

Robust Crisis Governance in Turbulent Times

Summary

This PhD position will be part of the Horizon Europe project ROBUST: Robust Crisis Governance in Turbulent Times – Mindset, Strategies, Evidence. The PhD project will address the following questions: 1) How does robust crisis governance differ from existing approaches to crisis management and resilience? 2) What has characterized the governance of recent financial, refugee and COVID-19 crises? 3) How have the interfaces between policymakers, experts and citizens impacted crisis governance?

Research field:	Public policy and innovation
Supervisor:	Prof. Dr. Tiina Randma-Liiv
Availability:	This position is available.
Offered by:	School of Business and Governance Ragnar Nurkse Department of Innovation and Governance
Application deadline:	Applications are accepted between October 01, 2022 00:00 and October 23, 2022 23:59 (Europe/Zurich)

Description

The 21st century has offered an array of valuable insights for crisis governance. The global financial crisis, terrorist attacks, floods and wildfires, refugee crises and the COVID-19 pandemic have tested the crisis governance capacities of all European governments. There is a widespread perception that crises increase in number and frequency, and accelerate in speed in future. Crisis situations are characterized by unclear problem definitions, complex causalities and conflicting goals. In addition to being complex, some problems are also characterized by being turbulent – surprising, inconsistent, uncertain and unpredictable which do not have ready-made solutions. Whereas traditional public administrations have been designed to deal with routine and standardized processes in a stable environment, crisis governance combines dynamic and complex processes, and requires flexible adaptation, proactive approaches and constant learning in delivering effective responses.

This PhD will take place within the Horizon Europe project ROBUST (Robust Crisis Governance in Turbulent Times – Mindset, Strategies, Evidence) running from 2022-2026 and led by Roskilde University. Tallinn University of Technology leads a work package and serves as a partner in all other work packages. The project aims at conceptualizing and operationalizing a paradigm shift from “resilience” to “robustness” as the central principle of future crisis governance. The main focus of the empirical research is on COVID-19 but financial and refugee crises are also addressed.

The thesis will address the following questions: 1) How does robust crisis governance differ from existing approaches to crisis management and resilience? 2) What has characterized the governance of recent financial, refugee and COVID-19 crises? 3) How have the interfaces between policymakers, experts and citizens impacted crisis governance?

Responsibilities and (foreseen) tasks

- Compile an analytical framework for examining robust crisis governance
- Identify and analyze the interfaces between politicians, public servants, experts and the public in crisis governance
- Map possible case studies about crisis governance with the main focus on COVID-19 but also considering financial and refugee crises
- Collect data and conduct case studies on the selected cases
- Contribute to comparative data collection by desk research and interviews
- Develop suggestions for government practitioners
- Contribute to the organization of research and practitioner workshops where project findings are presented
- Lead and contribute to academic articles

Applicants should fulfil the following requirements:

- a Master's degree in social sciences (preferably in public administration, political science, law or sociology)

- an explicit interest in the topic of the position
- excellent command of English
- strong and demonstrable writing and analytical skills
- capacity to work both as an independent researcher and as part of an international team
- capacity and willingness to provide assistance in organizational tasks relevant to the project

The candidate should submit a research plan for the topic, including the overall research strategy. The candidate can expand on the listed research questions and tasks, and propose theoretical lenses to be used.

We offer:

- 4-year PhD position in one of the largest, most internationalized and leading social science research centers in Estonia with a large portfolio of ongoing cross-European and national projects on public administration, digital governance and innovation studies.
- An opportunity to work closely with Europe's prominent scholars within the Horizon Europe project ROBUST (Robust Crisis Governance in Turbulent Times – Mindset, Strategies, Evidence).
- Opportunities for conference visits, research stays and networking with globally leading universities and research centers in the fields of public administration, innovation studies and digital government.
- The PhD position guarantees a monthly income of at least 1700 EUR and Estonian national health insurance.

About the department

The Ragnar Nurkse Department of Innovation and Governance (RND) is an interdisciplinary research center of Tallinn University of Technology that focuses on socially relevant and future-oriented research and teaching on:

- models and practices of governance and public administration
- fiscal governance and fiscal bureaucracies
- e-governance and digital transformation of societies: datafication, public services and state-citizen relations in the digital era, smart cities and digital public services and cross-border collaboration
- P2P technologies, its' governance and potential new production models
- science and innovation policies

RND is a highly internationalized department and engages some of the top international thinkers and researchers in its research fields. Next to a fully English taught PhD degree it offers a MA degree in Technology Governance and Digital Transformations, and a unique Erasmus Mundus joint MSc programme in Public Sector Innovation and e-Governance in cooperation with KU Leuven (Belgium) and University of Münster (Germany). RND and its staff have coordinated or been involved in a multitude of international research projects with the EU (INTERREG, COST, FP7, Horizon), UN (UNDP), OECD (SIGMA), INET, and have participated in various European Commission working groups (the EU's Lisbon Agenda Group, Expert Group on Managing Risks in Public Technology Procurement, Expert Group on Public Sector Innovation). Recently RND initiated a major, 32 MEUR international R&D project on Smart Cities (FinestTwins). RND is also engaged in several international associations, such as the European Master in Public Administration program (EMPA), European Inter-University Association on Society, Science and Technology (ESST), and the European Group for Public Administration (EGPA).

For further information, please contact Prof Tiina Randma-Liiv, tiina.randma-liiv@taltech.ee.



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