How Europeans see Europe: structure and dynamics of European legitimacy beliefs

Scheuer, A.

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Chapter 1

European attitudes in public opinion research

Citizens' attitudes towards European integration and the European Union are nowadays a well-established subject in public opinion research. A wide array of studies has been published on quite different aspects of people's attitudes toward the European Union. Many of them can be grouped under the label of case-interest, in the sense that scholars are keen on understanding the evolution of public opinion with respect to this important integration project. In the beginning, research often focussed on the question whether and under which conditions publics of countries that had fought each other in the Second World War would, over the course of time, be able to develop a common sense of we-feeling and support a common political system beyond the nation state (e.g. Deutsch et al. 1957; Inglehart 1967, 1970a, 1977). During the first decades, when European integration was primarily focussed on economic harmonisation, scholars came increasingly to consider economic conditions as source of public support for European integration rather than political values (e.g. Inglehart & Rabier 1978; Handley 1981).

The establishment of direct elections to the European Parliament triggered systematic comparativists to engage in European attitude research because they see the European Union and its member countries as a unique laboratory that permits the comparative testing of theories. "The European Union (...) represents a common stimulus to Europeans. (...) With a common stimulus, we can test for the commonality of causal processes across national borders and for nation-specific processes" (Dalton & Eichenberg 1994:5). These opportunities are relevant for theories of European public opinion, but also for theories about voting behaviour, about legitimacy beliefs, etcetera. In all these areas, the comparative study of the member states can produce more general insights than would be possible with isolated single-country studies (e.g. van der Eijk & Schmitt 1991; van der Eijk & Franklin 1996).

A real surge of studies on public support for European integration was brought about by the process of ratification of the Treaty of the European Union (Maastricht Treaty) and the role of the Danish and French referendums therein (e.g. Svensson 1994). As public opinion had acquired a real political impact on the integration process, scholars became increasingly concerned about
the political legitimacy\(^1\) of the European Union (e.g. Eichenberg & Dalton 1993; Niedermayer & Sinnot 1995). In order to explain variations in the level of EU support, studies focused primarily on determinants of EU support at the country level as well as on the individual level (e.g. Gabel & Palmer 1995; Gabel 1998a, 1998b). The introduction of the common currency further raised researchers’ interests in explaining people’s support or rejection in different countries. At present, the ratification of the European Constitution (‘deepening’) and the accession of new member countries from Central and Eastern Europe (‘widening’) constitute new subject areas that raise even more powerfully the question of public legitimacy of European integration and the European Union (EU).

However, despite the importance frequently attributed to European legitimacy and in spite of the efforts made to explain variation in European attitudes\(^2\) by means of determinants, research has not yet come up with a consistent explanation of the origin and the development of European legitimacy, i.e. of its evolution. We still do not know how European legitimacy beliefs have come into being, we are uncertain about what kinds of legitimacy beliefs exist, we speculate how comparable they are across countries and – last but not least – we are largely ignorant of the factors that drive European legitimacy. From such weak basis, it is difficult to derive valid statements about the current state of EU legitimacy, let alone predictions about public legitimacy for future unification projects.

Progress in legitimacy research has been hampered mainly by two problems that are unresolved until present. The first problem concerns the conceptualisation and measurement of relevant European legitimacy beliefs. Scholars of European legitimacy diverge widely in terms of the concepts they deem relevant and how to measure them. But without common standards for central concepts in legitimacy research, individual studies cannot contribute to accumulative knowledge, but only produce disparate results. The great diversity in conceptualisation and measurement of European attitudes is illustrated in Section 1.1.

The second problem consists of the fact that “few theorists have shown interest in translating their conceptual models into testable hypotheses. The earlier theorists, again, proved a partial exception, but their operationalisations led to complex, quasi-indeterminate models that were difficult to test. (...) They be-

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\(^1\) The ‘democratic deficit’ as well as legitimacy in general can relate to a variety of different aspects: the (lack of) conformity of institutions to the democratic rule, fulfilment of conditions necessary for a democratic political process, or generalised public support. We are only interested in the legitimacy beliefs of the people on the political system.

\(^2\) The term ‘European attitudes’ here always means citizens’ attitudes towards European integration and the European Union. In reference works, another meaning of the term, namely attitudes of Europeans people regarding a certain issue, can be found.
came unwieldy instruments of description (or prescription) rather than devices for causal testing” (Hooghe 2001:3). This applies also for theories about the evolution of European legitimacy beliefs. Legitimacy processes are theorised in abstract terms that are difficult to translate into empirical models. The three major theoretical perspectives in this field – which we will summarise in Section 1.2 – all rely on untested propositions that call for empirical justification.

Any progress in European legitimacy research is dependent on overcoming the two major obstacles described above: the establishment of empirically-based concepts and valid measurement instruments for relevant European legitimacy beliefs and the development of an approach that translates theoretical propositions into concrete modelling devices. This monograph is dedicated to develop solutions for both problems by identifying concepts and measures that are suitable to be included in models that specify the evolution of EU legitimacy. We will establish the relevant dimensions in European attitudes and signify them in terms of legitimacy beliefs. On this basis, we will re-formulate existing theories on European legitimacy in empirical terms and specify models that test the adequacy of the rivalling theories. We describe the evolution of European legitimacy by tracing the legitimacy processes that shape people’s outlook on the EU in the different member countries.

1.1 Concepts and measures of European attitudes

Public opinion about the EU is usually investigated on the basis of survey data. The Eurobarometer (EB) studies, carried out by the European Commission since the mid-1970s in order to monitor European public opinion, are by far the most frequently used data.3 They provide time series for a wide range of items that have been asked in similar form in all member states. In addition to the Eurobarometer surveys, other studies provide further survey data comparable across the countries of the Union. The European Election Studies (EES) have been conducted at the occasion of direct elections to the European Parliament by the European Election Study Group4 and include all member states. They have a more specific focus, however, that is directed to voting behaviour and the European electoral process in general. Yet other cross-national

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3 Eurobarometer studies are carried out twice a year (spring and autumn) by the European Commission in all EU member countries. For detailed information about Eurobarometer studies see Soufflot de Magny & Holst (2002) and the following webpages: http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/index_en.htm and http://www.gesis.org/en/data_service/eurobarometer/index.htm (last visit in May 2005).

4 For details on the European Election Studies (EES) see www.europeanelectionstudies.net (last visit in May 2005).
surveys also include items on European attitudes, such as the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), the World Values Survey (WVS), the European Values Study (EVS), the International Social Survey Program (ISSP), and the European Social Survey (ESS). Finally, a great variety exists of country-specific opinion polls and election studies. All of this provides researchers with a rich database to study a broad range of questions regarding citizens’ attitudes towards European integration and the European Union.

It is imperative for any research on European attitudes to have a clear conceptual and operational basis in order to make a meaningful contribution to our body of knowledge. Theoretical concepts need to be identified and their operationalisation in terms of measurement specified. Survey items and theoretical concepts must be clearly and explicitly ‘mapped’ onto each other in ways that do justice to theoretical and conceptual implications as well as to observable patterns in the data. Ignoring this requirement risks ad-hoc measurement and conceptualisation, only justified by the individual researcher’s subjective assessments of face validity. As these subjective assessments diverge regularly, such a research basis impedes the development of cumulative knowledge.

Unfortunately, inadequate mapping of concepts and indicators is quite common in research on attitudes towards European integration and the EU. This is not a matter of mere terminology, i.e. the choice of words or labels for concepts. From a perspective of definitional nominalism, it is of little relevance which concrete terms are used to name the concepts under investigation, or even that this terminology varies from one study to the next. The crucial problem arises when observational implications of linking indicators and concepts are not empirically tested.

This problem can easily be illustrated by the different ways in which scholars make use of four of the most frequently used Eurobarometer items. These are customarily referred to as Unification\(^5\), Membership\(^6\), Regret\(^7\) and Benefit\(^8\). The fact that these four survey questions have been included in virtually every wave of the Eurobarometer, thus generating time series of up to 30 years, explains part of their appeal to analysts. Moreover, they seem to relate to central concerns about support for integration. Most researchers rely on their own close reading and semi-linguistic analysis of question wordings to arrive at

\(^5\) "In general, are you for or against efforts being made to unify Western Europe? Are you very much for, for to some extent, against to some extent or very much against?"
\(^6\) "Generally speaking, do you think that {our country’s} membership of the European Union is a good thing, a bad thing, neither good nor bad?"
\(^7\) If you were told tomorrow that the European Union had been scrapped, would you be very sorry about it, indifferent or very relieved?" This indicator is also sometimes called ‘Dissolution’.
\(^8\) "Taking everything into consideration, would you say that {our country} has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the European Union?"
their interpretations of what is measured by these items. This leads to remarkable differences in the assignment of indicators to concepts.

Many researchers see the Unification item, for example, as a measure of 'diffuse' or 'affective' support,9 and Membership as a measure for 'specific' or 'instrumental' evaluations.10 But others are of the view that Membership is also an indicator of diffuse/affective orientations.11 Bosch & Newton (1995) assume a continuum running from diffuse to specific on which Unification, Membership and Benefit are located in this order, which amounts to the assumption that each of these items indicates both concepts, but in different 'mixes'. Still others reject the notion that these survey questions measure different concepts. Hewstone (1986) purports to show that the distinction between affective and evaluative attitudes has no empirical basis. Similarly, Gabel & Palmer state that "Eurobarometer questions are too vague and broadly worded to be precise measures of these distinct components" (Gabel & Palmer 1995:9). Van der Eijk & Oppenhuis (1996) claim that all four items measure the same latent trait because they form a unidimensional scale.

The fact that some researchers decide to combine different items into a single measure (assuming that they are all indicators of the same concept) while others decide against this (thus assuming that they measure different concepts) illustrates the nature of the problem that this study addresses. Whether conceptual distinctions, or the lack thereof, are empirically warranted is rarely investigated.12 But when different researchers make such decisions on the basis of contradictory assumptions, at least some of them must be wrong and their substantive findings will lack validity. When items are combined that should be distinguished, the estimated relationships between the combined measure and other variables are contaminated and misleading. In the opposite case, when items are distinguished that actually pertain to the same concept, one gets conceptual and theoretical 'clutter' and risks instability and capitalising on chance. When these two situations exist next to one another, the results and findings from the various analyses will often appear to be conflicting or incompatible. Some of these results are bound to be invalid, but without explicit assessments of the merits of the way in which indicators were linked to theoretical concepts it is impossible to say which findings are valid and which are not.

Theory-driven approaches do not produce more clarity either. They are constrained by the lack of specificity of legitimacy theories. Studies on Euro-

10 E.g. Inglehart & Rabier (1978); Inglehart, Rabier & Reif (1987).
12 Some attempts have been made in Wildgen & Feld (1976), Handley (1977), Hewstone (1986), Treiber & Schmitt (1990), Gable (1998a), and also in van der Eijk & Oppenhuis (1996).
European legitimacy usually start out from Easton (1965, 1975) who proposed a typology of attitudes that distinguishes legitimacy beliefs with respect of mode (diffuse vs. specific) and object (political community, regime, authorities). But this is one of several typologies that are all difficult to translate into empirical terms. Niedermayer & Westle (1995) give a synopsis of a variety of typologies proposed for political support for the European Union.13 None of these typologies has been translated into an empirically tested operationalisation and measurement of European legitimacy beliefs. Little empirical research is available that tests which distinctions people actually make, whether these typologies apply, and how the legitimacy beliefs should actually be measured.

The problems of conceptualisation and measurement are compounded by the fact that the study of European attitudes is a genuinely comparative enterprise. Analysts do usually not study a single country, but many or all countries of the EU. Comparing results across countries, however, requires comparable measures. Usually, comparability is been taken for granted when the same (single or combined) measures are used in all countries under investigation.14 But if measurement decisions are ad hoc, three situations can occur. First, the measurement may be invalid in all countries. In that case all findings are suspect - but we will be blissfully ignorant of this until we systematically address issues of conceptualisation and measurement. Second, the measurement may be valid for some countries, but not for others. In this case, comparisons of findings between countries are misleading, but again, analysts will often not be aware of this. Third, measurements are valid in all countries so that substantive results and comparisons are also valid. Most researchers seem to take this third possibility for granted. Without empirical assessments, however, we cannot decide which of these three situations applies to a given piece of research. We can assume, however, that the increasing number of member countries in the EU re-

13 Regarding the attitude mode, Fishbein & Ajzen (1975) define attitudes as one-dimensional, ranging from beliefs over attitudes and behavioural intentions to behaviour. Almond & Verba (1963:15) conceive attitudes as multidimensional (cognitive, affective, and evaluative) whereby they subscribe to the socio-psychological theory of action by Parsons & Shils (1951). Easton (1965, 1975) distinguishes diffuse and specific support, but this distinction is sometimes interpreted bi-polar (e.g. Bosch & Newton 1995; Norris 1999). Lindberg & Scheingold (1970) separates utilitarian from affective support, which has strongly influenced the research on citizens’ attitudes towards the European Union. Niedermayer & Westle (1995:50) themselves propose to separate three modes of orientation: psychological involvement, evaluations (specific and diffuse) and behavioural intentions.

Regarding the attitude object, various scholars have proposed refinements of Easton’s seminal distinction of three objects: political community, regime, and authorities (e.g. Westle 1989; Norris 1999).

14 Comparability concerns are usually discussed with respect of problems associated with translation of question wording (e.g. Soufflot de Magny & Holst 2002).
roduces the likelihood that ad-hoc decisions will lead to valid measurement in all countries alike.

The first part of the present study is designed to overcome the pitfalls of ad-hoc measurement by constructing measurement models. They specify which survey questions point to which attitudes and by which indicators specific concepts can be captured empirically. It establishes empirically relevant conceptual distinctions in citizens' attitudes towards European integration and the European Union (EI/EU) and supplies measurement instruments to capture them. Our approach is comparative, i.e. we search for distinctions that can be found similarly in all countries and we aim to construct indicators that measure the same attitudes across countries.

1.2 Theories of European legitimacy

A major motivation for studying European legitimacy is the question whether or not — or to which degree — European citizens support the process of European integration and legitimise a European political system by their approval and loyalty. The very understanding that the European Union is a democratic political system in its own right that requires a basis of legitimacy in order to persist was the outcome of a long debate among scientists. Analysing European legitimacy firstly calls for conceiving the EU as a political system with its own requirements for legitimacy (Belot 2000). Similarly long debates were fought about the question whether the European Union is a political system sui generis, i.e. of a special kind, or similar (in relevant ways) to the political systems of the nation states. Under the condition that the EU is conceived as a political system similar to nation states, legitimacy theories can be transferred from the national to the European level. To our knowledge, three major perspectives exist about the basis on which loyalty to and legitimacy of the European Union emerges and about the factors that shape or alter it.

The integrationist perspective

The first perspective goes back to early theorists of regional integration who state that European integration is an elite-driven project and that publics are taught by national elites to perceive it favourably.\textsuperscript{15} According to the transactionalist approach inherent in this integrationist view, citizens in nations to be integrated develop support in terms of a sense of shared community ("we-

\textsuperscript{15} The spill-over from elites to publics is usually conceptualised on the basis of Deutsch's (1968) cascade model of communication and action.
feeling), mutual sympathy and loyalty due to increasing interaction and communication among the member countries (Deutsch 1957). In the same line, Lindberg & Scheingold (1970) coined the term of 'permissive consensus' that describes a state of European legitimacy in which citizens are passively approving European integration. The primacy of a diffuse or affective kind of support is frequently referred to by studies that “see signs of growing European identity and trust, and of beliefs in the goals and ideals of European integration, especially among the younger generation” (Bosch & Newton 1995:74).

Inglehart (1970a, 1970b, 1977) formulated two hypotheses on how the socialisation background determines the chances of forming European legitimacy beliefs on the individual level. According to the cognitive mobilisation hypothesis, the capacity to form beliefs on European goals and ideals depends on cognitive skills which increase by education. This is complemented by the value change hypothesis according to which younger generations develop new value priorities which are easier to bring into line with support for European integration.

A repeated finding was that nationality remained the strongest factor for the level of support (Shepard 1975; Mayhew 1980; Treiber & Schmitt 1990; Deflem & Pampel 1996). Therefore, many studies engaged in the explanation of differences in country levels of EU support. Political, economic, historical and cultural factors were found to shape European legitimacy on the country level. Two explanatory factors often referred to are duration of membership – i.e. the time the public has been familiarised with the new political system (Inglehart & Rabier 1978) – and the degree of elite dispute on the European issue in a public – i.e. the extent and intensity of positive and negative communications transmitted from the elite to the public (Treiber & Schmitt 1990). Given the fact that elites in most publics are positive about EI/EU, approaches of this perspective are usually optimistic to see European legitimacy grow over the time. Yet, they harbour doubts whether the extent to which legitimacy that can develop over the short period of time covered by the history of European integration is sufficient to provide a dependable foundation for advances in political unification towards a full-fledged European political system.

The utilitarian or instrumental view

The second perspective is the utilitarian or instrumental view of the neofunctionalists who stress the importance of the performance of the new political system for the development of loyalty and support. Given positive evaluations of performance, citizens would transfer loyalty ('spill-over') from the national to the European level by way of generalisation and a redefinition of national in-

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16 'Evaluation' or 'evaluative' is understood throughout the book as a general term that can imply utilitarian or instrumentalist calculus as well as satisfaction with normative demands.
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terests as European interests (Haas 1958; Schmitter 1970). Evaluation of policy outcomes and system performance is the key that determines the general orientation towards the system. This view is echoed in a variety of utilitarian approaches in which the benefits obtained from European integration are regarded as shaping people's view on European integration (e.g. Dalton & Eichenberg 1991, 1998; Eichenberg & Dalton 1993; Gabel & Palmer 1995). Proponents of this approach highlight the importance of benefits and evaluations but are often sceptical about the strength and endurance of EU legitimacy because it is “difficult to promote policies that reinforce support”, while “adverse economic circumstances tend to undermine its popularity” (Bosch & Newton 1995:74). Determinants of European legitimacy on the individual level are searched for in factors that condition individual chances to benefit from European integration, such as good education, specific occupations, residence near the border to another member country, etc. On the country level, factors such as national economic power, size of countries or strength of national identities are associated with specific benefits from European integration and assumed to foster EU support.

The Eastonian view

The third hypothesis is the Eastonian view which formulates legitimacy as an interplay between specific and diffuse support in order to explain why people stay loyal to a political system despite (temporarily) lacking positive outcomes (Easton 1965, 1975). The gist of Easton’s argument is that diffuse support constitutes a buffer for the political systems in times when specific support is low. In times when specific support is high, conversely, diffuse support increases. This approach includes the two previous ones in the way that diffuse support gives a positive outlook on the system performance and that long-term specific support fosters loyalty to the political system. The level of both kinds of support as well as the dynamics between them determine the current state of legitimacy of the political system. Despite its theoretical plausibility – evidenced by its appeal to many scholars – this theory is difficult to apply empirically. This is due to two major problems.

The first problem lies in the adequate conceptualisation and measurement of European legitimacy beliefs. As we have outlined already in Section 1.1, the major distinctions citizens make in their attitudes towards EI/EU have not been assessed empirically so that the classification and measurement of different legitimacy beliefs – although theory-driven – relies on ad-hoc decisions (e.g. Westle & Niedermayer 1991; Niedermayer & Sinnot 1995). Only limited attempts have been made to find empirically based measures for testing the
theory (e.g. Gabel 1998a). The weak empirical basis hampers the development of complex models that may capture the different dynamics assumed to occur in legitimacy beliefs.

The second problem lies precisely the modelling of effects running between different kinds of legitimacy beliefs. As mentioned above, the theories about political support proclaim that changes in one kind of support generate changes in other kinds and *vice versa*. Yet, such dynamic interrelationships have – to the best of our knowledge – never been explored empirically, let alone that theoretical propositions have been tested properly. The non-existence of such efforts is quite understandable, as the study of dynamic interrelationships includes the dimension of time. Long-term panel data would be ideal for such investigations, but they are non-existent and not easily organized either.

Previous research has therefore mainly reverted to the comparative testing of external factors in order to discern which kind of legitimacy dynamics prevail in certain countries or at a certain point in time in order to determine whether values, communications or (the perception of) benefits have the greatest impact on EU support (e.g. Gabel 1998b). These studies fall short, however, in assessing the dominant dynamics in legitimacy beliefs for two reasons. One is that often only one support variable is chosen so that no internal dynamics can be modelled. But even when different support variables are selected, the lacking time dimension in the data prevents to model the interrelations between them. As a consequence, we have no solid empirical evidence about how European legitimacy emerges, what the current state of European legitimacy is and to which factors it reacts – in short: we are ignorant about the evolution of European legitimacy.

The second part of the present study is dedicated to find solutions for these problems and thereby come to new insights about the evolution of European legitimacy. The solution of the first problem consists in the identification of relevant distinctions in citizens’ attitudes towards European integration and the EU. Knowing what kinds of attitudes people form towards the EU will help us to specify concepts and measurement of different kinds of legitimacy beliefs. The solution for the second problem consists in formulating an approach that allows us to draw conclusions about dynamics from single-point data. By means of this approach, we can specify models that show what the current dynamics of European legitimacy beliefs are and by which factors they are driven. At the end of our analyses, we will be able to decide which legiti-
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macy theory describes the empirical observations most accurately. This fulfils a necessary condition to understand the sources for future stability and change of European legitimacy.

1.3 Plan of the book

The key concept on which this study is founded is that of a belief system. The concept has been introduced to political attitude research by Converse (1964), but it also links to more recent insights from psychological research (Eagly & Chaiken 1998). We apply the idea of a belief system to citizens' attitudes towards EU/EU. Despite much scepticism about people's ability to form consistent and stable attitudes on the EU that can be measured meaningfully by surveys (e.g. Janssen 1991; Anderson 1995), we assume that citizens dispose of a system of structured attitudes that are clearly related to EU/EU. The European belief system can contain different kinds of attitudes, and it should be possible to decide whether a specific attitude is part of the European belief system or not.

Belief systems (like all systems) are composed of elements. In order to identify these elements in the empirical data, the structure of the belief system needs to be analysed by means of an appropriate modelling approach. The identification of the elements that belong to the European belief system is our first task. It is designed to facilitate the conceptual mapping of European attitudes in terms of legitimacy theories and the development of valid measurement instruments for including these concepts into empirical models. We develop a method to establish the structure underlying European attitudes as measured in public opinion surveys. In this way, we can determine the relevant attitude dimensions and present a map of the internal structure of the European belief system, from which valid measures can be derived for legitimacy research.

All elements of a belief system are connected by links, which allows the specification of the system in terms of a network. Our starting point for the modelling of dynamics is that these links contain information about past dynamics in the system. We will outline an approach to access the information of past dynamics that is immersed in present structures and we will specify models that indicate what the dominant dynamics between European legitimacy

19 Throughout this study, we try to avoid assumptions that cannot be empirically assessed via observable implications that flow from them. Therefore, most of our assumptions are starting points for our research, and are only kept in place as long as empirical evidence does not refute them or their observable implications.
beliefs have been in the past. By means of these models, we can determine the dominant driving forces in the European belief system and also specify how susceptible or resistant to change European legitimacy beliefs are.

Our research question – which of the legitimacy theories referred to above applies best to empirical information – is addressed comparatively. We consider surveys from the member states of the EU as representing separate publics that may or may not provide empirical support for any of these theories. Our feeling is that no single view contains the absolute truth while other views are empirically irrelevant. It is conceivable that several views complement each other in the description. Therefore, we will consider the member states as a range of cases in which to assess the merits of different theories. But such testing of theories across countries requires comparative models, and the construction of these is a formidable methodological challenge. We have to develop strategic procedures for the construction of comparative models of the European belief system that can be applied in all countries. Special modelling techniques are required to arrive at comparative models for the large number of member countries, and these techniques do not guarantee a positive outcome. It will be an empirical finding to what extent the structure of the European belief systems is similar across countries. To the extent that we do succeed, however, to construct comparable models and measures, we can compare cases under ceteris paribus conditions, which yields infinitely more information than the juxtaposition of single, unique cases.

Chapter 2 elaborates the ideas inherent in the belief-system approach and reviews theoretical assumptions and methodological strategies for modelling the European belief system. Section 2.1 outlines how the structure underlying European attitudes can be conceptualised and approached empirically. Section 2.2 explicates under which conditions traces from past dynamics can be discovered in present attitude structures. Section 2.3 describes how the comparative challenge in this study is mastered. Section 2.4 introduces the data base used for the analyses in this monograph.

Chapter 3 is presents the empirical analysis of the structure of the European belief system. We start by elaborating the methodological strategy that combines various analytical steps to identify the major elements at increasing levels of abstraction. Comparative modelling assesses the degree of similarity of attitude structures across countries. The outcome culminates in a comparative complex higher-order measurement model that represents the structure of the European belief system and that is applicable in all member countries under scrutiny. This raises various implications for concepts and measurement in European attitude research that are discussed by way of conclusion.

Chapter 4 analyses patterns of relations that reflect the prevailing internal dynamics of the European belief system. It starts with an elaboration of the
modelling strategy, than specifies external factors that influence the belief system and the internal dynamics that are generated by them. In this way, country-specific patterns of internal dynamics can be recognised that are informative about the evolution of European legitimacy beliefs. This, in turn, tells us which of the various theories about legitimacy is most appropriate in the different publics.

Chapter 5 summarises the findings we made in the analyses with regard to our research question and discusses their implications. The goal of this study is to provide insights in the evolution of European legitimacy and to supply methodological approaches that can advance legitimacy research in the future.

The Appendix contains the documentation of the data base used and the models constructed throughout the book. While the text presents only the most important features of the analyses, the reader is referred throughout the text to more extensive documentation in the tables and figures of the Appendix.