

UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

# Reliance and attitudes

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A study about the effect of political and institutional trust on postures towards the welfare state among migrants and non-migrants

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## SUMMARY

“Whether citizens support the welfare state depends on whether they trust the welfare state to be capable of delivering various public goods and services of sufficient quality” (Edlund, 2006, p.397). Although this argument incorporates a tempting logic research dealing with the question if this claim is valid is not to be found often, especially not with regard to immigrants who are a growing section of European populations. That is why, the aim of this study is to find out whether the level of political and social trust of immigrants has an impact on their attitudes towards the welfare state. In accordance with usual quantitative research methods, data from the European Social Survey has been used and evaluated with the background of existing literature and theories. It has been expected that the results of multiple regression analyses reveal a positive correlation between the independent and dependent variable. This means that the higher the degree to which immigrants have confidence in the political actors and institutions in their immigration country, the more they are supportive of respective welfare state provisions. However, hypotheses have not been confirmed after the running of statistical measurements. No distinctive differences between the two population groups were observed neither could a strong, positively linear relationship between trust and attitudes be detected. Both samples show low levels of political, modest levels of institutional trust and comparably high scores on government responsibility. Furthermore, initial correlations between the two variables were not resistant to the influence of third factors.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The motivation for this bachelor thesis is the interest in the general ties between trust and attitudes in forms that are relevant for the political and societal life of a country. The European Union consists of 28 in various aspects very different member states, all of which can be classified as welfare states. But also in this field, some broader and many detailed differences can be detected. On top of that, there are variations in the political set-up as well as in societal and cultural domains. Consequently, it has ever since the beginnings of European integration been of interest to examine such differences as they may provide explanations for developments in certain directions as well as they may influence people's attitudes and behaviour. The European Union or rather its population is growing, which is above all caused by net migration, meaning that more people from outside the EU immigrate into it than people exit (European Union, 2013). Thus, in many countries, increasing groups

of immigrants can be found that obviously shape the societal and cultural composition. It is very likely that migration influences politics and economics and thereby stimulating public discussion on the consequences of migration. The European Union is a place where democracy has turned into something taken for granted. One of the core elements of democracy is the freedom of speech and thought and as a form of government it can only function properly if maintained by its citizens (Held, 2006). There are quite some differences in forms of democracy, but what all of those states have in common, if they can be judged as liberal democracies, is that they require legitimacy and support by its population (Held, 2006). The central idea behind the concept of democracy is that the power or the rule is in the hands of the people and in most forms of democracy, this is expressed by the means of elections and political participation. Thus, combining the need for legitimacy and support with the forms of expression, researchers have found out that the model of trust can play a decisive role in these processes (Hooghe et al., 2008; Crepaz, 2008; Strömblad & Adman, 2010). Scholars differentiate between social and political trust, the former meaning trust in other people like fellow citizens, and the latter meaning the confidence in political arrangements like how well an institution fulfils its purpose. There are different theories about the way trust works, how it comes into existence and how it shapes and is shaped; the theory section will look closer at these. The most relevant aspect at this place however is the assumption, that if social trust in general and political trust in particular is low in a country, it is very likely that the government lacks support and legitimacy, which in turn affects its efficiency and effectiveness. A similar causal chain can be applied to the welfare state as well; the principle of solidarity that gives welfare states their ideological dimension cannot be sustained in the long run when members of the system lack trust in it, said differently: “mutual trust facilitates solutions to collective action problems inherent in social welfare programmes [...]” (Soroka et al., 2002, p.2). Coming back now to the increasing number of migrants that are entering the European Union, the question of the relationship between these various components pops up.

## 1.1 RESEARCH QUESTION

Turning now to the research questions that will serve as the basis for the bachelor thesis, the following will be the leading one during the research and writing process:

*“What is the role of political and institutional trust for attitudes towards the welfare state and are there differences between migrants and non- migrants?”*

A closer look at the research question will help to clarify what is meant and intended with it. First of all, one can say that it is explanatory in its character; the research does not only aim at describing a certain phenomenon, but rather wants to ask how the relationship between two variables looks like. So, the work ahead is keen on examining whether and how a connection between levels of trust and attitudes appears. Secondly, the analysis shall clarify whether the immigrant status has an effect on trust and then, according to the first part of the research, alters opinions concerning the welfare state. The research question can be related to two variables. On the one hand, we have „attitudes towards the welfare state“ as the dependent variable and on the other hand, we can establish „levels of trust“ as the independent variable. Thus, the latter one affects the former one, meaning that a change in variable X (=independent variable) is expected to bring about changes in variable Y (=dependent variable). If then, immigrant status as variable Z influences X similar changes in Y should be become apparent, too.

In the main part of the thesis, multiple regression techniques are conducted in order to see whether there is a correlation between the level of political and institutional trust and attitudes for the welfare state, following whether the former has an impact on the latter. This is tested for both, immigrants and natives. Outcomes are then interpreted with the help of existing literature touching upon the same or similar topics. Beforehand, a methodology section explains that and why three countries were chosen for receiving a sample, how the variables were operationalized and how data in general were collected. The conclusion of the thesis summarizes the findings of the study, gives a description of the meaning of these results and sketches an outline for further research. The next chapter builds the theoretical framework and discusses how available literature deals with the concepts of trust and attitudes and how potential relations between the two can or could look like. Therewith, the chapter provides a conceptualization of the variables.

## 2. THEORY

The section at hand deals with the theoretical framework that is considered to be helpful in order to find an answer to the research question of the bachelor thesis. This part will help to clarify what the concepts being used mean and what methods will be piloted, so that the analysis can apply theories on outcomes.

There are various theories of how trust comes into existence, how it is shaped and what it produces which makes it difficult to establish a one-way causal relationship. For example, it is not clear whether “people develop higher levels of trust because life has been kind to them, or is life kind to them because they are trusting?” (European Social Survey Education Net, 2013). However, the bachelor thesis will concentrate on the one-way approach whether levels of trust influence attitudes towards the welfare state because it seeks to explore whether there are significant indicators in this direction. Starting point for the operationalization of trust is a simple definition of what trust means in general and that trust can adapt different forms. Trust is considered to be “the belief that others will not, at worst, knowingly or willingly do you harm, and will, at best, act in your interests” (European Social Survey Education Net, 2013). This belief can then be basically divided into two sets; on the one hand, there is social trust which is the conviction that other people, above all fellow citizens, do not intend or will do anything to one’s own disadvantage. On the other hand, political trust implies that one holds faith that political institutions give their best in order to guarantee one’s own advantage. It is likely that different kinds of states produce different forms of attitudes since “according to welfare regime theory, different types of welfare states [...] also create certain patterns of public support” (Wendt et al., 2011, p.15). The importance of understanding the relationship between trust and attitudes for the welfare state can amongst others be detected in the work of Bergh and Bjornskov (2010), who found out that countries with historically high levels of trust nowadays provide extensive welfare state arrangements compared to those with less confident populations (Bergh & Bjornskov, 2010). This highlights the role of trust in shaping welfare outcomes.

## 2.1 POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL TRUST

The concepts of political and institutional trust can be used as an indicator of how much a society as an entity is confident about its government’s performance. This confidence is above all affected by historical happenings and governmental relations to them but also by more general governmental behaviour. Crises and political unrest, for example, can weaken societal trust, phases of calmness and prosperity in contrast can strengthen it (Hague & Harrop, 2010). While political trust describes the confidence in politically active people, institutional trust potters more concretely at the trust in constant institutions such as for example a country’s legal system.

Above all, in states that are democracies, it is substantial to care about the existence of at least a basis level of trust among citizens in order to guarantee a minimum amount of legitimacy and efficiency (Held, 2006). There are two broadly hold assumptions from where existence or lack of confidence can come from. On the one hand, individual citizens can subjectively judge about how well or badly ruling class' acts which can be based on own experiences concerning concrete government performance. On the other hand, there is also the possibility that trust is an attribute of a whole society, which is then influenced by perceptions of other people's experiences and or opinion forming tools, such as media (Strömblad & Adman, 2010).

Consequently, levels of trust may produce levels of acceptance of government actions, especially if they are about to have a direct impact of one's own life. As trust can also be a social attribute, it makes sense to link the two concepts. The imagination of social trust describes it as the social relationship between two people, or put more broadly, between two involved parties that is beneficial for both. One party allocates certain means to the other one and in turn expects that they are not misused for harming the giving one (European Social Survey, 2013). So for example, citizens pay taxes and assume that the state will spend them in useful ways. In other words, people are trusting because they are expecting some sort of advantage from it.

In most of the research about trust, it is ascribed a relevant function in forming and maintaining social cohesion as it is a good precondition for cooperation as well as it is "lowering transaction costs" (Gabriel & Trüdinger, 2011, p.275), which means that someone who is trusting needs to be convinced less from something the other party is suggesting than someone who is not trusting. In terms of politics this means that politicians must investigate less to persuade the public of certain measures if this public is relatively trusting; which then, consequently, makes it easier to implement laws and decisions that are not very welcomed initially. In that sense political and institutional trust deserves attention from politicians and other bureaucrats because it "becomes an important cultural resource to be used by governments in the shaping of public policies and – particularly – policy shifts" (Gabriel & Trüdinger, 2011). Further, one can also call trust a mean of decision-making as it is said to help people when deciding whether or not to comply with government actions, especially if they are not well informed about politics.



## 2.2 ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE WELFARE STATE

This paragraph will rather be kept briefly, as it will also become clearer what exactly is meant with attitudes towards the welfare state in the methodological section when it comes to the its operationalization.

First of all, it is important to know what makes up a welfare state. The term welfare state describes a country that is seeking to provide an offer of social security and public infrastructure. Since the concept of social security is almost explicitly related to the model of the welfare state, it will be sufficient to provide a rather brief definition which includes the strong monetary dimension as well as the key ideology behind social security. Further, it touches upon the areas, in which social security takes effect, namely illness, unemployment, injuries from work, disability, retirement, having children and parental leave (Hansen, 2002). This enumeration directly leads to the notion of the welfare state in which social security is tried to be implemented. Components of such provisions include among others legal health, pension or unemployment insurances as well as promotion of education and creation of wealth. Often, a welfare system is financed through the revenue from contributions and taxes and builds upon the idea of solidarity. Although nowadays actually in all democracies, welfare states are reflected, there are differences in the quality, quantity and range of single countries (Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 2013). Thus, according to the welfare regime types classification made by the Danish sociologist Esping-Andersen (1990), there are in general three archetypes of welfare states, namely the liberal, the conservative and the social-democratic one, based upon the idea the idea that welfare states can be divided into different types, dependent on the relation between the market and the state in terms of the provision of social benefits. This classification is not only important for the case selection of the study, but also when dealing with attitudes. Attitudes in this case concern the question of what an individual thinks to what extent a government should take care of the welfare of its citizens. So, it is the thinking, the opinion of how quality, quantity and range of social provisions should look like. Most often, attitudes are depicted in positive manners meaning that they are conceptualized as support for something. Following this definition, it becomes clear how important attitudes are for maintaining the welfare state since they can decide about retrenchment or extension of social provisions (Roller, 2007).

### 2.3 RELATION BETWEEN TRUST AND ATTITUDES

Coming back to the research question more explicitly, it needs to be looked at how the two variables or rather concepts are related to each other. Although much of the existing literature seeks to explain the effects of general opinions of the welfare state on levels of political and institutional trust, there are also some approaches which aim at exploring what certain amounts of confidence do with respective attitudes towards the welfare state.

One core assumption about this relationship conceptualizes attitudes as the opinions towards upcoming changes in the welfare system. The key hypothesis used as a starting point is that the higher the degree to which people are confident of political actors and institutions, the more they are in favour of alterations concerning welfare provisions. Put the other way round, “[...] resistance to welfare state reforms can be traced back to a lack of political trust” (Gabriel&Trüdinger, 2011, p.274). In general, measurements for testing this hypothesis allowed making two broad conclusions. On the one hand, there was indeed some evidence found that the level of political trust plays a role in determining whether an individual is in favour or rather against welfare changes, meaning that the more people are trusting, the more supportive they are of adjustments. On the other hand, it was assumed that this relationship is especially visible in areas where reforms have a direct effect on risk management of citizens and involves their financial contribution. However, this assumption could not be kept up.

Another assumption deals with the impact of trust on opinions towards the welfare state and is based on the same theory that the higher the level of trust is the more support the welfare state experiences. However, a leading hypothesis is formulated in a negative manner, asking whether distrust leads to less positive attitudes towards the welfare state (Edlund, 2006, p.395). These positive attitudes are simply conceptualized as support for the welfare state, but not especially on reforms. On top of that, it is actually assumed that there is the existence of an interaction between the two variables of the hypothesis and not a one way relationship; trust is defined as the belief whether actors and institutions are able to act in a desirable way which is in turn shaped by their actual performance. Following, it is to see whether people are less supportive of the welfare state if they think that institutions are not able to do a good job. Findings of the analyses reveal that, although there is a certain degree of distrust among citizens that does not mean that they are generally against welfare provisions and even rather the opposite is at stake: it seems that a majority of people thinks that social spending should be enlarged. However, it is asked to consider that this arrangement could change in the long run and that lacking trust could become a problem (Edlund, 2006).

## 2.4 IMMIGRANTS AND TRUST

As mentioned before, the arrival of migrants into a country alters the make-up of the society and thus can also change the population's general social and political trust. This is not only due to the circumstance that "native" citizens may transform their attitudes because they face new people in their society, but through migrants a new population group arises which is likely to bring in forms of social and political trust that are moulded by the experiences in the migrants' countries of origin (Röder & Mühla, 2012). Thus, there are various theories of why levels of trust among immigrants may differ from those of the native population. The similarity between most of these theories can be found in the assumption that variances are largest for groups of immigrants whose countries of origin are culturally different from their countries of arrival. Hence, in the further course of this thesis, immigrants will be those who belong to an ethnic minority in their country of arrival; this conceptualization will be taken up in the operationalization, too (European Social Survey Education Net, 2013).

Immigrants, who move from a country which is marked by political unrest and instability to a country with a tradition of peace and a stable political system, are likely to be trusting into their new home country's governmental capability (Strömblad & Adman, 2010). In other words, "immigrants may compare the host country's institutions with those in their country of origin, and should therefore have lower expectations than natives" (Röder & Mühau, 2012, p. 778). Accordingly, people moving between two relatively similar states, are expected to also show similar levels of trust in both countries' governments. As mentioned before, personal experiences and impressions are responsible for trust forming. In the case of immigrants, a good indicator, which highly influences experiences and impressions of government performance, is the perception and or knowledge of corruption in one's country. So, there is the expectation that migrants, who come from a country where corruption is high, are rather positive and show higher levels of political trust towards the new state's institutions than those originating from similar countries in terms of corruption (Strömblad & Adman, 2010). Further, immigrants coming from politically instable states are more likely to be conservative in terms of appreciating constancy and uniformity, which in turn is believed to produce higher levels of trust (Röder & Mühla, 2012).

Another approach suggests that the majority of immigrants form a 'have-nots' group in society or at least run a higher risk of belonging to this group. There are various reasons for

this circumstance, for example language barriers, lacking integration and unemployment. The status of being a ‘have-not’ on the one hand is assumed to decrease levels of trust, but on the other hand, those people are the ones most dependent from welfare state provisions (Röder & Mühlau, 2012).

Independent from the initial height of trust at the arrival in the emigration destination, it is believed that trust declines over the course of time and adapts to the average level of that of the native population; migrants become more critical towards their host country’s political institutions than they were at the beginning (Dinesen & Hooghe, 2010). There are observations from which the claim can be drawn, that this process of assimilation to a different culture which is connected to length of stay (there are also obviously differences between migrants aiming at long-term migration and those that intended to return to their country of origin (Timonen & Doyle, 2008)), citizenship, age and language usage, produces decreasing levels of trust (Röder & Mühlau, 2012).

In contrast to the acculturation of trust thesis, however, there are also studies that comprehend the role of integration into a host society the other way round; inspired by the work of Fennema and Tillie (1999), several researchers (see introduction by Jacobs and Tillie, 2004) have taken up their approach and attempted to establish “[the] claim that differences in political participation of ethnic minorities are linked to differences in ‘civic community’ [...]” (Jacobs & Tillie, 2004, p.419). This means that different ethnic groups in a country or a city were studied, measuring their levels of trust and participation as dependent and existence and character of organisations with ethnic background as independent variables. What could be derived as a new hypothesis from these studies was that the denser the network of ethnic organisations, meaning the higher the number of and the more personal links existing between the associations, the higher the levels of political participation and political trust (Fennema & Tillie, 1999; Jacobs & Tillie, 2004).

## 2.5 HYPOTHESES AND CONTROL VARIABLES

Based on the literature described above, the following paragraph will give an overview of what the theory means for the further work. The articles can be divided into two subgroups; on the one hand, there are those studies that deal with the link between trust and attitudes of a general population. On the other hand, some authors pay attention to immigrants as a specific

section of the population and their connections with the welfare state. This allows to make hypotheses as well as they provide information on potential control variables.

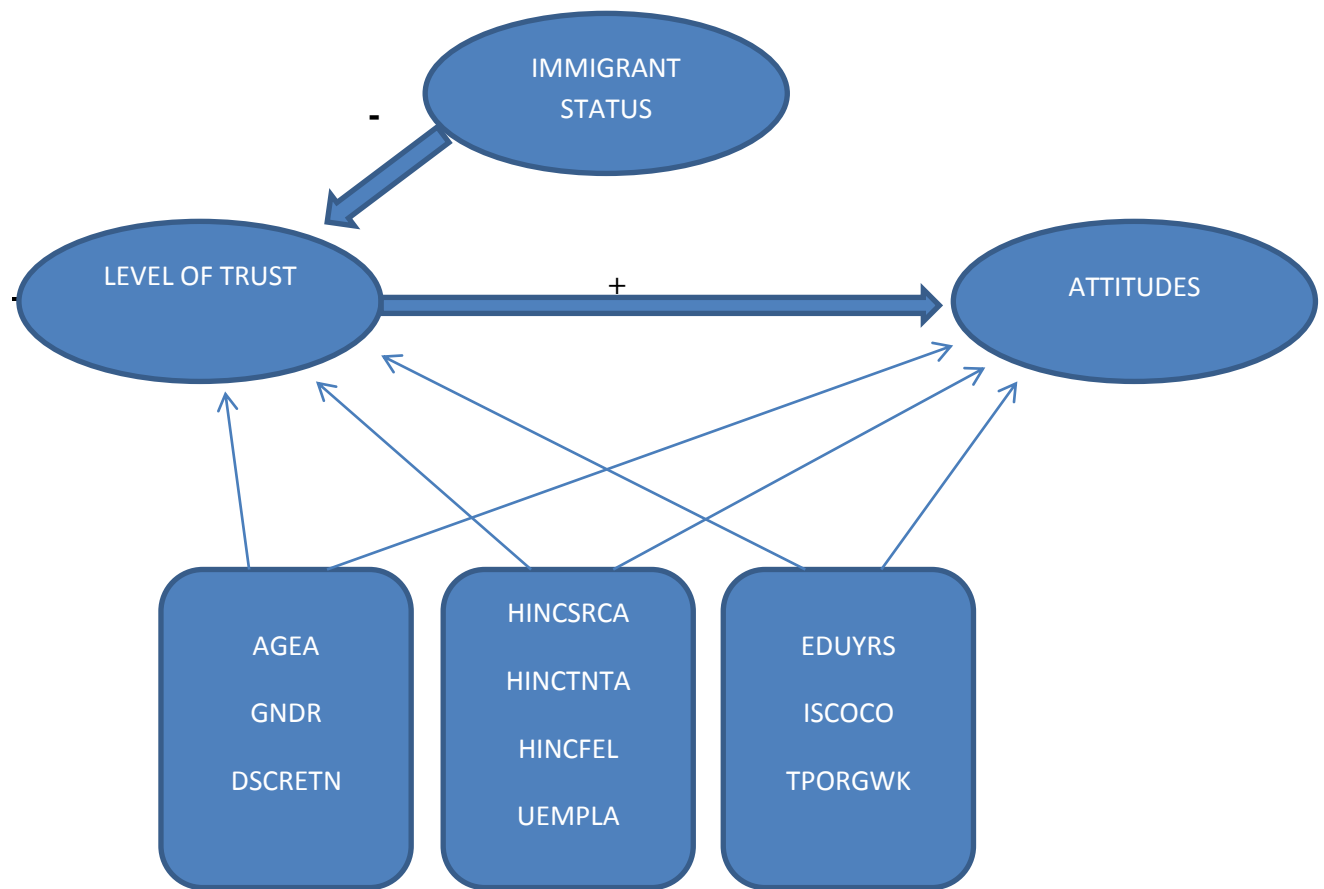
*H1: There will be differences in the levels of trust between immigrants and non-immigrants. It is expected that immigrants have higher levels of trust.*

*H2: The higher the levels of political trust for individuals, the more positive their attitudes towards the welfare state.*

Control variables will need to be included in the analysis as there are signs that they influence the level of trust or attitudes. It will be interesting to see whether there is a relationship between the two variables that withstands the influence of third factors. These are age, sex, discrimination due to ethnic group affiliation, occupation and status of employment of the respondent, together with what kind of organisation the respondent works for, the main source of the household income and the net amount of it, as well as the feeling about the household income and years of full-time education completed. It is likely that these variables can affect levels of trust in the following ways: concerning age, old people tend to trust more than younger ones as well as it seems that in general, women are more trusting than men. Further, it is likely that the socio-economic status, which is composed of income, the source of and the feeling about it and situation of employment, relates to levels of trust; individuals that are better off, tend to be more trusting. With regard to some sort of background of an individual, that embraces level of education, occupation and organisation s/he works for, is also positively related to levels of trust; for example, if an individual that is employed in an governmental organization, this job will almost definitely influence his/her view on the trustworthiness of governmental performance. Moreover, there is also the possibility that people who experienced forms of discrimination due to their membership of an ethnic minority will have less trust in general.

Figure 1 summarizes the expected relationships between the variables and shows the expected directions. Concerning the control variables, the direction is ambivalent and depends on the single categories of the variables.

Figure 1: Expected connections



Legend: AGEA= Age; GNDR=Gender; DSCRETN=Discrimination due to ethnic group affiliation; HINCSRCA=Main source of household income; HINCTNTA=Total Net Amount of Household Income; HINCFEL=Feeling about Household Income; UEMPLA=Unemployed, actively looking for job; EDUYRS=Years of fulltime education completed; ISCOCO=Occupation; TPORGWK=Type of organisation (European Social Survey, 2013).

The previous section has tried to show the complexity of trust as a component in the field of social sciences; there are not only different forms of it, such as political and social trust, but there also different conceptions of it, namely whether it is an individual attribute or rather encompasses a whole society as such. Further, research cannot agree fully on what shapes trust and how it in turn, shapes for example attitudes, as discussed in this paper. Moreover, consequences of much or lacking trust in the long run could not yet be established to a satisfactory extent.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

In order to make this thesis methodologically valuable, appropriate measurements as well as evaluation forms, fitting to the research question and the aim of the study need to be applied. The following section discusses the research design of the thesis and tells how corresponding data were collected and assessed.

#### 3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study will make use of a cross-sectional studies approach in order to receive an answer to the research question. Cross-sectional studies are research designs in which only one observation at one point in time are made, covering a sample, or section of a population. The disadvantage of this strategy is that “although their conclusions are based on observations made at only one time, typically they aim at understanding causal processes that occur over time” (Babbie, 2010, p.106). The research question is of empirical nature and the main aim of the project is to find an explanation for the relationship between level of trust and attitudes towards the welfare state. The theory section of the paper provides some concepts and hypotheses about how and why the two variables are linked to each other. Although the key focus will be on one explanatory variable, namely the level of trust, the number of different possibly relevant variables must not fall out of attention which means that the measurement will include checks for control variables as described above.

#### 3.2 DATA AND DATA COLLECTION

First of all, it is to say, that I do not have to collect new data on my own because I can use already existing data. The most central source for this bachelor thesis in terms of gathering data is the European Social Survey (ESS) since it is very useful for me in two respects; on the one hand, the ESS is not only “designed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe’s changing institutions and the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour patterns of its diverse populations” (European Social Survey, 2013), but, on the other hand, also provides data on attitudes and trust that allow to trace back respondents’ country of origin and that of current residence for seeing whether they are immigrants. The units of analysis will be individuals in European Union/European countries. Since it is however, unfeasible to ask all citizens, the units of observation are the respondents of the European Social Survey which gives a relatively high number of selected cases. This in turn increases the chance to have a representative sample. Moreover, I want to draw conclusions about attitudes which means that

there is no need to influence the units of observation and it is sufficient to observe them by looking at what they responded. The several institutions of the European Social Survey have been conducting studies for about one decade now. The decisive round of the data collection in this place will be wave 4 which was held in 2008. It is selected due to its questions about trust on the one hand, and due to its inquiries about attitudes towards the welfare state of individuals on the other hand.

### 3.3 CASE SELECTION AND SAMPLING

A first step in selecting cases is to decide which countries to include in the analysis, as restricting the research to only one country would not produce viable results due to the small number of cases. For the wave, data from over 30 countries were collected and evaluated. However, a comparison between all of these countries would be too extensive and on top of that it would mean that the differences between the states will receive more attention than the study ahead wants to pay them. Therefore, the analysis will be limited to the following countries: Belgium, France and Germany. The similarity between these selected countries is attributed to them according to the welfare regime types classification made by the sociologist Esping-Andersen which was shortly elucidated in the theoretical framework. He introduced the idea that welfare states can be divided into different types, dependent on the relation between the market and the state in terms of the provision of social benefits. His classification knows in general three archetypes of welfare states, namely the liberal, the conservative and the social-democratic one (Esping-Andersen, 1990). In my study, I choose to deal with states that belong to the category of the conservative type as a sort of middle between the more extreme ones. The circumstance of similarity is desirable in so far as that it reduces the probability of the differences between countries to have an influence on trust and attitudes. Next to the country selection, the available data need to be collated more; only those questions aimed at giving information about trust and attitudes need to be comprised. Further, two subsets need to be created, one with natives and one with non-natives.

### 3.4 OPERATIONALIZATION

#### 3.4.1 INDEPENDENT VARIABLE: TRUST

In order to measure this variable, the European Social Survey provides a number of questions that will be summarized into a scale. On the one hand, there will be the variable of political



trust. Questions that aim at discovering this is: “Please tell me on a score of 0-10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust” (European Social Survey, 2008). The selected variables then for measuring trust are “trust in politicians” and “trust in political parties”. On the other hand, the question just stated above also allows for measuring institutional trust which will be operationalized with “trust in country’s parliament”, “trust in legal system”, “trust in police”, “trust in the European Parliament” and “trust in the United Nations”. To test whether the recreation of independent variables holds reliability, a calculation of Cronbach’s alpha has been conducted. For the minorities’ sample and institutional trust a value of 0.837 was given, for the same sample of political trust a value of 0.896. Respective values for the sample natives were 0.831 and 0.895. All values speak for a relatively high internal consistency.

#### 3.4.2 DEPENDENT VARIABLE: ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE WELFARE STATE

Also the second variable can be measured with the help of the European Social Survey. The following two questions will serve as criteria for attitudes: “People have different views on what the responsibilities of governments should or should not be. For each of the tasks I read out please tell me on a score of 0-10 how much responsibility you think governments should have. 0 means it should not be governments’ responsibility at all and 10 means it should be entirely governments’ responsibility’. This inquiry includes the tasks “[ensuring] a job for everyone who wants one”, “[ensuring] adequate health care for the sick” and “[ensuring] a reasonable standard of living for the old”. The second inquiry is “And how much responsibility do you think governments should have to...” which then continues with “ensure a reasonable standard of living for the unemployed”, “ensure sufficient child care services for working parents” and “provide paid leave from work for people who temporarily have to care for sick family members”. It also uses the same scale for people to answer (European Social Survey, 2013). In order to see whether this recoding and creating of a new scale will lead to reliable results, Cronbach’s alpha has been calculated; for immigrants, a value of 0.784 was given, for natives a value of 0.781. This outcome does not show a very high internal consistency, but it is sufficient for proceeding with this operationalization of attitudes. In the appendix, one can see the original scale with the question and including the answers to the questions mentioned above.

### 3.4.3 IMMIGRANTS AND NON-IMMIGRANTS

To differentiate between immigrants and non-immigrants is relatively easy given the information provided by the European Social Survey. The questions: “Were you born in [country]?” as well as “Do you belong to a minority ethnic group in [country]?” are suitable for covering the difference between migrants and natives. Accordingly, immigrants are defined as those people who were born in a country different to that of current residence and or belonging to an ethnic minority in the country of residence. This operationalization also follows from the one made by the European Social Survey Education Net (European Social Survey Education Net, 2013b).

### 3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The availability as well as the nature of the data makes them suitable for statistical techniques in order to test hypotheses. So the data will be examined through the statistical methods of multiple regression analyses which will be done with the help of SPSS software. In more detail, I will conduct two different regression models, one for natives and one for migrants in order to see whether there is a difference between them. For both regression models, the independent variable is trust, composed of political and institutional trust. Other tested control variables are then the ones elaborated on before. Based on the results of the regression analyses, I will be able to say something about the influence of trust on attitudes for the welfare state with regard to immigrants and non-immigrants. I will also pay attention to the effect of the other potential affecting variables.

The section has shown that, in order to find an answer to the research question, a cross-sectional study with data from the different countries is applied. The European Social Survey serves as source for data collecting as well as it helps to operationalize the variables in accordance with survey questions.

## 4. ANALYSIS

This section is conducted in order to evaluate the outcomes of statistical analyses and to see whether the supposed hypotheses can be established. It is tested whether political and institutional trust has an influence on government responsibility, which is the operationalization of attitudes towards the welfare state. This relationship is tested twice; once

for a sample of immigrants and the other time for a sample of natives. I expect that there are differences between these two groups, and that immigrants in general are less trusting than natives. On top of that, I am of the expectation that the more trusting an individual is, the more positive is his/her attitude towards the welfare state. In other words, the higher an individual scores on the scale of trust, the higher I expect him/her to score on the scale for government responsibility.

As a first step here, I will depict some descriptive statistics concerning the independent and dependent variable as well as the immigrant status. The results of these statistics allow making first assumptions about following conclusions.

*Table 1: Descriptive Statistics: Natives*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Government Responsibility	6136	7.1963	1.41557
Political Trust	6206	3.5829	1.98333
Institutional Trust	5792	5.1569	1.76055

*Source:* own elaboration on European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

This table gives data for the group of natives in Belgium, France and Germany, which are represented by a total sample of 6278 individuals. One can see that for all three variables- government responsibility, which was made in order to measure attitudes, political trust and institutional trust as measures of the independent variable- there are some cases missing, however not a relevant number. Moreover, the table reveals different means; government responsibility has a relatively high mean, whereas political trust is relatively low. Institutional trust's mean is around the middle of the values. So it seems that the sample of natives holds positive attitudes towards the welfare state while their trust in the capability of their institutions is modest and the one in their politicians and political parties is even rather low.

*Table 2: Descriptive Statistics: Immigrants*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Government Responsibility	260	7.1295	1.51062
Political Trust	258	3.7132	2.14301
Institutional Trust	236	5.0729	2.01326

*Source:* own elaboration on European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

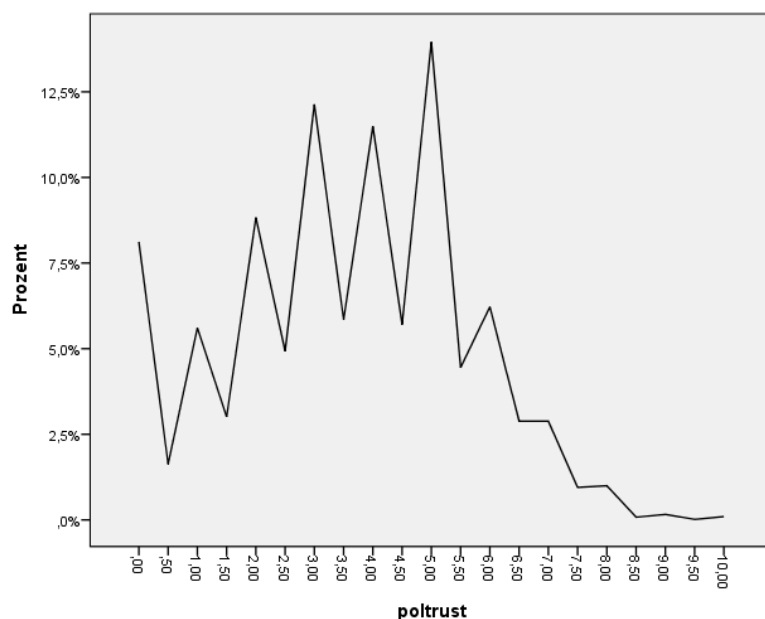
As one can observe in this table, it seems that the means for all three variables from data of the immigrants' sample are very similar to the ones of the natives' sample; government responsibility is almost in the upper quarter, while the mean for political trust almost falls in

the lowest one. The mean of institutional trust is similarly centred on the middle value. The number of respondents is lower and only gives an N of 268 people. Further, the standard deviations are slightly higher for the immigrants' sample than for the natives' sample.

As for now, the presented data do not give reason for assuming that there are significant differences between immigrants and natives in the three countries at stake, as the means for both groups and for all variables are roughly equal. Although this is not really convincing on its own, it gives a first impression of how trusting or distrusting the individuals in different societies are. Besides, it seems as if the relationship between political trust and attitudes is not as has been assumed before; despite a rather low mean for political trust for both population groups, the average score for government responsibility scores quite high. Thus, a linear relation between the two variables does not seem to be present at first glance. Between institutional trust and attitudes, it seems to be different, however.

#### 4.1 NATIVES

*Figure 2: Frequencies Political Trust Natives*

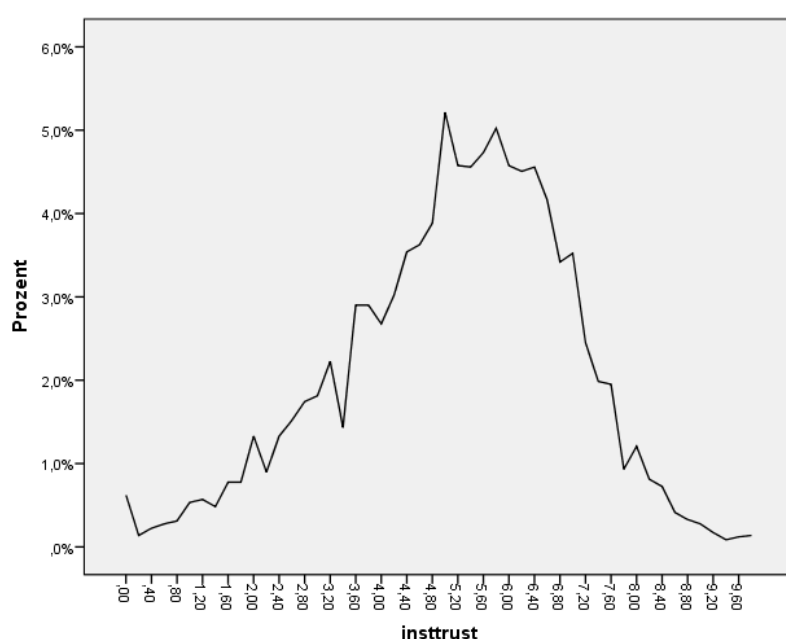


*Source:* own elaboration on European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

The figure above shows how many people trust the politicians and political parties in their country and to which degree. For reasons of comparison, the number of people is given in percentages. One can see that the curve is determined by steep up- and downward trends, especially at the left side of the curve. To the right end, in contrast, it is skewed and almost

becomes flat. The y-axis of the figure reveals that the maximum of percentage does not climb over 15%, which is around the score of five on the political trust scale. Further, of particular interest in this figure is that the peak of percentages is at the same time the point where the curve almost constantly decreases. In terms of the variables and hypotheses, we can so far derive the following conclusions: as indicated previously through the mean, the level of political trust for natives in the three selected countries is quite low. Most of the people trust their politicians and political parties less than half of the scale. There are some, who do not hold any confidence in them, while there is none who says s/he is completely trusting.

*Figure 3: Frequencies Institutional Trust Natives*



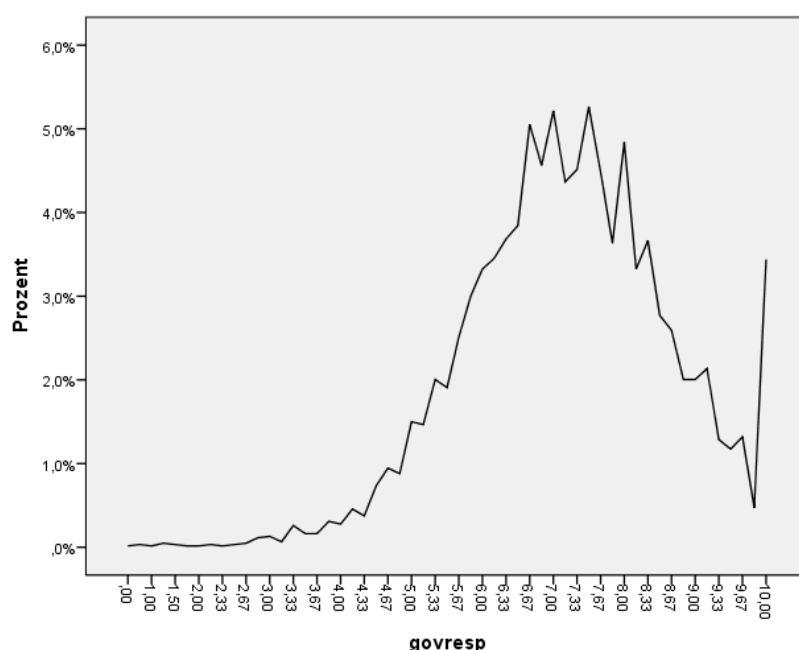
*Source:* own elaboration on European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

For institutional trust, the picture is different. The curve of figure X vaguely resembles a normal distribution with only slight up- and downwards trends and a peak centred on the middle values of the institutional trust scale. If looking at the y-axis, one can see that the percentages do not rank as high as in the previous figure, which means that there is more variation in the respondent's answer and they are spread on the whole range of the scale. Thus, there are people not trusting the political institutions of their country at all, but on the opposite, there are people who completely trust them. Putting this to the mean from before, it seems as if concerning institutional trust, people are equally trusting and distrusting.

When comparing the different forms of trust, one can see that the story is twofold; while people do not seem to hold much confidence in the performance of politicians and political

parties, governmental institutions enjoy a higher level of trust. This circumstance could indeed be ascribed to the nature of the different types of trust; it is likely that people in general trust the system of democracy in which they live and hence established institutions as such, whereas distrust in politicians and political parties comes about due to individuals' perceived as 'bad' performances. If, for example, single politicians misuse their position, this probably lowers trust in them. However, this does not have to mean that confidence in establishments decreases, too. That is why, it is not too unusual that political and institutional trust differ as they do in figure 2 and 3.

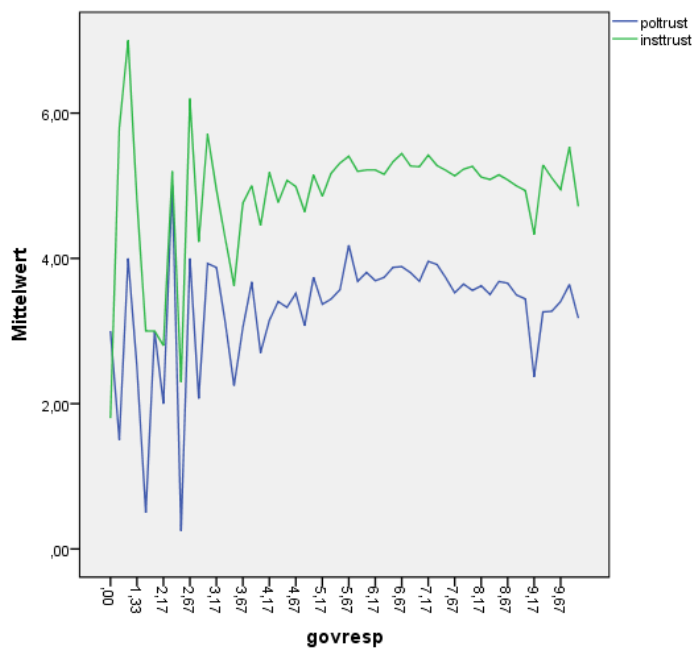
*Figure 4: Frequencies Government Responsibility Natives*



*Source:* own elaboration on European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

The curve for government responsibility also resembles a mountain, however with two specialties. On the one hand, the curve is skewed to the left. On the other hand, to the right end of the curve, there is a steep increase. Respondents' answers are spread on the whole range of the scale which gives relatively low percentages for single values. In general, most of the percentages are in the upper half of the scale, with the maximum around the values of seven. Interpreted, this means that most people think that the state should take care of range of issues and thus providing social benefits. The relatively high mean is interesting in so far as the chosen sample represents conservative welfare states and slightly in contrast to the theoretical stance of that type, people are in favour of rather extensive welfare provisions.

*Figure 5: Political and Institutional Trust on Government Responsibility Natives*



*Source:* own elaboration on European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

Setting the three pieces together in a graph, the following picture is produced; the curves for political and institutional trust on government responsibility are relatively similar, meaning that they follow similar up- and downward trends. These are mostly pronounced at the left and therewith lower end of the scale and are weakened during the middle. The curve for institutional trust is above the one for political trust which fits to the previous results. Further, it looks like in general the means are higher and more constant towards the higher values of the government responsibility scale. So far, the picture does not allow making conclusions regarding the hypotheses; one cannot say, the higher the mean of trust, the higher the score on government responsibility or the other way round. Not only are control variables still missing here, but also statistical tests that tell whether there is a real connection between independent and dependent variable and not just random results. Nevertheless, the picture already inherits the hint that maybe the outcome of such tests will not meet the expectations from the hypotheses.

Turning now to the core of the analysis, table 3 and 4 show the outcomes of five different regressions for different independent variables on the dependent variable of government responsibility.

Model 1 sought to measure the relation between political trust and attitudes, which is the connection of prime interest. As one can see in the table, there is a weak, but statistically significant relation between the two variables. However, which is most surprisingly, the correlation is negative, which contradicts the hypothesis of this study that trust and attitudes are positively linked. The model shows that it is the other way round, the less a person is trusting, the more s/he is positive towards the welfare state.

In the second model, all potentially affecting third variables have been included in the regression. The correlation between political trust and government responsibility is still negative, but it is even weaker and no longer statistically significant. In general, all of the tested correlations are relatively weak. Some of them, however, are significant; occupation of the respondent seems to be relevant as well as the type of organisation s/he works for. This is not too much of surprise, as the two variables are closely related to each other and further, the working place has direct connections to governmental establishments. If people, for example work for local authorities, it is logical, that this forms their attitudes towards the responsibility of the government. Moreover, the total net amount of income and the feeling about it are statistically significant. This makes sense as well, as at least the amount of income is indirectly linked to government policies which claim taxes and contributions, which in turn are a key component of welfare systems.

Models 3 to 5 have split up the control variables in three classifications in order to see whether there are influences according to these groups. Model 3 can be considered as covering demographics, namely gender and age. What one can see is that the correlation (=the coefficients) between political trust and government responsibility is almost equal to the one in the model without third factors. The age of the respondent is not of any relevance whereas the relation between gender and attitudes is statistically significant and positive which indicates that the older people are, the more positive they are towards the welfare state. Model 4 seeks to interpret the influence of discrimination on government responsibility, which is a category with only one component. The correlation between these two variables is not decisive and the one between political trust and the dependent variable remains the same. In the last model, the socio-economic status, including income, job and working place, is depicted. Most striking in this model is the fact that the correlation between trust in politicians and political parties and attitudes towards the welfare state is no longer statistically significant. It is again the variables as in Model 2 that seem to be decisive, except for the one of occupation.



*Table 3: Regression Estimates for Attitudes towards the Welfare State (Political Trust);  
Natives*

<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>	<b>Model 4</b>	<b>Model 5</b>
Political Trust	-0.034* [0.009]	-0.011 [0.010]	-0.035* [0.009]	-0.034* [0.009]	-0.011 [0.010]
Gender		0.110 [0.040]	0.166* [0.036]		
Age		0.003 [0.001]	0.002 [0.001]		
Discrimination		0.088 [0.342]		-0.007 [0.301]	
Occupation		3.766E-005* [0.000]			3.208E-005 [0.000]
Main source of income		-0.037 [0.015]			-0.023 [0.013]
Net amount of income		-0.056* [0.009]			-0.059* [0.009]
Feeling about income		0.138* [0.030]			0.135* [0.030]
Type of organisation		-0.087* [0.017]			-0.095* [0.017]
Years of education		-0.002 [0.007]			-0.007 [0.006]
Unemployed		0.224 [0.107]			0.183 [0.105]
Constant	7.319* [0.038]	7.233 [0.215]	6.986* [0.082]	7.319* [0.038]	7.671 [0.169]
Observations	6206	6206	6206	6206	6206
Model Fit ( $R^2$ )	0.002	0.043	0.002	0.002	0.007

*Note:* Given are the coefficients of the regression; standard errors are given in square brackets;

\* $p < 0.05$  level of significance

*Source:* Own elaboration on European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

Summarising, what can be concluded from the table above at first glance is the circumstance that the second hypothesis of this bachelor thesis cannot be confirmed. On the one hand, there is only a quite weak correlation between the level of political trust and government responsibility for welfare state provisions, which runs in the opposite of the expected direction; the relation is not linearly positive, the more X, the more Y, but obviously, the less faith in political actors' good performance somebody holds, the more s/he favours a great extent of governmental responsibility. On the other hand, which is even more disappointing, the relationship does not remain statistically significant against the background of third variables and gets even weakened through these. On top of that, the table allows the

conclusion that factors making up the individual economic situation of a person affect his/her attitudes to a greater degree than levels of political trust.

A major weakness all of the different regression models with the two samples and both independent variables (see Tables 3, 4, 5, 6) unfortunately have in common is the low model fit which is given in the last column of each table. The value of  $R^2$  explains the variation in the data; so for example, the second model in Table 3 accounts for only 4.3% of variation which is already quite low. The other models include even hold lower values in the model fit. However, an important observation one can draw from this is, that again in this indicator, the control variables-especially the socio-economic status- count for the highest percentage of explanation. This underlines their strong influence. In general, the outcome of the indicator of model fit is very similar in all of the four different sets of multiple regression models ( see Tables 3, 4, 5, 6).

Table 4 repeats the multiple regression analysis for the independent variable of institutional trust on attitudes toward government responsibility. Model 1 simply measures the impact of only the former variable on the latter one. Although the result is not of statistical relevance, it is interesting to see that the also weak correlation is negative which means a rejection of the hypothesis, which suggested that the higher levels of institutional trust, the more positive the attitudes towards the welfare state. Model 2 however tells another story, as the relationship turns positive when all potentially affecting third variables are included. Nevertheless, the result is not significant, either. Occupation of the respondent, net amount of income, feeling about it and type of organisation s/he works for however are. In the third model, demographics are displayed. While sex is a variable showing statistical significance, the other two included in the model, age and institutional trust do not display that. Concerning the variable of discrimination, used in Model 4, neither this one nor the one of institutional trust correlate significantly with government responsibility. As one can see in the fifth model, the socio-economic status of a person contains three variables which produce statistically significant results. These are the total net amount of income, the feeling about that as well as the type of organisation the respondent works for. Institutional trust does not correlate to an important extent with the dependent variable, however, the correlation turned positive.

*Table 4: Regression Estimates for Attitudes towards the Welfare State (Institutional Trust); Natives*

<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>	<b>Model 4</b>	<b>Model 5</b>
Institutional trust	-0.018 [0.011]	0.019 [0.012]	-0.016 [0.011]	-0.018 [0.011]	0.016 [0.012]
Gender		0.099 [0.040]	0.149* [0.037]		
Age		0.004 [0.002]	0.002 [0.001]		
Discrimination		0.001 [0.362]		-0.173 [0.322]	
Occupation		3.913E-005* [0.000]			3.294E-005 [0.000]
Main source of income		-0.038 [0.015]			-0.020 [0.013]
Net amount of income		-0.055* [0.009]			-0.057* [0.009]
Feeling about income		0.147* [0.031]			0.141* [0.031]
Type of organisation		-0.090* [0.018]			-0.098* [0.018]
Years of education		-0.003 [0.007]			-0.008 [0.006]
Unemployed		0.231 [0.108]			0.180 [0.106]
Constant	7.287 [0.058]	7.085* [0.225]	6.959* [0.098]	7.287* [0.058]	7.555* [0.179]
Observations	5792	5792	5792	5792	5792
Model Fit ( $R^2$ )	0.000	0.045	0.004	0.001	0.043

*Note:* Given are the coefficients of the regression; standard errors are given in square brackets;

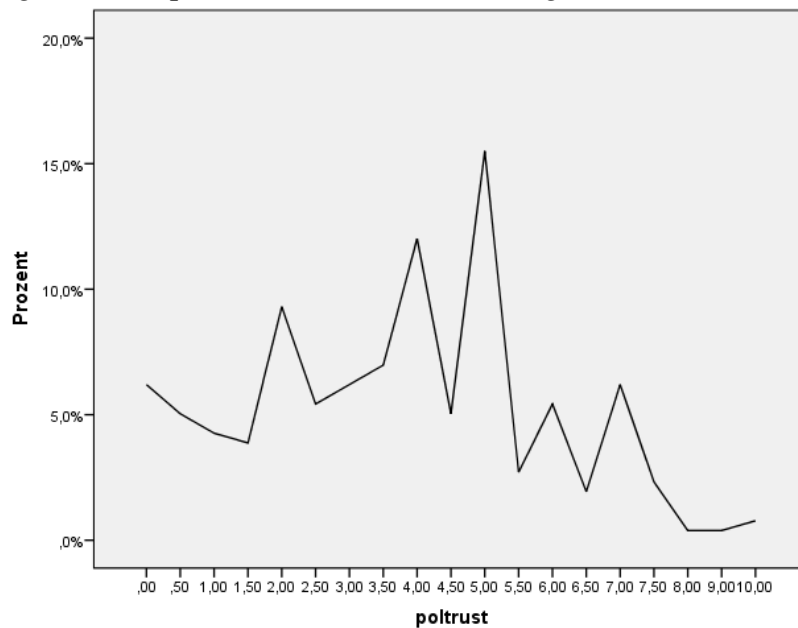
\* $p < 0.05$  level of significance

*Source:* Own elaboration on European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

In sum, the results of the table above lead me to reject my hypothesis that the higher the level of institutional trust is, the more positive attitudes towards the welfare state are. First of all, the statistical measure for testing the effect of the independent on the dependent variable has revealed that this impact does not have statistical significance and is not very strong either. Further, it goes in the opposite direction than expected. Secondly, the connection does not even bear closer examination when control variables are included; the socio-economic situation of a person seems to play a much bigger role in shaping views on government responsibility. In this regard, especially income seems to be decisive.

## 4.2 MINORITIES

*Figure 6: Frequencies Political Trust Immigrants*

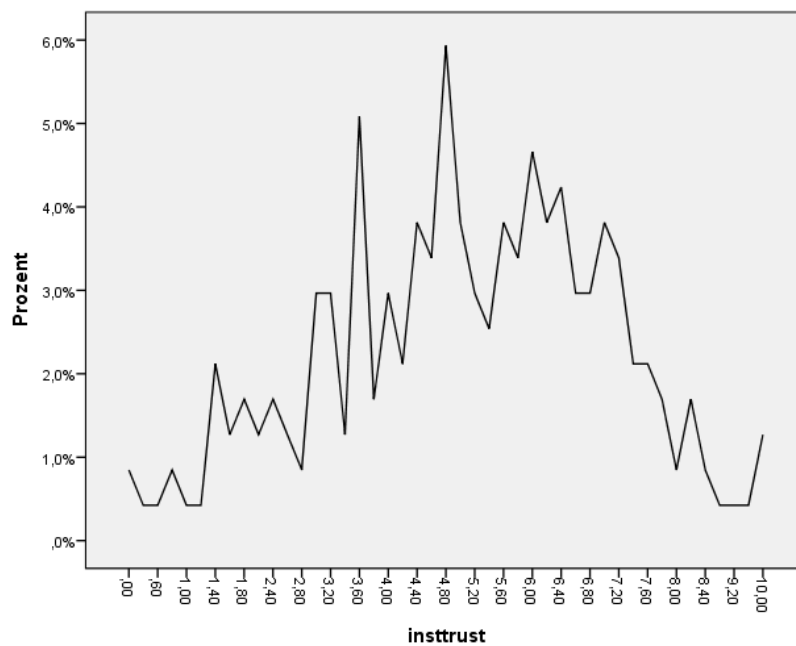


*Source:* own elaboration on European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

Political trust among immigrants is distributed over the whole range of the survey scale and the curve runs strongly up- and downwards. The highest point of the curve is about 15% and around the value of five, in accordance to the mean from before. There are more people who are not trusting at all than people who are fully trusting. Generally, it is the case, that most people position their level of trust in the lower half of the scale.

Although the mean for both population groups, immigrants and natives, is roughly the same, the figures reveal some differences. What leaps out most is the outlook towards the right end of the scale; while political trust for natives more or less constantly decreases from the value of seven, the curve for the immigrants' group is not that skewed, but rather very roughly symmetric. The first indications show that there are little differences between the two groups, but it is questionable if these are meaningful, because basically both population sections demonstrate similar levels of political trust.

*Figure 7: Frequencies Institutional Trust Immigrants*

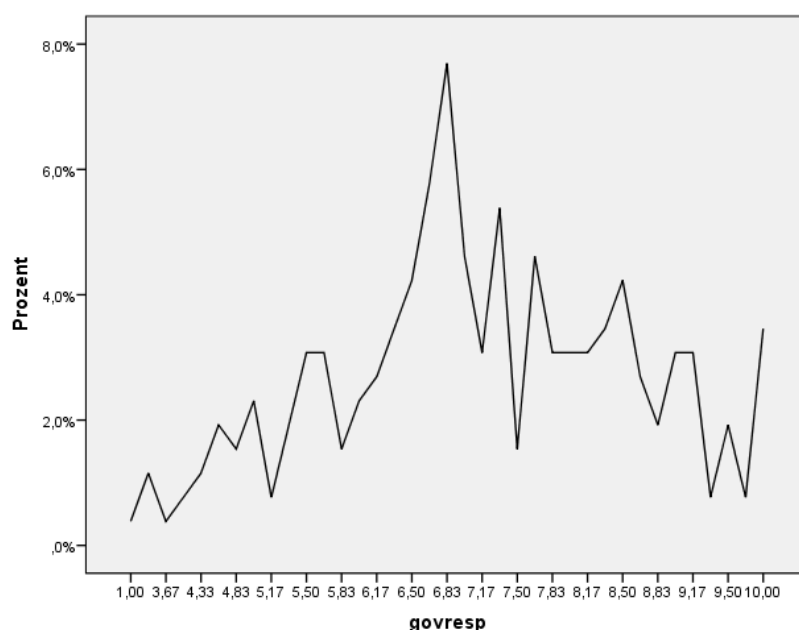


*Source:* own elaboration on European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

Figure 7 shows the curve for immigrants' levels of institutional trust, in which no obvious trends can be observed. The respondents' answers are that much distributed over the entire scale, that the maximum percentage at the value of five does not even reach 6%, which is more or less equal to the mean. Remarkably here are the ends of the scale. For the first time, the percentage for the highest value of the scale exceeds that for the lowest one and was even increasing. However, both percentages are quite low.

Again, both means of the two groups are almost the same, but the curves differ to a great extent. While the curve for natives is similar to the contour of a mountain, the one for immigrants does not show clear tendencies, which makes it hard to tell just from seeing whether the respondents could be split into equal groups for both halves. Also here, the hypothesis that there are differences between immigrants and natives experiences first steps of confirmation.

*Figure 8: Frequencies Government Responsibility Immigrants*

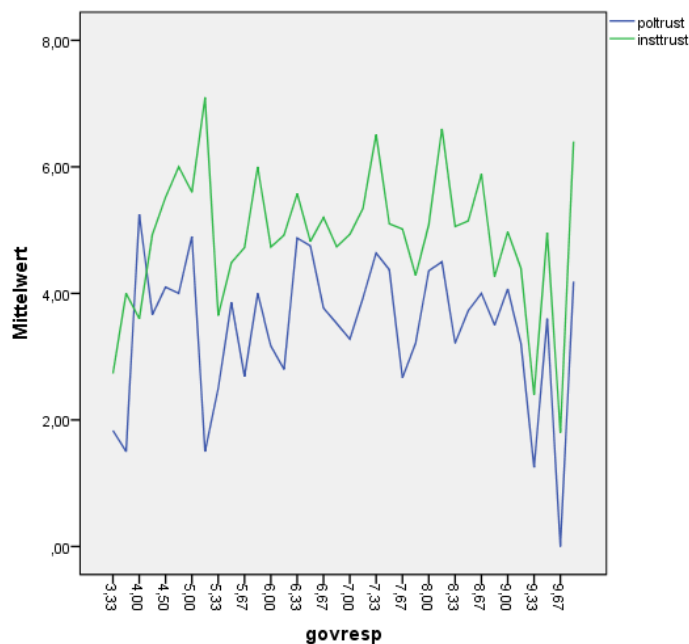


*Source:* own elaboration on European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

The outcome concerning the variable government responsibility can be described as very roughly symmetric, although the right half of the curve is generally higher than the left half, which means that more people are for more extensive provisions by the state. As the x-axis indicates there is no one who wishes absolutely no governmental support, while there are some who are in favour of full support. The mean is almost at the value of seven with reaching about 8%. Also in this case, the answers are broadly spread.

Comparing the two groups under study at the basis of this variable, it is to say, that natives seem to have a clearer common opinion concerning provisions of welfare. The wide range of answers among immigrants seems to indicate different views on in how far the welfare state should take effect. Initially, there are two arguments for these dissimilarities between the groups. On the one hand, the idea that a society shares common values, such as the range of welfare, could be at stake. On the other hand, the different countries of origin and respective experiences of immigrants could play a role in determining their opinion of government responsibility. So for example this can explain why some think the state should take care of those who need it, while others might say that this is not necessary (Timonen & Doyle, 2008).

*Figure 9: Political and Institutional Trust on Government Responsibility; Immigrants*



*Source:* own elaboration on European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

When now putting again all three variables together into one figure, a similar picture, like that for natives, is produced. Both curves run in like patterns and the one of institutional trust is above the one for political trust, which indicates the means are generally higher. The strongest up- and downward trends can be found at the right and higher end of the scale. This case does not allow for making any conclusion concerning the hypotheses either, despite the fact that they cannot be confirmed as expected.

Table 5 and 6 present the results of multiple regression analyses, for political trust as well as for institutional trust on government responsibility, conducted for the sample of immigrants. In the first model of table 5, one can see the pure correlation between the independent and dependent variable under study. A weak, positive correlation is given, which however, is not considerable in statistical terms. Model 2 incorporates all variables that have previously been chosen as potentially influential. Concerning the main correlation, no great changes can be observed. On top of that, even all other components do not bring about relevant outcomes. Following the first two models, three further models seek to examine the influence of control variables according to certain classifications. Model 3 thus includes only variables that can be ascribed to the demographics of a person, namely age and gender; results here do not show signs of statistical significance either. The fourth model considers discrimination as impacting factor. However, this is not the case, and also political trust does not correlate with

government responsibility in meaningful ways. The socio-economic status of a person can provide circumstances that potentially affect his/her way of seeing government responsibility; hence, Model 5 has been constructed in order to see whether this applies. However, the regression reveals no correlation between the included variables. The connection between political trust and attitudes does not alter remarkably, either.

*Table 5: Regression Estimates for Attitudes towards the Welfare State (Political Trust); Immigrants*

<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>	<b>Model 4</b>	<b>Model 5</b>
Political trust	0.010 [0.044]	0.053 [0.053]	0.011 [0.043]	0.014 [0.044]	0.041 [0.053]
Gender		0.340 [0.229]	0.414 [0.186]		
Age		-0.005 [0.009]	0.002 [0.006]		
Discrimination		0.471 [0.435]		0.349 [0.361]	
Occupation		-7.531E-006 [0.000]			1.007E-005 [0.000]
Main source of income		0.124 [0.082]			0.091 [0.073]
Net amount of income		-0.011 [0.044]			-0.022 [0.044]
Feeling about income		-0.047 [0.155]			-0.045 [0.156]
Type of organisation		-0.089 [0.100]			-0.105 [0.097]
Years of education		-0.027 [0.031]			-0.020 [0.031]
Unemployed		-0.558 [0.433]			-0.586 [0.415]
Constant	7.109 [0.187]	7.368* [1.103]	6.423* [0.406]	7.071* [0.191]	7.711* [0.862]
Observations	258	258	258	258	258
Model Fit ( $R^2$ )	0.000	0.041	0.021	0.004	0.033

*Note:* Given are the coefficients of the regression; standard errors are given in square brackets;

\* $p < 0.05$  level of significance

*Source:* Own elaboration on European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

Reviewing the outcomes of the above table, it is to say that for immigrants, there does not seem to be any noteworthy relationships; neither between the variables of the hypothesis, saying that the higher levels of trust, the more positive attitudes toward the welfare state, nor between third factors and the Y-variable. Thus, the expectation that increasing levels of



political trust lead to increasingly positive attitudes for the welfare state cannot be confirmed to a satisfactory degree.

The correlation between institutional trust and government responsibility is negative, not especially strong and above all not statistically significant as one can gather from model 1 in table 6. This only slightly changes, when control variables are included in the regression; the correlation now is positive. Moreover, the second model exposes a meaningful effect of occupation on the respondent on attitudes, whereas the other components do not seem to be important. Including demographics only, as conducted model 3, produce a negative link between political trust and the dependent variable, although this must not be of great concern. Sex, in contrast, plays a role for migrants' attitudes. Model 4 does not show any statistically relevant results, so discrimination is not decisive. Like in the previous table, the last part of the regression analyses show that the control variables net amount of income, feeling about income and type of organisation have not been included in the measurement without reason, these are the ones that yield substantial correlations; while the one between the key variables is still not noteworthy.

*Table 6: Regression Estimates for Attitudes towards the Welfare State (Institutional Trust); Immigrants*

<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>	<b>Model 4</b>	<b>Model 5</b>
Institutional trust	-0.018 [0.011]	0.019 [0.012]	-0.016 [0.011]	-0.018 [0.011]	0.016 [0.012]
Gender		0.099 [0.040]	0.149* [0.037]		
Age		0.004 [0.002]	0.002 [0.001]		
Discrimination		0.001 [0.362]		-0.173 [0.322]	
Occupation		3.913E-005* [0.000]			3.294E-005 [0.000]
Main source of income		-0.038 [0.015]			-0.020 [0.013]
Net amount of income		-0.055* [0.009]			-0.057* [0.009]
Feeling about income		0.147* [0.031]			0.141* [0.031]
Type of organisation		-0.090* [0.018]			-0.098* [0.018]
Years of education		-0.003 [0.007]			-0.008 [0.006]
Unemployed		0.231 [0.108]			0.180 [0.106]

Constant	7.287 [0.058]	7.085* [0.225]	6.959* [0.098]	7.287* [0.058]	7.555* [0.179]
Observations	236	236	236	236	236
Model Fit ( $R^2$ )	0.004	0.070	0.031	0.009	0.036

*Note:* Given are the coefficients of the regression; standard errors are given in square brackets;

\* $p < 0.05$  level of significance

*Source:* Own elaboration on European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

Comparing in this place both samples that were object of the analysis, one can detect that there are differences between immigrants and natives, which fits to the first hypothesis of this study assuming those. Nevertheless, it remains questionable if these dissimilarities really allow for making broader conclusions. The less natives are politically and institutionally trusting, the more they seem to be in favour that governments show responsibility in welfare arrangements. The same seems to be true when the connection is subject to the input of different sorts of control variables, although it is no longer of any statistical significance. For the case of immigrants, the regressions tell another story. Here, it is much harder to say something definite. Since the outcome for immigrants' relations between levels of trust and attitudes towards the welfare state does not provide any special conclusions, except for the fact that one cannot really draw some, the second part of the hypotheses that suggests lower levels of trust among immigrants can neither be rejected nor confirmed. In addition, the mean levels of political trust, institutional trust and government responsibility are roughly the same for both population groups, so that also in this case a hint that immigrants hold less confidence than migrants cannot be found.

#### 4.3 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The two leading hypotheses being formulated at the beginning of the thesis have been: first of all, there will be differences in the levels of trust between immigrants and non-immigrants which are expressed with higher ones for the immigrant section of the population. Secondly, the higher the levels of political trust for individuals, this time regardless to immigrant status, the more positive their attitudes towards the welfare state will be. After having run several multiple regression analyses, it turns out that results do not meet assumptions.

In the following it will be tried to give explanation approaches for why the results differ from what has been assumed beforehand. On the basis of the outcomes, mainly three findings can primarily be identified. Firstly, it cannot be determined whether there are big differences existent in terms of levels of trust for immigrants and natives. On the one hand, this is due to the absence of statistically significant products for the case of immigrants. On the other hand,

descriptive statistics indicate comparable values for the two groups. Basically, there can be two reasons for this; either there are indeed no differences or these are hidden, for example because the size of the sample has been too small. If the former possibility proved right, this could be explained by the fact that immigrant status does not matter. Another theory suggests, that immigrants adapt to the levels of trusts the native population in their country of arrival holds so that differences cannot be observed any longer (Dinesen & Hooghe, 2010). This could also be traced back to the circumstance that the better immigrants are integrated into the society of their country of arrival, the less trusting they are (Röder & Mühlau, 2012). Secondly, the selected sample of citizens from Belgium, France and Germany shows low levels of political trust and only modest levels of institutional trust. In contrast to that, government responsibility scores relatively high which means that attitudes towards the welfare state are quite positive. This arrangement is contradicting the hypothesis, which foresees a positively linear relation between the variables. However, there are approaches in the literature giving answers to that. For example, Edlund (2006) found out that support for welfare arrangements is existent not despite but because of lacking trust. Further, the component of time can be of crucial nature; there is a difference between attitudes towards reforms and those in general. As Gabriel and Trüdinger (2011) state in one of their studies, the German population rejected reforms under the government of Schröder, related to a lack of confidence in him and his cabinet. So, it could be possible that when respondents of the European Social Survey were asked to declare their levels of trust, they measured them on the basis of current political actors, whereas questions concerning government responsibility were covered by more general ideas. This could also help to explain why institutional trust offers higher means than political trust; just because present politicians do not act 'well' this does not instantly mean that one loses faith in the system of democracy as such (Gabriel & Trüdinger, 2011). Moreover remarkably in this area is that the chosen countries represent the conservative type of welfare states, but the mean score for government responsibility is relatively high. It is open for discussion whether this outcome fits to the welfare regime theory and if the observation is only a product of subjective assessment (Sainsbury, 2006). Another explanation for low levels of political trust could be delivered by the initial study by Fennema and Tillie (1999) and following research (Jacobs & Tillie, 2004): there is the possibility that, what is described as 'civic community' is rather poor in the countries chosen for this thesis, meaning that there are few ethnic organisations who only hold weak bonds between each other. One could even think whether this correlation does not also hold true for the native population and thus could explain the similar low levels of trust (Fennema & Tillie,

1999). Thirdly, control variables that have been included in the statistical analysis were responsible for greater variation in the results than they were thought off to have. Above all, the socio-economic status of a person seems to be of biggest concern. Here, the individual amount of money which is monthly or annually available for a citizen seems to have a more immense effect on attitudes towards the welfare state than respective levels of trust. This is not expressly surprising; the concept of the welfare state has a strong monetary/financial dimension which shapes everyone's income to a certain extent by imposing taxes on it. The meaning of this variable is even strengthened by the one of feeling about income which still shows stronger correlations with the dependent variable. Next to that, some common assumptions about trust seem to be present here, too. For example that older people and women are more trusting than the younger generation and men. Another interesting observation is that the status of unemployment does not produce a statistically significant effect on government responsibility, although in practice both are certainly directly linked. However, this may be due to the brief period of time in which unemployment is considered in the survey. The weakest spot of the work is probably to be found in the low model fits that were produced in the statistical analyses; none of the models really account for much of the variation in the data.

Finally I would like to point out that neither the collected data nor my personal evaluations of them are free from the risk of making errors. Next to various traps and the danger of misinterpretations that are provided by conducting surveys, statistical analyses are not infallible; the right handling of data is tricky and not to be underestimated. On top of that, it cannot be said with determination whether variables have been omitted that would have changed everything; perhaps there is one factor which causes or at least favours the creation of both, trust and attitudes. This brings us back to the very start of the theoretical framework of the thesis: it is hard, if not impossible, to establish a one-way causal relationship between the two main components of the research question. Maybe, the outcome of the analysis constitutes a further indication for this.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Possibly a great majority of people would agree on the claim that an intact and good relationship requires a high level of mutual trust between two parties and some would even argue that feelings or emotions on their own are not enough if the relationship lacks a certain

degree of this mutual trust. What conceivably holds true for most close bonds between individuals can also be applied to more abstract and broader relations between people and other people in their function as actors, between societies, between people and social constructs. The aim of this study was to find an answer to the research question: “*what is the role of political and institutional trust for attitudes towards the welfare state and are there differences between migrants and non-migrants?*” After having run several multiple regression analyses on the correlation between trust as the independent variable on the one hand and government responsibility as the operationalized dependent variable on the other hand, plus including a range of control factors, I am unfortunately not able to give a straightforward answer to my research question. Beginning with the enquiry about dissimilarities between two population groups, it is to notice that outcomes are twofold. Although initially, results of the analyses give hints for existing differences, these are not reliable and no generalizable conclusion can be drawn from them, since in the case of immigrants, potential effects are not of statistical significance. Probably the most interesting and noteworthy finding concerns the general levels of trust and attitudes; natives as well as immigrants seem to possess little confidence in the performance of politicians and political parties with a mean as low as 3.00 on a scale ranging from 0 to 10. The faith in institutions is slightly higher and shows a modest mean of 5.00. In contrast to that, for many people it seems to be important that governments are responsible for securing welfare state arrangements as the mean on the same scale is at 7.00. Consequently, there is no positive linear relationship between trust and attitudes, which finds approval through the regression analyses. Additionally, third factors have a greater impact than has been expected. The total net amount of income, the feeling about it and the type of organisation somebody is working for, contain relevant correlations to the dependent variable. Model fit values show that generally all variables do not explain much of the variation in the data.

Concluding, hypotheses can thus neither be fully confirmed nor fully rejected and the direction of the influence between trust and attitudes will still be subject to further research. Nevertheless, it must not be denied that if- and probably only if- members of a society trust their environment or rather the political and institutional environment to a certain extent, the regime can remain in the long run. In contrast, one could argue that citizens, who fully trust their state, are blind and ignorant of deplorable state of affairs; this may well be true, but what counts is, that trust plays a significant role in shaping the relation between the population and its government. Especially for democracies, it is vital to consider the decisive power the criterion of trust may have as it also correlates strongly with political participation (Fennema

& Tillie, 1999). In the long term, few policies can be retained without the support or at least recognition of people; if the majority of them does not agree or accept a certain policy, which for example intends to increase taxes for purposes of redistribution, a real implementation of the policy will be difficult and thereby also the solution of a problem. Put simply, if citizens agree on government plans, it will be easier to install them as if they disagree on them. Therefore, policy makers should be interested in the attitude of people and if it is trust what shapes these attitudes, the relationship between them should be put closer in the focus of attention.

## APPENDIX

**CARD 8:** Using this card, please tell me on a score of 0-10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust. Firstly...**READ OUT...**

		<i>No trust at all</i>										<i>Complete trust</i>	<i>(Don't know)</i>
<b>B4</b>	...[country]'s parliament?	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88
<b>B5</b>	...the legal system?	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88
<b>B6</b>	...the police?	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88
<b>B7</b>	...politicians?	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88
<b>B8</b>	...political parties?	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88
<b>B9</b>	...the European Parliament?	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88
<b>B10</b>	...the United Nations?	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88

*Source:* European Social Survey, Round 4, 2008.

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