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## **Economic crisis and democratic legitimacy**

### **Does cross-national variation in political culture affect how European citizens evaluate the democratic legitimacy of national parliaments and the European Union?**

Jan Eichhorn<sup>1</sup>, Jakob Hensing and Christine Hübner

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#### **Abstract**

In the context of the crisis of the Eurozone repeated calls have been made for a deeper economic integration to enable monetary union. While a large range of commentators have argued that a stronger political union is necessary to achieve this, few have asked explicitly which barriers to further political integration may exist because of divergent political cultures between the member states. In a bottom-up understanding of political culture large differences in nationally dominant preferences of, practice in and evaluations of the political system present substantial obstacles in the development of an institutional architecture that would be considered legitimate by citizens across all member states.

This paper engages with this concern in an empirical way. Using data from the 2008 European Values Study and a two-stage hierarchical model we first establish whether individual-level factors influence evaluations of confidence in national parliaments and the European Union and then proceed to identify which national-level domains of political culture moderate these individual-level relationships. Our results illustrate the need to consider differences in political culture manifestations between European Union member states in order to understand how legitimacy evaluations are constructed differently across the European Union. Finally, suggestions for future research agendas identify ways to deepen this perspective further.

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## Introduction

In a context where deeper integration of EU member states is seen by many as a necessary response to the Euro crisis, the title question is highly relevant: "Whose political union?" is it actually that is being talked about. Proponents of closer integration typically claim that a monetary union would require a completed economic union in order to succeed thus suggesting the need for integration of economic governance. This leads many commentators to argue that in order to achieve such stronger coordination of economic activities across the member states it would be necessary to establish deeper political integration at the European level to overcome problems caused by differences in national policy making. The arguably most commonly stated formula for addressing the crisis within the existing framework appears to be to i) create a stronger political union, which is able to ii) deepen the economic union, in order to enable the iii) monetary union to be successful.

This proposition misses out on discussing a crucial prior question: Would a stronger political union be considered equally legitimate across all member states? Stated differently, if the European Union is meant to be understood as a democratic body, to what extent is the political culture across member states cohesive enough to permit for a deeper political integration that is perceived as legitimate by the citizens? So far, the debate about legitimacy and the democratic deficit has mostly focused on the presence or absence of representative institutions in the EU. The question of democratic legitimacy, however, is not simply a matter of institutional design: it emanates from every individual citizen's perception of legitimate institutions and thereby addresses the societal foundations of a democratic polity.

Our investigation aims to widen the focus of the debate. Analysing survey data from all EU member states, we seek to explore whether and how evaluations of political legitimacy differ between people across the European Union. Our focus lies on understanding how national-level differences in political culture, both articulated and practiced, affect how individuals in different member states come to evaluate the legitimacy of national and European political institutions. Identifying which national-level expressions of political culture moderate the political evaluations of individuals helps us to highlight the necessary foundations of - as well as potential barriers to - democratically legitimate political

integration and opening up avenues for future research. Differences in the evaluation of legitimacy of national institutions or the supranational European Union would both be indicative of differences in political culture manifestations between countries, as both national and supranational institutions form related, but not interchangeable pathways of decision making in the European Union. Both, legitimising relationships through national institutions and directly with the European Union matter equally. Variation between member states in how either legitimising evaluation is formed by citizens may point to divergences in the formation of political cultures and may therefore act as barriers to democratically legitimised integration. Starting from the individual citizen's perception of legitimacy, this paper particularly contributes to the debate by exploring both articulated and practised political values across the range of all EU member states.

### **Democratic legitimacy and political culture in the European Union**

The question of whether the EU suffers from a democratic deficit has been discussed extensively. Arguments in this debate typically emanate from explicitly normative vantage points rooted in political theory (see Føllesdal 2006). In this vein, those who regard the European Union as a political system and thus as a "polity" (e.g. Hix & Høyland 2011) tend to apply relatively demanding standards of democratic legitimacy (e.g. Føllesdal & Hix 2006). Others, in contrast, have argued that such questions of democratic legitimacy do not arise in the context of the EU, as long as it essentially remained a regulatory agency where "politics and economics are kept as separate as possible" (Majone 1998: 5). Finally, some scholars maintain that if measured against the actual realities in contemporary nation states rather than against an ideal derived from democratic theory, the EU fares comparatively well on democratic legitimacy (Moravcsik 2002). From this basic framing of the debate, it is apparent that the "democratic deficit" is not simply a matter of institutional arrangements, but fundamentally related to the question what kind of political community the EU is or aspires to be.

Accordingly, the notion of European identity and its relationship to democratic legitimacy has also been discussed in greater depth. In the context of the ill-fated constitutional convention in the early 2000s, Kalypso Nicolaidis described this debate as one between intergovernmentalists, who believed that the EU would never accomplish the kind of common identity that allowed nation states to be truly

democratic polities, and supranationalists, who believed in the emergence of a European identity and therefore advocated the establishment of traditional institutions of representative democracy at the European level. She noted that “although the issue seemed largely institutional, the two camps were really asking a fundamental philosophical question: if democracy requires a demos—a group of individuals who have enough in common to manage their affairs collectively—is there, or can there be, a single European demos?” (Nicolaidis 2004: 100). Nicolaidis proposes to resolve the debate by introducing the notion of European “demoi-cracy”: “The EU is neither a union of democracies nor a union as democracy; it is a union of states and of peoples—a “demoi-cracy”—in the making. It appeals to a political philosophy of its own—transnational pluralism—rather than to some extended notion of the nation-state. And however paradoxical, recognizing that its different needs require a different model is in fact a way to honour the nation-state’s role as a cornerstone of national democracy.” (Nicolaidis 2004: 101). Empirically, this implies an important consequence for bottom-up approaches in which we want to understand people’s political attitudes and participation: we need to analyse both the attitudes of people towards institutions of the European Union as well as with regards to their own respective member states. Political culture in the European Union needs to be conceptualised both within member states in terms of orientations towards national political institutions (as one channel affecting supranational policy), and on the level of supranational institutions themselves.

In many ways, the debate about democracy in Europe also mirrors broader discussions about democracy beyond the nation state. A pattern similar to the one described by Nicolaidis is visible in the debate on legitimacy and global governance, where sceptics identifying the absence of a global demos (such as Dahl 1999) encounter optimists who discern signs of an emerging cosmopolitan political community (Linklater 1998). Despite these apparent parallels, the European case has generally been seen in a somewhat more optimistic light. The interdependence between EU member states is significantly greater than among states worldwide, the region is culturally and socio-economically much less diverse than the entire globe, and it shares a common (if conflictual and violent) historical legacy. Although attempts to promote a European public sphere through Europeanized media outlets have not been success stories, at least a measure of “Europeanization” of national public spheres has been observable over time. National media today report widely on issues

and perspectives from other member states (with some variation in extent), and tend to accurately reflect the extent to which decision-making on a given policy field occurs at the community level (Koopmans & Erbe 2004).

Meanwhile, questions on the coherence and convergence of *political culture* in Europe have attracted comparatively little explicit attention in the debate on the democratic deficit. While Imig and Tarrow (2001) discuss the issue of transnational political mobilisation in Europe, national differences in political attitudes and in practices of political participation within Europe remain under-explored in the debate on democracy in the EU. This is astonishing, given that the concept of political culture was developed in the 1960s with the precise purpose of analysing the socio-cultural preconditions and underpinnings of democracy. As Almond and Verba argued in their foundational study, a “democratic form of a participatory political system requires as well a political culture consistent with it” (Almond & Verba 1989: 3). Political culture is defined in their study as “the particular distribution of patterns of orientation toward political objects among the members of the nation (ibid: 13), with an emphasis on “specifically political orientations – attitudes toward the political system and its various parts, and attitudes toward the role of the self in the system” (ibid: 12). Political culture is thus conceptualised in an understanding that reflects shared attitudes of members of a particular political entity – implying the need for “bottom-up” analytical approaches. The thrust of Almond and Verba’s argument was that a democratic polity can only be stable if sustained by a “civic culture”, which they described as a mixture of strong participatory orientations with a certain degree of political apathy, the latter engendering some patience and acquiescence with the policy-making process run by elected officials.

There is an apparent theoretical link between political culture, participation and questions of legitimacy. As Fritz Scharpf has argued, legitimacy is “the functional prerequisite for governments which aim to be simultaneously effective and liberal” (2009: 5). Scharpf proposes to structure debates around legitimacy in terms of input-oriented and output-oriented legitimizing beliefs. Input-oriented arguments refer to the institutional settings that enable “government by the people”, i.e. beliefs in the normative justification of institutions even if those may not serve to further one’s individual preferences. This allegiance to democratic institutions despite the fact that they may work to the individual disadvantage is also referred to as “loser’s consent”. Scharpf points out that this kind of

legitimacy presupposes trust in the benevolence of fellow citizens in the collectivity, so that being part of a minority on a given policy question is not experienced as a threat. This trust typically arises from commonalities in history, culture, language, etc., and it is in his view insufficiently developed in Europe to allow for an increase in input legitimacy through institutional reforms (Scharpf 1999: 9). Output-oriented legitimacy, in contrast, arises from substantive problem-solving capacity – referring to the “effective” aims of governments requiring legitimacy to successfully address these aims according to Scharpf (2009: 5). This type of legitimacy does not require a “thick” common identity, but rather the perception of a range of common interests that can be pursued through collective action. It can be expressed in terms of expectations of particular (for example economic) outcomes from the system’s arrangements or in terms of a generalised expectation that people or organisations will work cooperatively and not against one’s own benefit. Such positive expectations result in strengthened (output-oriented) legitimacy, as “(...) those with greater faith in people are psychologically prepared to accept the democratic process” (Lane 1959: 164). Scharpf (1999) argues that although output-oriented arguments alone are insufficient to create democratic legitimacy, this is currently the only option for the European Union, as it lacks the preconditions for the type of input legitimacy that are present in the nation state. Both input and output legitimacy, Scharpf suggests, manifest themselves as “trust in institutional arrangements” (Scharpf 2006: 1) that ensure the responsiveness of governing processes to the preferences of the governed (input) as well as the provision of solutions to their substantive problems (output). This view implies that empirically observed differences in institutional confidence and levels of democratic participation between member states would present a barrier to political integration.

Following Scharpf’s arguments we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a: Respondents with more positive input-legitimacy oriented evaluations would have more positive evaluations of political institutions.

Hypothesis 1b: The relationship between positive input-legitimacy oriented evaluations and evaluations of political institutions are more pronounced for national institutions than EU institutions.

Hypothesis 2a: More positive output-legitimacy oriented evaluations are associated with more positive evaluations of political institutions.

Hypothesis 2b: The relationship between positive output-legitimacy oriented evaluations and evaluations of political institutions are more pronounced for EU institutions than national institutions.

One may expect that publics will tend to regard political institutions as legitimate (especially in terms of input legitimacy) if these conform to their expectations regarding the political process. Any particular form of institutional design is unlikely to be regarded as similarly legitimate in all cultural contexts. This argument strongly relates to Scharpf's concerns whether there would be "loser's consent" in a European polity. Individuals may not only be alienated by the involvement of other individuals with whom they do not have a strong feeling of shared identity, but also by the fact that political choices are made through institutions that are not supported by their political culture. In addition, choices of institutional design are much more enduring and more difficult to change than substantive policy choices. A situation where large parts of the European public saw themselves confronted with political institutions that are incompatible with their attitudes towards the function of the political system would therefore be problematic considering goals of deepening political integration.

In relation to the discussion of the relationship between legitimacy-oriented evaluations and evaluations of political institutions we may therefore formulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: In countries where evaluations of the political system are more positive on average, the effect of personal legitimacy orientations on evaluations of political institutions would be enhanced.

Furthermore, if the expectations of what constitutes legitimate government differ with regards to orientations towards respective member state governments, expectations about their behaviour in representing countries at the European level are likely to vary as well. We propose that such differential expectations matter even when they are subtle and all related to the democratic realm as in the European context. Barriers to functioning political integration based on compatible political cultures arise both from differences in expectations towards domestic governments as well as towards supranational institutions – even if all of them are democratic. The same is true with respect to output legitimacy. Whether the policies of an institution are conducive to the pursuit of a perceived "common good" cannot be discussed without reference to cultural contexts. If people differ on their understanding of what the role of (democratic) political institutions in society should be, can these institutions deliver policy outputs that are regarded as desirable across cultural contexts?

In the light of this question, we formulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: In countries where the normative emphasis on a democratic system is more pronounced, the strength of the relationship between legitimacy orientations and evaluations of political institutions would be increased compared to countries where the normative emphasis on a democratic system is weaker.

Finally, it is crucial to extend the focus beyond mere cognitive orientations of people in order to understand the formation of attitudes towards the legitimacy of political institutions at the national and European level. To gain a comprehensive understanding we also have to consider political practice and the extent of participation of people in the respective context. While contingent on other factors, the potentially positive social and political benefits of engagement in civic associations have been discussed for a variety of contexts (Putnam 1993, Stolle & Rochon 1998, Teorell 2003). Almond & Verba (1963) champion associational engagement as one cornerstone of civic culture that ultimately supports the legitimacy and stability of a democratic system.<sup>2</sup> Others have highlighted since the relevance of considering the actual practice of people's involvement to understand to what extent the demos is involved directly with political decision making, thus engaging with their legitimate claims to participation in democratic processes (Inglehart 1997). Traditionally, participation would have been considered as embodied in representative mechanisms – mainly voting in elections. However, contemporary authors have been championing the role of so-called elite-challenging participatory forms (such as demonstrations and petitions) allowing for engagement beyond electoral cycles and thus acting as emancipatory processes for the people (Welzel et al. 2005). Such activities should not be understood as undermining the system, but rather as strengthening it by increasing the democratic legitimacy of the system through more continuous political engagement of self-directed citizens (Dalton 2008) – a positive attitude also shared by the majority of people in most member states according to a recent survey (European Commission 2013).

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<sup>2</sup>The exact mechanisms through which associational membership affects political values and practices form a broad field of enquire and debate. Discussions about which associations have any or what sort of civic benefit or to what extent it can be realised greatly qualify a uniform premise built on membership in any form of association (see for example Olsen 1972, Hanks & Ekland 1987, Wollbaek & Selle 2003, Paxton 2002). While we acknowledge this qualification, it would be beyond the particular scope of this paper to engage more extensively with the debate. However, it could form a subsequent, additional investigation.

Considering the relevance of civic engagement both the individual and societal level as highlighted by the studies cited we formulate the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 5a: People with greater levels of personal civic engagement would have more positive evaluations of political institutions.

Hypothesis 5b: In countries with greater levels of civic engagement the effect of legitimacy-oriented evaluations on evaluations of political institutions will be enhanced.

Most studies have so far focussed on analysing levels of confidence in national and European institutions and commonly noted a decline in confidence which has been intensified from the onset of the crisis (see for example European Commission 2010). Some studies have investigated this also taking into account national-level context factors. Roth et al. (2011) for example aimed to identify how different macroeconomic contexts affected differential outcomes in explaining the substantial variation in institutional trust between countries. However, the investigation did not engage with differences in political culture to contextualise the evaluations of individuals – a gap we are addressing in this paper.

Summarising our review above, we can distinguish three areas of influence affecting people's evaluations of democratic legitimacy: input-oriented orientations, output-oriented orientations and political practice. At the core of our investigation we want to establish whether these factors affect attitudes towards the legitimacy of national and European institutions in the same way across all 27 member states or whether particular manifestations of political culture at the national level moderate them (rather than for example macroeconomic factors, as explored by Roth et al. 2011). The identification of such systematic national-level factors may allow us to identify where barriers exist to a political integration at the European level that is congruent with the political orientations of its citizens, based on shared views on the democratic legitimacy.

Lastly, in the special case of the European Union where political integration is advanced and has a historical legacy, it seems to be imperative to include a fourth contextual dimension when analysing evaluations of confidence in European institutions in addition to the general manifestations of attitudes to and practiced political culture outlined above: A more positive national climate towards the European Union in general may be an important moderator of individual-level evaluations of its institutions. We therefore propose a final hypothesis:

Hypothesis 6: In countries where attitudes towards the European Union are more positive in general, the relationship between legitimacy orientations and evaluations of EU political institutions will be enhanced.

## **Approach and method**

In order to identify systematic variation in barriers to political integration, we set out with an approach grounded in the variables theoretically discussed above: perceived legitimacy and political practice. The operationalisations chosen aim to be reflective of the three identified individual-level factors (input-legitimacy orientations, output-legitimacy oriented orientations and practiced civic engagement) as well as the four aggregate-level domains discussed in the reflections above (evaluations of the system, the normative importance of democracy, levels of civic engagement and general affinity attitudes towards the European Union). As with any secondary data analysis involving existing surveys operationalisations of theoretical concepts can always only be an approximation of the complex concepts envisaged.

### Dependent variable and approach to modelling

We use data from the 4<sup>th</sup> wave of the European Values Study (EVS 2008) mainly conducted in 2008 for all 27 member states of the European Union. The time point of the data collection was ideal as it allows us to engage with responses that were given before the strongest effects of the Eurozone crisis were felt. These responses have a greater validity in providing a representation of political attitudes generally held by populations in the member states yet unaffected by the differential experience of the subsequent crisis.

In order to approximate orientations reflecting the perceived legitimacy of political institutions we utilised questions allowing respondents to express their degree of confidence in particular institutions. This operationalisation goes back to Scharpf's (2006) initial definition of perceived input as well as output legitimacy being represented by the "trust in institutional arrangements". For the national level, our dependent variable was the confidence individuals had in their national parliaments. To investigate whether factors found to influence confidence in parliament would also be relevant for orientations towards the European level we conducted all analyses also with confidence in the European Union as the dependent variable. The variable was dichotomised in both cases, distinguishing between those with positive orientations ("a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence)

and those with negative views (“not very much” confidence or “none at all”). This allowed us to use logistic regression frameworks as the basis of our statistical models.<sup>3</sup>

*Figures 1 & 2 about here*

There is great variation across the 27 member states for both dependent variables as figures 1 and 2 show. In some countries fewer than 20% of respondents declare a positive attitude on confidence in their parliament (including Bulgaria, Lithuania and the Czech Republic), while there are countries with over two thirds of respondents reporting such confidence (Denmark and Luxembourg). Spotting consistent patterns is difficult at face value. While the six countries with the lowest stated confidence in parliament are all Central-Eastern and Eastern European countries, a simple split by region or accession date would not be sufficient. Great Britain’s confidence values for example are as low as those in Hungary, while Slovenia and Slovakia have values in the upper middle of the range – similar to those of the Netherlands for example. At the same time 2004 accession countries Malta and Cyprus are among the top five countries, just below Sweden. The variation for confidence in the European Union is similarly great and face-value patterns even more difficult to identify. While we find the lowest levels of confidence for five pre-2004 accession countries (Great Britain and Austria with under 30%, and Germany, Finland and Sweden with below 40% expressing confidence), other prior members are found in the middle (such as France) or in the top third (such as Luxembourg and Belgium). Splitting the analysis geographically, we do not find distinctive patterns for confidence in the European Union either: Both Central-/Eastern European countries and Mediterranean member states are found in all parts of the scale. Also, a simple split by budget net-beneficiary and contributor countries does not explain the picture. While some net contributors are at the lower end of confidence (such as Germany and the United Kingdom) other net contributors are at the higher end of EU confidence (such as Luxembourg and Italy).

Attributing differences in legitimacy orientations towards parliaments and, in particular, towards the European Union based on simple classifications such as region or accession date may appear to be an obvious approach. However, instead of using pre-determined stereotypes we aim to present an

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<sup>3</sup>All calculations were done using HLM 6.06.

analysis that allowed us to systematically examine what particular macro-factors may moderate individual-level influences on evaluations of legitimacy. We therefore employed a simple two-stage hierarchical model: at the individual level we used a set of indicators to distinguish input and output orientations as well as practiced civic engagement, controlled for by socio-demographic variables, to estimate the effects on the dependent variables.

In the light of the theoretical discussion, we extended the model to include country-level indicators to contextualise potential individual-level relationships: normative ideal system, system's evaluation, active political participation, supranational orientations. The four identified national-level factors representing different manifestations of political culture are used to estimate their direct effects and cross-level interactions with the individual-level predictors. An overview of the operationalisations and descriptive statistics for all variables can be found in table 1 and an overview of the approach to modelling in figure 3.

#### Individual-level variables

In order to reflect orientations towards the inputs that are relevant for the evaluation of legitimacy we used a combination of two variables in a combined score engaging with views on the political system itself. The first variable seeks to explore the strength of the respondent's support for a democratic system: whether they consider having a democratic system a rather good or bad thing<sup>4</sup>. This is combined with a second variable asking about how the respondents would rate their political system for governing the country generally.

Output orientations are also modelled using a combination of two variables in one score. First, respondents are asked to what extent they associate democracy as governing system of their country with economic problems – a negative output orientation. The second variable reflects on outcome expectations relating to the European Union: whether people were afraid or not about their country having to pay for the EU in the end, thus resulting in a material loss because of integration.

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<sup>4</sup>For the precise operationalisation of this and all other variables please refer to the overview in table 1.

In order to capture respondents' civic engagement we combine information on associational membership and active political participation. We take into account how many different types of associations respondents were a member of – reflecting a greater breadth of their civic networks – and how many different types of political participation they have actively engaged in. The scores are combined with equal weight in one index.

For all models a consistent set of socio-demographic control variables was used. It included variables for sex, age, marital status, education levels, unemployment and income to ensure that the relationships observed for our predictor variables were not spurious to simple socio-demographic differences between respondents. As there was a substantial amount of missing data for income, imputation was used to estimate the values for the missing cases. Robustness checks were done for all individual-level analyses presented in this paper and selected multilevel models. The analyses were conducted using all cases with imputed income values and again using only those cases with valid responses. For both, estimates for coefficients did not differ substantially and levels of significance remained equivalent as well. Therefore the analyses presented here use the imputed income variable (logarithmised because of its substantial skew).<sup>5</sup>

*Table 1 about here*

#### Aggregate-level variables

The aggregate level variables employed reflect different manifestations of the prevalent political attitudes in the country, thus forming a picture mirroring its political culture. The variables are split into four groups of two variables each: i) evaluations of the governing system, ii) normative expressions of the preferred political system, iii) the extent of civic engagement, and iv) orientations towards the European Union.

Considering that we have 27 aggregate level units in our model we can employ a multilevel model meaningfully (Maas & Hox 2004, Kreft 1996). Taking into account that it is not a large sample size at

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<sup>5</sup>Detailed results on the imputation and robustness checks can be obtained from the authors upon request.

level 2 and referring to benchmark studies suggesting to ideally expand the number of aggregate units beyond 30 to model cross-level interactions (Hox 2010), we took a cautious approach. Most of the bivariate relationships between aggregate predictors were not very substantial ( $r$  ranging between 0.03 and 0.21) with the exception of the correlative relationship between normative preferences and civic engagement ( $r < 0.65$ ) and the relationship between system evaluations and normative ideals ( $r < 0.7$ ). We therefore included all four aggregate level predictors as main effects in all multilevel models to ensure that they are controlled for to avoid identifying spurious relationships. However, the sample size was insufficient to simultaneously model all 12 cross-level interaction effects of interest (three individual level predictors with four aggregate-level variables) for each of the two dependent variables. We therefore modelled the interaction effects for the three individual-level variables separately for each aggregate-level predictor.

The first aggregate-level variable operationalised evaluations of the political system in the light of Hypotheses 1 to 3. It combines information from two measures: firstly, to what extent people evaluate their system as worthy of support by rating how important they find it that political institutions and laws are respected. The second question then seeks to identify how satisfied or dissatisfied respondents actually are with the way their democratic system develops. The measure combines the two variables with equal weight and uses the mean value at country-level (the correlation between the mean scores of the two variables computed separately at the country level is  $r=0.5$ ).

The second aggregate-level variable reflects mean attitudes towards democracy and the political system, providing a basic representation of the normative framework of the political culture as a whole in the respective member state. This operationalisation is in line with Hypothesis 4. It combines information from two survey questions: The first variable measures the mean appraisal of democracy as a desirable characteristic of the political system. We contrast this with a variable measuring the approval of experts making decisions in the political system – a consideration that has gained great public attention after the instalment of “technocratic” governments for temporary periods in Greece and Italy during the crisis. While these were only temporary and clearly functional, differences in perceptions of and experiences with “technocratic” governments can imply variation in how citizens evaluate democratic values and practice at the national as well as supranational level. Insights on this

question can help to reveal variations in the understanding of democracy in particular revealing when there is a greater willingness to compromise liberal democratic values with functional, technocratic ones (discussed as a possible instrument to distinguish differences in the manifestation of democratic evaluations by Linde & Eckmann 2003). The correlation between the two variables' means computed separately at the country level is  $r=0.81$ .

After modelling general attitudinal factors, we incorporated variables reflecting the mean extent of civic engagement of citizens in accordance with Hypothesis 5. For this, we included measures of the variety of citizens' associational membership and their active political participation at the country level.

As discussed above, it makes sense to explicitly reflect on how pronounced the identification of citizens with bodies beyond their nation state may be in general and specifically with regards to evaluating the European Union. We combine information about attitudes towards different influences of the European Union, measuring whether respondents in a country on average are rather more or less afraid of particular consequences including a potential loss of social security, a loss of national identity and culture, their country having to pay more money, a loss of power in the world for their country and a loss of jobs. The mean scores of the five variables computed separately at the country level are correlated highly with each other (between  $r=0.66$  and  $r=0.89$ ).

Figure 3 summarises the approach and combination of variables utilised.

*Figure 3 about here*

## **Results**

### Individual-level variables

#### *Socio-demographic controls*

Sex, unemployment and income showed no significant association with confidence in either institution in our models including the three individual-level predictors. There was a significant relationship with

age for both institutions – however pointing in opposite directions: While older age was associated with greater levels of confidence in national parliaments, it was associated with lower confidence in the European Union. Being married was marginally significant and negatively related to confidence in the European Union, but unrelated to confidence in national parliaments (however, the effect was not very large substantially). Higher tertiary education degree holders were more likely to have greater confidence in the European Union, but there was no association with confidence in national parliaments.

*Table 2 about here*

### *Predictors*

Both, input- and output-legitimacy oriented evaluations were significantly associated with the level of confidence in national parliaments and the European Union. More positive input- and output-orientations were associated with greater levels of confidence in both institutions respectively (in support of Hypotheses H1a and H2a). Comparing the size of the effects for the two different dependent variables we find that the relationship between input orientations and confidence in national parliaments was relatively more pronounced than the relationship between input orientations and confidence in the European Union (thus also supporting Hypothesis H1b). Conversely, the relationship between output orientations and confidence in the European Union was more pronounced than the relationship between output orientations and confidence in national parliaments (confirming our expectations formulated in Hypothesis H2b).

The relationship between civic engagement and confidence in the two political institutions is similar in direction but different in substance. Contrary to our expectations (Hypothesis 5a) greater personal civic engagement is actually related to lower levels of confidence in both political institutions. This negative effect is slightly greater in strength for national parliaments. This seems counter-intuitive at first – however, it may be explained by considering different causal mechanisms. Following civic culture literature above we assumed that those who had more civic engagement would be more supportive of political institutions. However, it is also plausible that actually those who have less

confidence in these institutions would be more likely to find alternative forms of civic networks and participate in forms of active political participation external to those institutions.

### Country-level variables

#### *Evaluations of the political system*

In addition to showing a significant direct positive relationship with confidence in parliament (but not in the European Union), country-levels of the evaluations of the political system were an important moderating factor for the previously identified individual-level relationships. The moderation patterns differed between the two dependent variables. For confidence in national parliaments both input- and output orientations were significantly moderated by system evaluations. More positive system evaluations at the country level were associated with a significant enhancement of the positive effect of both of these evaluations on confidence in national parliaments. However, there was no significant moderation effect of the relationship between personal civic engagement and confidence in parliament.

The opposite holds true for confidence in the European Union. While there was no significant moderation of the personal-level attitudinal variables, the civic engagement effect was moderated substantially. In countries with comparatively more positive system evaluations personal civic engagement was associated even more strongly with lower confidence in the European Union. This may imply that when satisfaction with the status of the political system within a country is higher people could rely less on the European Union – whereas in countries where the national political system is evaluated less favourable confidence in the European Union as an alternative actor may be higher.

We found that hypothesis 3 held for national parliaments, but it did not for the European Union. Differences in the political climate, reflected in evaluations of the political system, affected the relationship of attitudinal factors with national institutions. For confidence in the European Union only personal civic engagement was affected.

### *Normative system preferences*

A similar pattern to the above also emerged for differences between countries in normative system preferences. These moderated attitudinal orientations in relation to confidence in national parliaments, but civic engagement in relation to confidence in the European Union. Hypothesis 4 therefore only holds partially. As expected, when country-levels of normatively embracing a democratic system (in contrast to preferring an expert-led one) were higher, both input- and output-oriented legitimacy evaluations were associated with greater levels of confidence in national parliaments. The same cross-level interactions were not significant for confidence in the European Union however. Stronger country-level normative endorsements of democratic systems were associated with a stronger negative effect of personal civic engagement on confidence in the European Union – similar to the previous context factor.

### *Civic engagement*

Contrary to hypothesis 5b there were hardly any significant moderation effects of country levels of civic engagement for confidence in either of the two institutions. The only exception was the relationship between input orientations and confidence in the European Union showing a marginally significant positive interaction effect between country-level civic engagement and input orientations: In countries where civic engagement was more prevalent positive input orientations were more strongly associated with greater confidence in the European Union. The effect size was not particularly large however – the importance of the relationship should therefore not be overstated.

### *EU affinity*

Hypothesis 6 was falsified: The degree of country-level European affinity did not moderate any of the individual-level relationships. While this was not necessarily expected for confidence in national parliaments, it is somewhat surprising to see that the average national level extent of worries about the European Union did not seem to affect how individuals form their evaluations of confidence in it.

## Discussion

From the mere descriptive statistics of levels of confidence in national and EU institutions and indicators of political culture (attitudes towards political systems, democratic norms, civic engagement) we can assume that there is a complex pattern of how confidence in institutions is formed. While varying levels of input- and output- orientations can be seen as different mainly in terms of relative magnitude of effects, we observe distinctive variation between our independent variables representing attitudinal orientations and actual practice. This leads us to assume that there is substantial variation in the domains of manifestations of political culture between the countries of the European Union.

In our analysis, we find further support for Scharpf's established framework of both input and output legitimacy being building blocks of confidence in political institutions: measures of the two types of legitimacy are positively associated with confidence in political institutions. Further in support of our hypotheses 1 and 2, the effect of input legitimacy is more pronounced at the national than at the EU-level. While national political institutions benefit more from a common identity and political culture (input legitimacy) than the EU, the opposite holds true regarding output legitimacy orientations: they have a stronger effect on confidence in the EU than national parliaments. This supports Scharpf in his assessment of the current status of EU-institutions with citizens: in addition to input-orientations, confidence in EU-institutions depends strongly on evaluations of output legitimacy - to a greater extent than confidence in national parliaments. In the light of this finding, reportedly eroding levels of trust in the European Union during the onset of the Euro crisis gain a new interpretation, as monetary integration and the common currency can be seen as one dominant factor in citizen's evaluation of the successful functioning of EU institutions (output legitimacy).

When identifying in how far country-level manifestations of political culture affect evaluations of political legitimacy, we find substantial differences for the construal of legitimacy for national parliaments and the EU respectively. The wide variation in attitudinal orientations and actual political practice between citizens in the EU member states has different effects on their evaluations of input- and output legitimacy at the national and the EU-level:

- An overall positive political system evaluation in a country seems to benefit trust in national institutions, but less so European institutions. This finding could mean that the concept of loser's consent for legitimacy evaluations is less pronounced at the European than at the national level. The link between national political attitudes and confidence in EU institutions seems more complex and very much different from what can be observed for confidence in national parliaments.
- Our results also show that the country-level of democratic norms does not affect how input- and output evaluations of individuals affect their confidence in the EU – while a moderation effect for confidence in national parliaments is found. This finding hints towards the fact that citizens' interpretations of the European Union can be very different from how national parliaments are regarded.
- Contrary to our expectation, differences in attitudes towards the European Union between countries do not systematically impact people's confidence in the EU as an institution within countries. The building blocks of legitimacy at the European level may be more complex than at the national level.

These findings suggest that at the country- and at the individual level, different understandings of the concept of the 'European Union' exist: it is not really one political union, but rather several interpretations of it. People bring different frames of reference and experiences with governance at the supranational level to the table – as individuals or in terms of differences in country-level political culture manifestations. Such differences can present barriers to further political integration at the EU level. The results also underline the importance of not treating the EU analytically just like a nation state: legitimacy pathways run through national parliaments and supranational institutions at the same time. The evaluations of confidence of individuals differ substantially between the two and need to both be considered carefully to comprehend the differences in political culture between people across member states.

If we want to understand why certain people have greater or lesser confidence in national and European institutions, it is not enough to use simple national classifications. But neither is it sufficient to consider only differences between individuals. Both future research as well as the public discourse

on political integration needs to consider the evaluations of people in the context of their respective political cultures, distinguishing different spheres of personal evaluations and manifestations of political culture.

A starting point to such a discourse and to overcoming barriers to integration can be found in the special link between personal civic engagement and formation of legitimacy at the EU level. We want to highlight this relationship because of its complex nature and the opportunities it presents for the public discourse, practical implications and future research. Contrary to our hypotheses, personal civic engagement is associated with lower levels of confidence in political institutions in general - a relationship that is impacted by countries' patterns of normative political orientations and system evaluations at the level of the European Union. In countries where citizens subscribe strongly to democratic norms, civic engagement is even more negatively associated with trust in EU institutions. We may find people using forms of civic engagement as a substitute for a perceived lack of control over what is decided at the European level. This suggests that the causality may be more complex: Those who have less confidence in the European Union may be more likely to actually become civically active. This approach to understanding the results would also provide a meaningful interpretation of the moderation effect observed: In countries with stronger democratic norms, citizens who feel less confident in trusting the European Union as political actor, may feel more empowered to act on these norms and thus have a greater likelihood of becoming civically active.

This discussion illustrates that even the much-researched concept of civic engagement may be ill-defined in the broad context of European integration and its various member states. Before continuing the process of European integration and –most certainly- before designing further European institutions and quasi-national political instruments, there should be an emphasis on understanding public discourses and divergences between countries to tie such loose ends together. The true underlying motivations for citizens to engage with and trust the institutions of the European Union need to be investigated and discussed broadly. Our findings show that such a debate has to include perspectives of the individual and national level and should certainly not focus merely on face-value differentiators such as accession dates or economic indicators.

### Limitations and avenues for future research

Any quantitative, empirical analysis requires a degree of abstraction in the operationalisation of concepts. We encountered some limitations in our work based on the availability of data and the scope of the analysis. The European Values Survey was rich in relevant variables, yet the chosen items have to be understood as approximations of the theoretical concepts employed. In future work it would be insightful to expand the analysis to engage with a greater set of multi-item constructs through latent variable modelling which may allow for the construction of indicators that reflect a greater degree of complexity. This could also help in addressing the needs for further engagement with the question of what actually motivates citizens to trust in European institutions or not. In particular the two country-level variables that did not see any or hardly any significant relationships - civic culture and EU affinity - could be revisited in future research. It may well be that the effects found here are accurate reflections of existing (non-)relationships. However, there are other options to operationalise civic engagement, for example, following a connectedness approach by Paxton for association membership (Paxton 2007). General attitudes towards the European Union could potentially be modelled in less negative expressions (fears), but rather through positive evaluations of identification, for example.

Causality, of course, is also an issue with regards to interpretation. Any cross-sectional analysis only allows for causal inferences based on their underlying theoretical assumptions. However, the relationship between confidence in the European Union and personal civic engagement (moderated through national civic culture) could very plausibly be seen as a relationship that is multi-causal – requiring other methods to engage with further. In particular longitudinal approaches can help shed light on this relationship in future research.

Any such further research calls for multi-level approaches: it is important to investigate the building blocks of legitimacy at the European level from the perspectives of individual citizens, in the light of national political cultures as well as in a broader European context as manifestations of political culture differ across all of these levels.

## Conclusion

In this paper we have engaged with how citizens evaluate the legitimacy of national and European political institutions in the light of the discourse on further European political integration. Our results illustrate the need to consider individual-level and national differences in political culture manifestations between European Union member states in order to understand how legitimacy evaluations are constructed differently across the European Union. There is substantial variation in political attitudes and actual political practice between individuals in and the countries of the European Union. We show that these differences matter: They present potential barriers to political integration as they affect how people in different countries of the European Union develop their evaluations of political legitimacy regarding national and EU institutions. Especially differences in country-level evaluations of the political system and the extent of normative preferences for democracy substantially moderate individual-level processes.

These legitimacy differences may pose a barrier to a political union as the foundation of economic and monetary integration if not addressed. Great divergence in understandings of what constitutes legitimacy for national and supranational bodies would render it extremely difficult to construct a singular structure that resonates positively with the political orientations and expectations of its citizens from an array of distinctively manifested political cultures. Addressing this concern, however, is crucial when aiming to develop structures that are considered legitimate by publics across Europe. Whether this is achievable through a singular structure or requires a different way of thinking about how to properly engage with a "demoi-cracy" (Nicolaidis 2004) may be a question that should be at the foreground of discussions of how to achieve a European Union whose engagement with its member states is as sophisticated as its engagement with its citizens.

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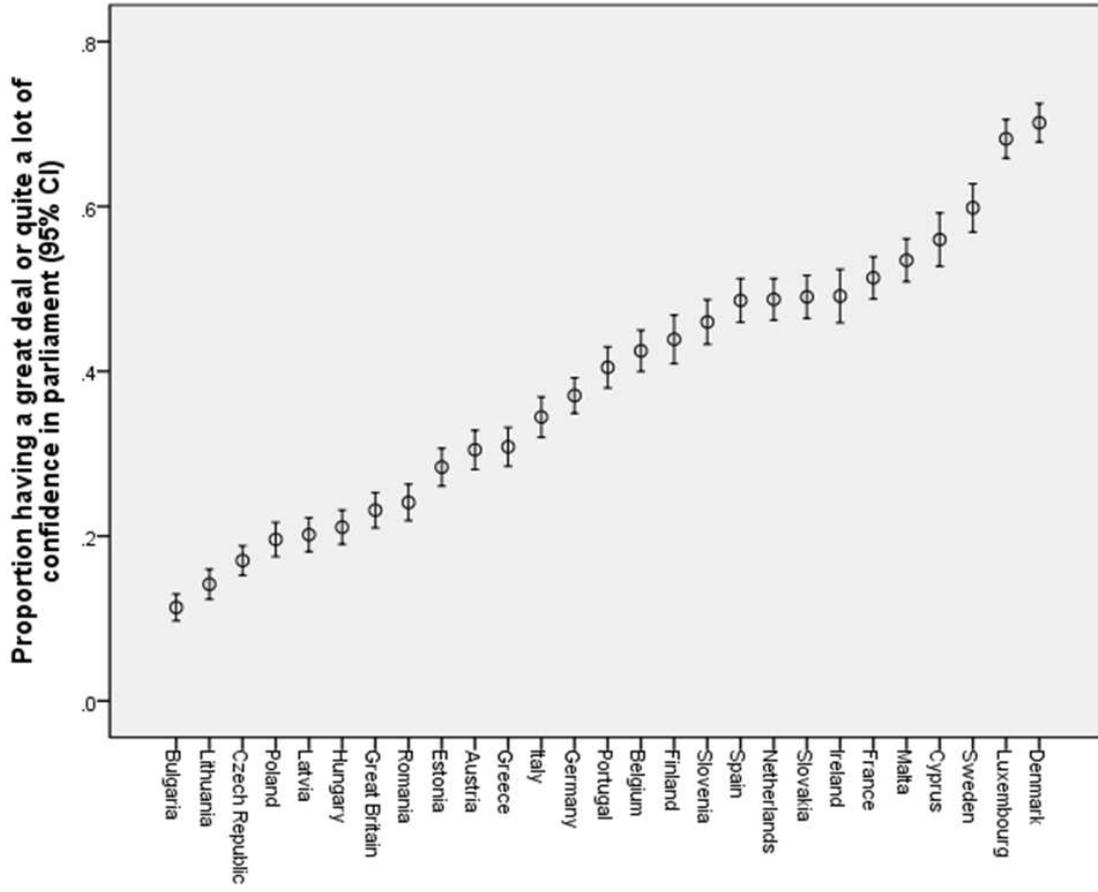
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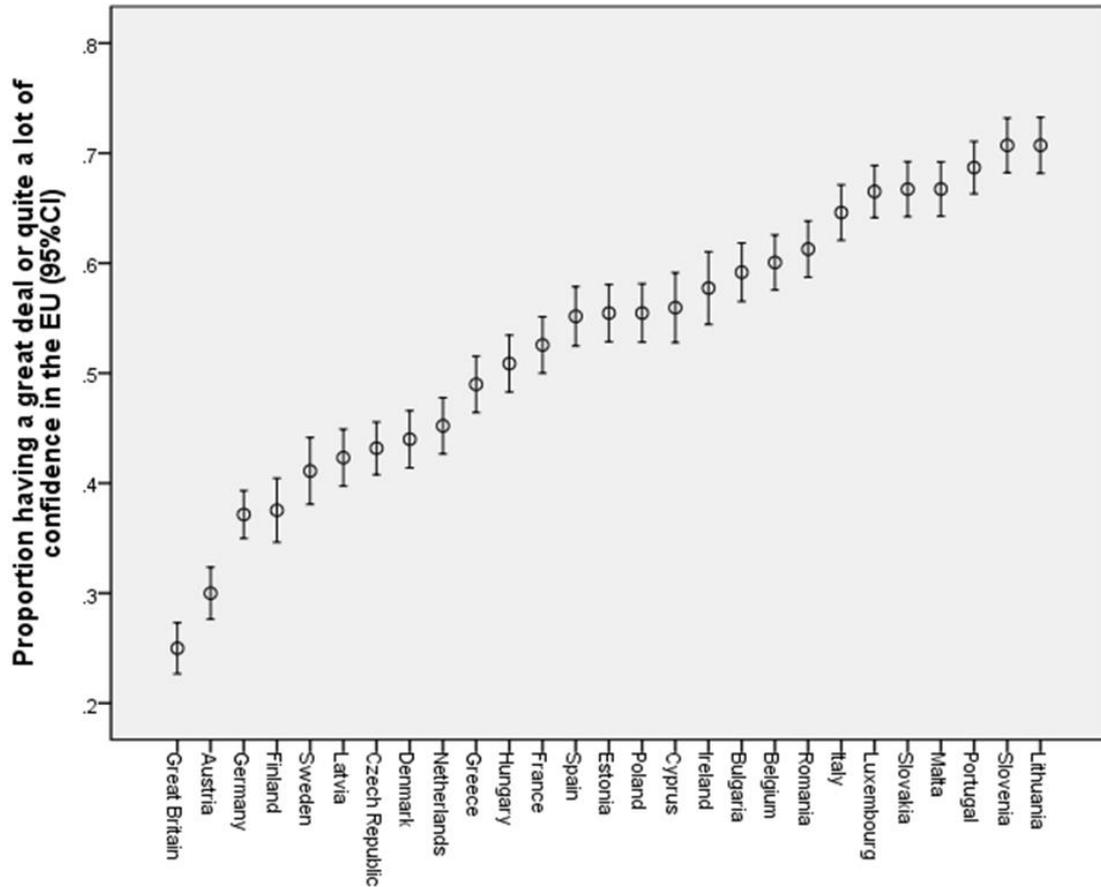
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**Figure 1: Confidence in national parliaments**



**Figure 2: Confidence in the European Union**



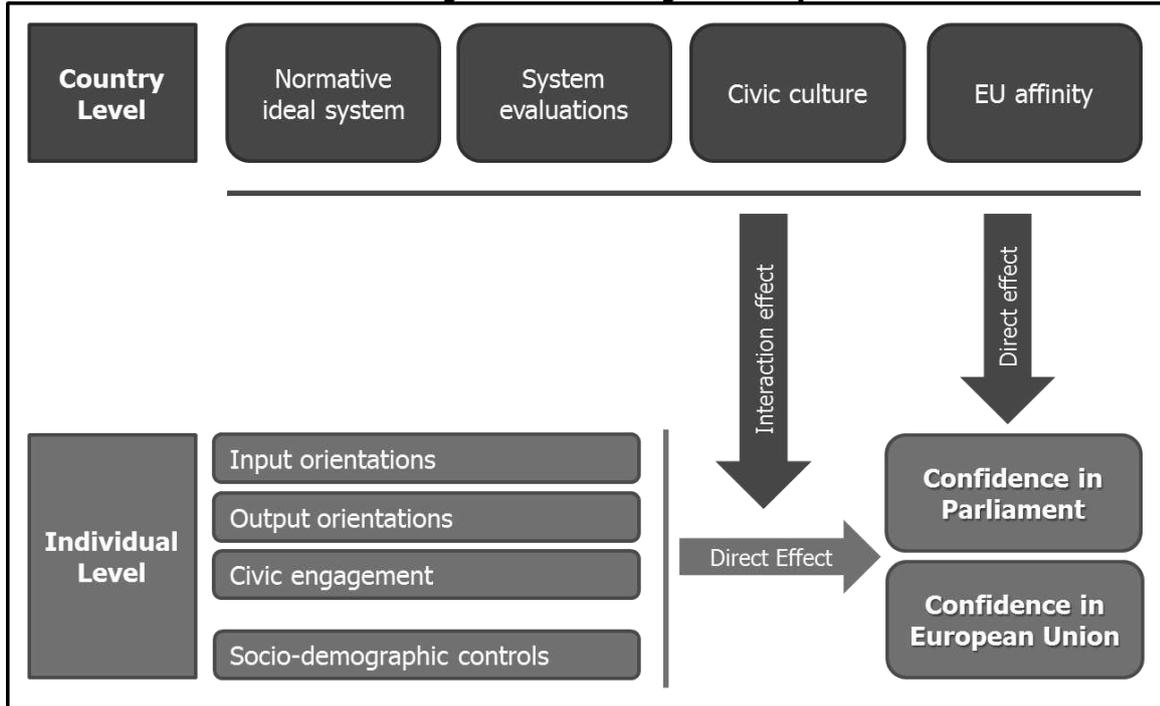
**Figure 3: Modelling summary**

Table 1: Operationalisation of variables

| Operationalisation   |  | Mean (s.d.) | Min..Max    |
|----------------------|--|-------------|-------------|
| <b>CONTROL</b>       |  |             |             |
| Male                 | 0-Female,1-Male  | 0.44 (0.50) | n/a         |
| Age                  | In Years   | 48.7 (18.0) | 16..108     |
| Married              | Dummy: Respondent is married   | 0.52 (0.50) | n/a         |
| Lower tertiary       | Dummy: Completed lower tertiary education  | 0.14 (0.35) | n/a         |
| Higher tertiary      | Dummy: Holder of higher tertiary degree  | 0.08 (0.27) | n/a         |
| Unemployed           | Dummy: Respondent is currently unemployed  | 0.05 (0.23) | n/a         |
| Ln income            | Monthly household income in 1000 € (PPP), logarithmised, imputed   | 0.12 (0.94) | -7.77..2.69 |
| <b>INDIVIDUAL</b>    |  |             |             |
| Input orientations   | Mean of the scores of the evaluation of the statement "Having a democratic system" (0: 'very bad' – 3: 'very good', divided by 3 and rating of "how well things are going" with "the system governing the country" (0: 'very bad' – 9: 'very good'), divided by 9 [Range 0..1]   | 0.60 (0.18) | 0..1        |
| Output orientations  | Mean of the scores of the evaluation of the statement "In a democracy the economic system runs badly" (0: 'agree strongly' – 3: 'disagree strongly', divided by 3 and evaluation of personally being afraid about "Our country paying more and more to the European Union" (0: 'very much afraid' – 9: 'not afraid at all'), divided by 9 [Range 0..1]                               | 0.48 (0.22) | 0..1        |
| Civic engagement     | Mean of the sum of types of associations the respondent is a member of divided by 15 (maximum number) and the sum of forms of political action the respondent has taken part in divided by 5 (maximum number) [Range 0..1]   | 0.10 (0.13) | 0..0.87     |
| <b>AGGREGATE</b>     |  |             |             |
| System evaluation    | Country mean of the Sum of the scores of the evaluation of the statement "To respect the country's political institutions and laws" (0: 'not important at all' – 3: 'very important') and the rating of satisfaction "with the way democracy is developing in our country" (0: 'not at all satisfied' – 3: 'very satisfied'), divided by 6 [Range 0..1]                              | 0.66 (0.07) | 0.51..0.78  |
| Normative democratic | Country mean of the Sum of the scores of evaluations of the statements "Having a democratic system" (0: 'very bad' – 3: 'very good') and "Having experts, not government make decisions according to what they think best for the country" (0: 'very good' – 3: 'very bad'), divided by 6 [Range 0..1]   | 0.63 (0.10) | 0.46..0.84  |
| Civic culture        | Country mean of civic engagement score [Range 0..1]  | 0.13 (0.13) | 0.03..0.74  |
| EU affinity          | Country mean of the Sum of evaluation scores of fears regarding the European Union (all 0: very much afraid – 9: not afraid at all): "The loss of social security", "The loss of national identity and culture", "Our country paying more and more to the European Union", "A loss of power in the world for [COUNTRY]", "The loss of jobs in [COUNTRY]", divided by 45 [Range 0..1] | 0.42 (0.08) | 0.29..0.56  |

Table 2: Random intercept and slope models with main effects only

| Dependant:<br>Confidence in  | 1                  |      | 2                          |       |
|--|--------------------|------|----------------------------|-------|
|  | Parliament         |      | EU                         |       |
|  | Coefficient (s.e.) | OR   | Coefficient (s.e.)         | OR    |
| <b>Societal Level</b>  |                    |      |                            |       |
| Intercept  | -0.560 (0.09)***   | 0.57 | 0.202 (0.12)               | 1.22  |
| System evaluations   | 7.813 (1.38)***    | 2473 | -4.613 (2.81)              | 0.01  |
| Normative democratic   | -0.426 (1.17)      | 0.65 | -0.472 (2.54)              | 0.62  |
| Civic culture  | 0.095 (0.53)       | 1.10 | -1.191 (0.99)              | 0.30  |
| EU affinity  | -0.740 (0.81)      | 0.48 | 1.105 (1.26)               | 3.02  |
| <b>Individual level</b>  |                    |      |                            |       |
| Male   | -0.046 (0.03)      | 0.95 | -0.049 (0.04)              | 0.95  |
| Age  | 0.006 (0.01)***    | 1.01 | -0.005 (0.00)***           | 0.99  |
| Married  | 0.012 (0.05)       | 1.01 | -0.065 (0.04) <sup>+</sup> | 0.94  |
| Lower Tertiary   | 0.035 (0.05)       | 1.04 | 0.453 (0.05)               | 1.05  |
| Higher Tertiary  | 0.055 (0.74)       | 1.06 | 0.166 (0.06)**             | 1.18  |
| Unemployed   | -0.025 (0.08)      | 0.98 | -0.097 (0.07)              | 0.91  |
| LN Income  | -0.001 (0.03)      | 1.00 | 0.038 (0.03)               | 1.04  |
| Input orientations   | 3.711 (0.26)***    | 40.9 | 2.435 (0.15)***            | 11.42 |
| Output orientations  | 0.620 (0.17)***    | 1.86 | 1.770 (0.20)***            | 5.88  |
| Civic engagement   | -0.502 (0.24)*     | 0.61 | -0.385 (0.19) <sup>+</sup> | 0.69  |
| <b>Random component</b>  |                    |      |                            |       |
| Intercept  | 0.149***           |      | 0.389***                   |       |
| Input  | 1.605***           |      | 0.415***                   |       |
| Output   | 0.644***           |      | 0.980***                   |       |
| Practice   | 1.228***           |      | 0.700***                   |       |
| ***p≤0.001 **p≤0.01 *p≤0.05 +p≤0.10  |                    |      |                            |       |
| Calculations done using HLM 6.06. Multilevel logistic regression models were applied computed using restricted maximum likelihood estimation. Entries are coefficients with standard errors in parentheses followed by odds ratios. Non-binary variables are grand-mean centred. Data comes from the European Values Study (2008). N: 26289 individuals in 27 countries. |                    |      |                            |       |

Table 3: Cross-level interactions for confidence in national parliaments

| Dependant:<br>Confidence in     | 1                  |                       | 2                  |                       | 3                  |                       | 4                  |                       |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
|                                 | Parliament         |                       | Parliament         |                       | Parliament         |                       | Parliament         |                       |
|                                 | Coefficient (s.e.) | OR                    |
| <b>Societal Level</b>           |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Intercept                       | -0.561 (0.08)***   | 0.57                  | -0.563 (0.08)***   | 0.57                  | -0.561 (0.09)***   | 0.58                  | -0.560 (0.09)***   | 0.57                  |
| System evaluations              | 6.898 (1.50)***    | 989                   | 7.827 (1.39)***    | 2508                  | 7.826 (1.38)***    | 2505                  | 7.818 (1.38)***    | 2485                  |
| Normative democratic            | -0.463 (1.17)      | 0.63                  | -1.112 (1.10)      | 0.33                  | -0.418 (1.17)      | 0.66                  | -0.415 (1.16)      | 0.66                  |
| Civic culture                   | 0.115 (0.53)       | 1.12                  | 0.108 (0.54)       | 1.11                  | -0.264 (0.53)      | 0.77                  | 0.092 (0.53)       | 1.10                  |
| EU affinity                     | -0.733 (0.81)      | 0.48                  | -0.746 (0.80)      | 0.47                  | -0.744 (0.80)      | 0.48                  | -0.601 (0.87)      | 0.55                  |
| <b>Individual level</b>         |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Male                            | -0.047 (0.03)      | 0.95                  | -0.046 (0.03)      | 0.95                  | -0.046 (0.03)      | 0.95                  | -0.046 (0.03)      | 0.95                  |
| Age                             | 0.006 (0.00)***    | 1.01                  | 0.006 (0.00)***    | 1.01                  | 0.006 (0.00)***    | 1.01                  | 0.006 (0.00)***    | 1.01                  |
| Married                         | 0.011 (0.05)       | 1.01                  | 0.012 (0.05)       | 1.01                  | 0.012 (0.05)       | 1.01                  | 0.012 (0.05)       | 1.01                  |
| Lower Tertiary                  | 0.035 (0.05)       | 1.04                  | 0.035 (0.05)       | 1.04                  | 0.035 (0.05)       | 1.04                  | 0.035 (0.05)       | 1.04                  |
| Higher Tertiary                 | 0.054 (0.07)       | 1.06                  | 0.057 (0.07)       | 1.06                  | 0.055 (0.07)       | 1.06                  | 0.055 (0.07)       | 1.06                  |
| Unemployed                      | -0.024 (0.08)      | 0.98                  | -0.025 (0.08)      | 0.98                  | -0.025 (0.08)      | 0.97                  | -0.025 (0.08)      | 0.98                  |
| LN Income                       | -0.001 (0.03)      | 1.00                  | -0.001 (0.03)      | 1.00                  | -0.001 (0.03)      | 1.00                  | -0.001 (0.03)      | 1.00                  |
| Input orientations              | 3.710 (0.24)***    | 40.9                  | 3.715 (0.24)***    | 41.0                  | 3.713 (0.25)***    | 41.0                  | 3.711 (0.26)***    | 40.9                  |
| Output orientations             | 0.604 (0.14)***    | 1.83                  | 0.610 (0.14)***    | 1.84                  | 0.615 (0.16)***    | 1.85                  | 0.619 (0.17)***    | 1.86                  |
| Civic engagement                | -0.510 (0.25)*     | 0.61                  | -0.510 (0.25)*     | 0.60                  | -0.505 (0.24)*     | 0.60                  | -0.507 (0.24)*     | 0.60                  |
| <b>Cross-level interactions</b> |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| System evaluations X            |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Input orientations              | 8.512 (3.18)*      | 4973*                 |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Output orientations             | 7.461 (2.00)***    | 1738***               |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Civic engagement                | -3.069 (3.43)      | 0.05                  |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Normative democratic X          |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Input orientations              |                    |                       | 6.264 (2.38)*      | 526                   |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Output orientations             |                    |                       | 4.979 (1.43)**     | 145                   |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Civic engagement                |                    |                       | -0.728 (2.12)      | 0.48                  |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Civic culture X                 |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Input orientations              |                    |                       |                    |                       | 3.534 (2.58)       | 34.3                  |                    |                       |
| Output orientations             |                    |                       |                    |                       | 2.305 (1.50)       | 10.0                  |                    |                       |
| Civic engagement                |                    |                       |                    |                       | -0.536 (0.58)      | 1.53                  |                    |                       |
| EU affinity X                   |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Input orientations              |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       | -1.530 (3.28)      | 0.22                  |
| Output orientations             |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       | -0.934 (2.64)      | 0.39                  |
| Civic engagement                |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       | -0.205 (3.33)      | 0.81                  |
| <b>Random components</b>        | Variance           | PRE (pre interaction) |
| Intercept                       | 0.146***           |                       | 0.145***           |                       | 0.147***           |                       | 0.150***           |                       |
| Input                           | 1.313***           | 0.18                  | 1.290***           | 0.20                  | 1.449***           | 0.10                  | 1.673***           | -0.04                 |
| Output                          | 0.391***           | 0.39                  | 0.414***           | 0.36                  | 0.574***           | 0.15                  | 0.670***           | -0.04                 |
| Practice                        | 1.237***           | -0.01                 | 1.299***           | -0.06                 | 1.299***           | -0.06                 | 1.301***           | -0.06                 |

\*\*\*p≤0.001 \*\*p≤0.01 \*p≤0.05 +p≤0.10  
Calculations done using HLM 6.06. Multilevel logistic regression models were applied computed using restricted maximum likelihood estimation. Entries are coefficients with standard errors in parentheses followed by odds ratios. Non-binary variables are grand-mean centred. Data comes from the European Values Study (2008). N: 26289 individuals in 27 countries.

Table 4: Cross-level interactions for confidence in the European Union

| Dependant:<br>Confidence in  | 1                  |                       | 2                  |                       | 3                  |                       | 4                  |                       |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
|  | EU                 |                       | EU                 |                       | EU                 |                       | EU                 |                       |
|  | Coefficient (s.e.) | OR                    |
| <b>Societal Level</b>  |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Intercept  | 0.201 (0.12)       | 1.23                  | 0.207 (0.12)       | 1.23                  | 0.201 (0.12)       | 1.22                  | 0.203 (0.12)       | 1.22                  |
| System evaluations   | -4.771 (2.86)      | 0.01                  | -3.812 (2.98)      | 0.02                  | -4.654 (2.85)      | 0.01                  | -4.607 (2.82)      | 0.01                  |
| Normative democratic   | 0.096 (2.54)       | 1.10                  | -0.302 (2.28)      | 0.74                  | -0.454 (2.56)      | 0.63                  | -0.467 (2.54)      | 0.63                  |
| Civic culture  | -1.114 (1.00)      | 0.33                  | -1.318 (1.00)      | 0.27                  | -0.723 (1.03)      | 0.49                  | -1.191 (0.98)      | 0.30                  |
| EU affinity  | 1.210 (1.26)       | 3.35                  | 1.211 (1.25)       | 3.36                  | 1.122 (0.88)       | 3.07                  | 1.223 (1.52)       | 3.99                  |
| <b>Individual level</b>  |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Male   | -0.049 (0.04)      | 0.95                  | -0.049 (0.04)      | 0.95                  | -0.049 (0.04)      | 0.95                  | -0.049 (0.04)      | 0.95                  |
| Age  | -0.005 (0.00)***   | 0.99                  | -0.005 (0.00)***   | 0.99                  | -0.005 (0.00)***   | 0.99                  | -0.005 (0.00)***   | 0.99                  |
| Married  | -0.065 (0.35)+     | 0.94                  | -0.065 (0.35)+     | 0.94                  | -0.065 (0.35)+     | 0.94                  | -0.065 (0.35)+     | 0.94                  |
| Lower Tertiary   | 0.046 (0.05)       | 1.05                  | 0.044 (0.05)       | 1.05                  | 0.046 (0.05)       | 1.05                  | 0.045 (0.05)       | 1.05                  |
| Higher Tertiary  | 0.165 (0.06)**     | 1.18                  | 0.165 (0.06)**     | 1.18                  | 0.166 (0.06)**     | 1.18                  | 0.165 (0.06)**     | 1.18                  |
| Unemployed   | -0.097 (0.07)      | 0.91                  | -0.096 (0.07)      | 0.91                  | -0.097 (0.07)      | 0.91                  | -0.097 (0.07)      | 0.91                  |
| LN Income  | 0.038 (0.03)       | 1.04                  | 0.039 (0.03)       | 1.04                  | 0.039 (0.03)       | 1.04                  | 0.039 (0.03)       | 1.04                  |
| Input orientations   | 2.432 (0.15)***    | 11.4                  | 2.430 (0.15)***    | 11.4                  | 2.432 (0.15)***    | 11.4                  | 2.435 (0.15)***    | 11.4                  |
| Output orientations  | 1.774 (0.20)***    | 5.89                  | 1.773 (0.20)***    | 5.89                  | 1.774 (0.20)***    | 5.89                  | 1.772 (0.20)***    | 5.88                  |
| Civic engagement   | -0.342 (0.18)+     | 0.71                  | -0.318 (0.17)+     | 0.73                  | -0.377 (0.19)+     | 0.69                  | -0.385 (0.19)+     | 0.68                  |
| <b>Cross-level interactions</b>  |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| System evaluations X   |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Input orientations   | 0.991 (1.47)       | 2.69                  |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Output orientations  | 1.820 (2.03)       | 6.17                  |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Civic engagement   | -3.911 (2.00)+     | 0.02                  |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Normative democratic X   |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Input orientations   |                    |                       | 1.816 (2.20)       | 6.15                  |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Output orientations  |                    |                       | 3.224 (2.72)       | 25.1                  |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Civic engagement   |                    |                       | -7.689 (2.48)**    | 0.00                  |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Civic culture X  |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Input orientations   |                    |                       |                    |                       | 1.060 (0.59)+      | 2.89                  |                    |                       |
| Output orientations  |                    |                       |                    |                       | -0.112 (1.58)      | 0.89                  |                    |                       |
| Civic engagement   |                    |                       |                    |                       | -0.304 (1.16)      | 0.74                  |                    |                       |
| EU affinity X  |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Input orientations   |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       | -0.907 (1.80)      | 0.40                  |
| Output orientations  |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       | -2.231 (2.44)      | 0.11                  |
| Civic engagement   |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       | 0.736 (2.08)       | 2.09                  |
| <b>Random components</b>   | Variance           | PRE (pre interaction) |
| Intercept  | 0.389***           |                       | 0.389***           |                       | 0.391***           |                       | 0.393***           |                       |
| Input  | 0.426***           | -0.03                 | 0.416***           | -0.00                 | 0.413***           | 0.00                  | 0.435***           | -0.05                 |
| Output   | 0.997***           | -0.02                 | 0.973***           | 0.01                  | 1.030***           | -0.05                 | 0.996***           | -0.02                 |
| Practice   | 0.612***           | 0.13                  | 0.477***           | 0.32                  | 0.743***           | -0.06                 | 0.734***           | -0.05                 |
| ***p≤0.001 **p≤0.01 *p≤0.05 +p≤0.10  |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |
| Calculations done using HLM 6.06. Multilevel logistic regression models were applied computed using restricted maximum likelihood estimation. Entries are coefficients with standard errors in parentheses followed by odds ratios. Non-binary variables are grand-mean centred. Data comes from the European Values Study (2008). N: 26289 individuals in 27 countries. |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |                    |                       |