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**PUBLIC CONFIDENCE ISSUES CONNECTED TO FLOOD DISASTER  
RECONSTRUCTION**

**Társadalmi bizalom kérdésköre az árvízi kárenyhítéssel kapcsolatban**

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**Abstract**

This paper aims to investigate major national and international level recent researches about public confidence, institutional trust focus on disaster management systems. The broader research purposes analysing the national, regional status of public confidence, attitude linked to many institutions and organisations which participate in post-flood-disaster reconstruction using the relevant elements of previous studies contributing to higher efficiency of post-flood-disaster reconstruction processes. In our country this field is a slightly studied area (during my former research there could not been found any study about public trust in case of post-flood-disaster reconstruction) thus considered important to made a review study. During collecting literature it turned out that public confidence issue is a very complex area. Many methodologies exist for its investigations and determinations despite, there are no integrated approaches. From the results of this study it is obvious, that all of the investigated researches approached the public trust topic in different context. Nonetheless, the analyzed methodologies could be appropriate basis of a subsequent questionnaire survey of public trust of the Hungarian post-flood-disaster reconstruction organisations.

**Key words:** public trust, methodological inventory, flood disaster

**JEL code:** Z13

**Összefoglaló**

A cikk elkészítésével célom volt, hogy feltárjam, milyen főbb kutatásokat végeztek a közelmúltban nemzetközi és hazai kutatók, kutató szervezetek társadalmi, intézményi bizalom témakörében, fókuszálva a katasztrófavédelmi rendszert érintő vizsgálatára. A tágabb kutatás célja, hogy alapul véve a már kivitelezett, kidolgozott társadalmi bizalmi kutatások releváns elemeit, vizsgálja a hazai társadalmi bizalom alakulását az árvízi katasztrófákat követő kárenyhítésben részt vevő szervek, intézmények iránt, hozzájárulva ezzel a kárenyhítési folyamatok hatékonyságának növeléséhez. Mivel a kérdéskör hazánkban kevésbé kutatott terület (vagyis eddigi kutatásim során nem találkoztam a társadalmi bizalmat az árvízi kárenyhítéssel kapcsolatban vizsgáló tanulmánnyal), ezért tartottam fontosnak egy összegző tanulmány elkészítését. A téma feldolgozása során fény derült arra, hogy társadalmi, intézményi bizalom kérdésköre egy rendkívül komplex terület. Számos módszertan létezik a vizsgálatára, valamint definiálására, mégsem beszélhetünk egységes megközelítésekről. A tanulmány eredményeiből látható, hogy a vizsgált kutatások szinte mindegyike más-más kontextusban közelíti meg a témát. Ennek ellenére az általuk használt módszertanok jó alapját képezhetik az árvízi katasztrófákat követő kárenyhítésben részt vevő szervek,

intézmények iránt tanúsított bizalom kérdőíves  
felmérésnek.

**Kulcsszavak:** közbizalom, módszertani leltár,  
árvízi katasztrófa

## Introduction

According to SAFFORD et al. (2012) environmental disasters have become increasingly prominent in the 21st century. These events capture the public's attention and bring to the fore questions about the capacity of public and private sector organizations to manage coupled social and environmental concerns (BEAMISH, 2010; CHEONG, 2011; COMFORT, 2007; PICOU et al., 2004; SCHNEIDER, 2008; SOMERS and SVARA, 2009).

For many years, opinion research has been used as a tool for monitoring the quality of public services (FLANAGAN, 2004). Besides other tools to measure process, output and outcome and particularly in fields where the public service needs the legitimacy of the (citizen-) clients, their opinion is being considered as a valuable indicator for the need to undertake service improvement actions (ENCJ PROJECT TEAM, 2011).

To investigate public confidence or in the other words, institutional trust it is important to discuss some approaches and definitions. Although, huge amount of concepts are exist in the literature about this topic, due to space limitations this paper specifies only a few of them.

### *Approaches for trust*

Trust is considered to be a significant resource in social relationships, such as partnerships, because it can reduce uncertainty and complexity and save expenditures of time and emotion (BACHMANN, 2006). Trust in information sources like government agencies may shape public opinion about environmental disasters (SAFFORD et al., 2012).

Because trust is considered fundamental to human relationships (COOK, 2001), numerous conceptualisations of trust have been developed in different disciplines, such as economics and psychology. While there is no consensus among disciplines about the definition of trust (KRAMER, 1999), definitions by MAYER et al. (1995) and ROUSSEAU et al. (1998) are frequently cited and used in the natural resources management (NRM) literature (e.g. DAVENPORT et al., 2007; LILJEBLAD et al., 2009). According to these authors trust is defined as 'a willingness to rely upon another person or organisation based upon positive expectations of their intentions or behaviour' (SHARP, et al., 2013)

In addition, the study of organizational trust has been studied by political science, public administration, management, business fields and sociologists. Organizational trust is tied to related concepts such as assurance, confidence, and competence. YAMAGISHI and YAMAGISHI (1994) drew a distinction between the concept of interpersonal trust and another concept, assurance, and wrote 'Trust is based on the inference of the interaction partner's personal traits and intentions, whereas assurance is based on the knowledge of the incentive structure surrounding the relationship'. Confidence is the belief in an organization to behave as expected (HARDIN, 2002). KRAMER (1999) suggested that trust is partially based on an individual's overall social trust, or generalized trust in people (LEAHY and ANDERSON, 2008).

According to KOŽUCH and SIENKIEWICZ-MALYJUREK (2015) consequently, trust is a complex phenomenon. Political trust in this context is understood as a central indicator of public's underlying feeling about its policy (BLIND, 2006). The second type of trust, social trust, called by many authors lubricant of interactions among people, refers to the citizen's confidence in each other as members of a social community, which enhances civic engagement and the development of social capital. Interpersonal trust and civic engagement in a community

contribute to the rising of social trust in a society (PUTNAM, 2000). By and large, face to face engagement with members of the community generates a feeling of self-worth and a personal relationship with the leader, it may also engender a positive feeling among relative strangers in society and government in their experience of communal contact. When approaching concepts of public trust a view must be underlined that public trust experienced in all situations can be defined as social capital, that enhances problem solving, reduces conflicts, and enables more satisfying relationships (FUKUYAMA, 1995; CARNEVALE, 1995).

The public's trust in people who manage risk plays a significant role in controlling damage caused by disasters (EISER, et al., 2012; TERPSTRA, 2011; WACHINGER et al., 2013). If risk managers are not trusted, residents may be hesitant about evacuating an area, even if they are informed that a major disaster is imminent; this would likely result in greater damages. Furthermore, if a lack of trust exists between risk managers and the public, the public may demand unnecessary disaster countermeasures even when risk managers assert that a risk of a disaster is small. In turn, this may result in government agencies expending an excessive amount of resources (i.e., budget and personnel) unnecessarily; moreover, this may make societies more vulnerable to future disasters since governments have limited resources they can invest in disasters. Therefore, the trust of the public is important for appropriate risk reduction. Trust is difficult to establish and can be easily destroyed. Once it is destroyed, it is difficult to rebuild. Difficulty in gaining and re-gaining trust is the very reason why researchers have paid much attention to trust as a research topic. However, most studies have focused on the composition and prerequisites of trust; few studies, in fact, have provided an achievable prescription to improve trust (SCHWEITZER, et al., 2006) (KAZUYA and OZAKI, 2014).

## Material and methods

In this article seconder and primer researches were carried out.

During the seconder research, literature review, content analysis were implemented with a focus on the characteristics of questionnaire investigations methods about public confidence, institutional trust connected to disaster management, disaster institutions and governmental institutions. Several searches were ran on Elsevier ScienceDirect and Elsevier Scopus and Google Scholar with the following research words: “public trust”; “social trust”; “public confidence”; “institutional trust”; institutional confidence”; “public institutions”; “governmental institutions” “disaster management”; “post-flood-disaster management”; “post-disaster reconstruction”; both in Hungarian like “társadalmi bizalom”; “intézményi bizalom”; “politikai bizalom” and their different variations. Then the relevant papers were assorted from the resulted scientific literature and a methodological inventory was prepared.

In addition, the Hungarian legal system of disaster management was reviewed to investigate which organisations and institutions do participate in post-flood disaster reconstruction.

During the primer research two semi structured interview were implemented on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2015 with an expert of National Directorate General for Disaster Management, Ministry of the Interior, and on 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2015 with an expert of National University of Public Service. The discussed issues were the followings: the current and previous legal regulations of disaster management, differences among them and the necessity of the new (current) laws, the processes of disaster management, the characteristics, experiences and procedural rules of the post-flood disaster reconstruction in Bereg region, 2001 and in Borsod region, 2010, and the main potential question topics for a subsequent questionnaire survey about public confidence in disaster-prone areas.

## Results

For the question, that what kind of researches and methodologies have been developed recently about public confidence in our country and abroad the following table (Table 1) provides information building by the seconder research. This table is a methodological inventory including such researches which can be connected to my own investigations.

Table 1 Methodological inventory about public confidence questionnaire surveys

Researcher(s) /Developer(s)	Investigation about...	Methodological characteristics	Sample area	Year of imp- lemen- tation
ENCJ PROJECT TEAM	public confidence; trust in judges, courts and justice	Develop a common questionnaire for 13 EU members.	Belgium, Denmark, England and Wales, France, Hungary, Italy, the Irish Republic, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia	2010; 2011 *
ENCJ WORKING GROUP	public confidence; trust in judges, courts and justice	The questionnaire survey was carried out on a random, nationwide, representative sample of 1500 adult Poles aged 18-75 implemented by ENJC. The sample was representative with regard to sex, age, education, size of the city and region.	Poland	2009
IPCC - IPSOS MORI	public confidence in the police complains system	The research was carried out on IPSOS MORI among a sample of 4067 adults plus 890 ethnic respondents aged 15 and over.	Wales, England	2014
KAZUYA, N. - OZAKI, T.	trust in disaster risk managers	The questionnaire survey was carried out on a sample of 118 housewives in the Kansai region, Japan. The ages of the participants was distributed as follows: 21.2% were in their 30s, 39.0% were in their 40s, 35.6% were in their 50s, and 4.2% were in their 60s.	Japan	2013
NAKAYACHI, K.	public trust in risk-managing organizations	The survey conducted by NISTEP. The data were collected via nationwide surveys from residents over 20 years, 1192 participant in 2008 and 1138 participant in 2012.	Japan	2008; 2012

Researcher(s) /Developer(s)	Investigation about...	Methodological characteristics	Sample area	Year of imp- lemen- tation
SAFFORD, T. G. –ULRICH, J. D. - C. HAMILTON, L.	public perceptions; trust in information sources	A random-digit telephone survey of 2023 residents was implemented affected by disaster. Probability weights were calculated by county population, household size and demographic characteristics (i.e. sex, race, and age).	USA	2010
SHARP, E. A. – THWAITES, R. - CURTIS, A. – MILLAR, J.	community- agency trust before, during and after a wildfire	The research was carried out on 38 community members (21 males, 17 females) in 26 interviews (12 interviews involved couples). The sample was not intended to represent the statistical distributions of population demographics. Instead, participants from a range of demographic categories who would reflect diversity in disaster (fire) experiences and social and farming backgrounds were selected.	Australia	2008
SZABÓ, I. L.,	institutional and economic organisations trust; political and system confidence	The questionnaire survey was carried out on a sample of 1000 adult Hungarian implemented by IPSOS. The sample was representative with regard to sex, age, education and settlement. The study investigated 25 institutions in Hungary.	Hungary	2014
TÁRKI	institutional trust; governmental confidence	The questionnaire survey was carried out on a sample of 1000 Hungarian resident. These data were combined with a former research data. Thus the whole sample size was 1500-1800. The data were weighted to 2011 population census.	Hungary	2009; 2013

\* it has not been implemented yet, these are the years of development

Abbreviations on the table:

ENCJ: European Network of Councils for the Judiciary

IPCC: Independent Police Complaints Commission

IPSOS MORI: Social Research Institute

TÁRKI: Social Research Institute Inc.

NISTEP: National Institute of Science and Technology Policy

Source: Own editing based on cited authors, 2015



The aim of building this methodological inventory was to introduce the recent researches and questionnaires about public confidence. According to the main findings, the researches in the table are not integrated and there are no consensus among them, correspondingly all of these investigations require different approaches. Despite the methodological approaches of these researches could be appropriate basis of the investigation of public trust of the Hungarian post-flood-disaster reconstruction organisations because these researches present the sample sizes, the representativeness, the sample areas and the topics of the questionnaires. Thus, it can provide an opportunity to prepare a combined specific method for the above mentioned Hungarian research field.

After collecting the researches the paper assesses the methodological approaches of the cited investigations connected to the utility of my research field.

In general, there are two types of researches in the table: on the one hand, the country representative investigations and on the other hand, the smaller disaster affected groups investigations. The latter one is closer to author's research field (e.g. KAZUYA. and OZAKI, 2014; SHARP et al., 2013).

By examining the research of European Network of Councils for the Judiciary (ENCJ) PROJECT TEAM (2011) there is no doubt that it could be an appropriate basis of developing a public trust questionnaire in case of investigations which study one concrete institution or organisation in greater depth. Their questionnaire survey has not been implemented yet, but the methodology has been drafted.

In previous work, there was a research which implemented by ENCJ WORKING GROUP (2010). They worked with country representative sample and they investigated a concrete institution. They note that it would be recommended to investigate cyclically and consciously the subject of public trust in their country and EU member states, as well. The content analysis concludes that, it is also a useful suggestion for Hungarian public confidence issues, especially to investigate the disaster management system.

The study of Independent Police Complaints Commission IPSOS MORI (2014) also worked with country representative sample and investigated a concrete organisation. Furthermore, similarly ENCJ PROJECT TEAM (2011), IPSOS MORI (2014) introduces the questionnaire which also could be a suitable principle of building a questionnaire which investigates one specified organization.

The paper of KAZUYA and OZAKI (2013) investigated disaster risk managers and suggested a method to improve trust. They studied a smaller disaster affected group. Instead of country representativeness they used disaster affected sample which could be useful for in-depth analysis of public confidence issues in disaster-prone areas.

NAKAYACHI (2015) researched risk-managing organizations (aggregated) for different types of disasters. This research compared public trust before and after disasters, which represents quite well a variation investigation on the subject of public trust. The questionnaire survey was carried out on a country representative sample like IPSOS MORI (2014) and ENCJ PROJECT TEAM (2011). In case of cyclic investigations it would be an effective approach.

Another aspect worthy of consideration is the article of SAFFORD et al. (2012). They surveyed concrete disaster affected people about public confidence in federal, state, local and a concrete institution level. The sample was quite large. By examining public trust issues they used data from a survey conducted during the concrete disaster to analyse how affected residents' social

backgrounds, experience with the disaster, and trust in information sources predict their perceptions of governmental and industrial efforts.

SHARP et al. (2013) investigated disaster affected people, as well. Instead of country representativeness the personal experience was the most important criterion for the questionnaire survey. They studied government agencies and agency staffs. For deep exploration they used not only scale questions, but elaborative questions, too. For example, responders had to define what trust is. Efforts to improve community confidence it is quite an interesting study.

SZABÓ (2014) investigated 25 Hungarian institutions inter alia Disaster Management, Defence Forces, Police, Insurance Companies in the context of ‘good intentions’, ‘trustworthiness’ and ‘competence’ which could be effective for my study. The sample was country representative like above mentioned studies. The paper strived to evaluate the 25 institutions relative to one another, to answer the question, what kind of connections could exist among them. Furthermore, it used simple questions but for many institutions, thus the analysis is superficial but comprehensive. In addition, it also introduces the questionnaire which is undoubtedly useful purpose of my investigation.

The Social Research Institute Inc. (TÁRKI) (2013) made a comparative analysis about public trust using two years data. It was a complex analysis which investigated not just institutional trust but in terms of this paper the institutional trust proved the most important element. The sample was country representative, as well. It studied inter alia the Government, Police and Hungarian Scientific Academy (as research group) which could be useful for my study.

To investigate the Hungarian public trust in post-flood disaster reconstructions the potentially affected institutions and other authorities have to be specialised. Thus, the next part of the evaluation of the paper’s outcomes I present the primary research, namely the semi-structured interviews’ results.

Due to space limitation and the connection of presented topic I evaluate only those topics which are connected to public confidence. Particularly, which governmental and other relevant institutions and organisations should be measured in the context of public confidence within the inhabitants of flood disaster-prone areas and suggestions that could be useful and appropriate to prepare the professional basics of a subsequent questionnaire survey.

As the results of these interviews and the current Hungarian legal system (see in the References) the most affected organisations in post-flood disaster reconstructions are:

- Water Management,
- Disaster Management,
- Defence Forces,
- Police,
- Government Offices,
- Government,
- Municipality,
- Ethnic Minority Municipality,
- Non-Governmental Organisations,
- Charities,
- Insurance Companies,
- Research and Scientific Institutions.



In addition, during the interviews suggestion have been drafted in the context of questionnaire survey issues, in particular what kind of questions, topics would be suitable to investigate the inhabitants of flood disaster-prone areas about public confidence. Based on the suggestions the topics are the followings: direct and indirect affected people investigations; one concrete disaster management process estimation; safety issues, client focus, donations and grants, contentment in case of flood disaster; institutional development issues; personal questions (e.g. age, school, gender etc.).

## Conclusions

This paper purposed to investigate the recent public confidence researches national and international level. The listed methodological approaches show, there are no consensus about different approaches and they are not integrated, in the context of institutions and the number of population. While the larger social research institutions used huge number of elements and representative samples in country level, as researchers investigated only the event's affected population. In our country the field of post-flood disaster reconstruction and their effects on society is a slightly studied area (during my former research there could not been found any study about public trust in case of post-flood-disaster reconstruction) thus these researches could be the basis of my subsequent investigations about public trust. It can be concluded that the questionnaire and the questionnaire survey which would be implemented in the near future is necessary to study more literature and methodology about public confidence based on the results of this article. In addition, it could be subservient to make a new approach of questionnaire survey which could examine the post-flood-disaster reconstruction in the context of public confidence.

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### ***Hungarian legal system of the disaster management***

#### **Magyarország Alaptörvénye**

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