Characteristics of surveillance, where do public officials draw the line? A comparative study between The Netherlands, Germany and France

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Preface

This thesis was written for my master's degree in Public Administration with a specialization in digitization in policy and administration at the Leiden University in The Netherlands. The subject of this thesis centres around public officials and their stance towards various types of government surveillance in relation to trust in national parliament. Adding on to this, multiple characteristics of surveillance play an important role as it could be helpful when designing or changing existing surveillance measures to have an idea of which characteristics have a favourable view among public officials.

This is an interesting topic to research as it is fully in development with new types of surveillance being used in conjunction with the rising use of artificial intelligence.

I would like to thank my family and friends for supporting me while writing this thesis. Additionally I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Sarah Giest for her guidance, reviews and recommendations. I am also grateful to Dr. Alex Ingrams and Prof. Bram Klievink for their interesting lectures during the profile course which laid the groundwork for my choice in this thesis subject.

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Introduction

There are many different reasons why surveillance measures are implemented by citizens, businesses or governments. Citizens use it to protect their neighborhood and businesses use it to collect information about their competitors, customers and suppliers. In this thesis the main focus will be around governments that make use of surveillance techniques. The usage of surveillance techniques by governments on a small to large scale has in the past been associated with states that are known for authoritarianism such as the Soviet Union, North Korea and the People's Republic of China. However, liberal democracies have also been increasing their usage of surveillance techniques to monitor their citizens on an increasingly large scale. A well-known example of this was leaked by Edward Snowden. As a whistleblower he uncovered that a group of liberal democracies were working together running a large scale surveillance network, countries including the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (Pujol, 2020).

There is a lot of criticism and fear surrounding the use of government surveillance in states as the critics are afraid it could lead to a society that is similar to science fiction stories such as George Orwell's 1984 or Steven Spielberg's Minority Report. These fears are not completely unwarranted as the United Nations has already published that the right to privacy that people have is increasingly under pressure from the use of digital technologies (OHCR, 2022). These digital technologies can be used for control, surveillance and oppression. The report by the United Nations Human Rights Office is focused around three areas and these are: the use and abuse of hacking tools by State authorities, the role of proper encryption methods to protect human rights in an online setting and the usage and impact that digital monitoring has on both offline and online public spaces (OUNHCHR, 2022).

The chapter in the report about the usage and impact of digital monitoring is relevant for the thesis as (large-scale) government surveillance has become cheaper and less intrusive due to technological improvements. Technology has taken a central role in surveillance measures as there is no longer a large reliance on spies and informers. These surveillance measures include the use of camera's in public spaces, the automatic collection and storing of internet and telephone communication and the usage of artificial intelligence to scan through the large amounts of collected data.

Societal relevance

The societal relevance of this thesis centers around the fact that everyone will encounter at least one of the forms of surveillance as to be discussed in the thesis. Public spaces often have camera's in place to make recordings so citizens will knowingly or unknowingly be in contact with forms of surveillance. This research is to make people more aware of the possible pros and cons of surveillance and to gain an insight into the state of affairs regarding surveillance measures in different European countries. Furthermore, this subject is relevant for society as a whole as governments are quite often not transparent in their activities surrounding surveillance. The danger in the public not being informed about these activities is the possibility of function creep, this means that technologies are being used for more than their originally intended purpose (Bernot et. Al, 2021). An example of this are smart camera's that are used to issue a fine to drivers who exceed speed limits. But instead of only registering their license plates to issue a fine, their data is also processed by the tax authorities to perform checks.

Different parts of the world use surveillance for different reasons, Ziller & Helbling conducted a research project in Spain, France, Germany and the United Kingdom on why citizens support government surveillance measures. The governments in these countries use surveillance to keep an eye on criminal activities, transnational terrorism and during the covid pandemic it was used to track the health status of citizens and their social interactions to try to contain the spread of the virus (Ziller & Helbling, 2020). They came to the conclusion that citizens are willing to support far-reaching surveillance measures if the circumstances of necessity, reliability and extensiveness are met. They also remark that there is more support for surveillance policy if the measures are aimed towards (potential) criminals or in the case of an urgent security risk. Concerns about the data-security does reduce the amount of support for surveillance policy. Their research project does have a key difference compared to this thesis, where Ziller & Helbling had a more general approach to the background of respondents. The takeaway from their research is that the average citizen is willing to forfeit some of their freedom in return for more surveillance measures aimed at criminals and a potential security risk if it increases the odds of prevention. The juxtaposition with this thesis is visible as the focus shifts from respondents with random backgrounds to respondents that are employed or have been employed at a government employer.

Scientific relevance

There is also a scientific relevance for this research because it is a subject that has been researched quite a bit but there has been a more general approach to these research papers. Most of these research papers have used data that is based around respondents that are employed in different sectors. This research paper however has a specific focus on public officials in different countries and how they perceive the usage of different types of surveillance measures.

For example, in China surveillance measures are also used by the government but there is a not a lot of resistance from citizens. A study by Su, Xu and Cao has been done to measure the stance of citizens on the use of surveillance measures, they concluded that Chinese citizens are quite supportive of government surveillance measures but this amount of support does drop the larger the scale of the surveillance (Su et al., 2021). They state that this form of support stems from the citizens' preference for social stability and trust in government. This shows that the reason why citizens support government surveillance can differ quite a bit from country to country.

The Dutch "Wet op de inlichtingen en veiligheidsdiensten" also known as the "Sleepwet" has made it only recently possible in a legal sense for the Dutch intelligence agencies to perform large scale surveillance on its citizens. It is scientifically relevant to research how these evolving capabilities relate to the more old fashioned forms of surveillance. Furthermore this research paper would illustrate the differences among European public officials and their approval of the use of surveillance measures. There have been multiple studies on why citizens either approve or disapprove of the use of surveillance measures by the government but not many centered around specifically public officials and their view on this topic.

The studies that are performed on this subject mostly have a focus on the motivation on why citizens would be willing to support surveillance measures. This thesis aims to provide insight on public officials' approval rate of surveillance measures in relation to trust in national parliament. Trust in a countries' national parliament is chosen as a way to gauge how supportive public officials are of surveillance measures. The reason behind this is the fact that national parliaments are responsible for making and changing legislation as well as deciding on what policies a country should follow.

Research question

The main research question that is to be answered in this thesis is as follows: *"To what extent do the characteristics of surveillance measures affect the approval rate by public officials in Dutch, German and French public government organizations?"*

Thesis overview

The focus in this thesis will be around governments which gather intelligence and the approval rates of this data collection under public officials in relation to trust in national parliament. This data collection happens on different scale levels ranging from forms of surveillance on a small scale to a large scale whereby information of a large group of individuals is collected. Furthermore different characteristics of surveillance measures will be discussed and linked to the types of surveillance measures to gain insight on which characteristics receive a more positive view from public officials.

Theories will be discussed explaining the concepts and the current situation in the different countries will be illustrated. Subsequently, hypotheses will be formulated based on the concepts, after which the choice of methods is justified and the concepts are operationalized. Afterwards the analysis will follow in which the hypotheses will be tested statistically and finally the evaluation in which the results are observed and evaluated with the acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses.

The motivation for writing this thesis arises from the increased usage that artificial intelligence has seen the last few years. Artificial intelligence has been gaining ground where it has broken into the mainstream. Applications such as ChatGPT and Google Bard are increasingly popular In different fields, this has also led to the European Union increasing their effort to legislating these types of technologies. The groundwork has been laid for the AI act which is the first law in the world that aims to regulate the use of artificial intelligence, it is slated to be in use by the end of 2023 (Satariano, 2023). The advancements in artificial intelligence could have far reaching consequences for government surveillance and those affected by it as the amount of data that can be processed in an automatic fashion could increase tenfold. Therefore it is relevant to research how supportive public officials are in the present time.

Theoretical framework

Surveillance performed by governments plays a central role in this thesis, so what exactly is surveillance? Surveillance can be defined as the monitoring of activities, behaviour or information with the purpose of collecting information, influencing, managing or steering. It is a one-sided, systematic routine supervision aimed at individuals or groups with a certain purpose (Trüdinger & Steckermeier, 2017). Examples of this would be observing from a distance using electronic equipment such as closed-circuit television (CCTV), intercepting internet traffic or a more old-fashioned form of surveillance without using digital technologies such as the interception of regular mail. Trüdinger & Steckermeier researched the relationship between political trust and support for government surveillance. They found a positive relationship between political trust and approval of surveillance measures. The type of surveillance measures were known amongst the population but the amount of information that was given was limited but still there was no impact on the approval of the surveillance policy.

Concepts

It has been established that there are different kinds of surveillance that are used for different types of purposes. These different types of surveillance are featured in this research as concepts. The first concept is that of “small-scale” surveillance, this can be defined as surveillance that takes place in the public physical space (Grommé, 2016). An example of this would be the use of closed-circuit television, this is a signal on a network that is not openly accessible.

The second concept is that of “medium-scale” surveillance, this can be defined as the use of digital surveillance whereby the internet or internet related technologies or services are used to gather and process information on individuals (Dormandy, 2020). The monitoring of e-mails on keywords or the checking of the internet history of persons would be examples of this form of surveillance.

The third concept is that of “large-scale” surveillance, the definition of this is the monitoring of the internet usage and telephone communication of citizens on a large scale. It is even possible that entire countries are monitored without a form of evidence of the presence of misconduct (Amnesty International, 2015). This type of surveillance is also often referred to as mass surveillance.

The fourth concept is that of “trust in parliament”, trust in itself is a very broad concept. This thesis makes an important distinction between the trust that individuals have in other people and the trust that individuals have in institutions such as a country’s national parliament (Brezzi, 2021). Trust in other people can be defined as interpersonal trust and trust in institutions is known as institutional

trust. Even though the focus in this thesis is on institutional trust it is still important to mention interpersonal trust as you can not have one without the other.

Both interpersonal trust and institutional trust have a great deal of importance for both individuals and society as a whole. Individuals require it to have a comfortable life in which they are assured that other members in their community can be trusted in day to day life. Trust also plays an important role across society as regular daily transactions have a degree of trust woven into the interaction. As stated earlier, individuals require trust in each other but also trust in institutions in order to have a society that functions well. To reach a certain degree of trust in institutions there is a requirement that institutions are both effective and competent in attaining their goals. Whilst trying to attain these goals, institutions must operate according to values that are similar to the expectations of citizens in regards to fairness and integrity (OECD, 2017). In short, the OECD defines trust in parliament as a person's belief that another person or institution will act consistently with their expectations of positive behavior.

The fifth concept is that of the "public official", this is also known as a public servant or a civil servant. A public official is employed in the public sector by a government department to undertake public sector projects or assignments . These public officials work for central or local government and have no affiliation with a political party. The public official concept has been transcribed in the Dutch "Ambtenarenwet" law where it is defined as a person who works with a government employer under an employment contract (Rijksoverheid, 2022).

Opponents of government surveillance

The opponents of the usage of surveillance state that it can be a serious danger towards freedom and the right to privacy. Bannister recognizes four categories of invasion of privacy that can be caused by surveillance measures. It can be divided into watching, intercepting, reading and interpreting (Bannister, 2005). Watching means that there is a physical observation of what people do, this form is quite labour-intensive, costs a lot of manpower and can cause logistical problems if performed on a large scale. Bannister mentions that the most common form of this is the use of CCTV camera's. This category connects to the concept of small-scale surveillance due to it being about surveillance measures in the physical space.

The second category that Bannister describes is intercepting, this means that forms of citizen communication is intercepted. This has been done for many years, where it used to be about opening envelopes and wiretapping nowadays it is mostly about the interception of digital communication. This category connects to the second concept of medium-scale surveillance due to it being about the interception of digital communication.

The fourth category is about interpretation of the data, Bannister states that manually interpreting data is not possible due to the sheer volume of the collected data. To combat the amount of data, technologies such as data-mining and artificial intelligence are used to filter out the most important data. Different types of data can be pieced together to form new information, for instance video footage, e-mails and banking details can be used together to keep an eye on potential terrorists and criminals. The third concept of large-scale surveillance can be recognized where large amounts of data are collected in an automatised way.

Proponents of government surveillance

The amount of proponents of surveillance are a lot smaller than the opponents camp. Taylor argues in his paper that the increased and perhaps even constant use of government surveillance should be welcomed and not fought against (Taylor, 2005). He states that the increased surveillance would not increase the amount of state power into people's lives.

According to Taylor if judges deem it morally permissible to secure information relevant to the case from a witness it should also be morally permissible to secure the information through the use of surveillance equipment. His main argument is that if it morally permissible for agents of the state to secure information about past events by subpoenaing witnesses then it should also be morally permissible to access information that has been generated by existing surveillance measures. Taylor goes on to state that it should be morally permissible for states to keep their citizens under constant surveillance but that it is not morally permissible for states to have access to all of the information that is collected. Complementary to the previous statement, agents of the state that are morally permitted to access certain information are limited to the amount of information that is required to achieve their goals.

It could supposedly lead to a reduction in costs, more accurate information and as long as a person is not involved in criminal activities they have no reason to be alarmed.

Behavioural changes of public officials

There are multiple reasons why a public officials behaviour or attitude towards something or someone could change. The organizational culture is one of them, this is the beliefs, norms and values that are shared by the members of an organisation. The organisational culture has three different dimensions and these are: supportive culture, innovative culture and bureaucratic culture (Wallach, 1983). Bureaucratic means that public officials cannot let their personal emotions get in the way and must operate like a cog in the machine without any form of discretion. Innovative cultures are creative and dynamic in nature due to constantly changing goals. Supportive cultures are an open environment where being friendly and helpful is important. This supportive environment exists if it is trusting, equitable, safe, sociable, encouraging and open.

There is also the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) which states that the perceived behavioural control, subjective norm and attitude can change the behaviour of a person by having an influence on the behaviour intention. A bureaucratic culture which can be found in the public sector has behavioural norms and implicit values.

A public officials' behaviour can also be altered by "gaming", interacting with the risks and benefits of open data in the game can help public officials gain a more realistic perspective of opening governmental data (Kleiman et al., 2022). The behaviour of public officials has an effect on how public policies are enacted. Open data is increasingly adopted by governments but public officials are not forthcoming in the use of open data due to a lack of knowledge surrounding potential benefits and risks. Games can change the attitude of public officials by transferring knowledge and providing insights from new experiences. Ultimately, governments could use games to change the attitude of public officials.

Characteristics of surveillance

Certain characteristics that are relevant to surveillance measures have to be discussed. These characteristics are to be linked to the different types of surveillance to gain insight on which of these characteristics have a favourable view amongst public officials. Knowing which types of characteristics have a favourable view could be useful for designing new software related to surveillance.

The Surveillance Studies Network has identified multiple characteristics of contemporary surveillance measures and these are: pervasiveness, intensity, speed, interconnection and automation (House of Lords, 2009).

Pervasiveness can be defined as the fact of being present and noticeable in every part of a thing or place. Intensity is the degree, volume or magnitude of something, in this case the amount of measures that are in place. The definition of speed is that of the rate at which someone or something moves or operates or is able to move or operate. Interconnection is the mutual connection between two or more things and finally automation can be defined as the use of machines and computers that can operate without needing human control. These different characteristics can be linked to the different types of surveillance based on their description.

Small scale surveillance: Pervasiveness can be identified as the use of camera's is at the core of this type of surveillance. This type of surveillance is limited to a certain area of a location and therefore present and noticeable to citizens.

Medium scale surveillance: Speed can be identified as it is possible to obtain information about individuals at a much faster rate than small scale surveillance. Interconnection is also identified as it is possible for intelligence agencies to collect data by using older and newer technologies that connect with each other such as modern wireless mobile networks and traditional landline networks.

Large scale surveillance: Intensity can be identified as this is the maximum amount of surveillance that can be described as mass surveillance as large groups of individuals are subject to it. Speed is also relevant as information can be obtained much faster than small scale surveillance. Automation plays a big part as huge amounts of data are collected and cannot be checked by hand so data-mining and artificial intelligence is used as described earlier. Interconnection also plays a part here as different networks can be accessed but on an even larger scale.

Hypotheses

After discussing these different theories it is possible to formulate multiple hypotheses regarding the types of surveillance in relation to public officials and trust in parliament:

The first hypothesis:

H1: “The approval of small scale surveillance has an effect on trust in parliament amongst public officials”.

H0: “The approval of small scale surveillance does not have an effect on trust in parliament amongst public officials”.

The second hypothesis:

H2: “The approval of medium scale surveillance has an effect on trust in parliament amongst public officials”.

H0: “The approval of medium scale surveillance does not have an effect on trust in parliament amongst public officials”.

The third hypothesis:

H3: “The approval of large scale surveillance has an effect on trust in parliament amongst public officials”.

H0: “The approval of large scale surveillance does not have an effect on trust in parliament amongst public officials”.

Methodology

The analysis will be based on an existing data-set from the European Values Study. This is a large scale longitudinal survey that is carried out in multiple European countries including the countries that are the main focus of this research. The respondents that are featured in this research are citizens of either The Netherlands, Germany or France. The European Values Study was chosen as the data-set for this research paper because they research topics such as religion, politics, society, family and work. Furthermore, the research question that is to be answered connects to the themes that the European Values Study examines. The respondents that have filled in the survey are from different backgrounds, this means that there are varying age groups, levels of income and levels of education. They do have one important thing in common and that is they either work at a government organization or they have worked at one.

Independent variables

The first concept is “approval of small scale surveillance”, this concept can be found in the dataset as the following question presented to the respondents: *“Do you think that the government should or should not have the right to keep people under video surveillance in public areas?”.* There is an ordinal level of measurement where the variable is operationalized using four possible answers and these are as follows: “definitely should have the right”, “probably should have the right”, “probably should not have the right” and “definitely should not have the right”.

The second concept is “approval of medium scale surveillance”, this concept can be found in the dataset as the following question presented to the respondents: “Do you think that the government should or should not have the right to “monitor all emails and all other information exchanged on the Internet”?. There is an ordinal level of measurement where the variable is operationalized using four possible answers and these are as follows: “definitely should have the right”, “probably should have the right”, “probably should not have the right” and “definitely should not have the right”.

The third concept is “approval of large scale surveillance”, this concept can be found in the dataset as the following question presented to the respondents: “Do you think that the government should or should not have the right to “collect information about anyone living in your country without their knowledge?”. There is an ordinal level of measurement where the variable is operationalized using four possible answers and these are as follows: “definitely should have the right”, “probably should have the right”, “probably should not have the right” and “definitely should not have the right”.

There is a form of approval of the surveillance measures if the respondent has answered the question with either “definitely should have the right” or “probably should have the right”.

Dependent variable

The fourth concept is that of “trust in national parliament”, this concept can be found in the dataset as the following question presented to the respondents: “Please indicate how much confidence you have in parliament”. The level of measurement is ordinal whereby the variable is operationalized using six possible answers and these are as follows: “a great deal”, “quite a lot”, “not very much”, “none at all”, “I don’t know” or “I prefer not to answer”. A respondent has trust in national parliament if the question has been answered with either “a great deal” or “quite a lot”.

Control variables

There are two control variables that play a role in the thesis and these are “public official” and “income”. These variables are held constant as they may have an effect on the results.

The fifth concept is that of the “public official”, this concept can be found in the dataset as the following question presented to the respondents: “Do/did you work for?” There is an nominal level of measurement where the variable is operationalized using five possible answers and these are as follows: “Government or public institution”, “Private business or industry”, “Private non-profit organization”, “I don’t know” and “I prefer not to answer”.

A respondent classifies as a public official if they have answered the question with the response of “Government or public institution”.

The sixth concept is that of “income”, this concept can be found in the dataset as a variable with the name “scale of incomes”. There is a ordinal level of measurement whereby the variable is operationalized on the basis of ten possible answers and these are as follows: “13600 or less on an annual basis”, “13600-17700 or less on an annual basis”, “17700-21100 or less on an annual basis”, “21100-25000 or less on an annual basis”, “25000-29200 or less on an annual basis”, “29200-34600 or less on an annual basis”, “34600-40800 or less on an annual basis”, “40800-48800 or less on an annual basis”, “48800-61500 or less on an annual basis” and “61500 or less on an annual basis”. A 10 point Likert scale is used with “1” being the lowest option and “10” being the highest relating to the range of possible income groups.

Income has been chosen as a control variable because there have been multiple researches done which conclude that social groups with a higher income have more institutional trust. The Dutch Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau came to the conclusion that young people, highly educated and those with a middle class or higher income have more trust in institutions than the elderly or low skilled groups (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken & Koninkrijksrelaties, 2021). There has been a constant positive correlation between socio economic status and trust (Brandt et. al., 2015).

A higher socio economic status can lead to a higher amount of trust as people who are a part of these groups usually have resources that enables them to afford the risk and vulnerability of trust (Hamamura, 2012).

Replicability and reliability

The scientific articles and data-set are freely accessible so it is possible to perform the research a second time and draw the same conclusion. This means that the research is reproducible and this increase the reliability of said research. The dataset is applicable as it describes the various forms of relevant surveillance, asks about trust towards national parliament, the respondents' institution of occupation and their income. A newer version of the European Values Study dataset could lead to results that are more in line with the current mindset in society as the amount of trust in public institutions may have declined since the covid pandemic. Adding on to this, the increased intensity of the surveillance measures that have only been introduced in recent years could also lead to changes in the results. A newer dataset is unfortunately not available (yet). The analysis will feature descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, anova analysis and finally the testing of the hypotheses. A quantitative study was chosen because this study aims to generalize to a larger population.

Expectations

The expectations are that public officials will have a positive attitude towards small and medium scale surveillance. These expectations are due to the tried-and-true nature of camera usage that is integral for small scale surveillance. The expected positive attitude towards medium scale surveillance is due to it being centered around aimed surveillance towards criminals and potential terrorism suspects. This would connect to the results of Trüdinger and Steckermeier, they found a positive relation between political trust and the support of government surveillance. There could also be a connection to the research of Hiller & Zelbling as they also performed a similar research in western countries in which there were similar results when it comes to the support of surveillance measures. Western countries also play a central role in this thesis so the results could be complementary to each other. These other researches did not have a focus that was on public officials but in the end public officials are still citizens of their respective home country. Large scale surveillance is not expected to receive a warm welcome due to the aggressive and intrusive nature of these technologies.

Variables/ Concepts	Definition (from theory)	Indicators	Data Sources
Independent Variables			
"Small scale surveillance"	"Surveillance that takes place in the public physical space."	"Do you think that the government should or should not have the right to keep people under video surveillance in public areas?".	Grommé, 2016, European Values Study
"Medium scale surveillance"	"The use of digital surveillance whereby the internet or internet related technologies or services are used to gather and process information on individuals."	"Do you think that the government should or should not have the right to "monitor all emails and all other information exchanged on the Internet"?.	Dormandy, 2020, European Values Study
"Large scale surveillance"	"The monitoring of the internet usage and telephone communication of citizens on a large scale."	"Do you think that the government should or should not have the right to "collect information about anyone living in your country without their knowledge?".	Amnesty International, 2015, European Values Study
Dependent Variable			
"Trust in parliament"	"Trust is defined as a person's belief that another person or institution will act consistently with their expectations of positive behaviour"	"Please indicate how much confidence you have in parliament"	OECD, 2017, European Values Study
Control Variable			
"Income"	"The consumption and saving opportunity gained that is expressed in monetary terms"	"Scale of incomes"	Barr, 2012, European Values Study
"Public official"	" A person who works with a government employer under an employment contract"	"Do/did you work for?"	Rijksoverheid, 2022, Ambtenarenwet, European Values Study

Table 1: Overview of concepts, definition, indicators and data sources.

Case description

Three countries and their public officials' opinion towards the use of government surveillance in relation to trust in national parliament are the main focus of this thesis. The countries that have been chosen are The Netherlands, Germany and France. They have been chosen for a specific reason as their implementation and usage of surveillance measures has similarities as well as having a national parliament with a structure that has similarities.

The state of government surveillance in Germany

In 2021 the German parliament made changes to existing laws to grant the intelligence services and the federal police more surveillance powers (Fischer, 2021). With these changes it has become possible to intercept the communications of "persons against whom no suspicion of a crime has yet been established and therefore no criminal procedure measure can yet be ordered". This has raised questions about the right to privacy and data protection. The German government has stated that amending existing laws and new legislation is required to be able to keep up with technological innovations. This increase in surveillance powers given to the German intelligence services and federal police shows that large-scale surveillance measures have become more common in Germany.

Apart from technological innovations, major events relating to crime and terrorism can also lead to changes in existing laws and new legislation. After the Berlin attack in 2016 the quite strict laws compared to other countries around surveillance cameras relaxed to allow for more CCTV usage in public places. When a decision was to be made to permit video surveillance, there was a greater emphasis made on the protection of life, health and freedom (Oltermann, 2017).

The German parliament is known as the Bundestag and is elected by the German people. Alongside the Bundesrat (federal council), the Bundestag is responsible for the legislation in Germany and parliamentary scrutiny of the government. The country's parliaments are tasked with the legislative process, this makes the Bundestag the most important organ in the German legislative process (Deutscher Bundestag, 2010).

The state of government surveillance in The Netherlands

The Netherlands could be seen as a medium-scale surveillance society for a very long time up until 2018 which saw the introduction of the new “Wet op de inlichtingen en veiligheidsdiensten” also known as the “Sleepwet”. This law made it possible for intelligence services to collect information about citizens on a large scale where it was previously only allowed to collect information about specific individuals. The Algemene Inlichtingen-en Veiligheidsdienst (AIVD) and the Militaire Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst (MIVD) intercept internet traffic that goes through the cable (Van der Pol et al., 2018). This new legislation came into place because the old legislation from 2002 became obsolete due to technological advancements because most of the information would be sent through the cable.

Intelligence agencies now have the freedom to go on a scouting run so to speak when there is a sense of threat. This leads to the collection of data where the information of other users will also be collected and stored for several years (Het Parool, 2017). There was a lot of controversy surrounding this new legislation which led to a referendum where 49,5 percent of the votes were against, 46,5 percent in favor and 4% voted neutral (NOS, 2018). The divide in Dutch society surrounding this question was very clear. This thesis also gives an insight on if these numbers might be different under public officials.

The Dutch parliament is known as the Staten Generaal (States General) and consists of two chambers: the Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal (House of Representatives) and the Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal (Senate). The Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal is the legislative body, propositions of legislation are discussed and actions of the cabinet are reviewed (Bruj, 2023) . If proposed legislation by either the Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal or the cabinet is approved by a majority it it sent to the Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal. A legislative proposal will then be accepted or rejected but the Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal does not have the power to make changes to these proposals and is not able to propose legislation on their own (Rijksoverheid, 2019).

The state of government surveillance in France

France was an early adopter of large-scale surveillance measures, in 2015 they adopted the French Intelligence Act (Amnesty International, 2015. After the Paris attacks in the same year the Intelligence Act was introduced as the government's reaction to prevent future attacks. There was a strong opposition against this new legislation from rights groups, tech companies, judges and international human rights bodies. The UN Human Rights Committee criticized the law stating that it would give the French government excessively large surveillance powers. The main problems with the law that were identified include lack of transparency, citizens do not know if they are the target of surveillance. The Prime minister has the freedom to authorize intrusive surveillance measures for vague goals. Mass surveillance measures can be used more freely and a judge's approval is no longer needed. Even more drastic measures that were part of the proposal did not make it through including the interception of international communications as this would be a violation of the international human right to privacy and free speech. There was another section dedicated to freedom for intelligence agencies, this would allow them to carry out surveillance without any form of authorization from the Prime Minister in case of threats.

France has their mind set on expanding their surveillance measures, in march 2023 the French National Assembly allowed the use of mass video surveillance technology during the 2024 Olympic Games (Amnesty International, 2023). This mass surveillance technology would make use of artificial intelligence and according to Amnesty international this decision undermines the European Union's effort to protect human rights by having artificial intelligence regulation on the EU level. There are worries that the use of mass surveillance technologies that use artificial intelligence will put a large amount of pressure on the rights to protest, privacy and freedom of assembly and expression. And on top of that it could lead to marginalized groups becoming targeted more.

The French parliament consists of two parts, the Senat (Senate) and the Assemblee Nationale (National Assembly). Together they form the legislative power of France.

The Assemblee Nationale is the main legislative body and it can overrule the Senate if they do not come to an agreement surrounding a matter. The Assemblee National is also tasked with governmental monitoring and a lot of resources are spent on reviewing the actions of the performing authorities (Assemblée Nationale, 2020). The Senat has similar powers to the Assemblee National. Both houses are able to submit and amend propositions after which an agreement has to be reached (Sénat, 2020). If an agreement is not found the final decision falls to the Assemblee National.

It is noticeable that there are quite a few differences on how governments handled their change of course when it comes to the implementation of large-scale surveillance. Where it is in part due to technological changes in The Netherlands, it is very much a reactionary matter in France. Even though groundwork was laid in France for large-scale surveillance legislation, it was rushed through the French Parliament as a reaction to the Paris attacks. Germany has over the years increased the amount of surveillance powers that are available to intelligence services and the federal police. But ultimately all three countries use surveillance techniques on a large scale.

Their national parliaments also have similarities as they follow the bicameralism when It comes to legislature. The exact tasks and organization of the multiple chambers differ slightly but ultimately they follow a similar philosophy.

Analysis

Results and Findings:

This section of the thesis shows the data analysis conducted on the gathered data. The quantitative data has been subjected to analysis using various statistical tools. The statistical methodologies incorporated in this study encompass correlation analysis and regression analysis. The analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS V.26.

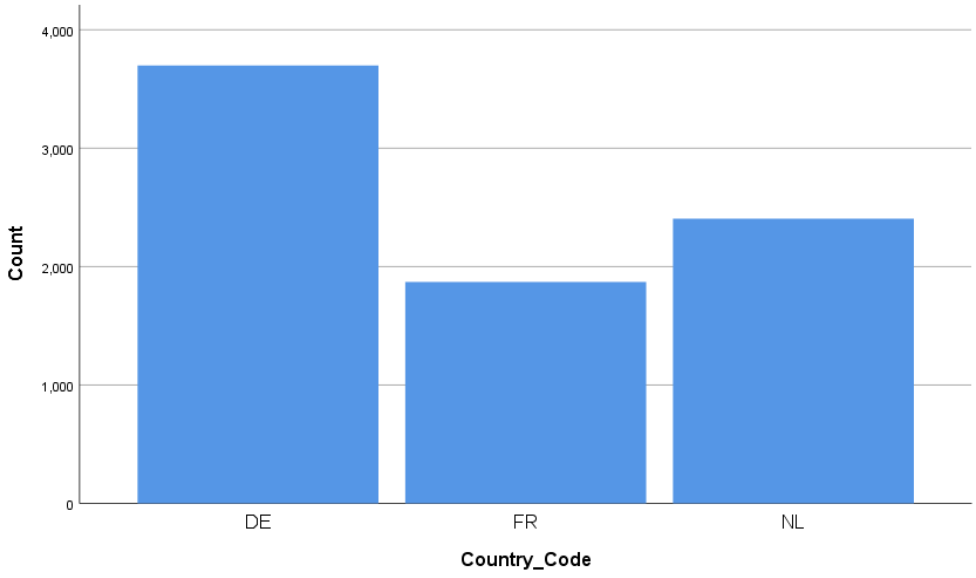
Demographical Information:

The tables (2 to 4) represent the frequency distribution of the participants. Of the total respondents, 3,698 individuals (46.4%) indicated Germany (DE) as their country of origin. There were 1,870 respondents, accounting for approximately 23.5% of the sample. These respondents identified their country as France. A total of 2,404 participants, accounting for 30.2% of the general sample, indicated their country of origin as the Netherlands.

Table 2: Country

Country				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
DE	3698	46.4	46.4	46.4
FR	1870	23.5	23.5	69.8
NL	2404	30.2	30.2	100.0
Total	7972	100.0	100.0	

Figure 1: Bar Chart of Participant Country



Among the entire sample population, 3,799 participants identified themselves as male. This constitutes 47.7% of the whole sample population. 4,169 participants identified as female, comprising 52.3% of the overall sample.

Table 3: Gender of Participants

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	3799	47.7	47.7	47.7
Female	4169	52.3	52.3	100.0
Total	7968	99.9	100.0	
No answer	4	0.1		
	7972	100.0		

Figure 2: Histogram of Participant Gender

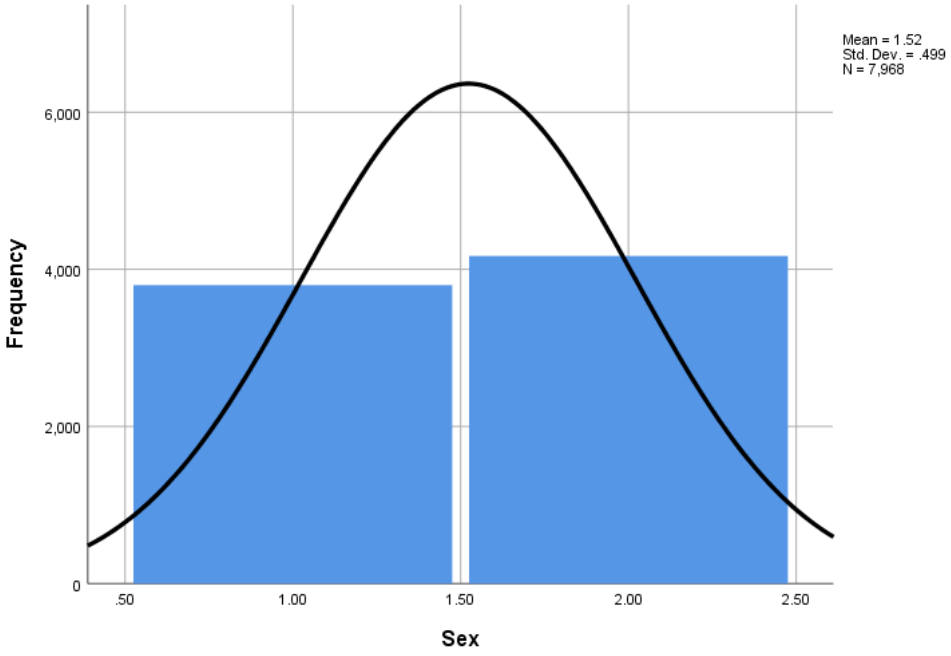


Figure (2) represents similar information as in the above table. The population of female participants was slightly higher in the sample.

A total of 3,841 respondents indicated they were married, accounting for 48.2% of the sample. Within this category, there were a total of 396 respondents, constituting 5.0% of the overall sample. These individuals identified themselves as living together as married. 796 participants, accounting for 10.0% of the general sample, reported being divorced.

A cohort of 183 individuals exists, accounting for approximately 2.3% of the overall population. These individuals have indicated that they are currently in a state of legal separation from their respective

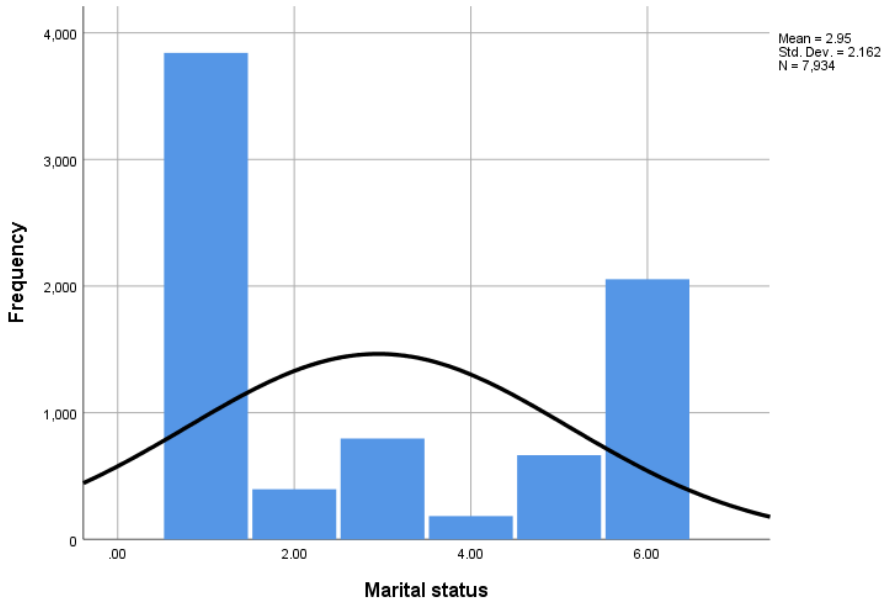
spouses yet have not formally obtained a divorce. A total of 664 participants, accounting for 8.3% of the overall sample, claimed to be widowed, signifying the loss of their spouse. About 2,054 individuals, constituting approximately 25.8% of the population, have stated themselves as single and have never entered the institution of marriage.

Table 4: Marital Status

Marital Status				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Married	3841	48.2	48.4	48.4
Living together as married	396	5.0	5.0	53.4
Divorced	796	10.0	10.0	63.4
Separated	183	2.3	2.3	65.7
Widowed	664	8.3	8.4	74.1
Single/Never married	2054	25.8	25.9	100.0
Total	7934	99.5	100.0	

According to the trend shown in Figure (3), there were more married respondents, while there were less separated participants in the sample. The graph also represents the mean and standard deviation. The standard deviation shows that data is highly dispersed.

Figure 3: Histogram of Participant Marital Status



3,012 respondents, accounting for 37.8% of the sample, indicated they were engaged in full-time employment, with a minimum of 30 hours worked per week. Within this classification, 862 participants, constituting 10.8% of the overall sample, self-reported being engaged in part-time employment with a work schedule of less than 30 hours per week. 4.0% comprised 320 individuals

who self-identified as self-employed, indicating their engagement in independent work and entrepreneurial pursuits.

A cohort of 2,404 individuals exists, constituting approximately 30.2% of the overall population under consideration. These individuals have self-reported their status as retired or pension recipients, signifying their cessation of active employment. 315 participants, constituting 4.0% of the overall sample, self-identified as housewives, suggesting their primary involvement in domestic and familial duties.

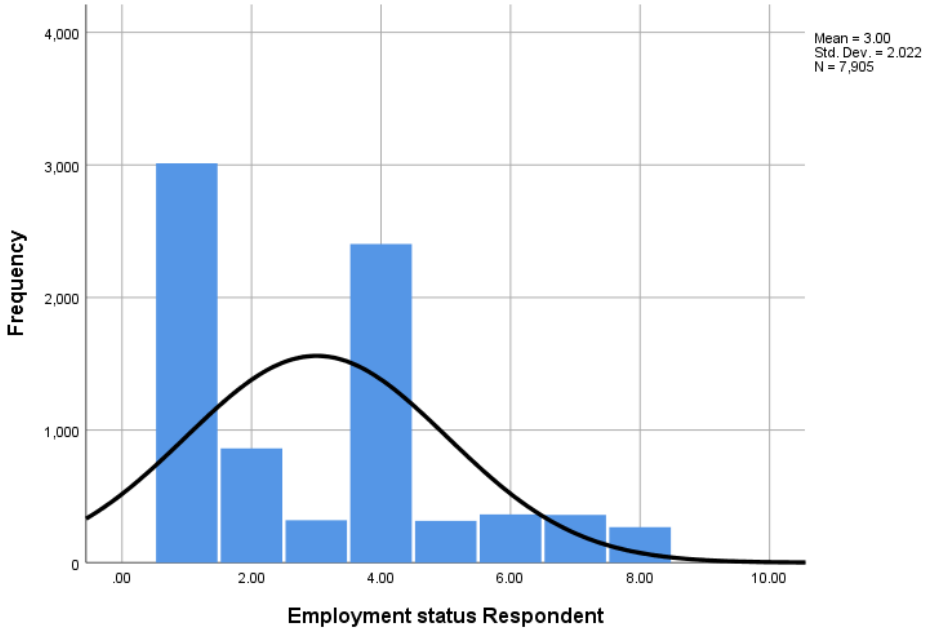
There were 364 individuals, constituting approximately 4.6% of the overall sample. These individuals self-identified as students, indicating their active enrolment in educational programs. A proportion of 4.5% of respondents are 360 in numeric, reported being unemployed and actively engaged in the job search. A group of 268 individuals, constituting approximately 3.4% of the overall population, cannot be categorized under any of the previously established classifications.

Table 5: Employment Status

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Full-time (30h a week or more)	3012	37.8	38.1	38.1
Part-time (less than 30 hours a week)	862	10.8	10.9	49.0
Self-employed	320	4.0	4.0	53.1
Retired/pensioned	2404	30.2	30.4	83.5
Housewife (not otherwise employed)	315	4.0	4.0	87.5
Student	364	4.6	4.6	92.1
Unemployed	360	4.5	4.6	96.6
Other	268	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	7905	99.2	100.0	

Figure (4) represents the mean and standard deviation. According to these values, the data is highly dispersed regarding employment status. The sample consists of more full-time or retired people.

Figure 4: Histogram of Participant Employment Status



Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis:

Table (6) represents the descriptive statistics and correlation analysis of the study's dependent, independent, and control variables. The parliament exhibits a mean value of 2.6920 which indicates that participants have an average level of trust in the parliamentary institution. The standard deviation of 0.76319 for the parliament suggests a moderate level of variation in the responses pertaining to confidence in the parliament relative to the mean.

Subjecting individuals to video surveillance in public spaces has a mean value of 3.1710, which signifies the average degree of concurrence with the assertion regarding the government's entitlement to engage in video surveillance in public areas. Subjecting individuals to video surveillance in public spaces exhibits a standard deviation of 0.95872. The average level of agreement with the statement regarding the government's right to monitor internet communications, as indicated by the mean value of 2.1026, encompasses monitoring all emails and other information exchanged on the Internet. The standard deviation of the government's authority to monitor internet communications, encompassing all emails and additional information exchanged on the internet, is 0.96512. These values represent moderate variation from the mean value.

The mean value of 2.9751 also indicates the average level of agreement among individuals residing regarding the government's prerogative to collect information about them without their knowledge. The data collected on individuals without their awareness exhibits a standard deviation of 0.97172, suggesting moderate variability in the responses about the government's authority to gather information without an individuals' consent. The institution of occupation possesses a mean value of 1.7968, which signifies the average rating or perception of said institution. The income level of participants exhibits a mean value of 5.3372, representing the average rating or perception of the scale of income. There is a low level of variation in the institution of the occupation while a high level of variation in the income level.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Coefficient Analysis

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Confidence: Parliament	Government has the right: Keep people under video surveillance in public areas	Government has the right: Monitor all e-mails and any other information exchanged on the Internet	Government has the right: Collect information about anyone without their knowledge	Institution of occupation	Scale of incomes
Confidence: Parliament	2.6920	0.76319	1					
Government has the right: Keep people under video surveillance in public areas	3.1710	0.95872	.074**	1				
Government has the right: Monitor all e-mails and any other information exchanged on the Internet	2.1026	0.96512	.073**	.372**	1			
Government has the right: Collect information about anyone without their knowledge	2.9751	0.97172	.071**	.563**	.431**	1		
Institution of occupation	1.7968	0.56038	.050**	-0.013	0.009	0.001	1	
Scale of incomes	5.3372	2.84739	-.193**	-.076**	-.076**	-0.026	-.078**	1

All three variables of government surveillance are positively correlated to the trust of individuals in the parliament. The correlation is weak as the values are 7.4%, 7.3%, and 7.1%, respectively. Confidence in parliament is positively correlated to institutional occupation while negatively linked to the individual's income level. The significance of the results will be discussed in the hypothesis testing section.

ANOVA Analysis

Table 7: One Way Anova

	Mean	Standard Deviation	P-value
Confidence in parliament			
DE	2.689	0.751	0.000
FR	2.819	0.796	
NL	2.582	0.718	
Government has the right: Keep people under video surveillance in public areas.			
DE	3.401	0.856	0.000
FR	3.233	0.963	
NL	2.689	0.982	
Government has the right: Monitor all e-mails and any other information exchanged on the Internet			
DE	2.16	0.98	0.000
FR	2.221	0.997	
NL	1.893	0.879	
Government has the right: Collect information about anyone without their knowledge.			
DE	3.069	0.912	0.000
FR	2.958	1.016	
NL	2.809	0.966	
Institution of occupation			
DE	1.771	0.536	0.000
FR	1.748	0.53	
NL	1.865	0.643	
Scale of incomes			
DE	5.727	2.732	0.000
FR	4.849	2.767	
NL	5.902	2.724	

The analysis findings indicate a statistically significant variation in the levels of confidence in parliament among respondents from various countries. It is worth noting that participants from France displayed a greater degree of confidence in their parliamentary system when compared to participants from other nations. The average confidence score for participants from France exhibited a noticeable increase (mean = 2.819) in comparison to participants from Germany (mean = 2.689) and the Netherlands (mean = 2.582).

There is statistically a significant variation in the perceptions concerning the government's authority to surveil individuals in public spaces among respondents from the nations ($p < 0.05$). The statement's mean agreement score exhibited the highest value among respondents from Germany (mean = 3.401), followed by France (mean = 3.233) and the Netherlands (mean = 2.689). The data indicate that individuals from Germany, France, and the Netherlands exhibit divergent perspectives regarding the government's authority to surveil individuals in public spaces.

Based on the findings, it can be deduced that individuals from the Netherlands exhibit a lower propensity to endorse the governmental prerogative of monitoring online activities, in contrast to their counterparts in France and Germany. Participants from the Netherlands showed the least amount of consensus with regard to this assertion, with an average score of 1.893. This was followed by respondents from France, who had an average score of 2.221, and Germany, who had an average score of 2.16. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that the disparities observed in the average scores were determined to have statistical significance ($p < 0.05$).

It is also suggested by the results that individuals from Germany, France, and the Netherlands exhibit divergent perspectives regarding the government's authority to gather information about individuals without their awareness. Participants from Germany showed a comparatively high degree of concurrence with this assertion (mean = 3.069), trailed by participants from France (mean = 2.958) and the Netherlands (mean = 2.809).

Hypothesis Testing:

In this study, there are three models or hypotheses that are tested. This hypothesis aims to determine if the government surveillance variables significantly influence the trust in parliament. Other than that, the models include two controlling variables: whether a person works for the government and the second is the income level of the individual.

Model 1:

Figure (5) shows the impact of the government's right to keep people under video surveillance in public areas on the trust in parliament.

Figure 5: Impact of government right to keep people under video surveillance in public areas on the trust in parliament

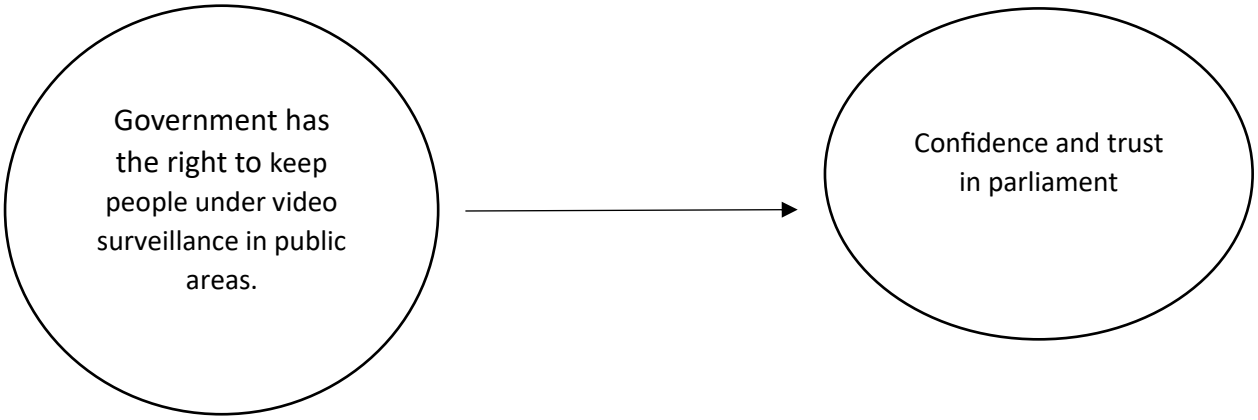


Table 8: Coefficients

Model	R	R-square	F	df1	df2	p
A	0.571	0.326	754.914	3	4680	0.000

Table 9: Impact of government right to keep people under video surveillance in public areas on the trust in parliament

Model	Coeff	SE	t	p	LLCL	ULCL
Constant	2.779	0.057	48.747	0.000	1.457	1.689
Government has the right: Keep people under video surveillance in public areas	0.043	0.011	3.878	0.000	-0.068	0.012
Institution of occupation	0.042	0.019	2.202	0.028	-0.029	-0.012
Scale of Income	-0.054	0.004	-13.540	0.000	0.550	0.597

The coefficient of 0.043 suggests that, while keeping other variables unchanged, a one-unit rise in the degree of agreement with the government's authority to conduct video surveillance of individuals in public spaces is linked to a 0.043 unit increase in the trust in the parliament. The obtained p-value, less than 0.001, signifies statistical significance in the examined relationship. This suggests that the extent of agreement with the government's authority to conduct video surveillance significantly and positively influences the trust in the parliament. Hypothesis 1 is supported.

Model 2:

Figure (6) shows the impact of the government's right to monitor all e-mails and any other information exchanged on the Internet on the trust in parliament.

Figure 6: Impact of government right to monitor all e-mails and any other information exchanged on the Internet on the trust in parliament

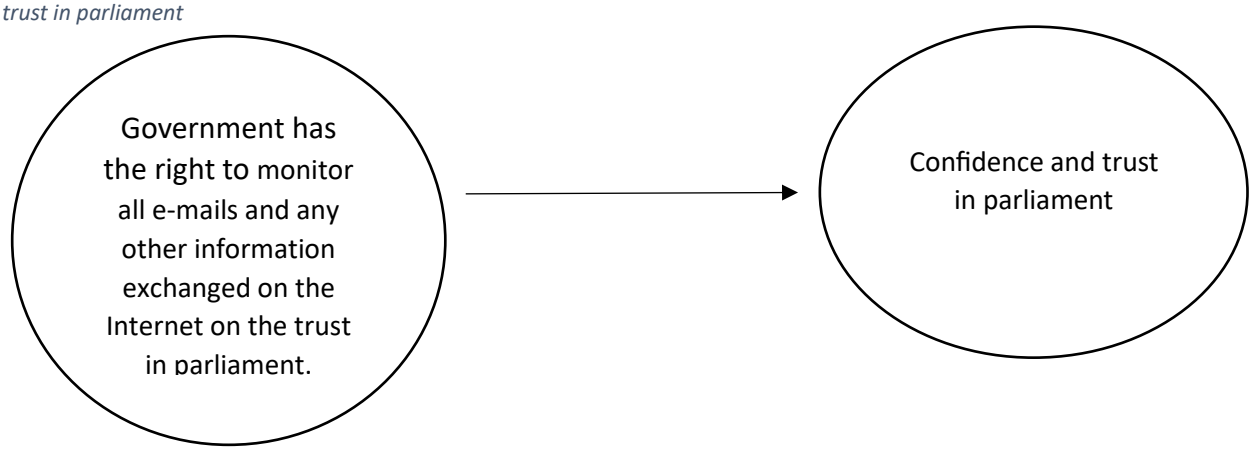


Table 10: Coefficients

Model	R	R-square	F	df1	df2	p
A	0.216	0.047	75.568	3	4618	0.000

Table 11: Impact of government right to Monitor all e-mails and any other information exchanged on the Internet on the trust in

Model	Coeff	SE	t	p	LLCL	ULCL
Constant	2.797	0.050	55.766	0.000	2.698	2.895
Government has the right: Monitor all e-mails and any other information exchanged on the Internet on the trust in parliament	0.058	0.011	5.083	0.000	0.036	0.081
Institution of occupation	0.038	0.019	2.003	0.045	0.001	0.076
Scale of Income	-0.053	0.004	-13.433	0.00	-0.061	-0.045

Based on the obtained beta coefficient of 0.058, it can be inferred that, while controlling for other variables, a marginal increase of one unit in the level of agreement with the government's authority to monitor internet communications is correspondingly associated with a marginal increase of 0.058 units in the level of trust placed in parliament. A p-value of less than 0.001 indicates the statistical significance of this relationship. Put simply, the extent to which individuals agree with the government's authority to monitor internet communications significantly influences their level of trust in parliament. Hypothesis 2 is also supported.

Model 3:

Figure (7) shows the impact of government rights to collect information about anyone without their knowledge.

Figure 5: Impact of government rights to collect information about anyone without their knowledge

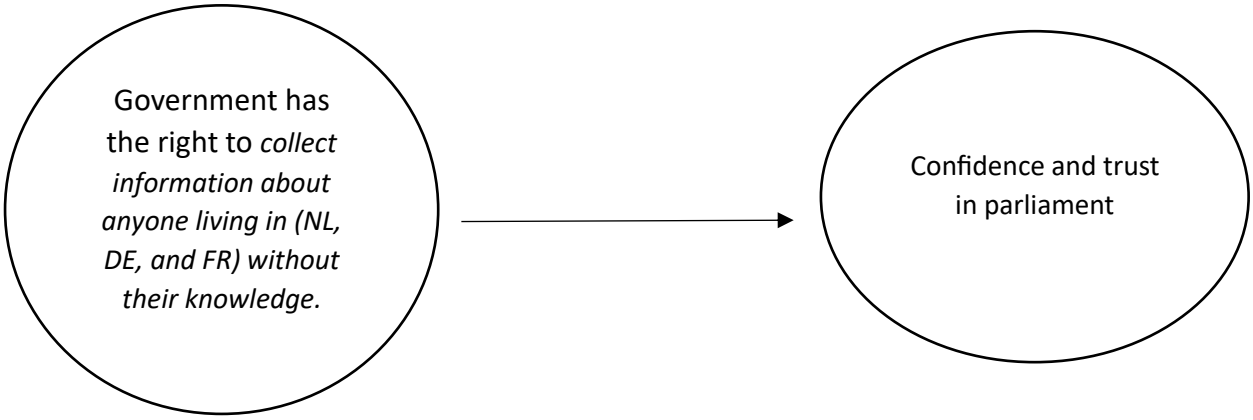


Table 12: Coefficients

Model	R	R-square	F	df1	df2	p
A	2.08	0.043	68.840	3	4583	0.000

Table 13: Impact of government rights to collect information about anyone without their knowledge

Model	Coeff	SE	t	p	LLCL	ULCL
Constant	2.775	0.055	50.246	0.000	2.666	2.883
Government has the right: Collect information about anyone without their knowledge	0.047	0.011	4.134	0.000	0.025	0.069
Institution of occupation	0.038	0.019	2.006	0.045	0.001	0.076
Scale of Income	-0.053	0.004	-13.302	0.000	-0.061	-0.045

The observed coefficient of 0.047 suggests that, while controlling for other variables, an incremental rise of one unit in the extent of agreement with the government's authority to gather information about individuals without their awareness is linked to a corresponding increase of 0.047 units in the level of trust placed in parliament. The obtained p-value, which is less than 0.001, signifies statistical significance. This implies that the observed relationship between the level of consent with the government's right to gather details without individuals' knowledge and trust in parliament is statistically significant and positively impactful. Put simply, individuals who exhibit greater acceptance towards collecting such information are inclined to possess elevated levels of trust in parliament.

Discussion

After completing the statistical analysis there is room for discussion. All three hypotheses are supported, public officials who show greater acceptance towards the different scales of surveillance are inclined to have a greater deal of trust in parliament. The expectation was that only small and medium scale surveillance would see a positive result. Characteristics of surveillance were linked to different types of surveillance in the theoretical framework and acceptance of these characteristics by public officials were tied to trust in national parliament as it is the national parliament that proposes new legislation surrounding surveillance measures which may or may not contain these characteristics.

Ultimately, public officials whom are supportive of these characteristics and measures have an significantly increased level of trust in parliament.

Respondents from the Netherlands showed with each surveillance scale that they have a lower propensity to endorse the governmental prerogative of surveillance. Whilst Germany and France were quite close with each type of surveillance scale. When it comes to the different scales of surveillance there are quite differing perspectives amongst the respondents on whether or not the government should be using these types of surveillance.

Circling back to the different characteristics of surveillance, it is possible to deduce that certain characteristics would fare better in German or French society as opposed to Dutch society as there would be a greater amount of consensus amongst both public officials and citizens. Implementing technologies that incorporate characteristics such as intensity and automation would receive less resistance from German and French public officials and citizens.

The reasoning behind this is difficult to tell and this thesis does not stretch to finding the reason why there is a greater consensus amongst Germans and the French. It could be related to the history that both countries have had in the recent past regarding acts of terrorism which could lead to them being more open minded towards government surveillance.

Conclusion

The main research question to answer in this thesis is: "T*o what extent do the characteristics of surveillance measures affect the approval rate by public officials in Dutch, German and French public government organizations?"*

The different hypotheses are all supported, public officials whom are supportive of the characteristics of surveillance measures are inclined to have an elevated level of trust in parliament. The characteristics of surveillance measures have quite a large effect on the approval rate by public officials. As Kleiman stated, this could have an effect on how public policies are enacted as they partially rely on the behaviour of public officials. Trüdinger and Steckermeier came to similar results when measuring for the relation between approval of surveillance measures and political trust. The results also came close to the expectations apart from the results surrounding large-scale surveillance. This shows a disconnect with the research from Su, Xu and Cao which states that the amount of support drops the larger the scale of surveillance becomes.

I was able to expand on the theories by connecting characteristics to different scales of surveillance and by incorporating trust in national parliament to measure the approval rate amongst public officials. However, it might not just about the characteristics themselves, there could also be a relation to past events where government surveillance played a role in prevention or detection. This falls in line with Ziller & Helbling that stated in their research that there is support for far-reaching surveillance measures if the circumstances of necessity, reliability and extensiveness are met.

A limit of the research is that it may not have the most recent sentiment towards surveillance and trust in parliament as the dataset was made before covid. It is still the latest dataset by the European Values Study but covid has possibly made an impact on trust in public institutions and the results could be different when a new dataset releases. Another limitation is that the dataset cannot show what the reason is behind a public officials' support for surveillance measures. The literature shows that it is a consideration between safety and privacy in which trust plays an important role but the dataset is not sufficient enough to prove this.

As previously discussed, certain characteristics of surveillance being used while designing or changing existing surveillance technologies will receive more or less backlash amongst public officials in certain countries. There is no one size fits all and it would be wise to take into account each country's current stance and history on surveillance measures. Characteristics that receive backlash in the Netherlands might not receive as much in Germany, France or a different country.

This could be a valuable addition in a possible follow up research, incorporating a country's history with surveillance more into the reasoning why public officials and the general population have a greater consensus on certain measures.

A policy recommendation would be to incorporate both characteristics and a country's history with surveillance measures when designing or amending government surveillance measures.

A practical implication would be that characteristics of surveillance can have an impact on the approval rate by public officials even though this could differ per country but these characteristics should still be taken into account.

Management summary

The goal of this thesis is to determine what the relation is between different types of surveillance measures and trust in national parliament. Multiple characteristics of surveillance were linked to the different types of surveillance and the stance of public officials on these surveillance measures has been made measurable by using trust in national parliament as a dependent variable.

The research question that needs to be answered is: "T*o what extent do the characteristics of surveillance measures affect the approval rate by public officials in Dutch, German and French public government organizations?"*

The literature states that support for surveillance measures arises from a need for safety but this has a tense relationship with privacy. Societies are willing to trade some of their personal freedom in exchange for safety. The bigger the threat the more of these personal freedoms are traded. According to the literature, large scale surveillance will have less support from societies.

The dataset originates from the European Values Study, they perform research on different subjects within the European Union such as politics, society and religion. Three different hypotheses were drafted to find out what the relation is between surveillance measures and trust in national parliament.

After the analysis all three hypotheses were accepted as it became clear that public officials whom are supportive of the characteristics of surveillance measures are inclined to have an increased level of trust in parliament. The characteristics of surveillance have quite a large effect on the approval rate by public officials.

A limitation of the research is that not much attention has been given to the reasons behind why public officials approve of surveillance measures because the dataset is not able to answer these questions. Furthermore, the possible effects of the covid pandemic on trust in public institutions were also not present in the dataset as the European Values Study collected their data before the covid pandemic.

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