes committed against groups that are disliked (if not persecuted) by their preferred party.

H6: The negative effect of politicization on X_i will be smaller for PiS supporters.

As above, we address this using the full factorial and interaction term specifications.

$$8) X_i = \beta_0 + \gamma_1 * Group1_i + \gamma_2 * Group2_i + \gamma_3 * Group3_i + \gamma_4 * Group4_i + \delta_1 * (Group1_i$$

In the factorial model, for this to be the case δ_1 and δ_3 (coefficient on politicized, but PiS-aligned groups) should be positive in regression (8). This is because while we generally expect politicization to negatively affect trust towards police, the effect will be diminished for those who support the party that benefits from politicization.

We also verify H6 using a full factorial specification:

$$9) X_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * Competence_i + \beta_2 * Neutrality_i + \beta_3 * (Competence_i * Neutrality_i) + \delta_1$$

For H6 to hold, in the interaction term on neutrality of those supporting PiS, δ_2 , would need to be negative in regression (9). This is because, while neutrality generally affects trust positively, this effect is likely diminished among PiS supporters who benefit from it less.

Importance of historical conditioning

Finally, given the interest in the long-term effects of the security service reform on trust towards police, we argue that the respondents with a personal or family history of repression or resistance (pretreatment questions in the earlier part of the survey) will display less trust towards police (Curtice, 2021).

H7: Respondents with personal and family history of repression or resistance will display less trust towards police.

Here we will run regressions analogous to (8) and (9) above, but with a history of repression/resistance dummy instead of a PiS support dummy.

$$10) X_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * Competence_i + \beta_2 * Neutrality_i + \beta_3 * (Competence_i * Neutrality_i) + \delta_1$$

In the interaction model (10), for H7 to hold β_4 will be negative.

$$11) X_i = \beta_0 + \gamma_1 * Group1_i + \gamma_2 * Group2_i + \gamma_3 * Group3_i + \gamma_4 * Group4_i + \delta_1 * (Group1_i$$

In the factorial regression (11), for H7 to hold, β_1 will be negative.

Finally, those with history of repression/resistance might be more sensitive to politicization of police.

H8: Respondents with personal and family history of repression will put more weight on political neutrality in determining their trust towards police.

For H8 to hold, δ_2 the coefficient on neutrality for this group in regression (11) needs to be positive.

Support for verification

The second question we are interested in is to what extent competence and neutrality affect support for verification. Verification is designed to identify and remove any police officers who are found not to be politically neutral (i.e., they act in the interest of a certain political party). It is mostly a political process and does not include removing incompetent functionaries, as the lack of competence is usually weeded out through usual managerial processes.

This question is key for the main argument of our project. We know from historical sources that the verification commissions set up to screen the security agents of the communist regime were concerned with their competence and level of extremeness (the historical equivalent of politicization). We also show theoretically that they were only interested in approving applications from candidates with high competence and moderation, with the three other combinations of attributes viewed as comparably undesirable (Nalepa & Piotrowska, 2024).

In this part of the analysis, we want to see how competence and political neutrality affect preference for screening and if competence of the police can offset their lack of political neutrality and vice versa: if political neutrality can offset lack of competence.

To understand this, we run a regression similar to specification (2), with support for verification as the dependent variable and recoding Politicization and Neutrality (where politicized=1 if neutral=0), for ease of coefficient interpretation. The objective of verification is identified in the question

(identify and remove functionaries who are not politically neutral in their actions and are motivated by the interests of political parties) and so the respondents are familiar with it.

H9: Political neutrality will have a negative effect on support for verification.

$$12) X_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * Competence_i + \beta_2 * Politicization + \beta_3 * (Competence_i * Politicization_i)$$

Given that verification is presented to respondents as aiming to eliminate politization, but not incompetence, we expect β_2 in regression (12) to be negative, as there is no need to screen a neutral police force. However, we are agnostic concerning β_1 (for more discussion, see the “Effectiveness-loss cue” section below). β_3 is our coefficient of interest, as it identifies the trade-off between competence and neutrality.

$$13) X_i = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 * Group1_i + \gamma_2 * Group2_i + \gamma_3 * Group3_i + \gamma_4 * Group4_i + \epsilon_i$$

In the full factorial specification, the support for verification should be higher in treatment groups exposed to message about politicized policing (groups 1 and 3). Hence, γ_1 and γ_3 should be positive in regression (13).

Effect of effectiveness-loss cue - exploratory

We assume that, when thinking about police screening, the citizens are aware that that the screening might result in a loss of competent officers and hence reduced effectiveness of the police in fighting crime.

H10: The coefficient on support for verification should be the same in the question without the competence cue than with the competence cue.

To check whether this is the case, we will run regression (12) above twice: once asking for support for verification without mentioning the consequences for competence (Q4) and once mentioning the consequence (Q5):

Q4. Do you think that police in wojewodztwo X should be verified to identify and remove functionaries who are not politically neutral in their actions and are motivated by the interests of political parties? 1 = definitely yes, 2, 3, 4, 5= definitely no; 88=no answer

Q5. Highly qualified functionaries might lose their job as a result of verification, as a result of which police may become less effective in fighting crime. Do you still think that police in wojewodztwo X should be verified? 1 = definitely yes, 2, 3, 4, 5= definitely no; 88=no answer

$$(Q4)X_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * Competence_i + \beta_2 * Politicization + \beta_3 * (Competence_i * Politicization_i) + \epsilon_i$$

$$(Q5)X_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * Competence_i + \beta_2 * Politicization + \beta_3 * (Competence_i * Politicization_i) + \epsilon_i$$

If the respondents are aware of the possible loss of competence, the two regressions should yield similar results.

We will then compare β_0 , β_1 , β_2 , and β_3 in the two regressions. If the citizens are aware of the consequences of political screening for competence the coefficients should be the statistically indistinguishable. Any differences demonstrate that the respondents did not previously factor in the effects of screening on competence of the force and this knowledge affected their relative valuation of competence and politicization.

Importance of political preferences

Finally, the extent to which politicization is seen as a police force weakness of should depend on the respondent's political support for PiS. The argument is analogous to the one concerning its effect on the trust towards police. Given that politicization is defined with reference to Law and Justice (PiS), we expect that the supporters of this party (PiS_Support_i=1) will find politicization of the police less problematic. This is because, in this case, politicization means that the police are lenient toward crimes committed against groups that are disliked (if not persecuted) by their preferred party. Hence, politicization cue is less likely to lead to support for verification among the supporters of PiS.

H11: Politicization will have a smaller effect on support for verification among PiS supporters.

$$14) X_i = \beta_0 + \gamma_1 * Group1_i + \gamma_2 * Group2_i + \gamma_3 * Group3_i + \gamma_4 * Group4_i + \delta_1 * (Group1_i$$

The groups with politicization cue are group 1 and group 3. For PiS supporters we expect the effect that politicization has on the support for screening to be diminished, i.e. δ_1 and δ_3 should be negative in regression (14).

$$15) X_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * Competence_i + \beta_2 * Politicization_i + \beta_3 * (Competence_i * Politicization_i)$$

In the interaction term specification, we expect that politicization will have a smaller effect on support for verification among PiS supporters than non-PiS supporters. In other words, if H11 holds, we expect δ_2 to be negative in regression (15).

Importance of historical conditioning

Finally, as in the case of trust towards police, we are interested in the long-term effects of repression (or repression and resistance) on the relative importance of competence and politicization for support for verification. In particular, a history of repression (or repression and resistance) can make respondents generally more supportive of initiatives reducing the politicization of the police.

H12: Respondents with a personal and family history of resistance/ repression will display more support for verification.

Here we will run regressions analogous to (8) and (9) above, but with a history of repression/resistance dummy instead of a PiS support dummy.

$$16) X_i = \beta_0 + \gamma_1 * Group1_i + \gamma_2 * Group2_i + \gamma_3 * Group3_i + \gamma_4 * Group4_i + \delta_1 * (Group1_i$$

In the factorial model, for H12 to hold β_1 in regression (16) will be negative.

$$17) X_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * Competence_i + \beta_2 * Politicization_i + \beta_3 * (Competence_i * Politicization_i)$$

Similarly, in the interaction model, (17) for H12 to hold β_4 will be positive.

Moreover, those with history of repression/resistance might be more sensitive to politicization of police. This is because they were themselves or knew victims of politicized security forces and hence are more aware of the consequences of politicization.

H13: Respondents with personal and family history of repression/resistance will put more weight on political neutrality in determining their support towards verification.

In the factorial design (16), this translates to a positive coefficient on groups with politicization cue (groups 1 and 3) and history of repression, implying a positive δ_1 and δ_3 .

In the interaction term specification (17), this should be associated with a positive coefficient on δ_2 (politicization cue and history of repression).

Analysis

Exclusion and Inclusion Criteria

Balance Tests: We will check for balance on the demographic variables (age, wojewodztwo (region), size of place of residence, gender) for the primary 2X2 factorial cells of the experiment.

Procedures for Missing Data: Listwise deletion.

Post Analysis

Data Archiving

Our data will be made available to other researchers. We will post the study materials and all data on the OSF website one year after the data are delivered to us. Information about the study and the link to data will also be made available.

Submission and Modification

We will pre-register this pre-analysis plan on the Open Science Framework website (<https://osf.io/prereg>). Any changes to the pre-analysis plan we initially file will be made transparently: we will report the change and the justification for the change. Any unregistered analyses will be transparently reported as “unregistered,” “exploratory,” or “preliminary” findings.

Publication

We will report the results of all preregistered analyses, regardless of outcome.

References

- Barczyszyn-Madziarz, P., & Norström, R. (2022). Discourse on LGBTQ issues in the Polish presidential campaign (2020): The perception of the LGBTQ community and foreign media. In *Gender and LGBTQ Issues in Election Processes*. Taylor & Francis.
- Curtice, T. (2021). How repression affects public perceptions of police: evidence from a natural experiment in Uganda. *Journal of Conflict resolution*, 65(10), 1680-1708.
- Kääriäinen, Juha, and Reino Sirén. "Trust in the police, generalized trust and reporting crime." *European journal of criminology* 8.1 (2011): 65-81.
- Nalepa, M., & Piotrowska, B.M. (2024). Purging the Police in Nascent Democracies. *Working Paper*