

Welfare conditionality and democratic participation

A study of democratic participation in Norway's residual safety net

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Why democratic participation?

- Consequences beyond employability and self-sufficiency
- Social citizenship and new-paternalism – diverging expectations regarding democratic citizenship
- Few empirical studies

The feedback perspective

- Consequences of public policies for democratic citizenship
- Design of benefits – what we see from the outside
- Administration of benefits – encounters between citizens and public services

Social assistance in Norway

- Residual scheme
- May activate, may sanction
- Locally designed
- Terms of activation often negotiated

Design and data

- SuppA – panel study of welfare state attitudes and behaviors
- Proba – municipality implementation of activation

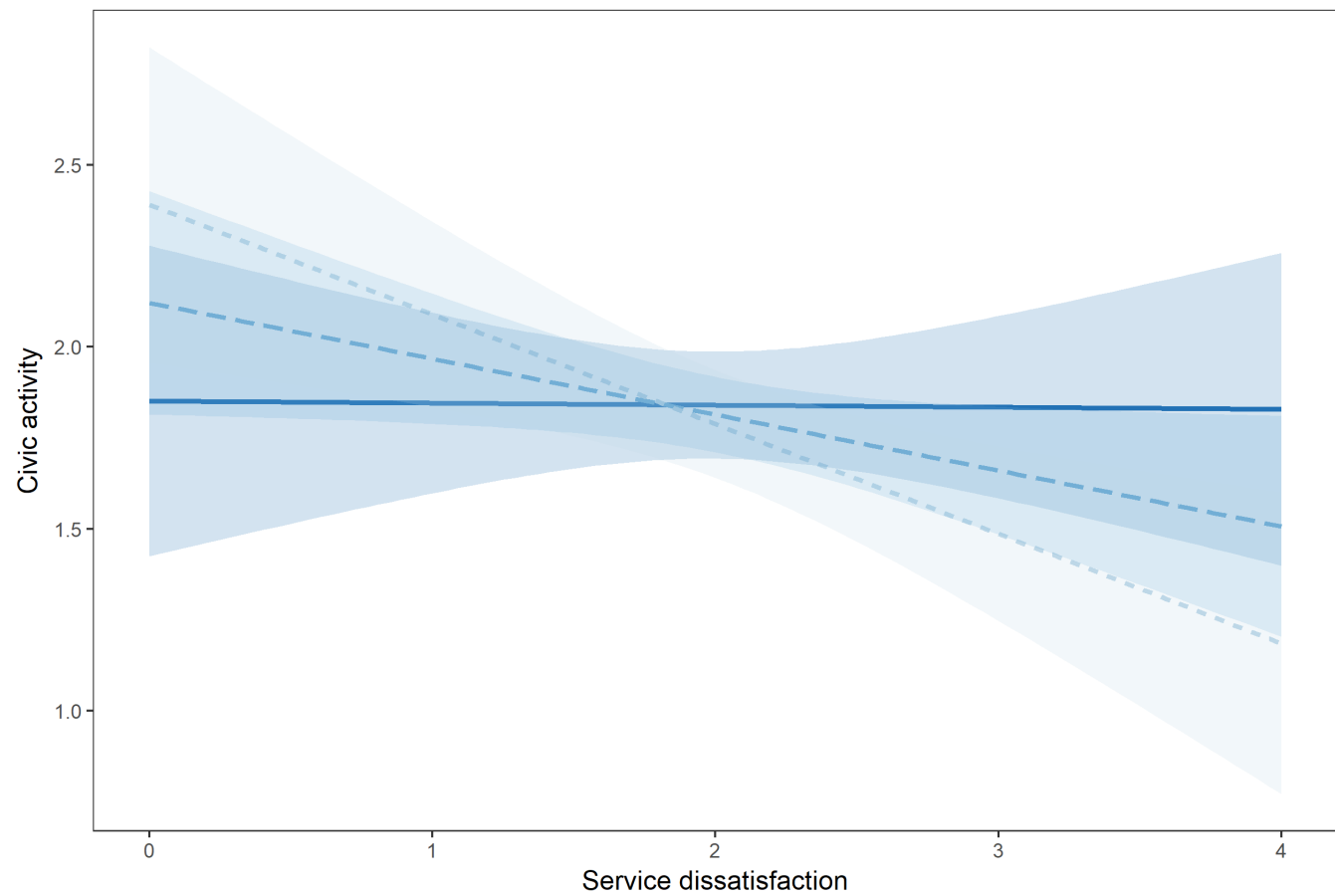
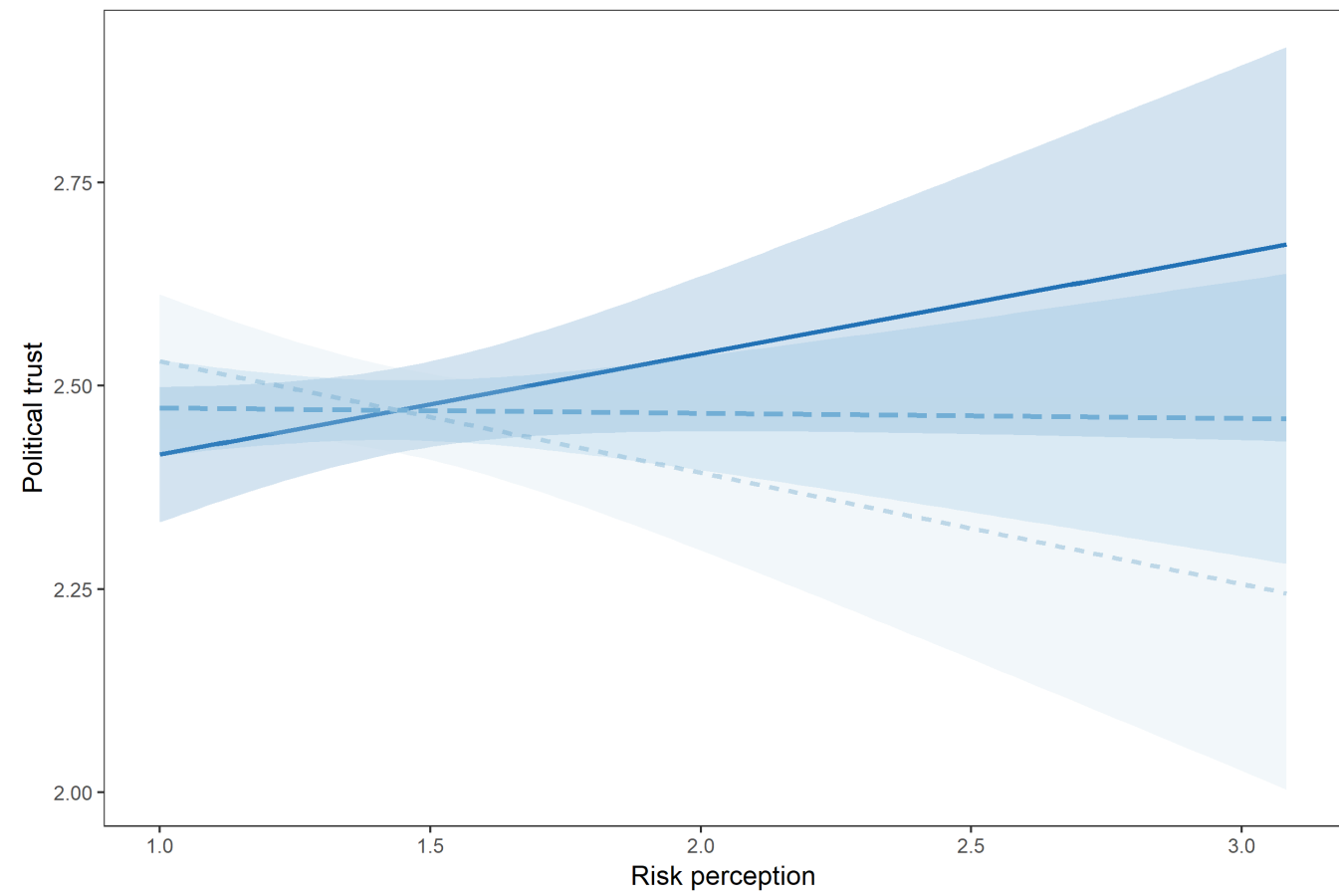
- Democratic participation
 - Civic activity, political interest, political trust

- Exposure to welfare conditionality
 - Program usage, risk perception, dissatisfaction with local social services

Findings 1

- Unconditional models
 - Service dissatisfaction negative effect on all dependent variables
- Conditional models - municipality implementation and exposure to conditionality
 - Mostly null effects
 - Positive effect for: service dissatisfaction on civic activity and risk perception on political trust

Findings 2



Findings 3

- No negative effects, mostly null effects and some positive effects
- Why?
 - Double may; may activate, may sanction
 - Mandatory activation entails more follow up
 - Focus on finding out why clients breach sanctions
 - Benefit generosity