NEW PERSPECTIVES IN GERMAN POLITICAL STUDIES

POPULAR SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY IN UNIFIED GERMANY

Critical Democrats

Ross Campbell

New Perspectives in German Political Studies

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Far reaching changes are now taking place in Germany. Stability lay at the core of the German model and much of the writing from Peter Katzenstein and Manfred Schmidt onwards sought to explain this enviable stability. Changes in the external environment have created a number of fundamental challenges which pose a threat to that stability. Germany is now Europe's central power but this has generated controversy about how it is to exercise this new power. Although attention is often centred on German power the migration crisis demonstrates its limits. *New Perspectives in German Political Studies* aims to engage with these new challenges and to cater for the heightened interest in Germany. The Editors would welcome proposals for single-authored monographs, edited collections and Pivots, from junior as well as well-established scholars working on contemporary German Politics.

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Popular Support for Democracy in Unified Germany

Critical Democrats

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Preface

This is a relatively short book about an enormous subject—it is a study of the support that Germans direct towards their democracy. Its principal justification is a serious and recurring shortcoming in large-scale comparative studies: the lack of historical perspective. Although they aim to uncover generalisations, they sacrifice country-level detail to the extent that the conclusions are at best open to question or at worse profoundly misleading. By failing to incorporate the distinguishing characteristics and style of modern democracies, there are good reasons for being sceptical about the literature on political scepticism. In most studies, this issue is superficially acknowledged, but it is time it was confronted directly.

This is the purpose of this study. Attitudes to democracy are analysed through the concepts and institutionalised features of the German political system. A case in point is the *Rechtsstaat*. Put simply, it refers to the constitutional and legal framework which assigns pre-eminence to the rule of law. It emerged from the arbitrary lawlessness of the Third Reich and is manifested in the Basic Law, which prescribes the values underpinning German democracy as well as the norms and principles enumerating how the system works. Attitudes towards it are thus a key indicator of support for the constitutional order. Democratic structures, meanwhile, have constitutional functions, many of which constrain government via a network of institutional counter-weights. Attitudes towards institutions thus go well beyond a tabulation of their support and probe into the ways in which constitutionally-defined relationships are accepted. Equally significant is that the frontiers of German democracy are no longer bound by the nation-state but extend into the European Union

where decisions are taken within multilateral institutions rather than as an exercise of sovereign power. During a period of profound uncertainty in the EU, readers may well focus on this aspect of the research. My argument, however, is that by placing the EU alongside the other dimensions, readers will acquire a more complete picture of German images of democracy.

This is the approach used in this study. The research focuses on attitudes towards four different dimensions of the German political system: (1) the functioning of democracy; (2) the Basic Law; (3) democratic institutions within the nation-state; and (4) institutions of the EU. By drawing on a rich body of survey data, it investigates the support that these objects attract and the factors from which it originates. To do this, it employs an analytical perspective which encompasses a range of long and short-term factors. Rather than one aspect dominating, the study shows that these are linked and cumulative and that support is multidimensional. The perspective is also flexible enough to pinpoint east-west differences and change over time—key issues which have defined the analysis of German attitudes towards democracy since the unification of the country in 1990. The evidence is wide-ranging and is carefully qualified, but two main findings stand out. The first is that much of the support which eroded following unification has now returned and the picture is thus cautiously optimistic about the condition of German democracy. One caveat to this, however, concerns the EU, where low support is grounded in social structural factors which suggests it is unlikely to increase in the short-term. The second key finding is that east-west differences have narrowed on some objects but remained wide on others. Yet from the perspective of popular support, Germany's project of national integration appears more complete than at any previous point shown in the surveys used.

This study thus contributes insights on a number of different fronts. By critically evaluating the established wisdom, it refines the study of attitudes towards democracy, sensitising it to the institutional features of the German political system. In addition, the study provides a detailed analysis of trends and trajectory of support, pinpointing where it is extensive and increasing and where it is low and static and thereby adding to the literature on the political cultures of Germany. Furthermore, the research evaluates the utility of analytical concepts commonly linked to the origins of support and thus intersects with scholarly discussions about the shape, trends and changing forces of support for democratic government in advanced industrial democracies.

In writing this study I have had fruitful conversations with a number of colleagues. My research has been enriched by lively papers presented at key academic conferences and I acknowledge the delegates and panellists who offered insightful and helpful comments. I am particularly appreciative of those who attended the annual conferences of International Association of the Study of German Politics (IASGP) in London in 2017 and in Cologne in 2018 for the engaging discussions on my lines of approach and the subject matter. I am also especially grateful to delegates and speakers at the RStudio conference in San Diego in January 2018, who made excellent suggestions about data visualisation. I alone bear responsibility for any errors that remain.

Glasgow, Scotland Ross Campbell

Acknowledgements

This study has been a long time in gestation. My fascination with German politics began in November 1989, when the fall of the Berlin Wall, more than any other event, awakened my political consciousness and prompted me to ask questions about the upheaval occurring in Germany. In 1990, West Germany won the World Cup and when the country was unified in October of that year, it was the culmination of a whirlwind of fascinating events that defined my formative years—events, moreover, that contrasted so sharply with the deindustrialised graveyard of Scotland in Thatcher's Britain. And 1990 also marked the year when I began learning German language at high school. When my teacher asked each pupil in the class which part of Germany we would most like to visit, I was the only one whose response was the GDR. She interrupted me crisply, announced that I had answered incorrectly and quickly moved the discussion on. I remember being embarrassed at her reaction, but learned later on that she had family roots in the West and a revulsion of the GDR. It was my introduction to some of the historical sensitivities surrounding the division of Germany. At that time, I could not have imagined that I just commenced a journey that would lead to an academic career in the study of German politics. This book continues that journey.

In writing it, I benefited from the advice of a number of colleagues. I consider myself deeply privileged to have received an ESRC scholarship which enabled me to complete doctoral studies at the University of Strathclyde. The German Academic Exchange Service (*Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst*, DAAD), meanwhile, funded my post-doctoral fellowship to the Social Science Center in Berlin (WZB), enabling

me to conduct further research and benefit from its stimulating intellectual environment. Stephen Padgett has been a predictably generous source of good advice, on occasion during (unusually competitive) rounds of golf. David Conradt, meanwhile, has been an exceptional mentor and provided critical perspective and intellectual companionship in equal measure. Willie Paterson provided helpful suggestions and literature for which I am immensely grateful. Colleagues from the International Association for the Study of German Politics (IASGP) have been extremely supportive and I wish to thank Ed Turner, Dan Hough and Wade Jacoby. Not all may have been aware of their contributions, but small words of encouragement, often just at the right time, brought much-needed injections of confidence. In addition, colleagues past and present have been extremely helpful. From my previous institution, Glasgow Caledonian University, Stewart Davidson, Fraser Duncan and Elaine McFarland reminded me, as Thomas Mann once wrote, that 'laughter is the sparkle of the soul'. At the University of the West of Scotland, meanwhile, Liz Frondigoun, Nick Jenkins, John Connolly and Claire Harkins have been kind and generous. Singling out particular individuals often risks the ire of those omitted, but Claire has been an exceptional colleague, and for her patience and good humour during some the most challenging moments of my career, I owe her a special word of thanks.

My greatest debt, however, is to my wife, Jennie, and my two sons, Ivor and Angus. Angus was born during the writing of this book, and as he began to crawl he would often disappear only to be discovered in my office hammering away at my keyboard. He quickly learned that each time he contributed to this book, he would gain my attention. This brought light relief during stressful moments, and in gratitude I must add one of his memorable contributions: omo2ni3r0[fpb[0§2bf3.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Thomas Mann, winner of the Nobel Prize for literature in 1929, was famously sceptical about the prospects of establishing democracy in Germany. Mann traced Germany's 'democratic problem' to the public's aversion for politics and their admiration for the *Obrigkeitsstaat*—an authoritarian state detached from society without popular sovereignty.[1] Although it was an undeniably bleak assessment, Mann's pessimism was amply vindicated by the tragic breakdown of the Weimar Republic, the mass enthusiasm for National Socialism and the enormity and irrationality of the Third Reich. But in the century since his views were published, a critical paradox has emerged: few would question that German democracy has evolved into a model of stability; and yet research has repeatedly shown that it lacks the popular support upon which its stability depends.[2] As support for aspects of democracy has drained away and been replaced with scepticism, acquiescence and indifference, it has challenged triumphalist claims that liberal-democracy is the final form of human government and strengthened the case for reform.[3] Critical questions thus arise and justify fresh analysis. To what extent is there an emerging challenge to the traditional bases of political authority? And what conditions are most conducive to the development and maintenance of popular support? These are the central questions that this study aims to address.

This is a propitious time to answer them. There is consensus that political attitudes are one of the principal challenges confronting contemporary democracies, but scholars differ on which trends are the most important

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and what they mean.[4] Interpretation is problematic. Academics emphasise the importance of 'idealist' support, which stresses citizens' normative adherence to the values and goals underpinning democratic political systems—values and goals that may not yet be fully realised.[5] This form of support is high, widespread and durable. Equally, national attachments are deep and tenacious, confirming that the emotional foundations of the political community are strong.[6] Forms of non-democratic government, meanwhile, have been unequivocally rejected, demonstrating that whilst people may question aspects of democracy, the attraction of forms of authoritarianism is negligible. And as sizeable majorities affirm that democracy is the least worst form of political system, they confirm that it is a form of government to which there is no serious alternative.[7] Viewed from this perspective, then, signs of discontent should not be overly embellished; they may be addressed through the normal channels of managing political conflict.

Another argument, however, points to numerous indications of disaffection, the depth and durability of which are giving cause for concern. At this level, scholars focus on 'realist' measures, emphasising the actual workings of democracy; i.e., the concrete institutions and real-life practice. The evidence is straight-forward. Satisfaction with democracy has eroded as Germans recognise—and are increasingly critical of—gaps between ideals and reality.[8] In tandem, disaffection with aspects of representation suggests that linkages between citizens and representatives are waning and losing their affective base.[9] Opprobrium towards elites, meanwhile, is pervasive and contrasts markedly with idealistic perceptions of them as custodians of a broader public service.[10] Trust in democratic institutions, meanwhile, is low and shows no signs of recovering.[11] And as the institutional picture centres on parliaments, it reveals that they are viewed more as theatres of illusions than as responsible democratic fora. In addition, a lack of deference towards political parties, civil servants and the media is ubiquitous and entrenched.[12] And the symptoms are not isolated to the nation-state. Disaffection is equally manifest towards the EU—especially its institutions, elites and processes of citizen engagement.[13] Overall, then, German public opinion, whilst characterised by inner reserves of support, has changed in a more critical direction.

Mapping these trends has been straight-forward but interpreting them as a whole has been more challenging. Abstracting from the dense thicket of linguistic convolutions, three viewpoints dominate.[14] The first suggests that despite its difficulties, no alternative system commands significant

public approval and support for a return to the pre-1989 arrangements is negligible.[15] As Germans demonstrate durable, if qualified, attachments to democracy, it strains credulity to suggest that the polity is languishing in the midst of crisis.[16] Disaffected democrats are not necessarily hopeful revolutionaries. A second interpretation suggests that disaffection is confined to institutions and elites and signifies a healthy critical *zeitgeist*.[17] If the ideals of democracy clash with the deficiencies of its reality, disaffection is to be anticipated, particularly when centred on the competitive parts of the political process.[18] Yet since Germans distinguish among and ascribe contrasting levels of support to key political objects, disaffection with the everyday reality exists in balanced tension with an adherence to democracy. And a third interpretation emphasises the persistence of the trends. As disaffection has endured despite alterations of government, elections have proven ineffective at alleviating it, which has compounded the problems by triggering deeper levels of criticism.[19] Resolving which of these interpretations more closely corresponds to reality is no minor issue. They present one of the most formidable challenges to which governments must respond; and yet a meaningful response depends first upon a clear understanding of the challenge.

What, then, is the trajectory of support over time? Two scenarios dominate the literature. According to one line of argument, there has been 'systematic erosion', meaning that support has declined across a number of objects of the political system and that it has affected the vast majority of the population, albeit unevenly. The challenge for contemporary governments is thus formidable: the time-frame and nature of the change suggest that long-term factors have consigned the halcyon era of political deference to the past. As support may not easily be reclaimed, governments need to adjust to a low support environment and redesign aspects of democracy to provide more effective channels of citizen input. An alternative argument suggests that support exhibits 'trendless fluctuation', meaning that it ebbs and flows without definitive pattern. If the decline is temporary and less dependent on long-term factors, support should restore itself, making the need for democratic reform less urgent. Developments in German politics, however, provide reasons to anticipate a different scenario from either of those outlined. As Germany absorbed sixteen million people from the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) in 1989/1990, it set in motion far-reaching processes of social and political change which profoundly influenced how Germans viewed the institutions and agents of the state. Support in both parts of Germany was

initially strong as easterners embraced their first democratic arrangements since the Weimar Republic. But, as the economic strain of rehabilitating the east became increasingly apparent, support drained away leaving scepticism. To what extent is this still the case? This part of the research not only underlines that the trajectory of support has practical implications for public policy, but it intersects with debates about the adaptability of post-communist citizens to democratic arrangements.[20]

An important part of the terms of reference for this study is thus set by the circumstances of the peaceful revolution of 1989 (*Wende*) and the legacy of German unification.[21] Unification raised searching questions, the most important of which was would the Berlin Republic thrive or revert into a democracy without democrats? If its success depended, in part, upon reshaping eastern political culture to sustain democracy, developing support on the rubble of the GDR was a formidable exercise: the sobering history of forty years of socialist-authoritarianism provided precarious foundations for democratic government. Some anticipated that the acquisition of democratic values would be achieved incrementally, driven by the actuarial replacement of those socialised in the pre-1989 era.[22] But there was a more optimistic scenario.[23] As east Germans' personal fortunes provided positive experiences of the market economy, so it would nurture support for the democratic framework in which it was located.[24] And the initial evidence supported this. When aspects of liberal democracy were surveyed, easterners endorsed democratic values at surprising levels.[25] Freedom of expression, the right to demonstrate and the right of parties to govern if elected received widespread support. And the acceptance of political conflict—and commitments to manage it within the democratic formula—were, if anything, slightly higher in the east. The evidence, then, confirmed that easterners began their experience of the new Germany with a set of values conducive to sustaining democracy. Equally optimistically, the levels of support were indistinguishable from the west.[26] United Germany began with a united consensus.

But for some this was unconvincing. Support for democratic values during a transition is no guarantee that democracy will be accepted in the long-term. Initially, it may be supported because it is not the previous regime, but as people evaluate it on its own terms they may revise their views and take a more critical perspective. In addition, as easterners lacked familiarity with the intricate workings of western democracy, there was the possibility that their answers were superficial responses

from *Fragebogendemokraten* (questionnaire democrats).[27] Support may have been a mile wide, but was it an inch deep? At best, it was preliminary, possibly even no more than an indictment of the GDR, and conclusive judgements about its resilience had to be suspended.[28] Equally, much of the early evidence rested upon an Anglo-Saxon model of democracy and analysed a limited battery of survey questions based upon it. Classic Lockean philosophy, supplemented by theorising by Robert Dahl, placed primacy upon the liberal elements of democracy, especially popular sovereignty, participation, the role of the opposition and the protection of minority rights.[29] Whilst immensely important aspects, a number of theorists conceived of an equality dimension, designed to ensure that democracy did not revert into a system sustained by an elitist few. And when this was included in the surveys, it attracted greater support in the east compared with the west.[30] The reduction of income differences, the rejection of poverty and the role of the private sector and the market economy constituted areas on which east and west Germans diverged in their understanding of democracy.[31] Germany was united, but not yet one.

In addition, the time-frame in which east-west differences would fade was updated periodically. Evaluations of the day-to-day reality of democracy in Germany revealed enduring east-west disparities, with Allensbacher data consistently uncovering a lack of popular enthusiasm in the east. Asked in 1990 if the Federal Republic was the most optimal state model, a minority of easterners agreed.[32] In addition, disquiet about the project of *Aufbau Ost*, twinned with increasingly positive sentiments about aspects of the GDR, were uncomfortable reminders of the scale of the challenge in uniting Germany.[33] True, some writers may have overstated these differences. Nostalgia about the past rarely equates to a desire to return to it. But there were equal dangers of writing them off as a naïve 'hammer-and-sickle' nostalgia.[34] The transformation prompted feelings of dislocation, an acute sense of the gains and losses of unification and a backlash towards the centrality of work as a defining characteristic of social status.[35] And time was no reassurance that German outlooks would simply converge; in fact, it could entrench them. Indeed, time revealed the full scale of the psychological differences between the two parts of Germany, as writers noted the formation of a distinctive *Ostidentität* (eastern identity), an attachment which transcended the regional disparities and was anchored in the shared values and history of the GDR. Because aspects of the phenomenon also encompassed antipathy towards the unified polity, phrases such as '*Mauer*

im Kopf' and '*Sondermentalität*' were used with increasing frequency to characterise the growing estrangement between the two parts of Germany.[36]

Yet they did not imply that easterners favoured an alternative model of democracy. Any preferences for social betterment were achievable within the framework of the Federal Republic. Rather, it suggested that consolidating and extending the consensus depended upon cementing the transition at the social, cultural and, above all, economic levels, and this was proving more painful than was anticipated. The optimism of the new Germany swiftly gave way to tension, as expectations of a democratic, equal and spontaneous fusion failed to materialise with sufficient speed or depth. From academic studies to the piercing honesty of personal memoirs, evidence gradually emerged that forty years of division were proving extremely difficult to exorcise. Scholars suggested that this justified sober assessments about the developmental trajectories of the two Germanies.[37] Others uncovered signs of convergence and accommodation. Few, however, would contest that what belongs together is growing together. If the evidence is disputed, it concerns the extent to which German images of democracy continue to vary.[38] Yet as more than twenty-five years have now passed since the fall of the Berlin Wall, it represents a timely juncture to evaluate the issue afresh, update the evidence and, if possible, draw more authoritative conclusions.

The argument of this book can be summarised in five propositions. First, there is popular support in Germany, but it depends on the object evaluated. Germans discriminate between evaluations of the functioning of political system and democratic institutions and agents. Second, support has neither eroded systematically, nor does it exhibit 'trendless' fluctuation. By contrast, it declined significantly following unification, but it has recovered. Indeed, much of the support lost in the years after unification has been reclaimed. Germans are supportive of their democracy—a finding which challenges claims that people have irretrievably lost faith in democracy. Third, support is multidimensional, with sources traced to contrasting theoretical perspectives. The research pinpoints where long- and short-term forces shape support. Fourth, differences remain between easterners and westerners. On some measures, these are not as pronounced as in the period following unification, but on others—especially the more important indicators—sizeable differences remain. Fifth, popular support is driven by different mechanisms in the east and the west, a finding which suggests that the factors connected to maintaining support in the west are not the same as those leading to its development in the east.

Defining Popular Support for Democracy

The starting point is to define popular support for democracy. This is a contested term burdened with surplus meaning and ambiguity. It refers to orientations which contribute to the legitimacy of democratic government—especially attitudes and values. As this adopts the same formulation as Easton's concept of 'political support', one might question why the term popular support is needed. In my view, Easton's definition usefully highlights the objects to which attitudes are directed. This analysis does not contest that point, but it defends agency. As a concept, support denotes the ways in which *individuals* evaluate political objects through their attitudes as part of the relationship between citizens and the state. As a power structure, the state and its component parts require legitimacy; i.e., acceptance that power and authority are exercised through popular consent. This is inferred through normative commitments, obligations and actions signifying that the existing political arrangements are the most appropriate ones.[39] The various ways of approaching legitimacy thus account for the different empirical assessments. But, as claiming legitimacy is an active, ongoing task, it is important to pinpoint its nature. Weber conceived of an ideal-type which distinguished between authority which is legitimated traditionally; i.e., follows a historically-established sequence. Authority which is legitimated charismatically, meanwhile, is done so via the extraordinary achievements—and inspirational style—of particular leaders. And authority may be legitimated legally-rationally; i.e., through forms of decision-making which conform with enacted statutes or an established set of shared norms.

Drawing upon Weber, analyses have further partitioned legitimacy into 'macro' and 'micro' dimensions. Macro dimensions highlight formal system properties, including procedural regularity, majority rule and mechanisms of democratic accountability—especially fair, free and frequent elections.[40] Echoing the Weberian ideal-type, the system obtains legitimacy to the extent that constitutionally-established processes are followed and their outcomes accepted. This may be inferred from compliance; i.e., citizens' willingness to abide by the basic rule of law.[41] However, people may comply with laws but differ profoundly in their appraisals of the government of the day. Compliance does not necessarily denote support or acceptance. Micro dimensions, therefore, include citizens' views of governmental authority and their sense of personal efficacy in dealing with political institutions and actors.[42] The system thus derives legitimacy to

the extent that there are meaningful avenues for input into the democratic process and that the constitutional and institutional structures are supported by those in whose name they purport to govern. Viewed together, then, it is clear that whilst attitudinal support is intrinsically interesting, it is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for determining the overall legitimacy of the system. Legitimacy cannot merely be reduced to beliefs; to do so would be to strip it of its behavioural and legal aspects.[43]

Nevertheless, attitudes towards democracy are a key indicator of legitimacy and have been subject to monitoring in political science. The classic analysis is Almond and Verba's study of the Civic Culture, which examined a range of attitudes that contributed to sustaining democratic government. By focusing on their distribution, the study had problematic implications for post-war Germany. According to the data, Germans were permissive of democracy, but not supportive. Their acceptance of the political system was overly detached, instrumental and had not yet deepened into generalised attachments.[44] Viewed in the historical context in which the data were gathered, however, the prospects of unqualified support were improbable. The study was conducted ten years after the foundation of the post-war republic within a provisional state lacking national focus. When the findings were revisited twenty-five years later, the conclusions were substantially revised and an entirely different picture presented—one indeed in which Germany emerged a quintessential model of stability.[45] Crucially, however, Almond and Verba's references to 'subject culture' distinguished between passive toleration and more durable support: allegiance. Generalised attachments, Almond and Verba claimed, denoted feelings of collective loyalty which would sustain the polity during testing times. Most controversially, however, Almond and Verba connected allegiant sentiments to the durability and effectiveness of democracy: 'the development of stable and effective democratic government depends upon more than the structures of government and politics: it depends upon the orientations that people have towards the political process—upon political culture. Unless the political culture is able to support a democratic system, the chances for success of that system are slim'.[46]

This raises a crucial question: does the absence of popular support signify the presence of disaffection? The answers are contested, and the available benchmarks differ. A lack of basic challenge to the existing political arrangements is clearly significant, as is the degree of elite consensus. Disaffection, meanwhile, may be uneven across the population, and support from important segments may prove critical in times of heightened

stress. This may counterbalance—or simply overshadow—disaffection. At the same time, inferences of disaffection, if inferred from low trust in democratic institutions, stem from reasoning in which the absence of one attitude denotes the presence of its opposite. This need not follow. Attitudes which are not supportive are not necessarily hostile or corrosive; they may be benign. And individuals who do not trust government do not necessarily distrust it; they may be sceptical. Indeed, most individuals' views of government rarely fall within a straight-forward 'support' or 'hostility' dichotomy. They merge shades of circumspection or wariness, signifying the well-informed vigilance which has normative value. A similar point applies to individuals who are 'indifferent' or 'passive'. Although the questions may tap a subject of peripheral importance, apolitical segments of the population are not necessarily disaffected.

Tensions are thus at the heart of the concept. Whilst democratic stability is presumed to depend upon supportive citizen attitudes, the most resilient democracies are those in which supportive attitudes are lacking. No study has presented evidence that where popular support falls, democracies breakdown, citizens revolt or governments descend into paralysis.[47] Indeed, according to some writers, despite widespread and long-term disaffection there is little to suggest that democracies have departed from a largely stable condition. Yet developments in German party politics challenge aspects of this view. Electoral support for smaller parties confirms how disaffection is altering contemporary political styles. Writers have noted that as underlying socio-structural change has eroded confidence in parties, voters increasingly eschew the partisan attachments which structure political competition.[48] Declining partisanship, in turn, contributes to electoral volatility, creating a fluidity and openness in the space in which parties compete. This has been a long-term, albeit uneven, development. But one of the most striking examples occurred at the 2013 Federal Election, when the junior coalition party, the *Freie Demokratische Partei* (FDP), was ejected wholesale from the Bundestag, whilst the *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD), a right-wing populist party founded in February of the same year, narrowly missed the 5 per cent threshold required to obtain a proportional share of seats. By harnessing and channelling voters disaffected with mainstream politics, it vividly demonstrated how parties can tap into disaffection and use it as a mobilising device, redirecting it back into the system in ways that disturb established political alignments. Democracy may not falter, but government formation and the party landscape will differ in circumstances in which there is disaffection.

A Framework of Popular Support

If consensus on the meaning of popular support has been difficult to achieve, disagreement on its properties and dimensionality has been equally rife. As will be argued, merely replicating the established frameworks would be an insufficient remedy to the problems in the literature. There is a need to go further and select indicators which operationalise German democracy in a manner consistent with its history and contemporary practice.

The most well-known framework stems from David Easton's *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*.[49] Although written in the mid-1960s, this continues to be the dominant theoretical work on the subject. Easton's explanation of why political systems persisted focused on the 'authoritative allocation of values'—the ability of systems to pursue principles or goals independent of particular structures. Part of the explanation, Easton claimed, was their ability to attract 'support'. Hence, Easton deconstructed the system, partitioning it into the objects to which support is directed, types of support which they attract and the connections between them. The most important object is the political community, which is the people over which governments exercise authority, i.e., the nation. Because consensus on the nation is the fulcrum of any stable polity, support for the political community transcends institutions or actors and denotes an underlying support for the citizens for whom governments act. Without it, governments lack credibility, political actors may become immobilised, and, in extremis, the system itself may regress from relative cohesion into fragmentation. A second object is the regime, delineated into: (1) principles setting out the form of government; (2) the norms and values detailing how government works; and (3) the institutions in which power and authority are invested. The regime defines the scope and form of government, balancing power between the executive, legislature and judiciary and setting the 'rules of the game'. A third object is the political authorities, encompassing civil servants, judges and political advisors, but more specifically referring to those who hold government office and conduct the affairs of state.

In addition, Easton discriminated between types of support. 'Specific' support is output-focussed. It is a politically endogenous form of support nourished through perceived policy competence. Since it is mainly directed towards those identified with perceived successes or failures in outputs, this is a contingent form of support, which is extensive at times, but in

short supply at others—a point which serves a reminder that support is not guaranteed and governments cannot take it for granted; it involves an ongoing process of building and repairing. Easton, however, recognised that governments cannot be supported exclusively on the basis of supply and there are forms of support which have a more enduring character. In particular, the system may institutionalise a settled allegiance towards governing arrangements, manifested as 'diffuse' support—a reservoir of favourable attitudes enabling people to tolerate trying political or economic circumstances.[50] Its 'above-the-fray' qualities mean that it is unlikely to be stimulated by appeals to self-interest. Rather, it transcends the activities of government, stemming from an assessment that the system, despite periodic failures, is worth retaining. Diffuse support thus represents 'attachment[s] to political objects for their own sake [and] will not be easily dislodged because of current dissatisfaction with what the government does'.[51]

These distinctions enabled Easton to conceive of how support could generalise; i.e., the process by which support for one object could spread to affect others. Falling support for authorities is inevitable, perhaps even healthy. It may indicate no more than a temporary wave of hysteria or a momentary backlash. Frequent scandal or repeated instances of self-serving behaviour, however, not only undermine confidence in politicians, but result in blanket denunciations of the framework in which they operate. Institutional gridlock, meanwhile, if temporary, may be an inevitable consequence of a more complicated parliamentary configuration driven by an increase in the number of effective parties. But repeated failure in democratic institutions will aggravate citizens in ways that lead them to question the system as a whole. Hence, 'not all expressions of unfavourable orientations have the same degree of gravity for a political system. Some may be consistent with its maintenance; others may lead to fundamental change'.[52]

Despite its versatility, this framework is not easily transposed into national settings. Empirical indicators are, at once, controversial and may be inadequate measures of complex concepts. Comparative studies may not be an especially useful guide as to which measures should be used. If successfully executed, comparative studies abstract from the particularities of any given state and establish global patterns. Their insights are obtained by varying—or holding constant—system-level properties. But what they purport to gain in 'general' laws is undermined by a loss of information at the country-level. And the picture may be distorted altogether by

inappropriate measures. This is particularly the case with the concept of political community, which is especially difficult to operationalise in the German context. If it is synonymous with the nation, it could denote an historical essence; i.e., an enduring set of characteristics persisting within a singular political entity with clearly defined boundaries. But if a more constructionist definition is being used, it may denote the ways in which the community is socially constructed through active processes of formation and reformation. Yet both of these formulations draw upon characteristics (language, history, culture) that are problematic in the German context. It is unclear why belief in a collective national identity alone should constitute the most powerful form of democratic attachment, when regional identities, so crucial to understanding the vicissitudes of German politics, remain important mechanisms through which customs and beliefs are transmitted. Equally, multiple overlapping identities are not only possible, but are increasingly the norm in the light of population mobility in an interconnected global context. In addition, there are sensitivities in operationalising this concept in Germany, which are particularly evident from the varying degrees of mass suspicion it attracts. Norris, for example, examined respondents' willingness to fight during wars and the data revealed unsurprisingly low levels in Germany.[53] But not only is there general mismatch between the concept and the measure, but one would be stretched to find a more inappropriate indicator in the light of the deep historical connotations surrounding war.[54] A simple reading of the preamble and Article 1 of the Basic Law could justify rejecting national sentiments suffused with militarism. In other words, this could be regarded as support.

Similar problems arise with other aspects of the framework. If Easton's concepts on the regime are to be successfully operationalised in the FRG, one must appreciate the way in which the system developed and how it works. A starting point is to recognise that history is the 'efficient secret' of the German political system. The institutional and procedural features are not random peculiarities but evolved in response to unique circumstances. If these are incorporated into the analysis, the inquiry will be more sensitive and the study enriched. Amongst the guiding concepts of German democracy is the *Rechtsstaat*—a state premised on the rule of law engendering normative requirements on the institutions and personnel of government.[55] In constitutional form, the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*) is the pre-eminent custodian of German democracy. It standardises political life by depersonalising the exercise of power and constraining government. It

enumerates individual rights, prescribing the ways in which power should be balanced, exercised and shared. Yet it goes further than this and not only outlines constitutional tasks (*Verfassungsaufträge*) but commits aspects of the system to realise them. This is achieved, in part, institutionally. The Constitutional Court (*Bundesverfassungsgericht*), for example, provides mechanisms of redress for ordinary citizens and adjudicates between organs of the state or between levels of government. Attitudes directed towards these aspects of German democracy may not only be more fundamental than has hitherto been appreciated but may usefully redirect the inquiry away from the institutional focus to constitutionally defined relationships between institutions and citizens.

A related point concerns the connections between parts of the political system. In Easton's formulation, the objects of the system are coterminous, but the degree of overlap may have been insufficiently appreciated. Distinctions between parties, office-holders and parliaments, often neatly separated for academic analysis, may be interdependent to ordinary citizens. Indeed, in the FRG, they may be fused together. Article 21 of the Basic Law, for example, requires political parties to adhere to democratic values. For historical reasons the Basic Law enunciates parties' duty to form the 'political will of the people' (*politische Willensbildung*)—a clause designed to bind parties to key democratic precepts and safe-guard against the pursuit of sectional interests. Parties thus discharge constitutional functions and are not merely randomly tolerated groupings. Indeed, they are anchored to the state through their constitutional role. Elections, meanwhile, contain an executive-selecting function—parties campaign and seek office on the basis of their Chancellor candidate. And the selection of a Chancellor is only confirmed when elected—or re-elected—by a majority of deputies in the Bundestag at the start of the new legislative term. The point, then, is that if the organs and functions of German government overlap, it is reasonable to suppose that mass evaluations will do likewise.

A related issue concerns 'sins of omission'. The Easton framework presupposes the existence of spatially-bound democracy operating within fixed national territories. But the German polity has been substantially influenced by wider developments in international fora, particularly processes of harmonising its political and economic institutions with those of the EU. Political decision-making is taken in multilateral fora with other member states. In tandem, aspects of the legislative and administrative agenda are no longer set exclusively in Germany; indeed, the regime has

extended beyond its national frontiers. The European Union is thus not only the centre of much of the activities of the regime and authorities, but its initiator. As the locus of power has shifted, the structures and styles of decision-making have altered and are defined by partnership and consensus-seeking. In addition, it is conceivable that processes of integration have altered Germans' sense of the political community, prompting them to identify with structures operating beyond Germany. Rather than having a single political identity forged within the nation-state, there is the possibility of dual identities—or indeed that the political community itself incorporates more transnational connotations.

A final point concerns the focus of Easton's distinctions. A standard practice is to focus on institutions, especially parliaments. Because cross-national surveys typically provide longitudinal data on parliaments, they are ideal for comparative analyses. The partisan focus of parliaments, however, may be an unreliable guide to support as a whole and may overshadow important areas where citizens' views may be supportive. For this reason, the approach adopted here differs and four indicators of support are used. First, the analysis focusses on satisfaction with democracy. Whilst its referents are somewhat opaque, studies suggest that this indicator denotes an across-the-board judgement of the functioning of democracy. This provides a general bellwether of support for the German polity. Second, the analysis examines pride in the Basic Law. Because the Basic Law is the legal source of power in the FRG, pride in it may denote system-level attachments.[56] A third area concerns Germany's democratic institutions—its political and judicial make-up. These institutions provide concrete form to the *Rechtsstaat* and are key linkage points for citizens, connecting them to democratic representatives and mechanisms of scrutiny and accountability and thus signifying the degree to which core structures of political society attract public approval. A final area focusses on the European Union. As discussed, the European Union is of immense importance to the German polity. Historically, it provided a passport to international respectability, but is also closely entwined with collective sovereignty and decision-making.

These four areas are not exhaustive, but together they operationalise crucial aspects of the system and build up evidence, the cumulative picture from which is all-important. They include general assessments of the practice of democracy, supplemented with the distinctive constitutional and institutional features of the FRG. The study thus brings into view the distinctive style and architecture of German democracy. In addition, the

indicators include the EU, whose institutions provide a measure of external constraint upon the exercise of power and whose decisions are taken within a multilateral framework.

Explaining Popular Support

How might support for these items be explained? Studies commonly refer to the following four approaches. Modernisation approaches draw on writing from Bell, Deutsch, Kornhauser and Inglehart, who examined how alterations in the structure of modern capitalism produced ineluctable change in urbanisation, industrialisation, secularisation and democratisation.[57] Modernisation produces social and technological development, altering demography, social mobility and an admixture of psychological beliefs. This occurs through rising levels of education, which raise individuals' aspirations and capabilities, generating greater cognitive sophistication and fuelling more demanding expectations of social and political institutions.[58] Inglehart's explanation focuses on the formative conditions in which individuals were raised and the accompanying effects on value profiles. Inglehart contends that generations raised prior to the Second World War acquired materialist values in an environment of acute material shortage and physical insecurity, whilst those raised in the post-war era acquired postmaterialist values reflecting stability, affluence and expanded political opportunities. Postmaterialism thus emphasises aesthetic and lifestyle issues, along with the environment and democracy.[59] On this approach evaluations of democracy are traced to the long-term influence of modernisation and the ineluctable processes of value change which it creates.

A second approach explains popular support for democracy with reference to 'civil society'. On this perspective, support stems from a broader social engagement and civic connectedness.[60] Civil society denotes the space in which citizens engage in processes of contestation and deliberation via a rich structure of voluntary associations. Narrowly, this includes professional, confessional and recreational organisations. But shorn of its neo-Tocquevillian emphasis, it encompasses a range of organisations, the principal function of which is to contest and monitor the exercise of power. These include non-governmental organisations (NGOs), social networks and citizens assemblies, all of which vie for power and mediate between society and the state.[61] Yet crucial to the approach are the dispositions acquired from civic engagement. Active participation in civil society fosters secondary skills referred to as 'social capital'.[62] Social capital contributes

to stabilising democracy, by equipping individuals with knowledge of democratic institutions, fostering awareness of diverse points of view and enabling individuals to build consensus. Civil society, then, depresses feelings of inefficacy and distrust and makes individuals more likely to evaluate the institutions of democracy as responsive and worthwhile.

A third approach emphasises political-economy. Drawing on a distinguished line of research on voting behaviour, popular support is connected to economic performance through a running tally of materialist assessments.[63] Individuals' support reflects perceived gains or loses based on utility maximisation derived from self-interested criteria.[64] If the economy performs well, or is perceived to perform well, citizens extend popular support. Antipathy, by contrast, stems from those who are less sanguine about economic performance—or those upon whom disadvantage has fallen. This approach suggests that support is labile, with dynamic properties, as it is revised, updated or reinforced in the light of contemporaneous circumstances. Political-economy approaches, therefore, suggest that its extension or erosion are a 'feedback' from assessments of the system itself, implying that support has an endogenous character and that the system can 'earn' it through material incentives, institutional choice, policy satisfaction or by abstaining from bad or corrupt practices.

A final approach contends that electoral results influence popular support.[65] Electoral outcomes distinguish between supporters of the winning and losing parties, and this distinction steers political evaluations. Losing exacerbates antipathy towards the authorities, whilst winning stimulates more sanguine attitudes. The approach is grounded in literature on political psychology and theories of cognitive dissonance, the core of which identifies how elements of belief systems are functionally integrated.[66] On this approach, popular support has partisan coherence.[67] Elections raise a partisan screen through which beliefs about the political sphere are refracted, meaning that support is configured in ways that are congruent with electoral choices—analogous to a 'home-team' effect. The corollary of this is that elections are not just periodic reviews of government conduct; they are highly salient interventions, the outcomes of which prompt re-evaluations of political objects in ways that shape popular support for democracy.[68]

This study tests these approaches. Each will be appraised across the four indicators of popular support. Each approach may matter, but it is unclear how they compare across these objects. The research, however, is no mere adjudication of rival theoretical approaches; it has practical implications. If

support is steeped in long-term processes of modernisation, it implies a path-dependent trajectory in which government will attract increasingly less support amidst heightened expectations. Government may therefore become caught in a vicious circle whereby it is confronted with expectations which it is increasingly unable to fulfil, thereby fuelling further popular distemper. If, by contrast, support is linked to civil society, then there are practical steps that government may take towards reviving community. The latter two approaches, by contrast, imply that governments may nurture support themselves, presenting some prospect of restoring support via perceived policy competence, successful economic stewardship or democratic inclusion. Again, there are democratic innovations that may enhance inclusion and efficacy. Participatory and deliberative mechanisms, for example, engender specific mechanisms which enhance legitimacy, engagement and accountability. Although work on these issues is ongoing, it has attracted disagreement on its normative value. In an environment in which democratic reforms are widely lauded, there is a danger that advocacy-based proposals, which so often overshadow academic analysis, will be a weak response to—or will perhaps even reinforce—the very problem they are attempting to alleviate. A study of popular support, therefore, may inject much-needed urgency into debates surrounding their resolution.[69]

The Structure of the Book

The book is divided into nine chapters. The second chapter outlines theories of popular support, setting out the origins of the approaches, enumerating their component propositions and drawing out their main claims and the variables on which they place emphasis.

The third chapter designs the research. Its central purposes are to draw hypotheses, outline indicators of popular support, highlight the explanatory variables and set out the main data source and methods. In addition, it assesses if the survey measures correspond to frameworks about evaluations of democracy. As discussed, Easton distinguished between support for the community, regime and authorities. By using data reduction techniques, this chapter tests if this framework corresponds to how Germans think about democracy. This, however, requires data and throughout this study the research uses the *Allgemeine Bevölkerungs Umfrage der Sozialwissenschaften*, German General Social Survey (ALLBUS). This survey has tracked trends in mass opinion, demography

and socio-economic change and has provided samples of individual-level data on west Germany since 1980 and east Germany since 1991.

Chapter 4 maps popular support in Germany, providing an overview of the levels, trajectory and east-west differences and establishes if any movement in support has been temporary or enduring. By showing the degree to which German democracy is supported, the picture contradicts the comparative literature in crucial respects. Germans are mildly satisfied with democracy, supportive of the Basic Law, cautiously trusting of democratic institutions, but sceptical of the EU. Equally, support is not eroding. In fact, on all measures save that of the EU, it is increasing and is more extensive compared with the period following unification.

Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 follow a similar structure. Each takes a separate measure of popular support and tests the extent to which the four approaches influence it. Chapter 5 begins with satisfaction with democracy and the findings demonstrate that it is influenced by all four approaches, but more so by partisan and performance-based explanations. In addition, differences exist between easterners and westerners, some of which are traced to their contrasting value profiles.

Chapter 6, meanwhile, examines pride in the Basic Law, arguing that this measures support for values and principles of the constitutional regime—and may well extend into *Verfassungspatriotismus* (constitutional pride). Empirical analyses demonstrate that support for this item is shaped by postmaterialist orientations and the syndrome of engaged and trusting dispositions inhered within civil society. As long-term factors, these anchor constitutional support in sources which provide it with longevity. Moreover, it discovers important effects from social structure. Older respondents with comparatively greater experience of witnessing the constitution in action are more supportive, suggesting that constitutional pride takes time to nurture and is stimulated by the accumulation of evidence of its successful operation.

Chapter 7 examines trust in democratic institutions. It pinpoints its values-based components, its rootedness in civil society, its performance-based aspects and its grounding in political partisanship.[70] The evidence cautions against the view that trust is principally or exclusively rational. Material conditions matter, but trust is not merely a straight-forward economic exchange, easily earned and flowing seamlessly from institutional effectiveness or prosperity. Trust is more complex concept in that it is also grounded in long-term political stimuli which make it more resistant to short-term change and set on a firmer trajectory. In addition, the research underlines

the importance of the east-west axis. Differences in trust between easterners and westerners suggest the difficulties of cultivating an appreciation of post-communist context are real and not easily overcome.[71]

Chapter 8 turns to the European Union, focusing on trust in the Commission and Parliament. Different support mechanisms are operating compared with previous chapters, as multivariate models confirm the presence of age-based and gender effects. As support is particularly low amongst males and most age cohorts, one may appreciate why support has been so shallow over the period for which there is data. This presents a difficult dilemma: governments must reconcile elite commitments to deeper integration in circumstances in which there is limited support and ongoing electoral backlashes.

Finally, Chap. 9 presents some closing reflections. It draws together the main findings and assesses the implications of them for German democracy. Overall, then, the study seeks to answer a simple question: to what extent is the Germany polity supported by its citizens? The simple answer is that there is such support. The following chapters explain why.

Notes

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3. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York, NY: Avon Books, 1992).
4. Russell J. Dalton, *Democratic Challenges Democratic Choices: The Erosion of Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
5. Frederick Weil, 'The Development of Democratic Attitudes in Eastern and Western Germany6' in Frederick Weil (ed.) *Research on Democracy and Society: Democratization in Eastern and Western Europe* (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1993).
6. Hans-Dieter Klingemann, Mapping Support for Democracy in Pippa Norris (ed.) *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 53.
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8. Max Kaase and Kenneth Newton, *Beliefs in Government* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 62.
9. For an excellent analysis, see Oscar W. Gabriel, Eric Kerrouche and Suzanne S. Schüttemeyer and Sven T. Siefken, 'Introduction: Political Representation in France and Germany', in Oscar W. Gabriel, Eric Kerrouche and Suzanne S. Schüttemeyer (eds.), *Political Representation in France and Germany: Attitudes and Activities of Citizens and MPs* (London: Palgrave, 2018), pp. 1–57.
10. Kai Arzheimer, *Politikverdrossenheit: Bedeutung, Verwendung und Empirische Relevanz eines Politikwissenschaftlichen Begriffs* (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 2002). See also: Oscar W. Gabriel and Lena Masch, 'Attitudes towards Representation and Political Trust' in Oscar W. Gabriel, Eric Kerrouche and Suzanne S. Schüttemeyer (eds.), *Political Representation in France and Germany: Attitudes and Activities of Citizens and MPs* (London: Palgrave, 2018), p. 286.
11. Ross Campbell, 'Values, Trust and Democracy in Germany: Still in Search of 'Inner Unity''. *European Journal of Political Research*, 51/3 (2012), pp. 646–670.
12. Russell J. Dalton and Steven A. Weldon, 'Public Images of Political Parties: A Necessary Evil?' *West European Politics*, 28/5 (2005), pp. 931–951.
13. See, for example, Renate Köcher, *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie 2003–2009* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), pp. 288–289.
14. *Politikverdrossenheit* or *politikmüdigkeit*, for example, denote a sullenness towards the personnel and activities of politics, but overlap with *politikerverdrossenheit*, *parteiverdrossenheit* and *demokratieverdrossenheit*.
15. Köcher, Ibid. p. 118. See also, pp. 48–49 for evaluations of the GDR.
16. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave*, (University of Oklahoma Press, 1993).
17. Pippa Norris, *Democratic Deficit: Critical Citizens Revisited* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
18. Robert A. Dahl, *A Preface to Democratic Theory* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2006).
19. Russell J. Dalton, *Democratic Challenges, Democratic Choices*, 2004.
20. Wolfgang Zapf, 'How to Evaluate German Unification', FS III00-404. (Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrums Berlin für Sozialforschung, 2000).
21. Ross Campbell and David P. Conradt, 'The Civic Culture at Fifty: Change, Continuity and Challenges in the Federal Republic of Germany'. *German Politics*, 24/3 (2015), pp. 217–233.
22. Petra Bauer-Kaase and Max Kaase conclude 'it will require a lengthy process to mellow estrangement and antipathies between the two German peoples' (p. 21). See, Petra Bauer-Kaase and Max Kaase 'Five Years of Unification: The Germans on the Path to Inner Unity' German Politics 5/1 (1996), pp. 1–26.

23. Eckhard Priller, '*Demokratieentwicklung und gesellschaftliche Mitwirkung in Ostdeutschland: Kontinuitäten und Veränderungen*' FS III 99–410. (Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrums Berlin für Sozialforschung, 1999).
24. Hans-Dieter Klingemann and Richard I. Hofferbert, 'Germany: A New "Wall in the Mind"?' *Journal of Democracy* 5/1 (1994), pp. 31–44.
25. Russell J. Dalton, 'Communists and Democrats: Democratic Attitudes in the Two Germanies'. *British Journal of Political Science*, 24/4 (1994), pp. 469–493.
26. Robert Rohrschneider, *Learning Democracy: Democratic and Economic Values in Unified Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 74–75.
27. The concept of *Fragebogendemokraten* was not merely linked to giving perceived 'democratic' answers to questions; but was also used to test commitment during the de-nazifaction processes in the post-war period.
28. Bettina Westle, 'Demokratie und Sozialismus. Politische Ordnungsvorstellungen im vereinten Deutschland zwischen Ideologie, Protest und Nostalgie'. *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, 46/4 (1994), pp. 571–596.
29. Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (London: Yale University Press, 1971), pp. 6–7.
30. See, for example, Richard I. Hofferbert and Hans-Dieter Klingemann, 'Democracy and Its Discontents in Germany', *International Political Science Review*, 22/4 (2001), pp. 365–366.
31. See, for example, Renate Köcher, *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie 2003–2009: Die Berliner Republik* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), p. 119.
32. There has been little improvement in these levels in the intervening time period. The question used is: 'Glauben Sie, die Demokratie, die wir in der Bundesrepublik haben, is die beste Staatsform, oder gibt es seine andere Staatsform, die bessere ist?' The levels began at 41 per cent in the east in 1990 and declined into the 30 per cent range, reaching 36 per cent in 2009. The proportions supporting an alternative system remain a minority, albeit one that has risen from 19 per cent in 1990 to 24 per cent in 2009. See, Renate Köcher, *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie 2003–2009: Die Berliner Republik* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), p. 116.
33. Katja Neller, *DDR-Nostalgie: Dimensionen der Orienteirungen der Ostdeutschen genüber der ehemaligen DDR, Ihre Ursachen und politischen Konnotationen* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag, 2006), pp. 135–146.
34. The Allensbacher data from 2002 is interesting on this point. When asked to list the factors most associated with a democracy, the percentage of eastern respondents noting core principles associated with democracy declined in the east. For example, the proportion noting fair and free elections declined from 76 per cent in 1990 to 60 per cent in 2000 (the correspond-

ing figure for the West is 73 per cent). See Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and Renate Köcher, *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie: Balkon des Jahrhunderts* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 2002), p. 597.

35. Petra Bauer, 'Politische Orientierungen im Übergang', *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 43 (1991), pp. 433–453.
36. On the Mauer im Köpfen, see: Heiner Meulemann, *Werte und nationale Identität im vereinten Deutschland. Erklärungensansätze der Umgangforschung*. (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 1998). On Sondermentalität, see: Gert Pickel 'Eine ostdeutsche "Sonder"-mentalität acht Jahre nach der Vereinigung? Fazit einer Diskussion um Sozialisation und Situation'. In Susanne Pickel, Gert Pickel and Dieter Walz *Politische Einheit—Kultureller Zwiespalt. Die Erklärung politischer und demokratischer Einstellungen vor der Bundestagswahl 1998* (Frankfurt am Main: Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1998).
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45. David P. Conradt, 'Changing German Political Culture', in Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba (eds), *The Civic Culture Revisited* (London: Sage, 1989), pp. 229–230.
46. Almond and Verba, *The Civic Culture*, p. 366.
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52. David Easton, 'A Reassessment of the Concept of Political Support'. *British Journal of Political Science*, 5(4), pp. 435–457. p. 437.
53. Pippa Norris, *Democratic Deficit: Critical Citizens Revisited* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). p. 45.
54. Ibid. p. 81.
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CHAPTER 2

Theories of Popular Support for Democracy

Introduction

Why do people support democratic government? After more than sixty years of empirical research there are no definitive answers to this question. Those that exist draw on a range of emotions, experiences and evaluations, thereby demonstrating that the sources of support are varied and essentially contested. The subject has attracted long-standing attention, but it lacks systematic theory with a logical set of propositions which are intellectually robust and internally consistent and which correspond to and provide an analytical perspective for real-life empirical trends.[1] This is not to argue that studies neglect the importance of contributing to theoretical literature, but that they use a selective amount, often resulting in fragmented and specialised conclusions, with each measure of support purportedly shaped by its own distinctive mechanisms. Any sense of a coherent pattern of steadily accumulating knowledge is thus difficult to obtain. Equally, a predictably familiar set of measures occupies the central focus of analysis—especially trust in government and satisfaction with democracy. Studies have prioritised refining their constitutive properties empirically. Whilst this casts much-needed light on corners of the phenomena, it inhibits analysis of the underlying conceptual mechanisms at work.

This chapter evaluates four approaches which dominate as explanations of popular support. The first draws on writing from modernisation, which holds that modern capitalism initiates changes in social structure and

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individual value profiles, the long-term consequences of which have reshaped popular support for democracy.[2] Second, writers emphasise how involvement within secondary organisations of civil society provides an antidote to apathy and alienation and projects a climate of trust onto the polity.[3] Third, writers suggest that support fluctuates on the basis of political-economy, with favourable circumstances boosting support and more austere times leading to its erosion.[4] Fourth, scholars emphasise the importance of partisan behaviours, claiming that support depends upon party fortunes at national elections. Winning generates support, whilst losing fuels antipathy and estrangement.[5] Despite emerging from different philosophical traditions, these approaches need not necessarily be viewed as mutually exclusive. They emphasise different mechanisms, but there are sufficient points of cross-fertilisation to enable them to be integrated into a single analytical perspective. This will be set out in the final section of the chapter.

Modernisation

Modernisation approaches hold that transformations of capitalism are linked to coherent patterns of cultural and political change. The approach posits a connection between economic and political development in which changes in the former result in a more liberal and democratic character in the latter. These changes are predictable, far-reaching and irreversible. Classic writing held that they occurred in linear 'stages',[6] but this is disputed, if not discredited.[7] Moreover, the timing, pace and weight of the changes—particularly the erosion of traditional habits and loyalties—are also debated. And the extent to which 'causal' mechanisms are at work is contested.[8] Whilst controversial, however, aspects of the approach continue to enjoy a measure of acceptance, particularly the processes by which the compulsion to compete draws pre-modern societies into cost-saving processes of rationalisation though the application of science and technology to the division of labour. From the simplicity and intimacy of community life in the peasant village, a complex, interconnected and adaptive economic system evolves, which is mediated through technology and is global in scope. Modernisation, however, is not merely confined to analysing how economic development sweeps away traditional order; as capitalism changes, it alters social reality, driving specific processes of socio-political change which work themselves out with 'iron necessity towards inevitable results'.[9] Economic development, for example, induces population

movements, leading individuals to abandon local communities and gravitate towards metropolitan areas, which offer skilled and specialised work. Occupational specialisation, in turn, increases human capital, cognitive skills and education, raising living standards, income levels and life expectancy and altering social structure and human psychology. Demographic and cognitive change is initiated, generating social groups which are animated by new issues and are mobilised into the political arena with different expectations of authority.

Modernisation approaches, then, descend from nineteenth century theorising which focuses on the connections between economic and human development. Writers differ on the nature of this process, with some emphasising the shift from primitive to scientific-rationalism, whilst others focus on the transition from community to industrial-capitalism. The connecting thread, however, is that an evolutionary process is at work. Marx, for example, argued that history was moving to the point of class dissolution and the establishment of communism, and that capitalism was the transformative force underlying these developments. '[T]he economic structure of society', Marx wrote, 'is the real foundation on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness'.[10] Like an organism responding to stimuli, law, politics and ethics are derivative phenomena from the investment cycle and its extractive requirements. Marx, however, extended this argument, noting that property relations not only influence individuals' position within the economic structure; they condition knowledge, thoughts, identities and images of the conflicts in which they are engaged. The effects of the capitalist mode of production are sufficiently far-reaching to alter how people think. This is so because the mental constructs individuals use depend upon the economic setting in which they are forged.[11] As prevailing material circumstances falsify social reality, they also generate a 'false consciousness' which not only obscures the true nature of material conflict but creates a 'commodity fetishism', whereby those who fail to appreciate their true social relations attribute an illusory value to capitalism. Classical social theory, then, underpins modernisation by claiming that capitalism evolves via its internal growth dynamics and that these have consequences for mass pathology.

Yet there are different explanations for *how* capitalism alters social consciousness. According to some social theorists, this occurs indirectly and subtly. Durkheim, for example, emphasised how divisions of labour stimulated a syndrome of individualism in which spontaneous social relations

were replaced by contractual ones.[12] The result is an 'anomic society' in which collective interests and social consensus erode through the pitiless advance of capitalism. Community is thus fractured in the restless search for surplus value. According to Tönnies, meanwhile, industrial-capitalism replaced social groups with intimate bonds and strong feelings of togetherness (*Gemeinschaft*) with those of a more self-interested character (*Gesellschaft*).[13] Tradition and custom are thus the dry casualties of modernity. This leads to forms of social stratification based on functional differentiation rather than kinship and ascription, specialised political structures and roles which are legitimated without appeal to religious authorities. For Kornhauser, meanwhile, the evolution of capitalism was linked to a degenerative pathology via the decline of social diversity and organised group life. As societies modernise, the social equilibrium is upset through a changing urban-rural balance, which generates instability by uprooting individuals or leaving them socially dislocated. By transforming an agrarian-rural into urban-industrial economy, modernity prompts the movement of large numbers of people, which disrupts community via the rapid influx of large numbers of people into newly developing areas. Socio-economic differentiation, isolation and, in some circumstances, resentment may follow. And shorn of the insulation of community, the preconditions may thus be established for mass appeal. This suggests that the nature of economic transformation precipitates mass tendencies centred around atomisation and alienation. By eroding group-centred identities, individuals search for alternative forms of integration, raising the possibility that they may be harnessed by antidemocratic movements. Thus, 'where social pluralism is strong, liberty and democracy tend to be strong; and conversely, forces which weaken social pluralism also weaken liberty and democracy'.[14]

More contemporary exponents emphasise that modernisation influences cognitive sophistication. In effect, modernity raises the intellectual capacity of people, by equipping them with general skills to comprehend and critique the modern world. This line of theorising contends that capitalism has evolved in ways that depend upon specialist knowledge for growth. Technology and digital literacy are critical to its modern variant. Bell, for example, argued that in the 'emerging social reality', property relations of industrialisation were displaced by knowledge as the basis of social power.[15] Mechanistic property relations were swept away, altering work as it became increasingly defined by occupational specialisation. In effect, the transition was made to a knowledge-based economy.

Occupational change occurred via the reduction of blue-collar and agricultural work, the concomitant growth of the number of females in the labour force and the steady expansion of white-collar professions in administrative and professional sectors, along with tourism and retail.[16] This defines post-industrial society. One consequence of this is the growth of the 'service' industries, which drive increasing enrolments in universities and colleges, meaning a larger pool of recruits for positions and greater opportunity for social mobility and upward advancement.[17] National incomes rise, meaning that the proportion of expenditure directed towards durables and luxury items increases, reorienting consumption habits in directions associated with the quality of life.[18] In tandem, knowledge becomes a vital commodity, diffusing across and between professions and influencing how resources are disbursed. Decision-making becomes increasingly reliant upon technical expertise for the resolution of social and political problems. In post-industrial society, it is claimed, the issues confronting government are less amenable to resolution through the clash of values and interests and are instead solved through evidence-based review by technocrats.

The implications of Bell's analysis were the central focus of Ronald Inglehart's work. Inglehart applied aspects of the modernisation approach to individual political psychology, suggesting that this profoundly affected the relationship between citizens and the state. According to Inglehart, modernisation erodes traditional habits and behaviours and gradually broadens loyalties and identifications. This is driven by rising levels of education and income and the emergence of a new class. Indeed, Inglehart provides extensive analysis of the degree to which higher education expanded in the post-war period and income levels improved. The reason this was of such significance was that the changing socio-economic profile of mass publics led to the acquisition of a distinctive set of universalistic values. Much of Inglehart's analysis focuses on the centrality of values within belief systems and implications following their alteration. This is a critical aspect of modernisation approaches. Because values are the most pivotal and enduring aspects of individual psychology, change in their content is politically significant. How individuals relate to the modern world, the ways it is experienced through personal and group behaviour—all of this, according to Inglehart, underwent a profound shift in the light of value change initiated by processes of modernisation.[19] The core claim of Inglehart's analysis of modern capitalism, then, is that its transformative effects have

altered the value profiles of mass publics, which, in turn, have reshaped beliefs about authority.[20]

Why might this change have occurred? Inglehart's answer refers to Maslow's 'hierarchy of needs'.[21] Maslow contends that individuals fulfil a series of needs beginning with those that are physiological, subsistence and security-focussed, before progressing to belonging, self-actualisation and aesthetic matters. Needs are realised sequentially and in a logical order. Humans prioritise basic needs on which their survival depends: food, shelter, security and warmth. If fulfilled, they pursue those connected to safety: freedom from fear and anxiety, along with the need for law and order. If realised, they then focus on experiences which enrich life through creative and intellectual fulfilment. The need for knowledge and understanding, for a life philosophy, defines the human condition and constitutes ultimate rather than merely instrumental ends. Crucially, however, there are assumptions of progression: 'human motivational life is the arrangement of basic needs in a hierarchy of less or greater priority'.[22] Material needs are pursued, but once satisfied, are replaced by those emphasising self-worth and intellectual value.[23] This occurs gradually: before individuals concerns reflect higher-order goals, they first satisfy basic needs.

How might this occur? According to Inglehart, the shift in the relative importance of needs depends upon two important principles. The first is scarcity: individuals assign greater importance to things of relatively limited supply and gradually progress from biologically-centred priorities to those that are more experience-centred. The second mechanism is socialisation: the conditions in which individuals are raised shapes their value profile. What is scarce in one era may be plentiful in another. Socialisation is important because early learning is influential. What is learned first is retained the longest and shapes subsequent learning. If historical junctures could be identified in which formative conditions differed, value change would occur, and Inglehart contends that the material circumstances of the pre and post-war era were such a juncture and led to the acquisition of generationally-distinct value profiles.[24] The values of those reared in the formative conditions of the pre-war were characterised by physical and material scarcity. The context was one of existential anxieties driven by international conflict. In addition, there were limited consumer goods, precarious employment conditions and a basic social safety net. Since sustenance and survival could not be taken for granted, individuals prioritised basic wants and needs and acquired 'materialist values'. But an era of

relative peace and security followed in the post-war era, as rising wages provided greater amounts of disposable income.[25] Indeed, consumer affluence increased to the extent that some heralded a 'post-scarcity' environment. Higher education, meanwhile, raised levels of cognitive sophistication, meaning that individuals were increasingly willing to question authority and adopt new styles of participation. The reason for this is traced to the acquisition of value priorities which assign greater priority to the environment, gender roles, lifestyles and aesthetic issues.[26] In the light of their self-actualising content, Inglehart labelled these postmaterialist values.

Overall, then, modernisation approaches claim that economic change drives urbanisation, industrialisation, secularisation and democratisation. Over time, these erode traditional forms of commitment and establish more fluid loyalties and habits. These overlap with—and are reinforced by—patterns of consumption, occupational change and social and geographical mobility. In addition, modernised psychology is marked by cognitive sophistication, stemming from increased literacy and the expanded network of communications infrastructure upon which it draws. It engenders the ability to comprehend and criticise authority—and to confront it more directly. It is, moreover, linked to the acquisition of postmaterialist values. Postmaterialists have more demanding expectations of government fuelled by different interests, issue priorities and with an expanded repertoire of participation through which those demands are channelled. Thus, the approach provides a plausible account of how the prevailing value structure may be more critical towards elites, institutions and key parts of the democratic process.

The approach, however, is not universally accepted. Subjected to analysis it has received detailed and long-running criticism.[27] Despite revisions, its contemporary variant attracts critique for adhering to a similar set of unilinear assumptions as underpinned previous iterations of the approach. There is no conclusive evidence that economic development is a precondition for stable democracy, and where the two have been discovered together, the presence of the former need not necessarily cause the latter.[28] In addition, modernisation overlooks the inherently exploitative nature of capitalism. By labelling it 'economic development', the approach is insufficiently critical of the consequences of vast, integrated production chains brought together in an international division of labour. As these absorb competition and erode the capacity of state actors, they are not necessarily benign. Indeed, evidence has shown how they sharpen wealth concentration

which entrenches inequality and reinforces disadvantage. In addition, scholars have been critical of the way in which Inglehart has operationalised the modernisation approach. There are methodological vulnerabilities in Inglehart's value index.[29] Harold Clarke, for example, has attempted to demonstrate flaws in the materialist-postmaterialist battery.[30] Clarke suggests that the scale excludes important issues and is time sensitive. The consequences of this are that individuals' responses are conditioned by salient political issues. In particular, the scale asks individuals to construct a rank order of priorities by distinguishing between material and non-material items. According to Clarke and Dutt, the material items were problematic, since they did not include unemployment.[31] This was an issue to which individuals would have been sensitive given the economic environment, meaning that the battery was potentially invalid. This was challenged by those more sympathetic to the approach. Despite exchanges about evidence, techniques and interpretation,[32] Clarke dismissed the approach, suggesting that it is riven with ideological ballast and that its propositions are immune to empirical disproof.

Civil Society and Social Capital

A second approach locates the foundations of popular support in a realm of spontaneously created social structures which are separate from the state. Civil society generates a syndrome of norms, attitudes and behaviours which regulate social relations and stabilise democracy. The concept of civil society, however, is rarely used in a way has fixed meaning. Indeed, its contemporary usage has rendered it 'an ideological rendezvous for erstwhile antagonists'.[33] At its simplest, it refers to an organic realm of independent associations and the reciprocal benefits derived from activity therein. It is not merely the existence of pre-political associations that matters, but the secondary properties that flow from engagement within them—especially a diffuse trust in people. The approach, then, makes two important claims about the formation of popular support: (1) voluntary associations form a crucial part of the social infrastructure of society and generate trust: they are both the locus in which it incubates and the means through which it is reinforced within the population; and (2) the effects of generalised trust contribute to stabilising democracy. The first claim suggests that cooperation and community are underlying human needs: humans are socially embedded and draw together to overcome relations of avoidance. This emphasises the functional importance of civil society: it

constitutes social infrastructure which counterbalances solitude. The second claim, however, resolves a central tension within democratic theory by bridging the source of authority (the state) and the embodiment of popular sovereignty (society) via an important set of mediating attitudes.[34] Face-to-face interactions incentivise trusting instincts by rewarding cooperation and reinforcing social norms.[35] As these generalise, they permeate beyond the membership and are manifested in the political sphere.[36] In this sense, then, there are 'chains of affectedness'; associations act as conduits of representation and advocacy by activating, aggregating and channelling disparate voices, and by vying for power and mediating between citizens and the state.

Writing on civil society is grounded in ancient philosophy, and it is instructive to note its evolution and the frequency with which philosophers referred to specific properties which flowed from secondary associations. The term does not feature in Plato's work, but the foundations of it were provided through concern for social organisation and a public life geared towards morality and civic virtue.[37] Aristotle, by contrast, used the concept to denote the purposeful activity of self-government towards the achievement of shared ends.[38] The *polis* had formal institutions, but their organisation was enabled through intermediate structures of household and village. A plurality of associations gave form and substance to the Athenian polity, but political associations were vessels of common purpose and citizenship. For Hegel, meanwhile, it had a more specific and legalistic reference, denoting the reciprocal duty and respect towards property rights and private ownership that were necessary to fulfil the general will. This line of argument was modified during the Scottish Enlightenment, with analogous concepts including 'moral faculties', 'common sense' and 'public duty' recurring themes.[39] Hume, for instance, recognised the inimical potential of a Hobbesian state of nature, and argued that cooperation, reciprocity and bonds of obligation were necessary in societies in which resources and benevolence were limited.[40] Adam Smith, meanwhile, argued that behaviour could be regulated by internal norms and a general 'mutual assistance'. More critically, however, Marx associated it with class conflict and sectional interests. Departing from the liberal tradition, Marx thus advocated the removal of the distinction between public and private. Similarly, Gramsci viewed civil society as the locus of the struggle against hegemony with which the working class was subdued.

Generally, however, philosophical writing has enumerated the properties at the heart of the concept: mutual dependence and vigilant, active

citizenship—and drew attention to the dispositions by which they were manifested, particularly trust, reciprocity, civic duty and generalised social ethics. Alexis de Tocqueville, however, explicitly connected them to the quality of democracy.[41] For Tocqueville, despotism and inequality were distinguished, amongst other things, by their prevailing patterns of social relations. Amongst the vulnerabilities of nascent democracy, therefore, were self-interested motivations, which drew individuals into tight circles of suspicion, private enmity and general indifference. These, however, could be countered by traditions of assembly, because the proclivity to sociability links private concerns to a 'general interest', by drawing people into networks of mutual acquaintance and recognition. Thus, civil associations not only bridged the social and political, but strengthened public affairs, by raising community awareness, stimulating participation and debate, and thereby resulting in better decision-making. Anchored in towns and communities of America, social, recreational, confessional and welfare organisations inculcated 'habits of the heart', reciprocity and norms of mutual assistance. Hence, '[n]othing, in my opinion, is more deserving of our attention than the intellectual and moral associations of America. The political and industrial associations of that country strike us forcibly; but the others allude our observation, or if we discover them, we understand them imperfectly because we have hardly ever seen anything of the kind. It must be acknowledged, however, that they are as necessary to the American people as the former, and perhaps more so. In democratic countries the science of association is the mother of science; the progress of all the rest depends upon the progress it has made'.[42]

Tocqueville's work was revived in the closing years of the twentieth century. Studies analysed the density and strength of social networks.[43] In addition, the topic of trust scarcely went out of fashion.[44] But Robert Putnam's (1993) study of Italian regional government renewed interest in the cultural foundations of democracy. The study attempted to explain institutional performance from divergent civic traditions. Using a battery of 'objective' measures, including cabinet stability, responsiveness and the approach to legislation, Putnam detected a sharp regional divide whereby the Southern areas were consistently outperformed by those in the North. These indicators, however, were also related to subjective impressions about the performance of government: satisfaction with government was higher in those areas that performed better. The explanation, however, was not primarily attributed to socio-economic development. In fact, the performance gap persisted during a period in which the South was more

developed. Rather, it was traced to the comparatively weaker civic traditions of the South which generated a legacy of centralised and autocratic government.[45] According to this argument, patronage, cliques and deep-rooted patterns of corruption set in motion bonds of association inimical to the development of horizontal civic community which underpins effective and stable government.[46] Overall, then, Putnam characterised Northern civic life as conducive to the formation of 'social capital'. Sociability provides the impetus to generalised trust, cooperation and reciprocity that resides in ties, networks and voluntary associations and which makes democracy work.[47]

At a theoretical level, then, the approach emphasises the importance of civic involvement, and claims that historical patterns of development generate modes of association that are either 'horizontal' or 'vertical'. Vertical bonds are characterised by learned apathy, paternalism, social anomie and marginality. They signify a detached cynicism of government structures and decision-makers. Horizontal modes, by contrast, denote a syndrome of habits, traditions and attitudes which foster trust, solidarity and civic obligation, creating favourable circumstances to achieve consensus and mobilise people towards collective goals. Trust, therefore, is crucial to the approach. Trust is an initial driver towards sociability. As it permeates society, it generates sociability which leads to the acquisition of social capital. But it also reinforces trust: one outcome of sociability is an augmented sense of the trustworthiness of others. More than this, however, there is a 'spill over' effect; the acquisition of social capital creates a fiduciary relationship between government and the governed, by kindling beliefs that government is effective and responsive. Hence, 'generalised social trust (trust in people in general), trust in government and public officials, tolerance, and optimism are all seen, in many versions of the argument, as integral components of social capital directly linked to its beneficial impact on participation and civic engagement and democracy in general'.[48]

Does this assume that social trust is an undifferentiated concept, with positive benefits irrespective of its context? The answer is surely negative. Indeed, Putnam refined this aspect of the concept in his study of American civic traditions.[49] During the latter part of the twentieth century, Putnam detected an erosion of civic engagement and a long-term decline in social trust, an especially problematic finding given that writing on civil society emphasises that trust is a generalised ingredient for facilitating cooperation. However, trust may be distinguished by the context in which it is used, and Putnam distinguished two key types. Bonding trust is manifested

on the basis of kinship, ethnicity or race. It cements expectations of regularity, honesty and cooperation amongst a homogenous group, facilitating actions which benefit it, but also constraining harmful behaviours towards it. The closeness of the ties thus generates deep, but restricted, trust, tightly regulated by internalised norms and used exclusively by the in-group. Bridging trust, by contrast, forms in more heterogeneous contexts and has a wider radius. It transcends social divides, enabling individuals to access a more diverse range of resources than are otherwise available and is thereby more conducive to the 'positive externalities' that form the basis of modern social capital theory.

This approach is heavily steeped in pluralist writing. But it does not necessarily hold to a naïve interpretation of associations as incubators of democracy. Interest advocacy may stem from competitive individualism or private economic reward, the consequences of which may generate a self-reinforcing sphere of inequality and privilege.[50] Activity, meanwhile, even if positive, need not necessarily inculcate secondary skills which enhance democratic life. The fractious and divisive associational life of the Weimar Republic provides historical testament to their destabilising effects. In addition, not all organisations exist to influence government or energise citizens to collective action. Some may provide little more than a forum for the 'constant habit of kindness'.[51] But, if social context creates a general trustworthiness and political interest, popular support may be partly exogenous to the political sphere. The sources of support may originate in long-standing cultural norms and develop as an emergent property of generalised trust, which is projected onto democracy.

Political-Economy

A third approach claims that popular support depends upon the character and performance of the economy. According to Easton, '[n]umerous conditions contribute to the decline of support. A large part of them may be summed up under one category: output failure'.[52] At its simplest, the approach claims that democracy is supported to the extent that the prevailing material circumstances align with individuals' expectations. Favourable economic circumstances fuel support, whilst failure generates varying degrees of criticism and resentment.[53] The approach thus adapts Downsian logic in which citizens evaluate the political system in a quasi-rational manner.[54] People are viewed as instrumentally-motivated agents whose support involves a decision-making process underpinned by

self-interested calculations of anticipated utility. According to Downs, rational decision-making involves voters' weighing party policy based on perceived incentives. Voters, in turn, support the party or platform from which their material payoff is maximised. However, preferences may be heterogeneous, and information stratified or imperfect, leading to different ways in which rational choices are made. Incentives, for example, need not be confined to personal finance or *objective* macro-economic performance; citizens may rely on heuristic principles or information short-cuts to make reasoned judgements with limited information.[55] Assessments, meanwhile, may be distilled into *subjective* impressions, suggestive of reasoning in which support flows from reviewing past, or contemporary, economic experiences. In addition, questions surround the quantity and quality of information, along with the process by which it is sampled. Some impressions may be capricious and whimsical, whilst others are well-grounded.[56] This, however, does not fatally undermine the basic claim that those who perceive their economic fortunes to have soured, or that the economy is in downturn, should be less supportive compared with those whose outlook is positive. Citizens, then, 'think about what government can and should do. And the performance of government, parties, candidates affects their assessments and preferences'.[57] Popular support, then, is endogenous; it is politically interdependent and conditioned by economic stimuli.

A crucial aspect of this approach is its ability to link popular support to a principle: utility maximisation. This postulates that individuals adopt a calculating approach to decision-making, choosing the appropriate means for a given end, with economic self-interest the dominant motive: '[g]iven several mutually exclusive alternatives, a rational man always takes the one which yields him the highest utility, ceteris paribus; i.e., he acts to his own greatest benefit'.[58] Material incentives thus drive political behaviour: 'whenever we speak of rational behavior, we always mean rational behavior directed towards selfish ends'.[59] Rational behaviour thus stems from weighing the relative importance of alternative outcomes and choosing amongst them based on a consistent scale of preferences. As individuals use self-interested criteria, elections adopt a character analogous to the selection of consumer choices and the allocation of goods and resources in the market.[60] Citizens' are guided by cost-benefit analyses which are goal-oriented and predictive. As voters seek to maximise material gain, politicians and parties respond rationally by selecting strategies designed to appeal to the largest segment of the electorate and maximise their chances

of winning. The actions of governments, meanwhile, are also assumed to follow office-seeking goals, in that they choose legislative agendas and strategies which increase their chances of future electoral success.

Applying rational choice to popular support is often presented as straight-forward. But the approach does not necessarily assume that citizens engage in actual calculations—their choices may reflect broad goals and the constraints of the situation. In addition, rationality does not imply decisions devoid of error. Since information is limited and future conditions unknown, judgements may prove incorrect. Further, it does not suggest that material rewards are the only criteria from which support is extended. Psychological gratifications, social or group rewards or the need to avoid sanctions may form part of collective or non-economic inducements which underpin individual choices.[61] In drawing attention to the complexity of contemporary rational decision-making, however, one may quickly arrive at the point where it is irrational to support government. For example, overlapping levels of government not only make it easier to misplace blame and reward, but alter the costs in deciding whether or not government is deserving of support.[62] As individuals incur 'procurement' costs; i.e., they must invest time gathering and screening information on government and then incur costs through evaluating authorities and institutions, so the opportunity cost to supporting government increases. If the value of support is largely negligible, then small costs should prompt rational individuals to abstain.

Despite tensions in the approach, perceived competence in political-economy is argued to increase support for democracy, whilst perceived failings lead to its erosion.[63] In effect, democracy is supported because it delivers—it creates an environment in which people may prosper. Yet isolating the theoretical mechanisms at work has been more difficult. Few citizens pay constant attention to the ebb and flow of the political-economy and it is unclear how many are cognisant of the impact of government policy on their personal finances.[64] Subjective short-cuts, however, bridge the gulf between rational ignorance and informed decision-making without the associated information costs, enabling citizens to assess 'the nature of the times'. Decisions about whether times are 'good' or 'bad' form a decision calculus from which 'the leap to party culpability is simple and direct'.[65] Central to discussions is the distinction between personal (egocentric) and national (sociotropic) evaluations. Personal evaluations concern individuals' perceptions of their own financial predicament, and may include fluctuations in income, changes in savings, cash benefits or earning

power. This suggests that popular support varies on the basis of issues which impinge upon private economic reward. National evaluations, by contrast, link support to collective judgements of aggregate economic conditions.[66] On this view, citizens have general economic concerns—favourable business conditions, reduced unemployment and competent economic management—and support is extended or withdrawn on the basis of perceived success or failure in these areas.[67] Individuals may keep a 'running tally' of the most salient outputs, which are evaluated against their own benchmarks of success. In these scenarios citizens attribute credit and blame to governments in a 'reward-punishment' approach.[68]

Winning and Losing

Not all short-cuts, however, are economic. A significant body of literature holds that support is linked to electoral short-cuts.[69] The approach starts with individuals' electoral choice—who they vote for in national elections. Electoral participation is a primary experience which impacts on individuals' evaluations of government and democracy.[70] The approach holds that votes are a powerful sense-making device; partisanship imposes order and meaning on political objects, binding political stimuli together and generating varying degrees of consistency.[71] In this sense, elections not only evoke competitive instincts amongst partisans, but they constitute a framing tool, enabling individuals to economise information about government and evaluate the degree to which it is supported.[72] The most important outcome, however, is whether or not individuals voted for the winning party or parties. As elections distinguish between supporters of winning or losing parties, winning generates feelings of endorsement and favour which are lacking amongst those whose party has lost. This is so for rational reasons, as winners stand to gain more from the result by way of marginal utility, whilst losers should be dissatisfied and advocate change. In addition, there are also psychological reasons. As individuals strive to minimise cognitive dissonance; i.e., the process of holding contradictory beliefs, their support should align with electoral choices.[73] Elections, then, are not merely periodic reviews of government; they are salient interventions prompting individuals to revise and update their evaluations of political objects.[74] In effect, popular support is formed in ways that are congruent with electoral choices—analogous to a 'home-team' effect.[75]

A crucial part of the explanation thus emphasises partisanship. Electoral behaviour is shaped by party affiliations, which, in turn, generates political

evaluations. Partisanship is integral to the formation of political beliefs, because it denotes affective membership of a primary political group competing in national elections. As it denotes an underlying political attachment, it raises a partisan screen, which triggers competitive instincts. This colours attitudes towards candidates, enabling voters to take issue positions and thus influences electoral choices directly and indirectly. It is thus central to the electoral calculus, affecting voter choices and political evaluations, the effects of which may also recursively influence partisanship. Partisanship and political evaluations are therefore closely-related and mutually-reinforcing. On this approach, then, beliefs have a diversity of forms and varying degrees of connection, with important sub-domains involving interrelated subjects, including the political. Partisanship acts as an underlying predisposition which to helps 'one choose between alternatives, resolve conflicts, and make decisions'.[76] As partisanship steers the ways in which individuals evaluate political objects, it is, in effect, a linkage mechanism.[77] By linking attitudes and behaviours in politics and economics to a broader narrative about the state, partisanship provides varying degrees of constraint, connecting descriptive claims about the political world to prescriptions about their solutions.[78]

The relationship between winning and losing and support, however, may be amplified by other phenomena. The size of the victory, the frequency of defeat and the degree to which the results provide clear winners may all matter. Voters may respond differently in situations where their party wins but is unable to form a government with their preferred coalition partner. Voters may also alter their support if their party wins but is forced to govern with their principal rival. And there may be discrepancies if the election is first- or second-order. Aspects of the approach, therefore, may be conditioned by the post-election electoral arithmetic. But it may also be influenced by institutional design. How votes translate into governments alters the nature and size of the winning effect, which has consequences for supportive attitudes.[79] The support citizens direct depends, in part, upon the type of system in which they vote. Majoritarian systems, for example, attempt to maximise accountability through a plurality electoral system designed to provide governments with commanding majorities.[80] If they operate as intended, they appear disproportional, by 'manufacturing majorities' which enable parties to enter government with sizeable parliamentary majorities on the basis of a mere plurality of the popular vote. They purport to create accountability between voters and governments, but the trade-off is that there is limited opportunity for

losers' policy preferences to be realised in legislation. The system is winner-takes-all, and, save the prospect of a future election, it provides no consolation. Proportional systems, by contrast, differ in that winning parties must form coalitions. If they carry a greater degree of electoral support into government and adopt a more consensual approach to policy-making, they should accommodate the preferences of larger segment of voters and thus offset the frustrations of losing.

Electorates, however, differ in their familiarity with institutional rules. The winning effect may be tempered by democratic learning; i.e., by the process by which citizens familiarise themselves with the institutional arrangements of government.[81] If citizens are new to democracy, then differences between winners and losers may be especially pronounced, for the losers in the new system may be disproportionately drawn from those for whom the old system guaranteed winning.[82] In addition, voters in the new system may use different criteria to evaluate democracy, the most salient of which is the transition process itself. Evaluations of democracy may, in effect, be conditioned by the fact that it is not the old system, providing sizeable (but temporary) levels of support.[83]

Integrating the Four Approaches

These four approaches provide theoretical explanations for how popular support develops. They are not exhaustive, but they cover wide theoretical terrain and suggest that support is the product of complex and variable circumstances. Some are subjectively perceived, whilst others are structural and institutional. Some are long-term and incremental; others are short-term and direct. Viewed together, however, they approach the subject from different angles, providing complementary insights which pinpoint the foundations of popular support. Modernisation approaches highlight processes of pre-political learning and the values inhered therein. Civil society approaches emphasise community involvement and suggest that support is conditioned by the day-to-day activities in which people are engaged. Political-economy, meanwhile, focuses on democracy's capacity to meet material expectations.

Unresolved, however, is whether they should be conceived of as separate approaches or merged into a single perspective. There is precedent for both in the literature.[84] As shown, they have emerged from complementary disciplines, with contrasting views of the structural and ideational forces at work. They posit different cognitive and evaluative mechanisms,

and highlight different variables. On occasion, however, they have been integrated into a framework analogous to the 'funnel of causality', whereby factors are entered in a converging sequence, beginning with those which are structural and remote, before proceeding to intermediary influences and then those which are more immediate and politicised. The net effect is a chain of reasoning in which the analysis gradually proceeds from peripheral and contextual influences to those which are more directly political.[85]

Figure 2.1 visualises how this may be achieved. It recognises points of cross-fertilisation in the approaches. Far from being incompatible, they converge on a basic claim: experience matters. Different experiences matter, but together they are neither oversimplified explanations of complex

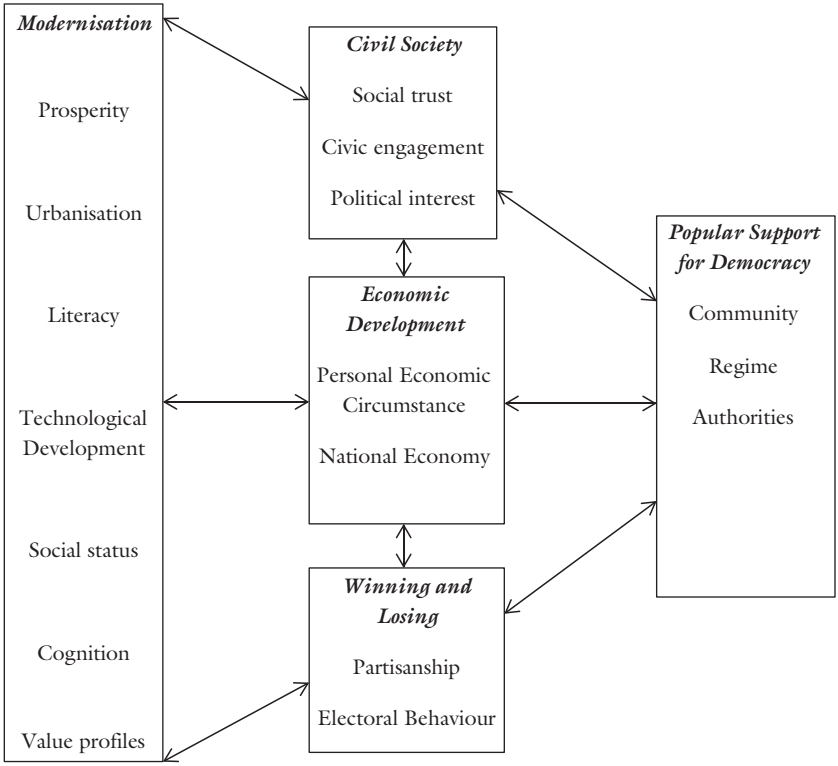

Fig. 2.1 A theoretical perspective on political support

phenomena, or a bewildering arrangement of esoteric propositions. Multiple factors influence support, and the model attempts to align with the experiences of ordinary citizens.[86] It recognises that political values may persist over the lifecycle, whilst also appreciating how contemporaneous influences shape support in a more dynamic fashion. Each step is important, each may be analysed empirically, but they are linked and cumulative.[87]

The importance of long-term conditions is underlined by the fact that the figure commences with modernisation. Modernisation emphasises structural conditions, differences in social position and political socialisation, the long-term consequences of which influence value profiles. Modernisation may be viewed as the most analytically remote, since its effects are distant, indirect and evolutionary. Modernisation establishes material conditions which influence consciousness, with consequences for the expectations and demands of ordinary people. The figure then proceeds to civil society. This does not imply that this is divorced from material circumstances; they overlap in important ways. In addition, it recognises connections between civic and political engagement: although civic engagement occurs outside politics, it draws individuals into political sphere through the issues with which organisations are concerned. As these structures forge ties between people and cultivate general resources which are carried over into politics, they may influence support. These resources are thus more proximate compared with modernisation. Equally proximate, however, are the influences of political-economy and winning and losing. Current and anticipated developments in the economy are yardsticks with which citizens appraise the effectiveness of government and democracy. Winning, meanwhile, should also impact more clearly on support, given its relationship with assessments of marginal utility and system output.

In addition, the figure accepts that the connections between the phenomena should be understood as reciprocal and mutually-reinforcing, rather than a simplistic one-way causality. Processes of economic change, for example, influence the character of civil society; and yet the character of civil society may have a recursive influence on the pace and nature of economic change. Testing these approaches is not a reductionist exercise to establish the relative importance of variables.[88] The details of which experiences matter and for how long they will last are all-important. If modernisation works its way out over time with predictable consequences, governments largely inherit its consequences and this should elevate its

importance on the research agenda. Approaches emphasising contemporaneous experiences, meanwhile, offer some possibility that government may contribute to restoring support. The more carefully these are delineated, the more likely their effects may be isolated and meaningful proposals formulated.

Conclusion

This chapter has set out the theoretical framework of the study. As noted, there are a plethora of approaches which explain how popular support develops. This chapter has set out four which dominate scholarly discussions. As shown, the concept of popular support is theoretically contested: it is sourced variously to long-term processes and disjunctures in modern capitalism, along with contemporaneous experiences of civil society, political-economy and winning and losing. Whilst these may not constitute entirely separate approaches, integrating them is not straight-forward. Emerging from contrasting parts of the social sciences, they place primacy on different influences, some which suggest continuity, whilst others engender discontinuity. Some are politics-centred, whilst others are society-centred. Yet by integrating them and taking account of the empirical differences of particular variables, a model is presented which more closely corresponds to the sequential nature of political learning.

Any evidence, however, depends on the manner in which it has been tested and the criteria used to evaluate the statistical and substantive importance of the mechanisms at work. If these approaches are to be tested, their core predictions must be extracted and converted into empirically testable hypotheses. There is no agreement on how this should be achieved because there is no consensus about the most appropriate indicators for each of the approaches. Nor is there acceptance about which measures of support should be used—or indeed about whether or not citizens evaluate the institutions of German democracy separately or relatedly. There are, in short, crucial methodological questions on whose resolution much of study of popular support depends. It is to these questions that the study turns next.

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CHAPTER 3

Designing the Research: From Concept to Measures and Methods

Introduction

How should popular support be measured? Despite volumes of research, there remains an uncomfortable paradox at the centre of this subject: numerous studies emphasise the importance of popular consensus for sustaining democratic government; and yet scholars themselves have failed agree on the indicators through which that consensus is measured.[1] The proliferation of survey items does not mean that each captures the same underlying concept, nor that every concept has a unique empirical referent.[2] Resolving this paradox depends upon finding indicators to measure multidimensional concepts with fluid parameters.[3] If resolved, however, studies still encounter a broader challenge: the trade-off between analytical depth and parsimony. Restrictions in space limit the scope for testing theories, meaning that scholars focus on core expectations, which often results in an overly restrictive and thus dissatisfying test; and yet as indicators multiply and the complexity of the analysis increases, the reader may be confronted with such a bewildering array of empirical findings that the central pattern is lost.

This chapter does not engage primarily with these wider challenges, but they feature in substantial measure. The chapter designs the research, setting out hypotheses which will be tested and providing the technical details upon which the empirical testing is based. The first section introduces four measures of support and uses data reduction techniques to

R. Campbell, *Popular Support for Democracy in Unified Germany*,
New Perspectives in German Political Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-03792-5_3

analyse if they constitute separate or related items. This provides crucial insights into the structure of how Germans think about democracy, by evaluating how far the theoretical distinctions correspond to the empirical reality. The second section summarises the theoretical approaches, highlights their principal variables and draws hypotheses with which they are tested. Throughout, the chapter introduces the data source used: ALLBUS (*Allgemeine Bevölkerungs Umfrage der Sozialwissenschaften*, German General Social Survey).

Measuring Popular Support

To test theories, empirical measures and data are required. The terms of reference suggest that the following criteria should guide the selection of indicators. First, they must operationalise theoretical distinctions between forms of support, particularly the higher-order measures of support along with indicators focusing on concrete institutions and real-life practice. If support depends on the aspects of political system evaluated, the analysis must capture the most important distinctions; and the more that are included, the more complete the picture that will be provided. Second, the measures used should, as far as possible, tap concepts operationalising *German* democracy; its distinctive constitutional and institutional features are essential to the analysis. Third, the study requires data covering a reasonably long time-frame to enable it to distinguish between temporary movements of support and more enduring changes. Fourth, the questions must operationalise the theories tested and shed light on east-west differences. This is not merely a case of distinguishing between easterners and westerners, but of incorporating variables about the nature of these differences—variables which are not commonly found in comparative cross-national surveys.

It is for these reasons that the research draws on the German General Social Survey (ALLBUS). This survey is conducted by the Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences and has collected data on a representative cross section of the German population since 1980. In 1990, it began surveying the five *Länder* previously comprising the GDR. It contains questions on a variety of political attitudes and each of the four theoretical approaches tested. Since the ALLBUS uses a number of core and rotating batteries, not all questions have been asked in every survey or with the same degree of regularity. However, the questions identified tap different aspects of the political system and have featured with

sufficient frequency to permit meaningful analysis over a reasonable time-frame.

Satisfaction with Democracy

One of the most commonly-used indicators of popular support is satisfaction with democracy. Respondents are asked how satisfied they are with democracy as it is practised in the FRG. The item has featured in ALLBUS surveys on eight occasions, the first of which was in 1988. This provides an important benchmark for support prior to unification, permitting an assessment of how the most significant development in Germany's post-war history changed the dynamics of popular support. Despite its long-term availability, however, the question has attracted controversy due to the different ways in which it may be interpreted. The criteria for answering are wide-ranging and there is potential for ambiguity. If, for example, individuals emphasise the word *democracy*, they may provide substantively different answers from those who emphasise the word *satisfaction*. If, meanwhile, citizens evaluate the disparity between the ideals of democracy and its reality, the lack of clear reference means that it is uncertain which are being used. Despite these concerns, there are important reasons for including this question in the study. First, whilst most questions target specific parts of the political system, this item provides an overview of the functioning of German democracy as a whole. This is important, for if readers wish to establish the general picture of support, this indicator provides qualified insights into this. Second, it is widely used in studies of popular support and its inclusion permits analysis of the degree to which the findings confirm (or refute) those of the more general literature. Third, all other measures of support in this analysis are *affective*; i.e., they tap support through questions about respondents' feelings. This question, by contrast, is *evaluative*, which sheds light on how emotional commitments differ from performance-based appraisals.

Pride in the Basic Law

ALLBUS also contains data on pride in the Basic Law. Respondents are asked to list aspects of the Federal Republic in which they have pride and the Basic Law is an option. On seven occasions this question has featured in the ALLBUS, with the time-frame preceding unification. This question is important for two key reasons. First, the Basic Law is perhaps the most

fundamental part of the *Rechtsstaat*: it not only guarantees the maintenance and protection of basic rights, but it constrains institutions and actors.[4] And yet it goes further than this by suffusing political life with democratic values and normative requirements. The Basic Law prescribes a constitutional and legal order premised on reason, law and justice in which individuals' rights are inviolable and where the state is empowered to act only insofar as it has statutory authority to do so. Since attachments to the Basic Law denote commitments to the constitutional order of the Federal Republic, they may capture higher-order support, aspects of which may be diffuse. Pride in the Basic Law may denote the rudimentary conviction in the political order. Second, this indicator may go further than this and tap into important components of Germans' political identity; it may incorporate the emotional commitments and feelings of togetherness (*Gemeinsamkeit*) which anchor the German polity in a political community.[5] This departs from the standard measures of this type of support. Questions on nationality are commonly used in recognition that allegiance towards the nation is likely to endure when faith in institutions or incumbents dwindles. But, since national sentiments were deeply compromised by the Third Reich and have persistently attracted varying degrees of mass suspicion, a remedy may be found in the concept of 'constitutional patriotism' (*Verfassungspatriotismus*).[6] This is a form of post-national political allegiance. Measuring it is not straight-forward, but those familiar with the historical development of the FRG will appreciate the arguments that were made about sustaining the German polity via attachments to the liberal values contained in the constitution. Analysis of this item, then, may reveal much-needed insights about the presence or absence of a shared sense of belonging to the state (*Staatsbewußtsein*) in unified Germany.

Trust in Democratic Institutions

ALLBUS surveys also contain data on trust in democratic institutions. Trust is critical to democracy. If extensive, it implies a degree of certainty that the core structures of political society, if unmonitored, will serve national interests. Trust thus confers legitimacy upon democracy, but by insulating government from short-term deficiencies, it also enhances its capacity for effective performance.[7] Despite its importance, authors claim that there is mounting evidence of scepticism towards the structures of democracy, and it is prescient, therefore, to investigate if Germans' trust in

the major representative and judicial institutions has changed.[8] As shown, on six occasions ALLBUS surveys have contained a battery on trust in political institutions, the time-frame for which exceeds twenty-five years. Although the institutions are disparate and wide-ranging, they are central to German democracy. Parliament, Federal government, the Constitutional Court and Judiciary, provide form and substance to German politics.[9] There can be little dissent about their analytical importance, since they are major fora in which representation occurs, legislation is framed and passed and government held accountable through scrutiny and debate. The former two are have an overtly party political character. Their activities centre on the day-to-day reality of governing by elites and those within them seek to gain partisan advantage. But, by placing them alongside the institutions of the judiciary, the analysis tests if these levels are atypical and if Germans distinguish institutions which enact policies from those which adjudicate on their legality and constitutionality.

Trust in the European Union

Thus far, the measures focus exclusively on the nation-state. By drawing the European Union into the study, the analysis is enriched by including governance structures that operate beyond the nation-state. Germany's membership of the EU has fundamentally altered its democracy, particularly through the way that legislation is framed within intergovernmental decision-making structures. Whether in binding directives or regulations, the EU drives much of the legislative agenda of the FRG, which is less of an exercise of sovereign power than of consensus-seeking in multilateral partnership. But the constraints on state actors have raised questions about the degree to which the EU suffers from a 'democratic deficit'.[10] These have become increasingly shrill as the circumstances under which the national veto may be used have declined, qualified majority voting increased and the role of the EU in major policy areas strengthened.[11] Processes of enlargement, meanwhile, have been sharply contested and remain a key area of elite-mass disconnect. And the future of Germany's 'European vocation' itself has been subjected to a more searching test following the financial, sovereign debt and migrant crises and the domestic political backlashes to them, especially the rise and breakthrough of the *Alternative für Deutschland*. This may signify that Germans' normative adherence to the EU is faltering and their faith in its institutions is irretrievably undermined. This will be investigated by analysing the ALLBUS

Table 3.1 Measures of popular support

Survey question	*Object(s) of political system*	*Type of support*	*Time-frame*
Satisfaction with democracy	Generalised support for democracy	Specific and diffuse	1988–2014 (8)
Pride in the basic law	Constitution/rechtsstaat	Diffuse	1988–2016 (7)
Trust in democratic institutions	Democratic institutions/ rechtsstaat	Specific and diffuse	1984–2012 (6)
Trust in European institutions	Supranational institutions/ European union	Specific and diffuse	1994–2008 (3)

Source: ALLBUS 1984–2012

battery on the trustworthiness of the EU Commission, Parliament and Court of Justice. As shown in Table 3.1, however, the data are less extensive compared with other institutions, with only three time points between 1994 and 2008. But, the changes occurring within this time-frame are highly significant, since they include major treaties (the immediate aftermath of Maastricht, 1993; Amsterdam, 1999; and Lisbon 2007); various waves of enlargement (1995, and 2004); and the replacement of the *Deutsche Mark* with the Euro (2002). This provides ample opportunity to establish how Germans have responded to the major developments in the EU and the support which these structures attract.

The Dimensions of Popular Support

Do these indicators constitute separate or related dimensions; and, if so, on which items are the distinctions most clear-cut? These questions are addressed through principal components analysis, the findings for which are displayed below in Table 3.2.[12]

The results are intriguing. In general, the findings support the theoretical distinctions made in the previous section. Examining the first factor, for example, the items are all positively related—a point consistent with claims that support is a generalised construct and flows across survey measures, and that items of support are inter-related. But the results also discriminate between at least three dimensions. The first concerns the institutions of the European Union: the Commission, Parliament and Court of Justice, which load particularly strongly on the first factor. Since there are other trust items in the analysis, these measures appear to be connected by the supranational level at which they operate. This suggests

Table 3.2 Principal components analysis of popular support

Survey question	*Factor 1*	*Factor 2*	*Factor 3*
Pride in the basic law	0.066	0.001	0.895
Satisfaction with democracy	0.089	0.391	0.547
Trust in constitutional court	0.174	0.687	0.288
Trust in justice system	0.324	0.649	0.110
Trust in parliament	0.238	0.828	0.011
Trust in federal government	0.300	0.759	−0.026
Trust in European commission	0.923	0.171	0.007
Trust in European parliament	0.928	0.187	0.035
Trust in European court of justice	0.802	0.252	0.173
Eigenvalue	4.02	1.3	1.0
Cumulative variance	29%	57%	70%
N	1454		

Source: ALLBUS 1984–2012
Notes: varimax rotation

that Germans recognise distinctions between the institutions of Europe and Germany and their institutional support is conditioned by whether or not they operate within or beyond the nation-state.

The second factor links four institutions of German democracy: the Constitutional Court, the Justice system, Parliament and Federal government. These load noticeably strongly and are connected as the major structures of government operating within FRG. This may indicate that respondents are abstracting from the party political configuration of the government and the electoral composition of the *Bundestag* and are focussing instead on these as constitutionally linked structures within the German political system.

The third factor comprises pride in the Basic Law. This question loads strongly on this dimension, a finding consistent with the view that it constitutes a different—perhaps higher-order—dimension of support. This supports the core argument of this study that the Basic Law is foundational to the style and tradition of German democracy. Since Germans view it differently compared with democratic institutions, the results are consistent with the view that it is, in fact, more diffuse in character and should be analysed as such.

Finally, satisfaction with democracy loads the strongest on the third factor (0.547). As it is positively related to pride in the Basic Law, this suggests that it has diffuse properties. Yet it is not entirely disconnected from

democratic institutions, as it also loads positively on the second dimension, albeit more weakly (0.391). However, there is no agreement about *how* strongly items must load on a factor to justify their inclusion: some suggest that the cut-off point is 0.4, but others suggest that the benchmark should be higher. Conceptually, it is not entirely surprising that satisfaction with democracy overlaps with the constitution and democratic institutions. After all, both are involved in the functioning of German democracy. The Basic Law enumerates the values emphasised in German society and the institutions through which they are realised. Evaluations of the practice of democracy may well engender assessments of how well the German model of democracy is living up to those ideals. There are important differences in these two items. In recognition of this, they will be analysed separately.

Overall, these findings suggest that there are distinctions between measures and they cannot be treated interchangeably. Some forms of support require particularly careful handling: support for institutions, for example, is distinguished by the *levels* at which they operate. Germans distinguish among the institutions of the national government and those of the EU. They also discriminate between these institutions and the Basic Law—and the evidence justifies treating it as a higher-order item. In addition, care must be exercised when discussing satisfaction with democracy, which overlaps with institutional and constitutional support, suggesting aspects of it are more realist in focus, whilst others may be more diffuse.

Research Design

The next section of the chapter turns to the theoretical approaches and sets out how they influence these forms of support.

Modernisation

Modernisation connects popular support to the evolution of modern capitalism. Prolonged economic growth leads to the abandonment of traditional methods and the search for efficient forms of investment. Technology rationalises production, gradually creating a knowledge-based economy. Socio-structural change follows, defining characteristics of which are affluence, social mobility, the weakening of social cleavages and occupational specialisation. Modernisation, however, is not merely linked to changes in status; it leads to an intergenerational value shift, which erodes deferential

attitudes towards authority and fuels political engagement through more direct and expressive forms. According to Inglehart, modernisation increases autonomy and reduces deference towards hierarchical institutions and agents: 'the postmodern shift has brought a de-emphasis on all forms of authority'.[13] This is so for two reasons, the first of which is through higher education. Education transforms passive recipients of knowledge into purposeful agents capable of impacting government via mechanisms of accountability. Education thus constitutes a cognitive and motivational resource, equipping individuals to comprehend and scrutinise government, extract knowledge about it and approach it with more demanding expectations. The approach, therefore, emphasises personal agency and self-efficacy. As levels of cognitive sophistication are raised, government is appraised against more exacting standards, eroding deference towards it. In addition, the acquisition of postmaterialist values reflects a shift towards priorities focussed on the actualisation of personal, rather than institutional, goals. These values reject bureaucratic authority and centralised decision-making, whilst engendering preferences for a more horizontal and responsive approach.[14] Frustrations with oligarchical structures which fail to adapt to a new agenda generate more critical sentiments towards institutions and elected leaders.

Modernisation, however, does not erode all forms of support. Postmaterialists do not display an undiscriminating cynicism of politics. Their engagement in more direct, elite-challenging and multidimensional modes of engagement demonstrates that their values engender the ability to discriminate between ideals and reality, and, if these are increasingly out of sync, they press authorities and institutions to align more closely with democratic principles.[15] Postmaterialists are critically assertive, not apathetic. Their criticism of authority reflects a discrepancy between how the ideals are being realised on a day-to-day basis via processes of decision-making, the limited focus of issues debated and the ways in which they are circumscribed by partisan interests. The solution is self-evident: extend democracy. If postmaterialists recognise the normative worth of the democratic system, then participation should be extended, structures decentralised and the workings of the system flattened.

Modernisation, therefore, emphasises links between education and postmaterialist values and popular support. These, however, are different aspects of the approach and the distinctions are important. Education is a *cognitive* resource implicit within the modernisation sequence; it has links to literacy and political awareness, enabling individuals to move beyond

the constrictive nature of established politics and realign it with updated needs and issues. Values, meanwhile, are more psychological and latent; they are an emergent property of increased access to higher education, but engender heightened expectations about institutions and the development of new issues. These will guide the empirical inquiry and are formalised in the hypotheses below.

H1 education reduces support for institutions but increases support for the Basic Law.

H2 postmaterialist values reduce support for authorities and institutions, but increase support for the Basic Law.

Civil Society

Civil society approaches emphasise that engagement in secondary associations generates a syndrome that counters inefficacy and alienation by incubating attitudes conducive to democratic pluralism.[16] These institutions constitute the fabric of civil society, in that they counterbalance isolation and inequalities through collective resources. Generalised dispositions inculcated in the public sphere thus draw individuals into supportive circles based on voluntary participation and consent. Active engagement denotes a willingness to move beyond the private realm and interest individuals in matters connected to the state.[17] Not all associations, however, exist for political purposes. Some have narrow spheres of interest or tightly circumscribed memberships, and people may associate for rational reasons: individual or collective interests, rather than a sense of the common good, may be the salient criteria from which engagement is spurred.

Rather than focus on the structural aspects of civil society, therefore, two dispositions are used to test the approach. The first is political interest. Writing on civil society holds that democracies are sustained by vigilant citizens attentive to civic affairs and endowed with a sense of responsibility to engage with politics.[18] This is an important component of conceptualisations of democratic citizenship, as it underpins political motivation and denotes a propensity cognitively to engage with the activities of the state. If supplemented with additional resources, it may thus equip individuals with the skills and knowledge to engage in discussions and debates from which political choices are made.[19] This is the hallmark of civil society. The trait is an indicator of active and responsible citizenship, enabling

individuals to establish issue positions, weigh party positions, evaluate political leaders and create a basis for meaningful political participation. Its effect on popular support will be tested in the empirical research.

H3 political interest increases popular support for democracy.

A second concept recurring in the civil society approach is social trust.[20] This is an underlying belief in the benevolence of others and denotes empathy, mutuality and reciprocity. It is based on positive face-to-face experiences and, if reinforced, may become a generalised property which affects other attitudes. Trust, then, creates conditions in which it is self-reinforcing. If its extension is justified, it may lead to further trust, generating a virtuous culture of trust. Conversely, distrust may also be self-replicating. If reciprocated, it has the potential to generate a vicious circle of self-fulfilling distrust, paralysing social coordination and action. Trust, then, is based on experience—it differs in quality depending on the relationship in which it is found. Crucially, however, social trust is held to 'spill over' onto democratic institutions. As social trust concentrates, it spreads to the extent that it is projected onto democracy. Despite research, however, doubt surrounds this claim. Some suggest the connections are robust, whilst others claim that they are weak to non-existent.[21] But by drawing on four indicators of popular support, each targeting different levels of the German political system, there is sufficient opportunity to subject it meaningful empirical scrutiny.

H4 social trust increases popular support for democracy.

Political-Economy

Political-economy approaches link support to assessments of utility. The approach suggests that democracy is supported to the extent that it delivers by satisfying performance-based expectations. Effective performance enhances support, whilst a legacy of substandard achievements leads to its erosion. Although there are a different types of assessments, subjective perceptions of economic outputs are crucial. The ability to maintain—or create—prosperity, for example, or to guarantee security of income and a minimum standard of living, are salient yardsticks from which the effectiveness of government is appraised. Connections between assessments of the economy and the support which government attracts are thus

claimed to be straight-forward and direct. As Fiorina argued: 'typically voters have one comparatively hard bit of data: they know what life has been like under the incumbent's administration. They do not need to know the precise economic or foreign policies of the incumbent in order to judge the results of those policies'.[22] Despite the force of Fiorina's reasoning there is disagreement on which assessments matter. A number of scholars emphasise personal economic circumstances, suggesting that support is revised on the basis of private economic reward. What matters, then, is personal financial well-being, screened through individuals' perceptions. This is formalised in the following hypothesis:

H5 perceptions of economic circumstance influence popular support for democracy.

A related indicator focuses on perceptions of national conditions. Perceptions of national economic activity may thus operate as a shorthand for effective stewardship in political-economy and resource allocation. If these are believed to be competently managed, individuals may keep a 'running tally', altering their support according to fluctuations in economic conditions. Alternatively, individuals may reason that economic growth will filter down in ways that will be personally advantageous. If government is perceived to have contributed to circumstances in which economic dividends are forthcoming, this may stimulate popular support. Political actors or institutions may therefore provide varying degrees of material incentives for individuals to support them, implying that support is an endogenous feedback: it is conditioned, in part, by the activities of governments. But it is also conditional. Support may move in different directions, increasing in more buoyant times and dwindling in more austere circumstances.

H6 perceptions of national economic conditions influence popular support for democracy.

Winning and Losing

A final approach links support to individual's political behaviour. At its simplest, support is politicised in that it stems from—and reflects—party choices in recent elections. Those who voted for the winning party or parties should be more supportive compared with those who did not. This is

so for rational reasons: if governments enact an agenda which aligns with winners' preferences, they stand to obtain more by way of utility maximisation. Those who did not vote for the winning party, by contrast, should be less supportive since they stand to gain comparatively less by way of marginal utility. Support is thus guided by a distinctive form of post-election rationality: the benefits which individuals expect to receive are reviewed in the light of party fortunes at national elections. There are, however, also psychological reasons underpinning this approach: elections are salient interventions and the urge to avoid cognitive dissonance motivates individuals to align their support with partisan choices.

H7 individuals who vote for the winning party should be more supportive of democracy compared with those who voted for the losing party.

Easternness

This study has not introduced a separate approach for 'easternness'; i.e., the values, attitudes and identities which demarcate easterners from westerners.[23] Although the focus of the research is not to investigate the differences between easterners and westerners, the above approaches may be modified by individuals' pre and post-1989 experiences. The different stimuli to which easterners were exposed in the pre-1989 era, along with their contrasting experiences of the economy, constitute a strong basis from which to anticipate differences in popular support. Although these were especially pronounced following unification, writers continue to uncover significant and politically important differences between easterners and westerners.[24] The analysis, therefore, tests the degree to which they continue to differ in their popular support (H8).

The study, however, probes into how and why they differ. Part of the explanation may be rooted in the contrasting circumstances in which east and west Germans were socialised. The conditions of western economic development did not apply wholesale in the east during the period in which Germany was divided. Socialisation differed, leading to the acquisition of values grounded in the GDR, the effects of which can be anticipated to endure. This does not mean that East German processes of political socialisation were successful.[25] Despite the efforts of the regime, research suggests that processes of transmitting core beliefs to the wider population largely failed. Nor does it imply support for the GDR leadership, many of whom were completely discredited. Yet easterners were

capable of discriminating between the ideals of socialism, its practitioners and its real-life practice, and of accommodating themselves to some of the features of socialism. Aspects continued have normative value beyond the dissolution of the socialist state. Writers have noted, for example, the tenacious affinity for socialism amongst east Germans and research has demonstrated its value-based properties.[26] These values affect political attitudes, but this study tests their influence against a broader range of indicators, generating deeper insights about how they influence support (H9).

The evidence, however, may be supplemented by probing for interaction effects. The values which easterners hold may moderate their popular support in ways that are discrepant form the west (H10). Experiences of economy, meanwhile, varied markedly following unification, since for many easterners, the transition brought initial euphoria, but the rapid introduction of the market economy not only brought significant unemployment, but engendered loss of esteem, status, prestige and security. These constitute a basis from which the development of popular support in the east may be particularly conditioned by political-economy (H11).

H8 popular support for democracy differs between easterners and westerners.

H9 evaluations of socialism influence popular support for democracy.

H10 evaluations of socialism may moderate popular support more strongly in the east compared with the west.

H11 political-economy may moderate popular support more strongly in the east compared with the west.

Time

Time, however, may alter the picture. Temporary discontent may fade as it is overshadowed by more recent events. As governments change, meanwhile, there are new opportunities to restore citizens' faith in them. Yet time may also impact on the theoretical linkages uncovered. Scholars have noted, for example, that social trust underpins popular support in established rather than new democracies, since it takes time for nascent democracies to establish a civil society and for trusting attitudes to permeate to the political realm. In addition, the disappointments with unification may

have receded. Some, for example, have written of the 'explosion of material prosperity in the east', and greater equality in household income and pensions.[27] Equally, unification can now be contextualised within a longer time-frame in which the resilience of democratic institutions to withstand domestic challenges has been amply demonstrated. And one cannot discount that an important mechanism at work over the past twenty-five years has been demographic. As time brings generational turnover, differences between easterners and westerners may diminish as fewer people have experience of living in divided Germany. At its simplest, then, democracy may be institutionalised with longevity: it may stabilise itself as people witness the peaceful transfer of power and the effectiveness of its constitutional framework. The system is thus supported not from pragmatic calculus, but from the realisation that it works and is qualitatively superior to any of its rivals. Specific effects about time, however, need not be posited. The analysis is already sufficiently complicated with eleven hypotheses. But the importance of time will be included in the discussion of the results.

Methods

The study takes a separate chapter for each form of support, beginning with satisfaction with democracy (Chap. 5). By taking this indicator separately, the study provides a general picture of popular support in Germany which will be augmented and refined in the subsequent chapters. There are general lessons to be extracted from the chapter on satisfaction with democracy, but this should not be pushed too far. The variation in findings between the chapters is crucial to the overall pattern. The analysis then focuses on indicators which provide substance to German democracy, turning first to the constitution and examining pride in the Basic Law (Chap. 6), before analysing trust in democratic institutions (Chap. 7) and trust in European institutions (Chap. 8).

The study uses a standard format to test the approaches. Each chapter begins with a simple cross-tabulation of the data, presenting an overview of how popular support changes as the major independent variables alter. This straight-forward from of analysis provides an informative picture of the mechanisms at work and how these vary between the east and west. However, it then turns to more advanced techniques, using multivariate regression analyses to filter out effects which are trivial or spurious. Models are presented for Germany as a whole, but where the evidence suggests that different theoretical mechanisms drive support between the east and

west, separate models have been run. To develop this further, models are also produced containing interaction terms to test if they moderate the effects of popular support.[28]

As three of the chapters use continuous variables, multiple regression procedures are appropriate.[29] This is one of the most widely-used techniques in quantitative analysis and models the relationship between a continuous dependent variable and a specified set of independent variables as an additive, linear function. Unstandardised coefficients enable us to understand how a one-unit increase in a predictor variable influences support net of statistical controls.[30] Standardised coefficients, meanwhile, enable variables to be interpreted in terms of standard scores, making it easier to establish an order of magnitude amongst the coefficients for the purposes of comparison.[31] There is, however, dubiety surrounding the interpretation of standardised coefficients. Although there are a number of remedies, the approach adopted here is that of calculating the proportionate contribution of the predictors to the R-square. The most important of these are then graphed to show the relative importance of variables.[32] Equally, the substantive (as well as statistical) importance of the effects of variables matter, the results of post-estimation analyses are visualised using average marginal effects.[33]

As noted, however, the techniques used depend on the properties of the variables. Pride in the Basic Law (Chap. 6) differs in that it is a dichotomous variable; i.e., it is discrete: respondents mentioned the Basic Law as something of which they were proud or they did not.[34] Logistic regression is thus used to model pride in the Basic Law, with logits presented in the outputs. These show the change in the predicted logged odds of expressing pride for each one-unit change in the independent variables.[35] Yet they may be more difficult to interpret. Equally, the interpretation of logits is complicated by the fact that they may be influenced by other variables included in the model, along with those not included.[36] To aid their interpretation, graphs of marginal effects are thus displayed.

Conclusion

This chapter has designed the research of this study. It derived empirical indicators of popular support, identifying four as essential to German democracy. First, satisfaction with democracy provides a bellwether of support and a general picture of its shape and character of Germany. Second, support for the constitutional structure of German democracy is indicated

through attitudes towards the Basic Law. In addition, trust in democratic institutions is used to assess support for the structures of representation and accountability, structures that rest upon (and derive power from) the Basic Law. Finally, German attitudes towards the European Union are analysed. As shown, however, these are more than merely conceptual distinctions; principal components analysis indicated that they correspond to the manner in which Germans think about democracy.

The following chapters thus explore the factors which lead to support for these measures. The hypotheses guide the analysis, setting out how the evidence may confirm, refute or modify the theoretical approaches used. Attitudes towards each are undoubtedly important, but the cumulative picture may be more the sum of the parts. Steep and protracted declines in all indicators would surely signal more than a temporary disenchantment weathered by the passage of time or by the replacement of a government. Rather, it would suggest that concerning levels of support and contagion across the system. This raises the issue of how much support there is in Germany. Prior to investigating what drives support for these indicators, the pattern of support requires analysis. Three issues are especially relevant: the levels of support within Germany, the differences between the east and west of the country, and how time has contributed to change. These issues demand a new chapter.

Notes

1. There are a wide variety of conceptual frameworks drawing on different empirical measures. See, for example, Pippa Norris, *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). Dieter Fuchs, 'The Political Culture Paradigm', in Russell J. Dalton and Hans-Dieter Klingemann (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 167.
2. Issues surrounding methodology have been recurring themes in the academic literature on popular support. The finest examples, however, are the Miller-Citrin debate in the 1974 edition of the *American Political Science Review*, the debate between Anderson and Canache et al. on the meaning and inference of satisfaction with democracy indicator—see Chap. 4. These intersect with classic and contemporary debates about public reasoning about politics. Classic discussions are found in Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (Macmillan Press: New York, 1922). See also Robert E. Lane and David O. Sears, *Public Opinion* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964). For contemporary discussions, see, for example, Arthur Lupia and

Mathew D. McCubbins, *The Democratic Dilemma: Can Citizens Learn What they Need to Know?* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998).

3. The literature on this is too voluminous to cite extensively, but the following provides a detailed account of the key debates. See, for example, Philip E. Converse, P.E. (1962) 'Information Flow and the Stability of Partisan Attitudes'. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 26 (1962), pp. 578–599. Philip E. Converse, 'The Nature of Mass Belief Systems' in David Apter (ed.) *Ideology and Discontent*. (Free Press: New York 1964).
4. Gordon Smith, 'The Nature of the Unified State' in Gordon Smith, William E. Paterson, Peter H. Merkl and Stephen Padgett (eds.) *Developments in German Politics* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 37–51.
5. Peter Merkl, 'A New German Identity' in in Gordon Smith, William E. Paterson, Peter H. Merkl and Stephen Padgett (eds.) *Developments in German Politics* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 327–348.
6. See, for example, Hans-Dieter Klingemann, Mapping Political Support in the 1990s in Pippa Norris (ed.) *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 40.
7. William Mishler and Richard Rose, 'Trust in Untrustworthy Institutions: Culture and Institutional Performance in Post-Communist Societies' *Studies in Public Policy* no 310 (Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, 1998).
8. Russell J. Dalton, *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Participation in Advanced Industrial Democracies: Third Edition* (New York, NY: Chatham House Publishers, 2002), pp. 240–241.
9. Robert Rohrschneider and Rudiger Schmitt-Beck, 'Trust in Democratic Institutions: Theory and Evidence Ten Years after Unification'. *German Politics*, 11/3 (2002), pp. 37–38.
10. Andrew Moravcsik, (2004), 'Is there a "Democratic Deficit" in World Politics? A Framework for Analysis', *Government and Opposition*, 39, 2:336–363.
11. Marcus Höreth, 'The Trilemma of Legitimacy Multilevel Governance in the EU and the Problem of Democracy', Center for European Integration Studies, (1998), p. 4.
12. Alan C. Acock, *Discovering Structural Equation Modeling Using Stata: Revised Edition* (College Station, TX: Stata Press, 2013).
13. Ronald Inglehart, 'Postmodernization Erodes Respect for Authority, but Increases Support for Democracy', in Pippa Norris (ed.) *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 242.
14. Christian Welzel, 'Individual Modernity' in Russell J. Dalton and Hans-Dieter Klingemann (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 195.

15. Russell J. Dalton, 'The Dynamics of Party System Change', in Karlheinz Reif and Ronald Inglehart *Eurobarometer: The Dynamics of European Public Opinion Essays in Honour of Jacques-Rene Rabier* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991), p. 219.
16. Michael Woolcock, Civil Society and Social Capital in Michael Edwards (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Civil Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 197–208.
17. Jan W. Van Deth, 'Norms of Citizenship' in Russell J. Dalton and Hans-Dieter Klingemann (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 403.
18. Oscar W. Gabriel and Jan W. van Deth, 'Political Interest' in Jan W. Van Deth and Elinor Scarbrough (eds.) *The Impact of Values: Beliefs in Government Volume Four* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 390–411.
19. Martin Kroh and Christian Könnecke, 'Political Interest and Participation in Germany' *DIW Economy, Politics Science Bulletin* Berlin 4/1(2014) (Berlin: Deutsche Institut für Wirtschaftsforschuung).
20. Jan W. van Deth, 'Measuring Social Capital: Orthodoxies and Continuing Controversies' *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 6/1 (2003), pp. 79–92.
21. The literature on this is sizeable. See, for example, Kenneth Newton, and Pippa Norris, 'Confidence in Public Institutions: Faith, Culture, or Performance?' In Susan Pharr and Robert Putnam (eds.) *Disaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Max Kaase, 'Interpersonal Trust, Political Trust and Non-institutionalised Political Participation in Western Europe'. *West European Politics* 22/3(1999), pp. 1–23. Ross Campbell, 'The Sources of Institutional Trust: Civic Culture or Economic Performance?' *German Politics*, 13/3 (2004), pp. 401–418.
22. Morris Fiorina, *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 5.
23. I would accept that easternness encompasses a broader range of phenomena, particularly the history and memory of those who spent the majority of their lives in the GDR.
24. See, for example, Edeltraud Roller, 'Welfare State and Political Culture in Unified Germany'. *German Politics*, 24/3 (2015), pp. 292–316.
25. The nature and extent of political socialisation in the GDR is sharply contested. Some suggest a specific GDR mentality formed. See, for example, Dieter Geulen, *Politische Sozialisation in der DDR: Autobiographische Gruppensgesprache mit Angehorigen der Intelligenz* (Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 1998); also, Christiana Lemke, *Die Ursachen des Umbruchs 1989: Politische Sozialisation in der Ehemaligen DDR*. Darmstadt: Westdeutscher

Verlag, 1991). For a more differentiated view, see: Mary Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a dictatorship: Inside the GDR, 1949–1989*. Oxford: Oxford, University Press, 1995).

26. See, for example, Ross Campbell, 'Political Culture and the Legacy of Socialism', *German Politics*, 24/3 (2015), pp. 271–291.
27. See, for example, Klaus Schroeder, *Der Preis der Einheit. Eine Bilanz* (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2000), p. 146. See also, David P. Conradt, 'The Civic Culture and Unified Germany: An Overview' *German Politics*, 24/3 (2015), pp. 256–257.
28. James Jaccard and Robert Turrisi, *Interaction Effects in Multiple Regression: Second Edition* (London: Sage, 2003).
29. Satisfaction with democracy (Chap. 4) is scaled 0–5 and is treated as quasi-continuous; trust in democratic institutions (Chap. 6) uses a combined index which sums the scores of respondents' answers to the four institutions. As each institution is scaled 0–6, the overall scale is thus 0–24. Chapter 7, meanwhile, focuses on trust in European institutions, combining the scores for the parliament and commission to give a 0–12 scale.
30. For the avoidance of doubt I use the R package. See, cran.r-project.org/mirrors.html.
31. Larry D. Schroeder, David L. Sjoquist and Paula E. Stephan, *Understanding Regression Analysis: An Introductory Guide* (London: Sage, 1986).
32. See, Ulrike Grömping, 'Relative Importance for Linear Regression in R: The Package relaimpo', *Journal of Statistical Software*, 17/1 (2006), pp. 1–27.
33. R has a variety of ways of calculating these. For the avoidance of doubt, I use average marginal effects (AME) calculated using the effects package. See, John Fox and Sanford Weisberg, *An R Companion to Applied Regression*: 2nd Edition. (London: Sage, 2011). These effects are illustrated using the ggplot2 package—see, Hadley Wickham, *ggplot2: Elegant graphics for data analysis: 2nd edition* (Warsaw: Springer, 2016).
34. See Fred C. Pampel, *Logistic Regression: A Primer* (London: Sage, 2000).
35. For further details, see Scott Menard, *Applied Logistic Regression Analysis: Second Edition*. (London: Sage, 2002).
36. See, for example, Corina Mood, 'Logistic Regression: Why We Cannot do What We Think We Can Do, and What We Can do About it. *European Sociological Review*, 26/1(2010), pp. 67–82.

CHAPTER 4

Mapping Popular Support for Democracy in Germany

Introduction

In 1992, *Politikverdrossenheit* was word of the year in Germany—a finding that amply illustrates the scale of the disaffection that was engulfing the newly-unified polity.[1] Frustrations with elites were pervasive as the difficulties of unification were becoming increasingly apparent. But disaffection with elites does not necessarily equate to a rejection of democracy. People discriminate in their views of government and may retain a faith in democracy when elites and institutions forfeit confidence. This is the central point of this chapter. It not only shows that Germans distinguish in their views of democracy, but do so on the basis of the *Rechtsstaat*, separating their evaluations of its institutions and day-to-day functioning from their appraisals of the Basic Law. To do this, the analysis uses the four dimensions identified in the previous chapter. Satisfaction with democracy summarises how individuals evaluate the functioning of democracy. If there is disaffection, it should be detectable through the levels and trends in this indicator. As Germans endorse the Basic Law, meanwhile, so they identify symbolically with the defining values underpinning their system of government and the norms and traditions through which it functions. Attitudes towards representative and judicial organs, meanwhile, not only operationalise structural aspects, but signal indirect legitimacy towards other latent objects through which their power is exercised—parties, political leaders and the composition of government being cases in point.

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New Perspectives in German Political Studies,
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And complementing these institutions, meanwhile, are those of the European Union. Without question, processes of harmonising the institutions of German democracy with those of a supranational political union have had profound implications for what it means to support democracy in modern Germany.

How supported are these dimensions? What has been the trajectory of support over the period for which there are data? And to what extent are there east-west differences? This chapter answers these questions and is divided into three principal sections. The first assesses the distribution of support across all four measures, distinguishing the levels from east-west differences and change over time. This provides a sweeping panorama of the breadth and depth of support for the German political system. Further, the chapter also probes into the levels of support within key socio-demographic groups, including age, education and gender. If changes in support have been uniform across the population or confined to particular sub-sections, it may indicate the underlying mechanisms at work. The second section analyses the variables connected to the four theoretical approaches—modernisation, civil society, political-economy and partisanship. If the ebbs and flows in these indicators correspond to those of popular support, then the study may have identified lines of inquiry on which subsequent parts of the data analysis may focus. The third section draws conclusions and reinforces the central findings: (1) there is evidence of support in Germany; (2) much of the support lost in the years following unification has now returned; (3) east-west differences have narrowed on some measures but remained wide on others; and (4) the levels and movement in support covary with the variables identified in the theoretical approaches, suggesting that they have potential to identify the correlates of support, but that it is a concept with complex and varied foundations.

Popular Support in Germany: Distribution and Trajectory

Satisfaction with Democracy: Decline and Recovery

The analysis begins with satisfaction with democracy.[2] The data in Table 4.1 contain the averages for Germany as a whole, along with those for the east and west of the country.

Table 4.1 Satisfaction with democracy, 1988–2014

	1988	*1991*	*1992*	*1998*	*2000*	*2002*	*2008*	*2014*	*Change*
Germany	3.7	3.1	2.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	3.1	3.2	−0.5
West	3.7	3.5	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.3	3.4	−0.3
East	–	2.7	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.9	0.2
East-west difference	–	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.5	−0.3
N	2997	2904	3376	3033	3510	2679	3205	3228	

0–5 scale: 0 very dissatisfied; 5 very satisfied
German citizens only
Source: ALLBUS 1988–2014

As shown in Table 4.1, the most recent levels in Germany (3.2) are marginally supportive in that they tend towards the satisfied end of the scale. Rather than uncovering ebullient support, there is mild satisfaction. Over time, however, the pattern is one of erosion and incremental restoration. In 1988, the average was 3.7, the highest in the series. But it declined sharply in the aftermath of unification and bottomed out in 1992, the lowest recorded figure for Germany as a whole in the twenty-six year time period. In small and cumulative increments, however, satisfaction with democracy has recovered, albeit not yet to the levels enjoyed prior to 1990.

Complementing this, meanwhile, the trajectories in the east and west of the country largely followed that of Germany as a whole, dropping abruptly following unification before recovering. If euphoria was the abiding memory of the event of unification, these data strikingly illustrate the speed with which it dissipated. Between 1991 and 1992 optimism was shattered by experience and Germans revised and lowered their satisfaction with democracy. Yet the depths to which the levels fell in the east demonstrate the uneven nature of the decline, for by 1992, satisfaction with democracy collapsed to the lowest ever recorded average in the ALLBUS (2.3). Exclusive concentration on this important but relatively short time period, however, risks overshadowing the scale of the recovery thereafter. Much of the support that was lost has been reclaimed—to the extent, indeed, that the most recent eastern average exceeds that first recorded in 1991. This is critical. Rather than east Germans displaying sharpening dissatisfaction towards democracy, they are more satisfied than at any point since unification and the disaffection which dominated the early part of the time series appears to have been assuaged.

The data raise similarly interesting points about east-west differences. Despite the passage of more than twenty years, clear disparities continue to exist. Although the most recent (2014) differences amount to half an increment on a six-point scale, placed within a longer perspective there is the unmistakable fact that at every time point, in every survey, the eastern average is lower than in the west. Yet this is not the full story. The differences have reduced over time, the most recent of which are the lowest of any survey. Discrepant levels of support between east and west Germans persist, but have narrowed and are the smallest than at any point since unification.

Table 4.2 develops these findings, distinguishing the levels by age, education and gender. In the west, the data concerning age are intriguing. In 1988, the youngest age group was the least satisfied, whilst the oldest age group was the most satisfied. Satisfaction with democracy, then, appears to increase with age. But this pattern faded, as distinctions between older and younger age groups reduced. Any aggregate change in satisfaction with democracy, therefore, appears unconnected to any one cohort: all became less satisfied between 1988 and 1998, whilst the recovery is evenly spread

Table 4.2 Satisfaction with democracy, 1988–2014, age, education and gender

	West					*East*			
	1988	*1991*	*1998*	*2008*	*2014*	*1991*	*1998*	*2004*	*2014*
Age									
18–29	3.4	3.3	3.0	3.3	3.3	2.7	2.5	2.6	2.9
30–44	3.6	3.5	3.1	3.3	3.3	2.7	2.4	2.5	3.0
45–59	3.7	3.6	3.2	3.3	3.4	2.7	2.3	2.4	2.8
60–74	3.9	3.7	3.2	3.4	3.5	2.9	2.6	2.6	2.9
75+	4.0	3.7	3.3	3.6	3.5	3.2	2.8	2.5	2.6
Education									
Degree	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.6	3.7	2.5	2.5	2.8	3.0
No degree	3.7	3.5	3.2	3.3	3.3	2.8	2.4	2.5	2.8
Gender									
Male	3.6	3.6	3.2	3.4	3.4	2.8	2.5	2.5	2.9
Female	3.7	3.5	3.1	3.3	3.3	2.7	2.4	2.5	2.9

0–5 scale: 0 very dissatisfied; 5 very satisfied
German citizens only
Source: ALLBUS 1988–2014

amongst the cohorts. Although the data must be handled carefully, this does not appear to suggest that support differs because individuals are at different points in a common life-cycle or because they belong to enduringly different generations.

A second point concerns the influence of education in the west. As shown, this *increases* support. This may have broader theoretical significance, since it not only fails to corroborate a standard claim of the modernisation approach, but it is the opposite of its conventional prediction. Satisfaction with democracy is unchanged for the educated, whilst the less educated have become slightly less satisfied over the time-frame considered.

Regarding the east, meanwhile, there are subtle differences. In particular, education reverses in influence over the time-frame. In 1991, support was lower amongst educated easterners, but by 1998 education stimulated support. This seemingly curious reversal may be important evidence about how socio-economic resources operated in the years immediately following unification. If in 1991 educated easterners were disproportionately drawn from the professional circles of the GDR, their criticism of democracy may have reflected a backlash from those more proximate to the regime, or those whose qualifications and skills were rendered obsolete. On this indicator, however, the evidence suggests that it was a temporary phenomenon and that education now operates in a similar way to the west.

Summarising the data, there does not appear to be much evidence with which alarmist—or pessimistic—concerns may be justified. Indeed, the principal findings reinforce the ways in which the polity is supported. First, Germans are satisfied with democracy. Support is far from resounding, but there is mild satisfaction diffusely spread across the population. Second, the momentous changes of the *Wende* prompted temporary support for the functioning of democracy. Yet this swiftly collapsed—and more so in the east compared with the west. Indeed, the scale of the collapse reduced support to the extent that it defined many of the following years. And yet whilst this had an enduring legacy, much of the support that was lost has been rebuilt. Although the recovery is incomplete, the upward trajectory underlines that support need not collapse and vanish irretrievably. Under certain conditions it may be replenished. A third point is that east-west differences remain. Although these data amply confirm that the spectre of divided Germany has not easily been laid to rest, east-west differences are not as striking compared with the period following unification.

Pride in the Basic Law: Resilience and Growth

The analysis now turns to pride in the Basic Law (Table 4.3).[3] The table provides the percentage of respondents who mentioned that they were proud of the Basic Law.

Recent all-German levels suggest that Germans are supportive on this dimension. Fully 59 per cent expressed pride in the Basic Law in 2016, suggesting that one of the mainsprings of German democracy which has anchored the country in the liberal-democratic tradition is supported by a clear majority of its citizens. Yet this is not the full picture. Over the period for which there are data, there have been important changes, including a sharp decline to 35 per cent in 1991, the lowest recorded all-German levels. Following this, however, there was a lengthy recovery, including an increase of 24 percentage points between 1991 and 2016, which not only restored the levels lost between 1988 and 1991, but added additional reserves. Examining this indicator, then, the support which eroded during unification has been regained and Germans are more supportive of their constitution than at any previous point for which there are data.

Equally optimistically, there are upward trajectories in both parts of Germany. In the west, support has grown from 51 per cent in 1988 to 68 per cent in 2016, an increase of 17 percentage points. Supplementing this, moreover, is the lack of movement in the western levels around unification. This is highly significant. The stability between 1988 and 1991 given the sweeping changes engulfing the polity surely attests to a resilient form of support that fails to dwindle in the face of substantial political and economic upheaval. In the east, meanwhile, the trends also increase, beginning from very low levels, with around one in five east Germans expressing

Table 4.3 Pride in the basic law, 1988–2016

	1988	*1991*	*1992*	*1996*	*2000*	*2008*	*2016*	*Change 1988/1991–2016*
Germany	51	35	39	43	42	52	59	8
West	51	51	49	53	52	62	68	17
East	–	21	18	24	27	32	41	20
East-west difference	–	30	31	29	25	30	27	−3

German citizens only
Entries are percentages of respondents who mention the Basic Law as something of which they are proud
Source: ALLBUS 1988–2016

pride in the Basic Law in 1991. Declines occurred thereafter and support reached its lowest level in 1992 (18 per cent). But in subsequent years there was upward movement, increasing support by 20 percentage points in twenty-five years. Despite this, the most recent evidence suggests that just over 40 per cent of east Germans express pride in the Basic Law. Nurturing support for the German constitution in the east has undoubtedly been a difficult and lengthy process, and there appears to be some way to go before the levels will be comparable with that of the west.

Counterbalancing this, however, are sizeable and enduring east-west differences. The disparity between the east and west in 1991 is remarkable, amounting to 30 percentage points. Equally remarkable, however, is that despite the passage of time the differences in 2016 have only narrowed by 3 percentage points. On this indicator, then, there are wide disparities in constitutional support between the two parts of Germany.

The data may be further qualified by examining the breakdown by age, education and gender (Table 4.4). Examining the data, support is higher in the western age groups compared with the eastern equivalents. In addition, support increases with age in the west but reduces with age in the east. Older western cohorts are more supportive, whilst in the east younger age groups—those with comparatively less experience of the GDR—are more

Table 4.4 Pride in the basic law, 1988–2016, age, education and gender

	West			*East*		
	1988	*1996*	*2016*	*1991*	*1996*	*2016*
Age						
18–29	46	49	69	19	22	52
30–44	54	53	60	18	23	42
45–59	51	58	69	23	28	39
60–74	54	53	72	23	25	39
75+	53	45	67	19	16	39
Education						
Degree	67	55	76	15	24	52
No degree	51	53	66	21	24	38
Gender						
Male	57	56	69	26	28	44
Female	47	49	67	16	21	37

Entries are percentages
German citizens only
Source: ALLBUS 1988–2016

supportive. This is especially the case with the 18–29 eastern age cohort in 2016, 52 per cent of whom are supportive. This is worth expanding upon. The narrowing east-west differences amongst the youngest cohorts in 2016 raise the possibility that attachments to the constitution are developing with the arrival of generations with a common experience of united Germany.

Concerning the effects of education, meanwhile, there are differences. Educated westerners are more supportive, but the eastern influence is more complicated. The effect is initially negative, but this cancels out over time, suggesting that if there was a depressive effect from the educated strata of the GDR, this faded fairly quickly.

Overall, then, Germans are supportive on this dimension. Affection is deeper and more tenacious in the west compared with the east, and the resilience of western support for the Basic Law over unification period is a crucial indicator of the article of faith into which it has developed. Although the same does not apply in the east, every year that this item has been probed has revealed stronger eastern support. Despite this, the most recent figures show that just over 40 per cent of east Germans are supportive, the consequence of which is that sizeable differences remain. But the picture is not entirely negative. As new generations arrive, support is increasing and one may be cautiously optimistic that affection for the constitution is slowly developing into more consequential bonds of pride of citizenship.

Trust in Democratic Institutions; Scepticism and Ambivalence

Table 4.5 extends the analysis to trust in democratic institutions.[4] The mean trust has been provided for the Constitutional Court, the Judiciary,

Table 4.5 Trust in democratic institutions, 1984–2012

	1984	*1994*	*2002*	*2008*	*2012*	*Change*
Constitutional Court	4.2	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.9	−0.3
Judiciary	3.6	3.0	3.2	3.2	3.4	−0.2
Parliament	3.4	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.8	−0.6
Federal Government	3.3	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.8	−0.5
Trust in Democratic Institutions Index	14.5	11.6	12.2	12.2	13.0	−1.5

Individual institutions: 0–6 scale; 0 very little trust; 6 a great deal of trust
Trust index: 0–24
German citizens only
Source: ALLBUS 1984–2012

the Parliament and the Federal government. Trust for each institution is scaled between 0–6, whilst the index combines the scores for the four institutions to range from 0 to 24.

The most recent figures suggest that trust differs based on the institutions evaluated. There is greater trust in the Constitutional Court and Judiciary compared with the Parliament and Federal Government. Further, the same rank order is found irrespective of the year in which the questions are asked, with the Constitutional Court consistently the most trusted institution, followed by the Judiciary, the Parliament and the Federal Government. Equally, the former institutions are slightly above the mid-point on the scale, whilst the latter two are marginally below it. Trust, therefore, is hardly extensive, but it is in noticeably shorter supply for institutions which have an overtly party-political character. Overall, however, most are in proximity to the mid-point, and the combined average for the four institutions (13.0) confirms a rather cautious outlook towards the structures of the German democracy.

In addition, Germans revised and lowered their trust in democratic institutions. Trust is less extensive in 2012 compared with 1984. Although the largest declines occurred in the Parliament (−0.6) and Federal Government (−0.5), other institutions did not escape, and there is evidence of a general scepticism sweeping over the structures of German democracy in the early 1990s. A crucial juncture was 1994, when each of the four institutions received their lowest average and marked the point at which the index fell below the mid-point (11.6). Since then, however, there has been cautious restoration and trust has returned. Germany's democratic institutions have not received sizeable injections of trust, but they have received minor increments, and whilst they have failed to restore the levels to those of 1984, they are nevertheless indicative of a more optimistic trajectory.

As shown, however, there are east-west differences (see Table 4.6). For every institution at every time point, trust is greater in the west compared with the east. The differences are the largest concerning the Parliament and Constitutional Court and smallest regarding the Federal Government. Part of the explanation for the sizeable differences is traced to the low eastern trust in 1994, when all institutions recorded low trust, some of which were decisively below the mid-point. By any measure these betray significant wariness about the institutions of the state. Indeed, the benchmark was set so low that in the subsequent eighteen-year period, the eastern levels have barely reached the mid-point. In the west, meanwhile,

Table 4.6 Trust in democratic institutions, 1984–2012, east and west Germany

	West					*East*			
	1984	*1994*	*2002*	*2008*	*2012*	*1994*	*2002*	*2008*	*2012*
Constitutional Court	4.2	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.1	2.9	3.5	3.4	3.6
Judiciary	3.6	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.6	2.5	3.0	2.8	3.2
Parliament	3.4	2.7	2.8	2.8	3.0	2.1	2.5	2.3	2.6
Federal government	3.3	2.5	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.2	2.5	2.4	2.7
Trust in democratic institutions index	14.5	12.6	12.6	12.9	13.6	9.7	11.5	10.9	12.0

Individual institutions: 0–6 scale; 0 very little trust; 6 a great deal of trust
Trust index: 0–24
German citizens only
Source: ALLBUS 1984–2012

the situation differs. Whilst trust declined for all institutions between 1984 and 1994, it has also recovered, albeit the recovery has been clearer for the Constitutional Court and Judiciary compared with the Parliament and Federal Government. If there is western scepticism towards institutions, its primary targets remain the Parliament and the Federal government.

Table 4.7 breaks trust down by age, education and gender. Concerning age, the relationship has changed. In both the east and the west in two of the three time points (1984 and 1994), trust increases with age. Older individuals appear to be more trusting of democratic institutions compared with younger individuals. Yet this faded over time. At this stage, it is too early to draw definitive conclusions attributing this to the replacement of trusting generations with those that are less trusting, but the trust extended by those aged 75 and over was particularly extensive.

Reviewing these data, three points should be reiterated. First, the general orientation towards democratic institutions appears to be one of scepticism. Trust generally falls around the mid-point of the scale, signifying caution in major representative and judicial institutions of the state. Second, the way in which Germans rank the institutions does not reveal sweeping across-the-board evaluations, but fine-grained assessments which distinguish among and ascribe different degrees of trust to the institutions of democracy. Third, there have been changes in the time

Table 4.7 Trust in democratic institutions, 1984–2012, age, education and gender

	West			*East*	
	1984	*1994*	*2012*	*1994*	*2012*
Age					
18–29	13.0	12.3	14.1	9.7	12.8
30–44	14.2	12.0	14.0	9.6	12.6
45–59	15.0	13.0	13.1	9.6	11.8
60–74	15.4	13.1	13.4	10.0	11.2
75+	16.4	14.0	14.0	10.5	12.3
Education[a]					
Abitur	13.8	13.2	14.8	10.2	13.6
No Abitur	14.5	12.4	13.1	9.7	11.6
Gender					
Male	14.4	12.6	13.7	9.8	12.2
Female	14.5	12.5	13.4	9.7	11.8

Entries are mean on trust index
German citizens only
Source: ALLBUS 1984–2012
[a]Question on degree not asked in 1984 and replaced with Abitur

interval considered. Westerners revised and lowered their trust, and whilst trust increased in the east, it began from such low base that it has taken almost twenty years to raise into the sceptical region. Overcoming a legacy of distrust appears to be one of the most formidable challenges revealed, as evidenced by the fact that despite year-on-year increments, an important east-west axis remains distinctly visible.

Trust in the Institutions of the European Union

The final dimension of support is trust in the institutions of the European Union (Table 4.8).[5]

At the all-German level, the picture is quite straight-forward: trust in the EU is noticeably low. The most recent averages for the Parliament and Commission are extremely limited, whilst trust in the European Court of Justice is marginally more extensive. When the scores for the institutions are combined, however, the average is 4.6, considerably below the mid-point and perhaps the clearest evidence of concerning levels of sup-

Table 4.8 Trust in European institutions, 1994–2008

	1994	*2000*	*2008*	*Change*
European Commission	2.3	2.3	2.3	0
European Parliament	2.3	2.4	2.3	0
European Court of Justice[a]	2.8	3.0	–	0.2
Trust in European institutions	4.6	4.6	4.6	0

German citizens only
0–6 scale; 0 very little trust; 6 a great deal of trust
Trust index: 0–12
Source: ALLBUS 1994–2008

Table 4.9 Trust in European institutions, east-west, 1994–2008

	West			*East*		
	1994	*2000*	*2008*	*1994*	*2000*	*2008*
European Commission	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.1	2.2
European Parliament	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.2
European Court of Justice	2.8	3.1	–	2.6	2.9	–
Trust in European institutions	4.7	4.8	4.8	4.5	4.3	4.4

German citizens only
0–6 scale; 0 very little trust; 6 a great deal of trust
Trust index: 0–12
Source: ALLBUS 1994–2008

port uncovered in this analysis. Examining the long-term, meanwhile, these data are far from atypical. Within the all-German time series there has been but one occasion when the levels of trust for any institution reached the mid-point (European Court of Justice, 2000). Overall, then, support for the institutions of Europe is thus not only at challenging levels, but shows very little sign of upward movement.

As shown in Table 4.9, the data scarcely alter when distinctions are drawn between easterners and westerners. Both sections of the German population are sceptical, but trust is somewhat lower amongst easterners. Thus, even by the low benchmark set by the all-German levels, eastern trust in the EU is minimal. Examining the trust index reinforces the point, which reveals that the average trust in the west is 4.8, whilst in the east it is 4.4. In addition to this rather gloomy picture, these levels are static over time and show no signs of recovering.

Table 4.10 Trust in European institutions, age, education and gender, 1994–2008

	West			*East*		
	1994	*2000*	*2008*	*1994*	*2000*	*2008*
Age						
18–29	5.2	5.1	5.7	4.5	5.0	5.6
30–44	4.4	4.8	4.8	4.5	4.4	4.4
45–59	4.7	4.4	4.4	4.7	4.0	4.1
60–74	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.2	4.0	4.2
75+	5.2	5.8	4.9	5.0	4.3	4.2
Education						
Degree	4.6	4.5	5.1	4.6	4.1	4.4
No degree	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.5	4.3	4.4
Gender						
Male	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.3	3.9	4.3
Female	5.0	4.8	4.9	4.9	4.7	4.5

German citizens only
Entries are mean on trust index
Source: ALLBUS 1994–2008

Behind these low levels is there any indication of socio-demographic change? As shown in Table 4.10, the youngest and oldest western age groups appear to be more trusting—a pattern which is not replicated in the east. Females, meanwhile, are marginally more trusting compared with males, and there do not appear to be any noticeable differences between education. In short, there does not appear to any evidence suggesting that the low levels of trust are likely to change in the short- to medium-term. The institutions of the EU are consistently the least supported.

Modernisation, Civil Society, Political-Economy and Winning and Losing

To what extent are the four theoretical approaches connected to the levels, trajectory and differences in support in Germany?

Modernisation

The following graphs provide evidence concerning the modernisation approach. The proportions with a higher education degree[6] are shown

(Fig. 4.1) along with percentages of respondents with materialist and postmaterialist values[7] (Figs. 4.2 and 4.3).

Modernisation approaches contend that underlying changes in socio-economic resources initiate processes of value change. As shown in Fig. 4.1, there is some basis to this, as the proportion of west Germans with a university degree increased from 6 per cent in 1986 to 15 per cent in 2018. Accompanying the rise of a more cognitively sophisticated population, meanwhile, has been a marked decline in materialist values (Fig. 4.2) and a corresponding rise in postmaterialist values (Fig. 4.3). Indeed, the changing value profile in the west between 1980 and 1991 is particularly striking, since it coincides with the erosion of support discovered in previous sections. If postmaterialism depresses support, then this may have been an important contributing factor to its downward trajectory in the early 1990s.

Yet it is unlikely to explain the contrasting east-west levels of support. Value-based explanations have merit and one area where German values may be expected to differ concerns their appreciation of socialism. On this point, Fig. 4.4 confirms that considerable proportions of easterners agree that 'socialism is a good idea only badly carried out'.[8] As shown, the aver-

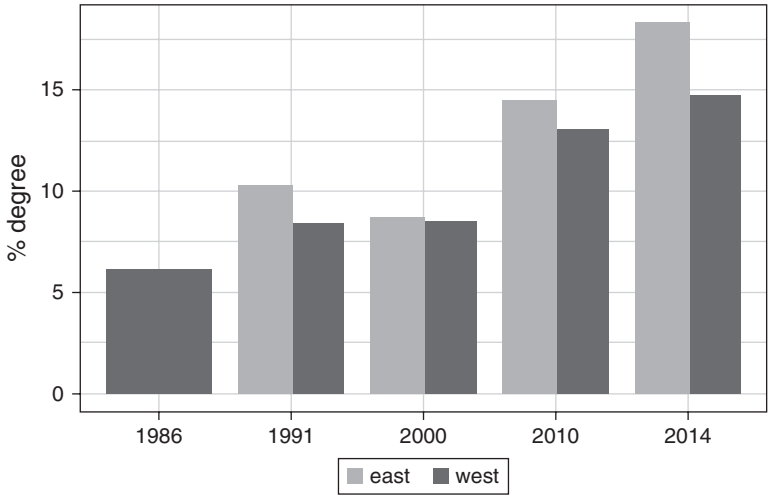

Fig. 4.1 Education, East and West Germany, 1986–2014. Source: ALLBUS 1986–2014

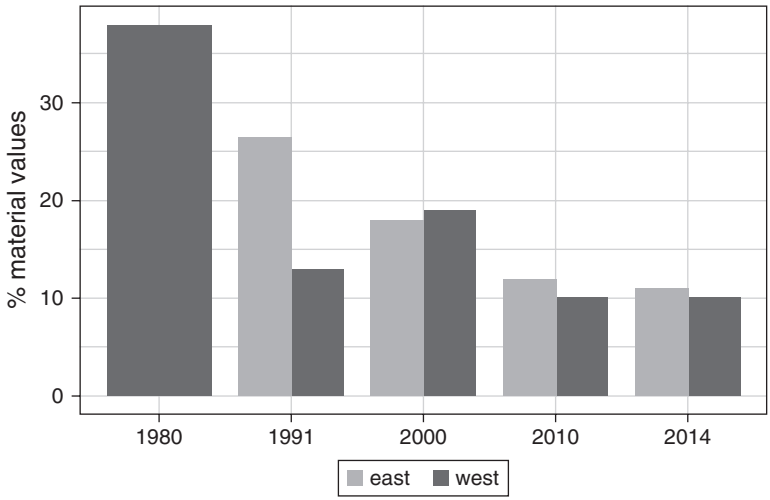

Fig. 4.2 Materialism, East and West Germany, 1980–2014. Source: ALLBUS 1980–2014

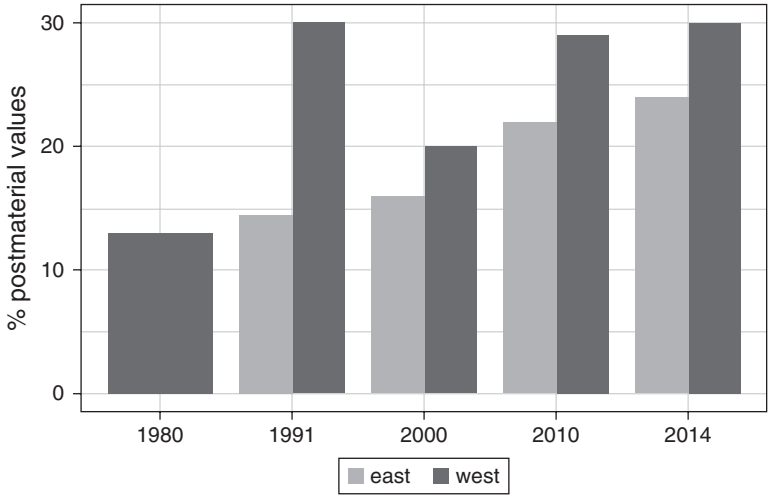

Fig. 4.3 Postmaterialism, East and West Germany, 1980–2014. Source: ALLBUS 1980–2014

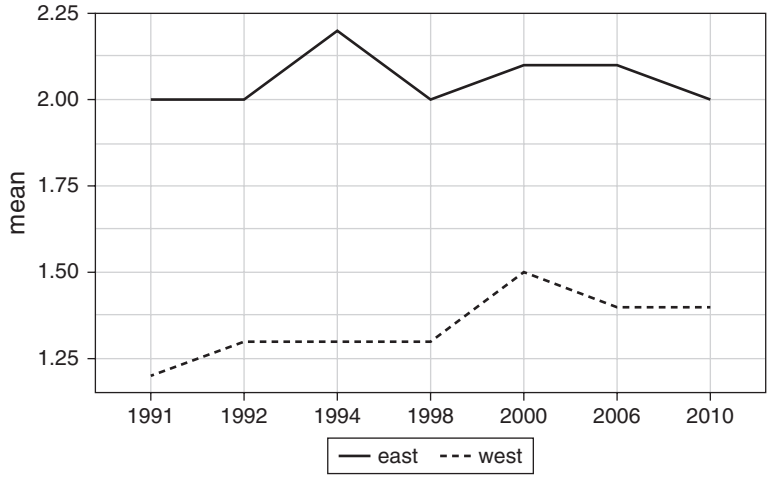

Fig. 4.4 Evaluations of socialism, East and West Germany, 1991–2010. Source: ALLBUS 1991–2014

age is high in the east—tending towards 'agree'. In addition, it remains stable over time, with very little evidence that it has dimmed. Further, although there are sharp and enduring east-west differences, these have faded recently. But the reasons for this are counterintuitive, for rather than a gradual erosion of eastern appreciation, the graph shows rising western appreciation. If these values depress support, they may contribute to explaining why it is lower in the east.

Civil Society

Figures 4.5 and 4.6 show the patterns of civil society in Germany by providing the proportion of respondents who are socially trusting,[9] along with average levels of political interest.[10]

Social trust (Fig. 4.5) varies markedly between the east and west, with western trust consistently higher than that of the east. In 2014, almost 29 per cent of westerners, compared with 19 per cent of easterners, affirmed that 'most people can be trusted'. These levels, however, have changed, rising in both parts of Germany, but by a greater amount in the east. Over the thirteen year time period, social trust increases by about 7 percentage points in the west, whilst in east it increases by 9 percentage points. This,

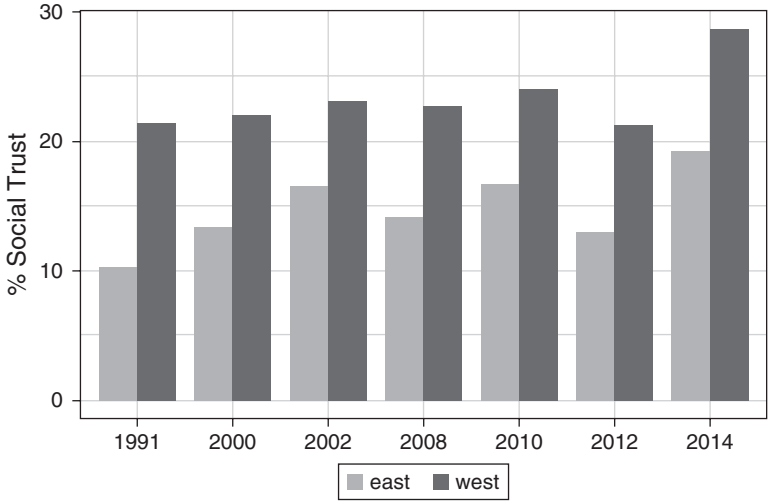

Fig. 4.5 Social trust, East and West Germany, 1991–2014. Source: ALLBUS 1991–2014

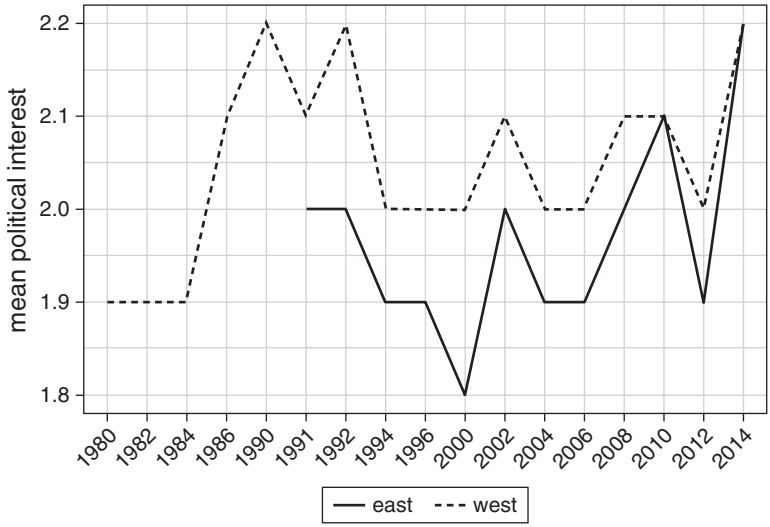

Fig. 4.6 Political interest, East and West Germany, 1980–2014. Source: ALLBUS 1980–2014

in turn, has implications for the east-west differences, which are wide and enduring and dominate the time series. Although they have reduced since 1991 (by less than 2 percentage points), contrasts in social trust between the east and west remain striking, and this may be important to develop in subsequent chapters, for if social trust nurtures support, then the comparatively low levels in the east may contribute to explaining why its development has been inhibited.

Political interest (Fig. 4.6) averages around the mid-point on the scale. Germans are interested in politics, but not deeply immersed in it. There has, however, been some fluctuation over the years—around unification, for example, Germans reported noticeably strong interest in politics. But this dropped abruptly, suggesting that the difficulties of the unification era led some to shun aspects of mainstream politics. Rather than a fleeting indifference, however, it endured. Indeed, by the year 2000, the average in the east was the lowest ever recorded in the ALLBUS. In the years that followed, however, political interest has not only returned to levels comparable with the early 1990s, but it is indistinguishable between the east and west of the country.

Political-Economy

The following figures visualise how Germans evaluate the economy. To simplify the discussion, separate figures have been constructed for the east and west. The first two graphs concern the east, with the latter two focussing on the west. Figure 4.7 examines eastern evaluations of the *national* economy,[11] whilst the second (Fig. 4.8) focuses on respondents' financial situation.[12]

The eastern data on perceptions of the national economy are especially interesting (Fig. 4.7). They are marked by a steep and protracted decline in the early 1990s. In 1991, easterners were positive about the present condition and future trajectory of the German economy. But this was short-lived. Between 1991 and 1998, they took a sharp downturn, and entered a sustained period in which they became increasingly negative, with the decline between 1992 and 1994 especially noticeable. Although there was a fleeting recovery between 1998 and 2000, further declines followed, and they descended to such an extent that in 2004 they were the most negative ever recorded in the ALLBUS surveys. Despite this, there was a ten-year period (2004–2014) in which evaluations improved, the cumulative effect of which has almost restored them to their levels at uni-

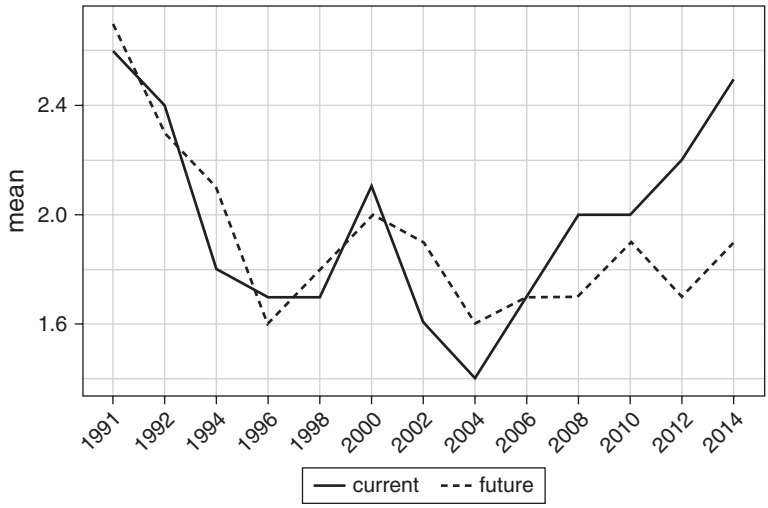

Fig. 4.7 Evaluations of the national economy, East Germany, 1991–2014. Source: ALLBUS 1991–2014

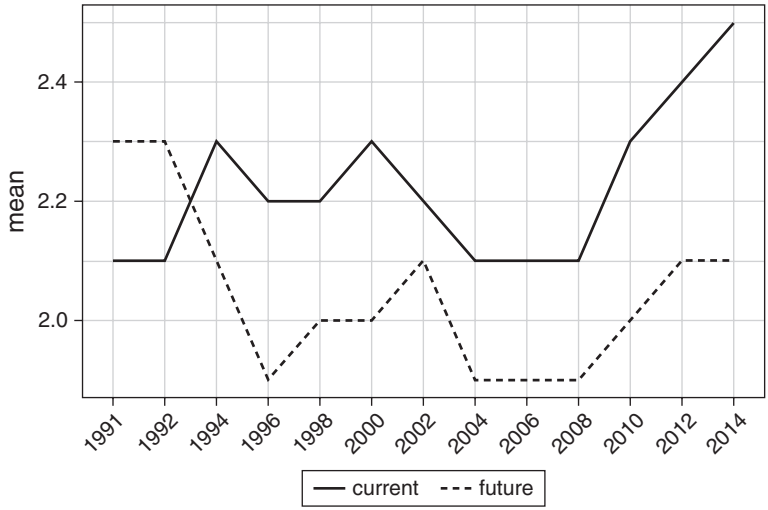

Fig. 4.8 Evaluations of economic circumstances, East Germany, 1991–2014. Source: ALLBUS 1991–2014

fication. A similar point applies to personal finances. Easterners began life in unified Germany with quite modest evaluations of their own personal economic situation (Fig. 4.8), but with expectations that they would improve. Between 1992 and 1996, however, these expectations changed dramatically, plummeting year-on-year, and only in 2008 were more satisfied evaluations evident. These data are highly significant. They show that around unification easterners were satisfied with the national economy and optimistic that their own personal circumstances would improve. This sanguine outlook, however, not only disappeared rapidly, but led to a noticeably sour perspective which lingered for some considerable time. If these assessments are key drivers of popular support, they may well contribute to explaining why support declined following unification and why it was enduringly lower in the east.

The figures for western evaluations of economy are equally intriguing (Figs. 4.9 and 4.10). The most recent evaluations of the national economy (Fig. 4.9) fall between the mid-point and 'good' options on the scale, suggesting cautious optimism about the present condition of the German economy. But these are atypical for the time series, which has oscillated quite dramatically over the years. From quite low levels in the early 1980s,

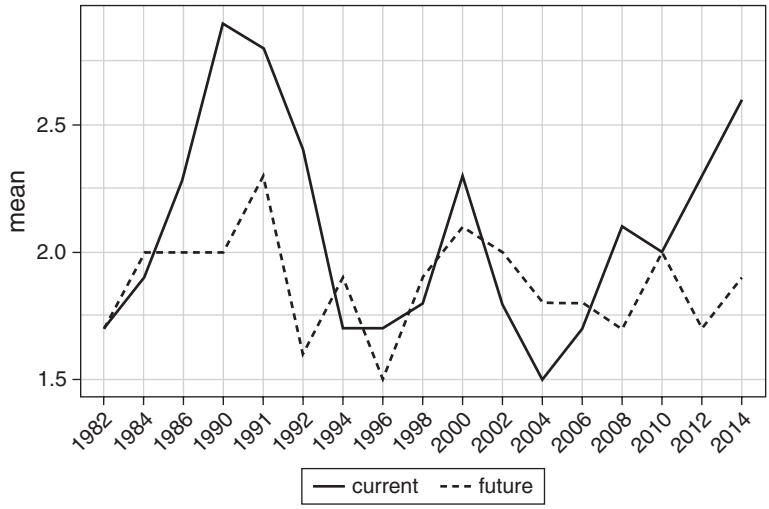

Fig. 4.9 Evaluations of the national economy, West Germany, 1982–2014. Source: ALLBUS 1982–2014

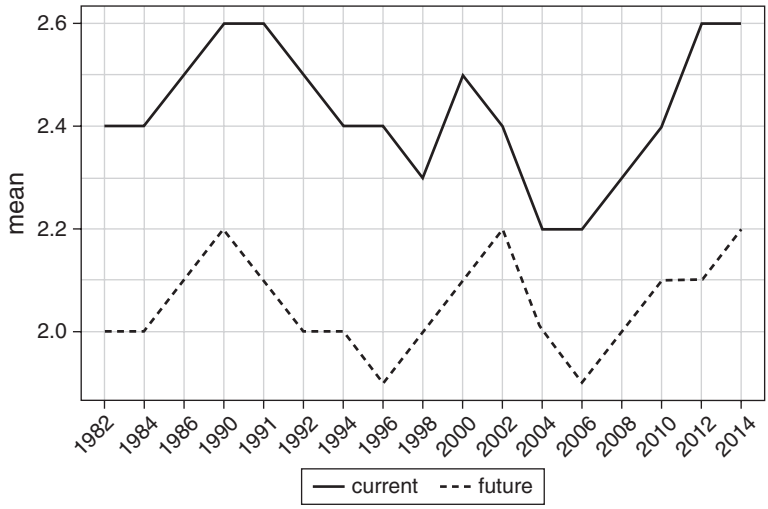

Fig. 4.10 Evaluations of economic circumstances, West Germany, 1982–2014. Source: ALLBUS 1982–2014

western assessments became increasingly positive, peaking in 1990. Thereafter, however, they plummeted, triggering an almost fifteen-year period in which the overall trend became increasingly negative. In a pattern that bears striking familiarity to the east, a significant decline occurred every year between 1990 and 1994, before levelling off and improving between 1994 and 2000. This, however, was short-lived, for they took a further downturn to the lowest recorded point in 2004. Since then, however, there has been a sizeable and prolonged recovery. Indeed, 2004–2014 has been the longest period in which assessments improved year-on-year. This being the case, westerners were more positive about the performance of the national economy in 2014 than at any point since the unification of Germany. Assessments of the future condition of the economy followed a similar pattern, for they too were noticeably high in 1990, but declined sharply and bottomed out in 1996. Although they have recovered, economic optimism has not been fully restored to its levels around unification. Similar trends apply to economic circumstances (Fig. 4.10). Personal satisfaction and a positive outlook about the future were both highest in 1990, but depleted thereafter. Only since 2006 has there been a strong and consistent recovery, the scale of which has returned personal eco-

nomic optimism to the levels around unification. Overall, then, during this time-frame there has been quite dramatic changes in how west Germans evaluate the performance of the national economy and their own personal finances, which correspond quite closely to the movements in some indicators of popular support, especially satisfaction with democracy and trust in democratic institutions. As these perceptions soured, support collapsed; as they returned to a more positive outlook, support was reclaimed. Whilst this clearly does not establish a cause-and-effect relationship, if these perceptions influence popular support, they may contribute to explaining why support collapsed during the 1990s and why it returned thereafter.

Winning and Losing

The data in Figs. 4.11 and 4.12 provide voting intentions for easterners and westerners in the years in which Federal elections were held.[13]

The data on voting intentions may be summarised in three points. As shown, the vast majority of respondents intend to vote for the losers. The most recent western data (Fig. 4.11) indicate that around one-third intended to vote for the winning parties whilst two-thirds intended to

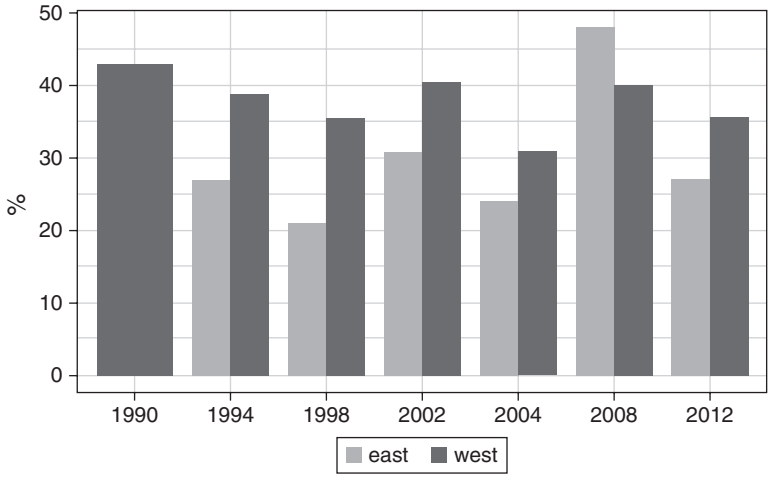

Fig. 4.11 Winners, East and West Germany, 1990–2012. Source: ALLBUS 1990–2012

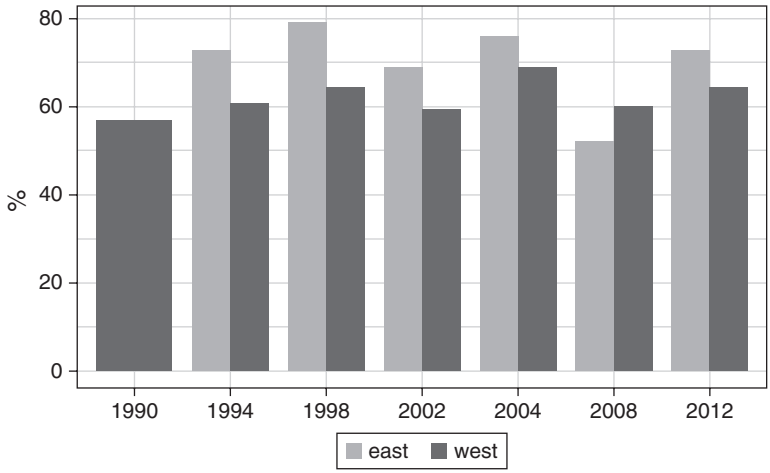

Fig. 4.12 Losers, East and West Germany, 1990–2012. Source: ALLBUS 1990–2012

vote for losing parties. Although this general point applies across Germany, it is sharper in the east. Striking proportions of easterners intend to vote for the losers (see Fig. 4.12). The figures for 2008 notwithstanding, between two-thirds and three-quarters of easterners consistently report voting intentions for losing parties. If easterners are more likely to vote for losing parties, they may view political institutions and the functioning of democracy from a perspective in which they have comparatively less chance of realising policy preferences, which, in turn, may contribute to explaining the lower eastern levels of support.

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed attitudes to democracy in Germany. Overall, although the evidence does not suggest an entirely quiescent condition, it scarcely confirms that there are the preconditions for instability. Indeed, the general picture is cautiously optimistic. By providing a fine-grained assessment, it has confirmed that support is not all of one piece, but that distinctions apply. Germans are mildly satisfied with democracy and whilst trust in democratic institutions is not abundant, the reserves are not entirely barren. On the more realist indicators, then, Germans

are tentatively supportive about how democracy is practised and cautiously trusting of democratic institutions. And this is a point worth reinforcing: in an era of purportedly pervasive disaffection with democratic government, the balance of evidence in this chapter points towards the ways in which aspects of the system attract support. Yet there are crucial distinctions—and these distinctions are intuitive taking into account the form of political system (*Rechtsstaat*) in which they are located. As the Federal government proposes legislation which is enacted by the *Bundestag*, evidence has been presented about how Germans distinguish between the initiating, scrutinising and overseeing functions of their government. Trust in these institutions differs between these parts of the system. As the judiciary protects basic rights and the *Bundesverfassungsgericht* rules on their constitutionality, the study has also shown how Germans separate out the different judicial structures of the *Rechtsstaat* and extend varying degrees of support to them. Trust is more extensive towards the Judiciary and Constitutional Court compared with the Federal government and Parliament.

In addition, there is deep scepticism of the institutions of the EU and this cannot be papered over. Although Germany has been a major driver of EU integration, public trust in its institutions is persistently low. If the low levels were limited to one time period, it may be possible to question their applicability to the EU as it is presently configured. If, meanwhile, they were confined to one institution, there might be specific ways of addressing them via democratic reform. But whilst the EU has evolved in crucial respects, scarcely has it been the case that trust in any of its institutions has reached the mid-point on the scale. In a time-frame covering fourteen years, trust has barely moved above the shallow pools uncovered in 1994. Nurturing trust in its institutions thus appears to be extremely difficult—and the attitudes towards it appear to betray hardened scepticism.

Although disaffection with supranational objects is real and entrenched, there are durable attachments to the Basic Law, suggesting that the system attracts support, some of which is normative. In the west, these attachments withstood the difficulties occasioned by unification and remained firm when institutional support collapsed, suggesting that the concerns Germans harboured about democratic structures did not penetrate through to affect the constitution. More important than the distribution on any one indicator, however, are the ways in which they combine

together. As shown, scepticism about the functioning of democracy may be combined with strong and deepening constitutional support; entrenched circumspection about the EU may be combined with recovering trust in national institutions. As Germans combine sceptical outlooks with an adherence to democracy, so this cautions against suggestions that the public is irretrievably cynical. The demand for democracy has not faltered. Any description must therefore capture the changing shades of disaffection and support. At times, the former may have unduly eclipsed the latter. Hence, terms such as 'critical citizens', or 'disaffected democrats' may be more apt to describe German attitudes to democracy. In my view, however, the latter may be more accurate, since the balance of evidence is tilted towards the 'democrats'. Mild satisfaction with democracy and cautious trust of democratic institutions are fused with deep reserves of constitutional support.

Qualifications are also needed concerning the trajectory of support in Germany. This is consistent neither with 'systematic erosion' nor 'trendless fluctuation'. In fact, there has been erosion, recovery and stability, each of which has formed an important part of the analysis. Support fell in the aftermath of unification, as euphoria gave way to pessimism and generated widespread concerns about the functioning of democracy. In subsequent years, these hardened and sharped and stirred into existence quite widespread dissatisfaction with the functioning of democracy. There were, however, legitimate reasons for this; support did not fall inexplicably or as part of a broad social trend, but was based on real-life experiences and an accumulating set of frustrations. Counterbalancing this, however, support for some objects remained firm. As shown, despite a turbulent transition process westerners' constitutional support remained tenacious, demonstrating that not all forms of support are equally labile. Some have dynamic qualities, whilst others are more resilient. Equally important is that support recovered. Claims of an irreversible decline falter under the evidence showing that in three out of the four indicators, support is more extensive compared with the low point following unification. Analysing the movement in support thus reveals unmistakable decline, but much of the support has returned.

Debates about differences between easterners and westerners also require careful handling. On every measure, at every time point, support remains lower in the east compared with the west. True, the differences in satisfaction with democracy and trust in democratic institutions are not as

striking as was once the case—and, indeed, they may well fade altogether in a multivariate setting; i.e., once key socio-demographic factors are held constant. But the east-west axis remains visible and central to the analysis of German attitudes towards democracy. This is especially so concerning some of the higher-order measures. Pride in the Basic Law remains substantially lower in the east—indeed the almost 30 percentage point margin is a considerable gulf. Differences in political outlook, then, have not vanished and are not merely confined to the institutions and functioning of democracy, but extend to the constitution.

In tandem, the chapter analysed how the structure and movement in some of the indicators of the four approaches corresponded to that of popular support. Yet there are some intriguing points worth drawing out from the analysis. In particular, the presence of an election—or indeed a change in government—does not bring injections of support. 1998, for example, marked the end of an era: the defeat of the Kohl government and the advent of the Red-Green coalition. And yet between 1994 and 2002, trust in democratic institutions changed minimally, if at all. Similarly, in 2005 a grand coalition replaced the Red-Green government, but did so without any appreciable change in support. Movements in support, then, appear to be somewhat disconnected from the electoral cycle are more complicated and subtle. As has been shown, declines covaried with the rise of negative appraisals of the economy and, at least in the west, an increase in postmaterialist values. As easterners' high expectations about their personal finances were confounded, this may have prompted an erosion of support which profoundly influenced its long-term character. In addition, variables theorised to stimulate support are in shorter supply in the east, whilst factors linked to its reduction are more prevalent in the east. Buoyant assessments of the economy, social trust and voting for winning parties are all comparatively lower, whilst evaluations of socialism and voting for losing parties are comparatively higher. At this stage, however, the analysis has presented intriguing but limited evidence about the distribution of support and the variables influencing its movement. By identifying the sources of support, however, the study may shed further light on the type of support these objects attract. This demands several chapters and the following chapter commences this task, beginning with satisfaction with democracy.

Notes

1. Politikverdrossenheit translates as 'disenchantment with politics'. According to the German dictionary, Duden, it was word of the year in 1992. See: Duden.de.
2. The question used is: 'Let's turn now to democracy in Germany: Generally speaking how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with democracy as it is practised in the Federal Republic of Germany?' very satisfied, fairly satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, fairly dissatisfied, very dissatisfied. A 0–5 scale was created with the satisfied options scored to have the highest values.
3. The question used is: 'On these cards you will find a number of things one can be proud of as a German, Please select the three things you are most proud of.' *The Basic Law*, B The German Parliament ('Bundestag'), The achievements of German athletes, Economic successes, German art and literature, Scientific achievements, Social welfare achievements.
4. This has been obtained from the following question: 'I am now going to read out a number of public institutions and organisations. Please tell me for each institution or organisation how much trust you place in it. Please use this scale. 1 means you have absolutely no trust at all 7 means you have a great deal of trust You can differentiate your answers using the numbers in between. What about the—Health service, German constitutional court, German Parliament, Municipal administration, Army, Catholic church, Protestant church, Judicial system, Television, Newspapers, Universities and other institutes of higher education [Hochschulen], German government, Trade unions, Police, Job centres, State pension system, Employer associations'. The scale was recoded 0–6 with higher values indicating more trust.
5. The question used is similar to that for domestic institutions: 'And now I will name a few institutions of the European Union. Once again, please tell me how much trust you have in the individual institutions. 1 means you have absolutely no trust at all 7 means you have a great deal of trust What about—The European Commission, The European Parliament, The European Court of Justice'.
6. The construction of this variable was made from the following question: 'What vocational or professional training do you have? Which of the categories on the card apply to you?' One of the responses was 'University degree' ('Hochschulabschluß'). This was recoded into a dichotomous variable.
7. The following statements were used to construct the standard materialist-postmaterialist index: 'Looking at the list below, please tick a box next to the one thing you think should be Germany's highest priority, the most

important thing it should do.' Highest priority Germany should … (1) Maintain order in the nation (2) Give people more say in government decisions (3) Fight rising prices (4) Protect freedom of speech. And which one do you think should be Germany's next highest priority, the second most important thing it should do? Next highest priority should … (1) Maintain order in the nation (2) Give people more say in government decisions (3) Fight rising prices (4) Protect freedom of speech.

8. The following statements are about the situation in the old and new federal states. 'Please tell me for each statement whether you: completely agree, tend to agree, tend not to agree or do not agree at all: Socialism is basically a good idea, it was just put into practice badly'. The strong agreement was coded to have the higher values.
9. The question used is: 'Some people think that most people can be trusted. Others think that one can't be careful enough when dealing with other people. What do you think?' The variable was recoded: (0) 'one can't be careful enough'; (1) 'it depends'; and (2) 'most people can be trusted'.
10. The question on political interest used was: 'How interested in politics are you? (4) Very strongly? (3) Strongly? (2) Middling? (1) Very little? (0) Or not at all?'
11. The question on the national economy is: 'How would you generally rate the current economic situation in Germany? Very good, Good, Partly good/partly bad, Bad, Very bad'. The question on the future is: 'What do you think the economic situation in Germany will be like in one year? Considerably better than today, Somewhat better than today, The same, Somewhat worse than today, Considerably worse than today'. Both variables were recoded such that the more optimistic options had the higher values.
12. The questions on the respondent's financial predicament follow directly from those on the national economy: 'And your own current financial situation? Very good, Good, Partly good/partly bad, Bad, Very bad'. And the question on the future is: 'And what will your own financial situation be like in one year? Considerably better than today, Somewhat better than today, The same, Somewhat worse than today, Considerably worse than today'.
13. The literature n winning and losing is unclear on whether intentions or behaviour should be used. Given the infrequency in the behavioural question, this study uses the following question on voting intentions: 'If there was a general election next Sunday, which party would you vote for with your **second vote** ('Zweitstimme')?' The Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union; The Social Democratic Party; The Free Democratic Party; The Greens; The Republicans; Party of Democratic Socialism; Other party, please specify. From this question a variable was constructed to capture whether or not respondents intended to vote for the winners or losers.

CHAPTER 5

Evaluative Support and the Functioning of Democracy in Germany

Introduction

After twenty years of research, there is no scholarly consensus on the origins of support in unified Germany. Any answers depend upon the measures used, the availability of data and the techniques with which it is analysed. The chief purpose of this book is to uncover the factors conditioning support in Germany and the following chapters present empirical evidence on this. This chapter begins with satisfaction with democracy, an item which has provided one of the longest running time series of any indicator of popular support, and yet its use has been controversial. Indeed, disagreement about what it measures has overshadowed the wealth of academic scholarship upon it. As a consequence, the implications of its levels and trajectory remain unclear, which casts doubt upon the elite-level advice premised upon it.[1] As argued in the first part of the chapter, however, it functions as a summary indicator of support, but one that is sensitive to the institutional context in which it is used. The second section tests theoretical propositions, examining the factors which drive satisfaction with democracy at the individual-level. It firstly presents cross-tabulated analyses, but then turns to multivariate modelling and post-estimation analysis of marginal effects to examine the statistical and substantive importance of its theoretical correlates. In this section, supplementary analyses probe into the ways in which some of these factors interact or have changed over time. The central finding of the chapter is

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clear: support is multidimensional. It is shaped by a conflation of theoretical factors, which vary between the east and west of the country. Distinctions between east and west thus not only influence which factors operate, but how strongly they impact upon satisfaction with democracy.

Satisfaction with Democracy: A Composite Indicator

A paradox dominates analyses of satisfaction with democracy: as it has been subject to regular monitoring it has facilitated a wealth of academic insights on popular support[2]; and yet conceptual and methodological dissent surrounding the question renders those insights problematic. The question is commonly phrased as follows: 'How satisfied are you with democracy as it is practised in your country?' It has featured in the *Afrobarometer*,[3] the *Latinobarometer* and a wide variety of national and regional opinion surveys, along with most election surveys. It has thus been used in established, new and re-inaugurated democracies. Despite its longevity, however, the referents of the question are not clear-cut and attempts to resolve them have been unconvincing.[4] Interpretation is problematic. What referents are people meant to use when answering; and how can it be ensured that they are stable from country to country? People may use the system as a whole, the performance and outputs of democratic institutions and/or the actions and activities of incumbents. They may range across a disparate set of issues, institutions and levels of government, which not only carries the potential of prompting different psychological processes when people answer, but also inhibits attempts to explain variation in this indicator between (or within) countries. This is particularly the case if they form part of large-scale comparative studies. Further, this creates theoretical issues, for if people use different reference criteria, their answers will lack construct and measurement validity, meaning that the ambiguity in the findings may impede analysis of the concept they are designed to elucidate. This is one of the main reasons why Canache et al. (2001) cautioned against using it altogether. They argued that it is asked without any clear frame of reference; and because citizens have varying conceptions of democracy, they will use contrasting criteria to answer, meaning that the differences uncovered are a function of the different interpretations of the question.[5]

Equally, the diversity of ways in which the question has been asked has contributed to the uncertainty. The Eurobarometer uses a standard formulation,[6] the principal virtue of which is that it has been repeated in most

surveys since 1977 and has facilitated longitudinal analysis. In addition, respondents are provided with the scaling options during the questioning, enabling them to map their opinions to the question.[7] The benefits of this are that repeated use of standardised measures has not only made it possible to pinpoint changing levels of satisfaction with democracy, but rules out the possibility of attributing that change to variations in question wording. In addition, the lengthy time series has enabled scholars to distinguish the short from the long-term components of that change. The question, then, has formed a crucial part of establishing the direction in which mass opinion has moved in established Western democracies and some of the reasons for that movement.

But this is not the only formulation. Various iterations have been used in new democracies. The World Values Survey, for example, asked a variation in 1995 in countries which had experienced transitions to democracy.[8] By subtly altering the question wording, respondents' answers were directed towards stimuli quite different to that commonly associated with the indicator.[9] Equally, the question is meaningful insofar as individuals appraise democracy against an ideal standard, a task that may be difficult in circumstances in which democracy is nascent. Evaluations of the old regime may shape respondents' appraisals of the new one for the simple reason that competition between regimes is real and salient. The question thus requires sensitivity to the political context, especially where respondents have no frame of reference for answering.[10] Indeed, where undemocratic rule was the prior (or current) form of government, the answers may be counterfactual.[11]

Whilst cross-national comparisons raise methodological challenges, two technical points add to the difficulties of interpreting answers to this question. First, the variety of ways in which this question is asked mean that as formulations multiply, so do response scales, which introduces methodological dubiety if the answers are aggregated and compared. Some variations dichotomise the response scale,[12] whilst one of the more recent iterations employs an eleven-point scale designed to capture finer gradations of opinion.[13] In addition, there are concerns about the translations of some of the mid-points of the scales, which in some renderings may be misleading or inaccurate.[14] These are more than mere technical curiosities. Changes in question response options—even small ones—may affect the aggregate results and the comparability of findings. And since erosions of satisfaction with democracy have provided some of the clearest evidence about the rise of critical sentiments towards aspects of democracy, there is the possibility

that some of the disaffection may be attributed to the different ways in which the question has been asked and the scaling options available for answering. Second, these technical concerns link to methodological discussions about how the concept of support should be transposed into empirical measures. These debates challenge the appropriateness of some survey questions, including satisfaction with democracy. The aspects of support it measures are disputed, and it remains questionable if it measures the same form of support in different countries. Kuechler, for example, initially rejected attempts to link it to support, claiming that it measured 'neither diffuse or specific support, but a form of support not recognised or inadequately conceptualised by Easton'.[15] According to Kuechler, the essence of the question is thus somewhat elusive. Hence, Kuechler began with the survey question and worked back to delineate its conceptual properties. In taking this approach Kuechler argued that positive evaluations of the practice of democracy captured in this indicator could, in the long run, lead to normative views about its desirability.

Others, however, begin with the theory and connect it to the Easton typology.[16] There are, however, disagreements about whether it measures attitudes towards a single object of the framework, multiple objects or the outputs deriving from specific institutions and actors.[17] Rather than having a shared, clear and fixed usage, its referents are often subjective and adapted to suit the needs of particular inquiries.[18] Some suggest it measures support for the existing system rather than incumbents, inferring that it is an amalgam indicator capturing a general support for democracy.[19] According to Kostelka and Blais, it taps 'regime performance' i.e., a form of support which lies between the most diffuse items and those measuring support for the authorities.[20] This interpretation is intuitive. Respondents' evaluations of the practice of democracy may range over issues encompassing representation, accountability and democratic performance in the area of the economy—areas all linked to the regime but also shaped by the actions of elites. Rose extends this, meanwhile, noting that the indicator is the closest empirical proximate to Dahl's concept of 'polyarchy', in that it measures the gap between normative ideals and the institutionalised reality of democracy.[21] In this sense, then, it measures the degree to which citizens perceive that their governing arrangements are becoming more proximate or distant from the ideal. Analogously, others suggest that it signifies the 'democratic deficit'; i.e., that respondents compare the current system with an idealised version.[22] This line of reasoning suggests that it investigates how citizens fuse normative and experiential

aspects, and make systematic determinations about the practice of democracy based on real-life criteria and standards.[23] The balance of studies, however, use it to target the regime and authorities, suggesting that it focuses on citizens' evaluations of the day-to-day workings of a democracy which are based upon the most salient successes or failures.[24] This study adopts this formulation in that the item clearly centres on the functioning of a democracy, rather than normative preferences for a particular form of system.[25]

Scholarship on attitudes towards democracy supports this formulation.[26] Studies have demonstrated that the indicator is conditioned by political and economic developments within particular countries, evidenced through connections between satisfaction with democracy and macro-level indicators, including perceptions of corruption, GDP and unemployment. This suggests that it is a composite based measure of support, based upon outcome favourability, procedural fairness and the quality of democratic governance.[27] Individuals are thus satisfied with democracy to the extent that institutions and elites create economic growth and prosperity and exercise power impartially. The justification for satisfaction with democracy as a more composite indicator also stems from the fact that studies have shown its movement to be independent of approval ratings for incumbent governments. The indicator, then, is not a proxy for satisfaction with the *government*; indeed, the ebbs and flows in government approval are quite different from those of satisfaction with democracy.[28] These studies have also assuaged some of the technical and methodological concerns which recur in the literature, for they have discovered that the indicator displays greater validity when used in particular national contexts.[29] Analysis of countries within Europe, for example, revealed consistent levels over time; and if the same pattern is repeatedly found, it reduces the likelihood that different individuals are using different criteria and suggests that citizens have a relatively stable understanding of the question, albeit one that is sensitive to national context.[30]

This study has added knowledge to the properties and interpretation of satisfaction with democracy. The principal components analysis (Chap. 3) revealed that the indicator loaded positively with other measures of support, but more so with the institutional items and the higher-order item on pride in the Basic Law. This provides evidence about how Germans evaluate the practice of democracy, suggesting that it is influenced by perceptions of the trustworthiness of the courts, judiciary and democratic institutions, and thereby indicates that it is conditioned, at least in part, by

the presence or absence of procedural norms ensuring the impartial exercise of political authority grounded in a stable body of law. These institutions are designed to provide confidence that rules and laws are adhered to and that public power may not be exercised for private gain. In short, they are key indicators of procedural fairness and the quality of democratic governance. The item, then, may not just be about what government provides, but about how it provides it. If processes shape what individuals receive, satisfaction may flow from perceptions of fairness that outcomes were delivered through a system which ensures procedural equality. On this basis, it seems problematic to interpret satisfaction with democracy as merely targeting one aspect of the political system; to varying degrees it overlaps with regime institutions and the constitution.

Cross-tabulated Analysis; Preliminary Evidence

The evidence in the following sections contributes further knowledge about the properties of satisfaction with democracy. How do the theoretical variables influence this form of support? Table 5.1 presents evidence on this.

Examining Table 5.1, there is mixed support for modernisation. Some aspects of the approach operate consistently between the two parts of Germany. Postmaterialism, for example, reduces satisfaction with democracy, although its influence is minor. Education, meanwhile, operates in the opposite direction anticipated, in that it stimulates support (0.2). Socialist values, meanwhile, reduce support, but their impact differs between the two parts of Germany. They reduce support in the west appreciably (0.5), but in the east, the reduction is even steeper (0.8). Overall, then, long-term factors are at work.

Turning to civil society, the evidence is clear-cut. All variables increase satisfaction with democracy in the expected direction. The rise, moreover, is appreciable: political interest increases satisfaction with democracy by 0.3 in the east, whilst in the west the increase is 0.4. Social trust, meanwhile, increases eastern satisfaction with democracy by 0.5, whilst in the west the increase is 0.4. Overall, then, those who are socially trusting and who cognitively engage with the affairs of the state are more supportive.

As also shown in the table, short-term factors matter. Irrespective of whether individuals are optimistic about the national economy or their own personal economic circumstances, they are more satisfied with democracy. The effects are consistent and strong, and apply to contemporary and

Table 5.1 Cross-tabulation, satisfaction with democracy

	East			*West*		
	Lowest[a]	*Highest*[b]	*Change*[c]	*Lowest*[a]	*Highest*[b]	*Change*[c]
Modernisation						
Postmaterialism	2.6	2.5	−0.1	3.4	3.3	−0.1
Education	2.6	2.7	0.2	3.3	3.5	0.2
Evaluations of socialism	3.0	2.2	−0.8	3.4	2.9	−0.5
Civil society						
Political interest	2.2	2.5	0.3	3.0	3.4	0.4
Social trust	2.5	3.0	0.5	3.2	3.6	0.4
Political-economy						
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	1.5	3.4	1.9	2.1	3.7	1.6
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	1.4	3.2	1.8	2.1	3.4	1.3
Perceptions of German economy (current)	1.3	3.1	2.8	2.1	3.8	1.7
Perceptions of German economy (future)	1.4	3.2	1.8	2.1	3.7	1.6
Winners and losers						
Winners	2.4	3.0	0.6	3.2	3.6	0.4

Source: ALLBUS surveys 1991–2006

[a]Mean on lowest point of scale

[b]Mean on highest point of scale

[c]Difference between lowest and highest point

prospective evaluations in both the east and west of the country. But the effects are not uniform. Indeed, there are quite pronounced cross-regional differences, with every indicator increasing satisfaction with democracy by a greater amount in the east compared with the west. Equally, the evidence concerning winners and losers also shows a consistently positive relationship. In the east, support differs between winners and losers by 0.6, whilst in the west, it is 0.4.

Overall, then, this preliminary step points to (at least) three sets of stimuli at work. First, there are effects deriving from *long-term* heuristics and civil society. Small, but potentially important, background effects from postmaterialist values are present, coupled with more noticeable effects from evaluations of socialism and the dispositions from civil society. Second, there are *short-term* effects, as satisfaction with democracy is amplified by assessments of political-economy and winning and losing.

Perceived rewards—and perceptions of buoyant conditions—created by the market economy cultivate support. And partisanship operates as expected, as political allegiances condition support. Third, an additional factor is at work, cutting across the long and short-term influences, which is the distinction between easterners and westerners. There are differences between the two regions, and the evidence on which approaches are at work—and how pronounced they are—depends on whether one is focussing on the east or west. Cumulatively, then, this provides an intriguing basis with which to probe for multivariate insights.

Multivariate Analyses

This stage examines the influence of the approaches in multivariate models. Using pooled data analysis, an all-German model is presented first (Table 5.2), followed by two models which separately investigate the east and west.

Overall, the model fit suggests a decent attempt to explain satisfaction with democracy. Goodness-of-fit indicators were all acceptable and the adjusted R^2 value (23 per cent) is appreciable. In examining the coefficients, three substantive findings emerge. First, the east-west indicator is negative and significant, meaning that net of the other variables in the model easterners are less satisfied with democracy compared with westerners. The size and direction of the coefficient is thus a striking reminder that the east-west axis is an extremely important one in German popular support. Second, all theoretical approaches receive varying degrees of confirmation. These are discussed in order of importance. The strongest evidence emerges for political-economy: all variables are positive and significant, meaning that those who are positive about their own personal economic circumstances and the German national economy are more satisfied with democracy. This applies, moreover, irrespective of whether the indicators focus on the here-and-now or the future. Political-economy exerts a strong influence, demonstrating that satisfaction with democracy is conditioned by perceived effectiveness in delivery. Equally, winning matters: the coefficient is sizeable, positive and significant, meaning that winners are more satisfied with democracy compared with losers. Concerning civil society, meanwhile, both political interest and social trust emerge with positive and significant coefficients. The effects of political interest are modest, but social trust appears to be noticeably important. Modernisation, however, has a more ambiguous influence. Postmaterialist

Table 5.2 OLS satisfaction with democracy, all-German model

	b	*Beta*
Constant	**1.50**[a]	
Modernisation		
Postmaterialism (ref: material values)		
Materialist-mixed	−0.001	−0.000
Postmaterialist-mixed	−0.090	−0.033
Postmaterialism	**−0.167**[b]	**−0.059**
Evaluations of socialism	**−0.110**[a]	**−0.097**
Education (ref: no degree)	−0.095	−0.023
Civil society		
Political interest	**0.081**[a]	**0.070**
Social trust (ref: can't be too careful)		
Depends	0.042	0.017
Most can be trusted	**0.184**[a]	**0.060**
Political-economy		
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	**0.250**[a]	**0.167**
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	**0.122**[a]	**0.071**
Perceptions of German economy (current)	**0.246**[a]	**0.154**
Perceptions of German economy (future)	**0.104**[a]	**0.068**
Winners and losers (ref: loser)		
Winner	**0.261**[a]	**0.106**
Socio-economic controls		
East (ref: West)		
East	**−0.552**[a]	**−0.228**
Gender (ref: female)		
Male	−0.008	−0.003
Age (ref: 18–29)		
30–44	0.069	0.027
45–59	0.093	0.033
60–74	0.101	0.033
75+	**0.244**[b]	**0.042**
N		
Multiple R^2/Adj. R^2	0.236/0.231	

German citizens only

Source: ALLBUS 1991, 1992, 1998, 2000

[a] $p \leq 0.001$; [b] $p \leq 0.01$; [c] $p \leq 0.05$

values lower satisfaction with democracy (−0.167), but education fails to surpass the significance level. Further, the effects of socialist values are curious, since despite applying mainly to easterners, these emerge as significant in the all-German model, with each one-unit increase reducing satisfaction with democracy by 0.110.

Figure 5.1 visualises these relationships using analysis of marginal effects.[31] For each variable, the corresponding graph provides estimated values of satisfaction with democracy holding other variables in the model at their mean. The dashed lines and error bars show the 95 per cent confidence intervals. The relationships in Table 5.2 thus become clearer, as the graphs depict how changes in the variables influence satisfaction with democracy. Postmaterialism decreases support, albeit the reduction is quite modest between those with materialist and postmaterialist values. Further, the negative relationship between socialist values and satisfaction with democracy is also illustrated: individuals placement on this scale reduces satisfaction with democracy. Further, the effects for civil society variables are positive. In addition, those for political-economy are especially noteworthy, with the graphs confirming the upward movement of satisfaction with democracy as these evaluations improve. In addition, significant changes are shown between winners and losers, along with quite striking differences between easterners and westerners.

A supplementary issue from this model concerns identifying the relative importance of the predictors. Because the variables use different scales, the unstandardised coefficients (b) may not be compared to give the order of magnitude. Standardised coefficients (Beta) attempt to correct for this, by providing the expected change in the dependent variable (satisfaction with democracy) per one-unit change in the standard deviation holding other variables constant. The Beta coefficients from the model (Table 5.2) indicate that the east-west variable has the greatest relative effect (−0.228), followed by variables from the political-economy, especially the respondent's current personal economic assessment (0.167) and assessments of the current condition of the German national economy (0.154). And there is also an important effect driven by winning and losing (0.106).

Yet there is no universally accepted criteria of relative importance.[32] Some writers are sceptical about relying mainly or exclusively on Beta coefficients.[33] Various remedies are proposed, one of which is to assess the proportionate contribution each predictor makes to the squared multiple correlation coefficient (R-square).[34] This approach has been adopted, but rather than include all of the variables, the top five are provided in Fig. 5.2 to draw attention to those of principal relative effect.[35] This confirms that amongst the most important influences on

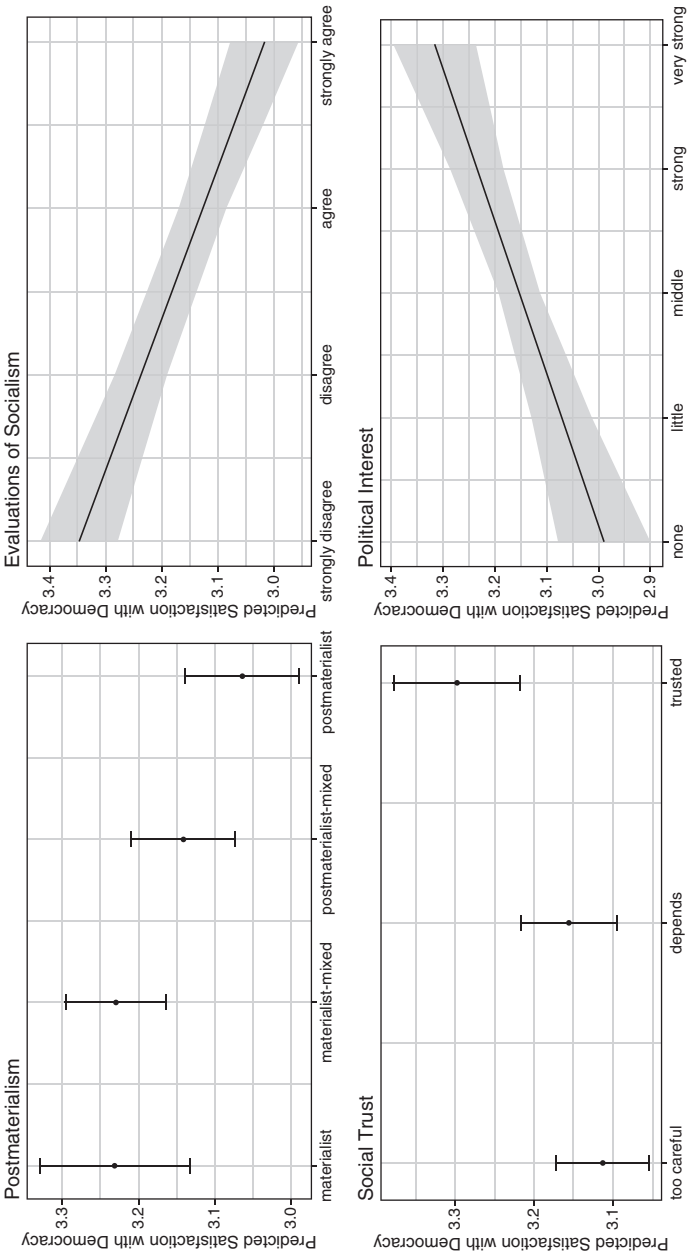

Fig. 5.1 Average marginal effects with 95 per cent confidence intervals (Table 5.2). Source: Table 5.2 ALLBUS 1991, 1992, 1998, 2000

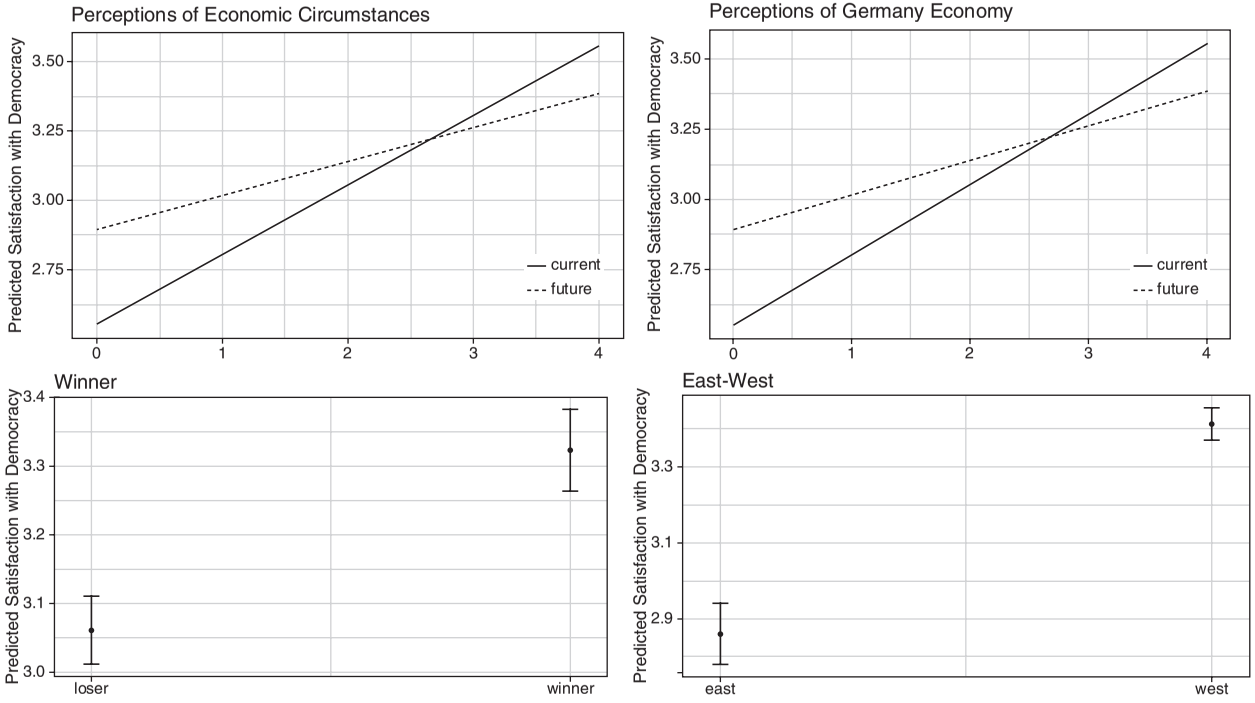

Fig. 5.1 (continued)

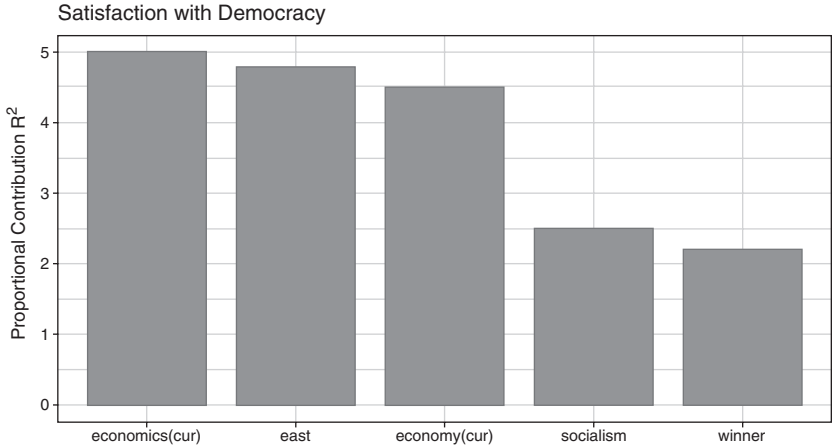

Fig. 5.2 Relative importance of predictors all-German model. Source: Table 5.2 ALLBUS 1991, 1992, 1998, 2000

satisfaction with democracy are those of the respondent's assessment of their current economic situation (labelled 'economics cur'). How Germans evaluate their own personal economic situation thus contributes the most the multiple correlation coefficient. This is followed by east-west, perceptions of the condition of the German national economy (labelled 'economy cur') and evaluations of socialism. The evidence, then, from the all-German model is clear: satisfaction with democracy is influenced by all four approaches, and is not merely economic in focus. Assessments of the respondent's personal economic situation matter, but as do values, partisanship and whether or not respondents are from the east or west.

Extending the Model: East-West

Are contrasting theoretical approaches at work in the two parts of Germany? If the sources of support differ, this would be clear from models in which the east and west of the country are conducted separately. The following table presents findings on this.

The results are intriguing. Four substantive points from Table 5.3 modify the findings about satisfaction with democracy. First, there is evidence that different theoretical approaches are at work *between* east and west Germany.

Table 5.3 Satisfaction with democracy East-West models

	East	*West*
	b (beta)	*b* (beta)
Constant	**0.935**[a]	**1.62**[a]
Modernisation		
Postmaterialism (ref: material values)		
Materialist-mixed	−0.009 (−0.003)	0.020 (0.008)
Postmaterialist-mixed	−0.138 (−0.052)	−0.074 (−0.030)
Postmaterialism	−0.080 (−0.024)	**−0.176**[c] **(−0.075)**
Evaluations of socialism	**−0.194**[a] **(−0.153)**	**−0.088**[a] **(−0.086)**
Education (ref: no degree)	**−0.225**[c] **(−0.057)**	−0.064 (−0.017)
Civil society		
Political interest	0.042 (0.036)	**0.092**[a] **(0.085)**
Social trust (ref: can't be too careful)		
Depends	−0.087 (−0.035)	0.077 (0.034)
Most can be trusted	**0.175**[c] **(0.048)**	**0.185**[a] **(0.073)**
Political-economy		
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	**0.260**[a] **(0.178)**	**0.229**[a] **(0.154)**
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	**0.222**[a] **(0.147)**	0.066 (0.036)
Perceptions of German economy (current)	**0.222**[a] **(0.139)**	**0.260**[a] **(0.178)**
Perceptions of German economy (future)	**0.153**[a] **(0.100)**	**0.094**[b] **(0.065)**
Winners and losers (ref: loser)		
Winner	**0.352**[a] **(0.137)**	**0.214**[a] **(0.099)**
Socio-economic controls		
Gender (ref: female)		
Male	0.065 (0.026)	−0.019 (−0.008)
Age (ref: 18–29)		
30–44	−0.005 (−0.002)	0.063 (0.027)
45–59	0.055 (0.020)	0.085 (0.034)
60–74	0.099 (0.031)	0.088 (0.033)
75+	**0.334**[c] **(0.058)**	0.196 (0.038)
N	1476	1816
Multiple R^2/Adj. R^2	0.240/0.231	0.159/0.150

German citizens only

Source: ALLBUS 1991, 1992, 1998, 2000

[a]$p \leq 0.0005$; [b]$p \leq 0.005$; [c]$p \leq 0.05$

Aspects of the civil society approach operate in the west only—political interest, for example. Second, different indicators are at work *within* theoretical approaches. Within the modernisation approach, postmaterialism has the predicted effect in the west only, whilst education operates in the east. Similarly, respondents' assessments of their future economic situation are significant in the east only, suggesting that easterners' support is not only contingent upon the present economic condition, but upon how it *develops*. Third, there are commonalities between the models: winning and losing, along with social trust, are also present in both models. Not all of the commonalities are intuitive, however, for despite distinguishing between the east and west, socialist values continue to depress satisfaction with democracy in both parts of Germany—a point which deepens the curiosity about their empirical properties in the west.

Thus far, different theoretical approaches are operating on satisfaction with democracy in east and west Germany. This is borne out in the analysis of the relative importance of the predictors in the models (see Fig. 5.3). Across east and west Germany, some of the same five predictors emerge, but there are subtle variations and they have different degrees of importance (see Fig. 5.3). In the east (Fig. 5.3), the variables which emerge as the most important centre on the respondent's evaluations of their personal economic situation, each of which contributes more than 3 per cent to the multiple correlation coefficient. Amongst the most important factors conditioning east Germans' satisfaction with democracy, then, are their personal economic circumstances—how they evaluate it in the here-and-now and how they project it developing in the future. In addition, it is noticeable that evaluations of the national economy also feature amongst the top five variables contributing to the multiple correlation coefficient. In the east, then, democracy is thus subject to immediate and future demands to deliver. This is not the whole story, however, for evaluations of socialism and winning are also amongst the principal sources of satisfaction with democracy in the east.

In the west, meanwhile, the picture is subtly different. The figure shows that evaluations of the current condition of the national economy are important, along with respondent's assessment of their present financial predicament. These contribute noticeably to the multiple correlation coefficient, and it is important to underline that both variables are contemporaneously focussed. Political-economy assessments of the here-and-now are important benchmarks for western satisfaction with democracy. This is an important area where east and west diverge

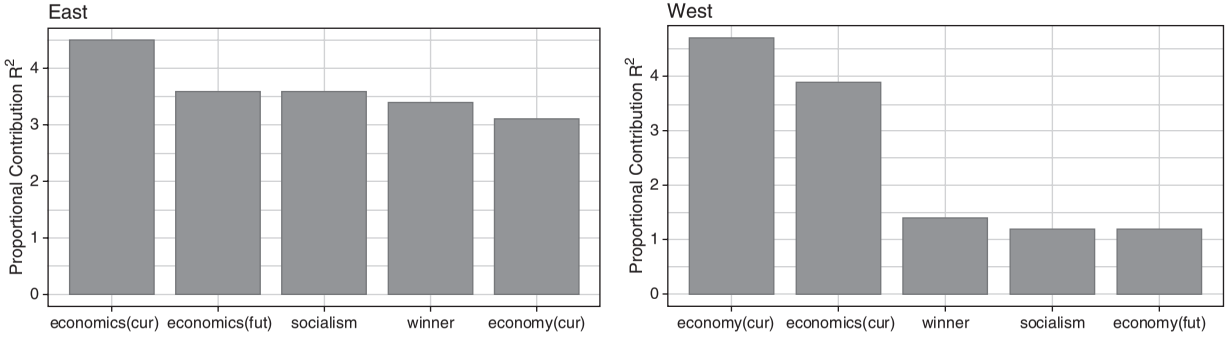

Fig. 5.3 Relative importance of predictors Eastern and Western models. Source: Table 5.3, ALLBUS 1991, 1992, 1998, 2000

slightly in their evaluations of democracy: western satisfaction with democracy appears to be more linked to the performance of the national economy—how it is performing and how it will develop. In the east, by contrast, it is more contingent upon respondents' personal finances and how they will develop in the future. It is important to note, however, that western satisfaction with democracy is not exclusively economic in focus; even when focusing on the principal influences, it nevertheless remains multidimensional. Winning matters, and features within the top variables in the model. And, despite numerous other influences in the model, evaluations of socialism continue to contribute to explaining satisfaction with democracy.

Interactions; East-West

The research may be extended further, by examining if some of the most important drivers of satisfaction with democracy interact differently between the east and west. Thus far, political-economy and socialist values have been identified as key influences. And it has been further confirmed that the east-west axis structures satisfaction with democracy in Germany. Not only are there are important east-west differences, but different theoretical approaches condition popular support within the two parts of Germany. It is possible, therefore, that some of these variables interact; i.e., that the effects of political-economy and socialist values on satisfaction with democracy differ between east and west Germany. The following part of the analysis investigates this by running two further empirical models. First, a model is run containing the indicators of political-economy and socialist values, which should reiterate the statistical importance of these indicators to the development of satisfaction with democracy. Following this, multiplicative interaction terms are then included in a second model, with their marginal effects graphed to assist interpreting their statistical and substantive importance.[36] The results are presented below.

The results are intriguing (see Table 5.4). Model one confirms the effects of the previous section: satisfaction with democracy differs between easterners and westerners (b −0.598), is lower amongst those who value socialism (−0.121) and increases with positive evaluations of the economy—irrespective of whether these concern the national economy or respondents' personal situation. Building on this, model two adds interaction terms in which each of the political-economy variables and socialist values are multiplied by east-west. The coefficients confirm

Table 5.4 OLS models with interactions

	Model 1	*Model 2*
	b (s.e.)	b (s.e.)
Constant	**1.53[a] (0.056)**	**1.53[a] (0.061)**
Main effects		
East-west (ref: West)		
East	**−0.598[a] (0.029)**	**−0.427[a] (0.120)**
Evaluations of socialism	**−0.121[a] (−0.010)**	**−0.102[a] (0.011)**
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	**0.258[a] (0.015)**	**0.245[a] (0.017)**
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	**0.095[a] (0.018)**	**0.091[a] (0.018)**
Perceptions of German economy (current)	**0.252[a] (0.014)**	**0.260[a] (0.015)**
Perceptions of German economy (future)	**0.225[a] (0.015)**	**0.226[a] (0.015)**
Interaction effects		
Perceptions of German economy (current) × east	–	−0.036 (0.035)
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current) × east	–	0.056 (0.035)
Evaluations of socialism × east	–	**−0.114[a] (0.028)**
N	9890	9890
Multiple R^2/Adj. R^2	0.240/0.231	0.159/0.150

German citizens only

Source: ALLBUS 1991, 1992, 1998, 2000

[a]$p \leq 0.0005$; [b]$p \leq 0.005$; [c]$p \leq 0.05$

that not all have surpassed the significance threshold. Of the three coefficients, only one is significant (evaluations of socialism x east), which may indicate that the relationship between socialist values and satisfaction with democracy differs between the east and west of the country. Interaction effects, however, can be more easily interpreted visually. Non-significant variables may nevertheless be substantively interesting. Graphs are therefore shown below for each of the terms entered in model two.

As shown in Fig. 5.4, the slopes of the indicators have been plotted along with the 95 per cent confidence intervals (shown in the shaded areas). In examining the graphs, two substantive points emerge. First, the graphs containing the political-economy indicators show similar slopes between east and west. Each positively influences satisfaction with democracy; they show how satisfaction with democracy increases as evaluations of the economy become more positive. Overall, then, there does not

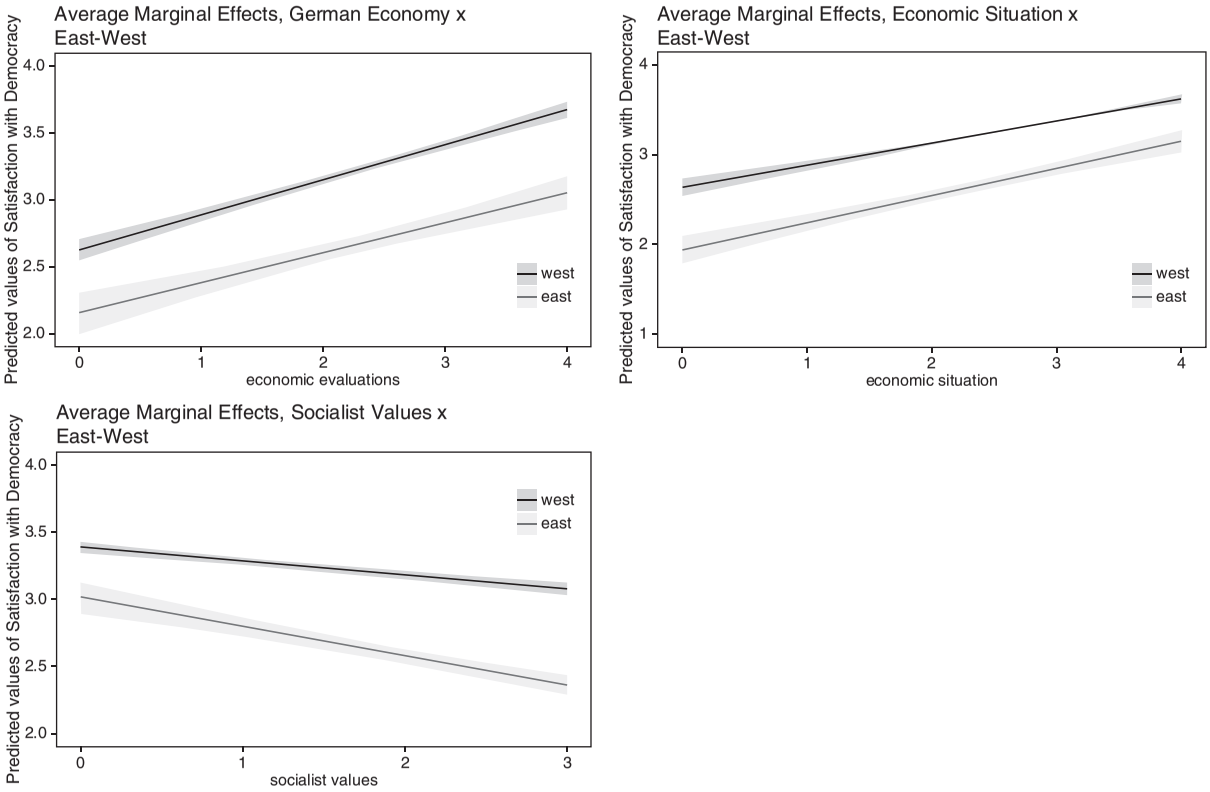

Fig. 5.4 Average marginal effects with 95 per cent confidence intervals (model 2, Table 5.4). Source: Table 5.4, ALLBUS 1991, 1992, 1998, 2000

appear to be much evidence with which to claim that the eastern and western slopes differ in their trajectory. The political-economy of satisfaction with democracy is important, but no more so in the east compared with the west. Second, there is some potentially important evidence concerning the slopes for socialist values. Examining the graph, both slopes appear to reduce satisfaction with democracy, but the eastern slope is slightly steeper compared with that of the west. Indeed, the decline in the western slope appears to be quite modest compared with the east. The differences between the trajectories of the two slopes are rather small, but they are substantively interesting and suggest that these values appear to reduce satisfaction with democracy by a slightly greater amount in the east compared with the west.

Time and Change

A supplementary issue concerns the manner in which time has mediated some of the findings uncovered in previous sections. For example, the evidence supporting the civil society approach was limited in the east, but it is possible that its development, initially inhibited by the legacy of GDR, may gradually have given way to civic dispositions which permeated to the political realm. By re-running the models in 1991 and 2000 the analysis may cast some light on this issue—and on the more general ways in which time has influenced support. Whilst it would have been preferable to extend the analysis over a longer time period, data restrictions limited this to 1991–2000.[37] Nevertheless, this provides the opportunity to comment on the degree to which the results in 2000 departed from those of 1991—and from the pattern already confirmed in this analysis. These are presented below in Table 5.5.

Overall, four central points should be emphasised from Table 5.5. First, the models confirm that the civil society variables had not yet attained significance in the east by the year 2000. Ten years appears to be an overly optimistic time-frame in which to anticipate that these measures of eastern civil society would develop in ways that underpinned pluralist democracy. Second, the coefficients from both eastern models shows that the sources of support are drawn almost exclusively from political-economy, which not only attests to the heightened sense of material demands on the system during the period following the transition, but for some considerable time thereafter. Third, rather than the effects of socialist values dissipating, they endure—a finding which underlines the challenges of nurturing support in the east in the ten

Table 5.5 Satisfaction with democracy east-west models, 1991–2000

	East		*West*	
	1991	*2000*	*1991*	*2000*
	b (beta)	*b* (beta)	*b* (beta)	*b* (beta)
Constant	**1.08**[a]	**0.666**[c]	**1.69**[a]	**1.67**[a]
Modernisation				
Postmaterialism (ref: material values)				
Materialist-mixed	−0.006 (−0.002)	0.012 (0.004)	−0.062 (−0.026)	0.095 (0.041)
Postmaterialist-mixed	−0.183 (−0.066)	−0.013 (−0.005)	−0.001 (−0.000)	−0.168 (0.069)
Postmaterialism	−0.101 (−0.029)	−0.038 (−0.012)	−0.190 (−0.082)	−0.096 (−0.041)
Evaluations of socialism	**−0.220**[a] **(−0.177)**	**−0.125c (−0.096)**	**−0.108**[a] (0.105)	−0.040 (−0.039)
Education (ref: no degree)	**−0.262**[c] **(−0.066)**	−0.120 (−0.031)	−0.067 (−0.019)	−0.150 (−0.039)
Civil society				
Political interest	0.042 (0.035)	0.051 (0.047)	**0.122**[a] **(0.111)**	0.047 (0.046)
Social trust (ref: can't be too careful)				
Depends	−0.084 (−0.034)	−0.064 (−0.025)	0.105 (0.048)	0.043 (0.019)
Most can be trusted	0.170 (0.046)	0.206 (0.060)	**0.275**[b] **(0.107)**	0.087 (0.036)
Political-economy				
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	**0.219**[a] **(0.154)**	**0.359**[a] **(0.233)**	**0.262**[a] **(0.174)**	**0.167**[b] **(0.114)**
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	**0.217**[a] **(0.153)**	**0.230**[b] **(0.120)**	0.048 (0.026)	0.086 (0.049)
Perceptions of German economy (current)	**0.169**[a] **(0.105)**	**0.375**[a] **(0.214)**	**0.168**[a] **(0.113)**	**0.342**[a] **(0.216)**
Perceptions of German economy (future)	**0.185**[a] **(0.118)**	0.010 (0.005)	**0.092**[c] **(0.068)**	**0.115**[c] **(0.072)**

(*continued*)

Table 5.5 (continued)

	East		*West*	
	1991	*2000*	*1991*	*2000*
	b (beta)	*b* (beta)	*b* (beta)	*b* (beta)
Winners and losers (ref: loser)				
Winner	**0.368[a] (0.139)**	**0.278[b] (0.113)**	**0.345[a] (0.158)**	0.032 (0.015)
Socio-economic controls				
Gender (ref: female)				
Male	0.089 (0.036)	0.013 (0.005)	−0.017 (−0.008)	−0.018 (−0.008)
Age (ref: 18–29)				
30–44	0.033 (0.013)	−0.185 (−0.072)	0.141 (0.060)	−0.035 (−0.015)
45–59	0.119 (0.043)	−0.161 (−0.059)	0.118 (0.049)	0.037 (0.015)
60–74	0.193 (0.058)	−0.195 (−0.068)	0.120 (0.043)	0.019 (0.007)
75+	0.338 (0.051)	0.131 (0.024)	0.219 (0.043)	0.119 (0.023)
N	976	978	990	807
Multiple R^2/Adj. R^2	0.258/0.244	0.256/0.243	0.190/0.176	0.135/0.116

German citizens only

Source: ALLBUS 1991, 1992, 1998, 2000

[a]$p \leq 0.0005$; [b]$p \leq 0.005$; [c]$p \leq 0.05$

years following unification. Fourth, the picture is not altogether negative in the east, since the influence of education appears to have changed. Education reduced support in 1991, but by the year 2000 this appears to have faded. This constitutes quite important evidence about the ways in which socio-economic resources operated in the east in the first ten years of unification. If the educated elite from the GDR accommodated themselves in ten years, elite adjustment to democracy may run ahead of the development of civil society and processes of value change.

The findings from the western models, meanwhile, are more limited. Overall, the western model in 2000 is unusually limited. None of the variables from the modernisation, civil society or partisanship approaches surpassed the significance threshold. In the year 2000, then, western satisfaction with democracy appears to be heavily influenced by political-economy—findings that are somewhat aberrant from those previously uncovered.

Conclusion

This chapter has uncovered a number of important findings about the shape and dynamics of popular support in Germany. Overall, the sources of satisfaction with democracy are multidimensional, with stimuli encompassing all four approaches. Cumulatively, the diversity of long and short-term factors influencing satisfaction with democracy challenge the view that it is merely a utilitarian-based form of support. In fact, it is conditioned by a combination of durable orientations and concrete experiences, shaped by cognition and evaluation, and by affect and percept. Regarding long-term factors, values matter. Postmaterialism shapes support, although its effects are small, remote and confined to the west. Mixed evidence, meanwhile, emerged for civil society, with the majority of it found in the west. Indeed, in the analysis of the east, political interest failed to predict support on any of the occasions in which it was tested and social trust did so inconsistently. This raises an important line of inquiry for subsequent chapters, since issues about the pace at which civil society permeates to democracy remain important to resolve. The lack of evidence in the east suggests that eastern support is less grounded in civic norms and more dependent upon material performance. The findings on social trust reinforce this point, since it influenced satisfaction with democracy inconclusively in both parts of Germany. At a theoretical level, the generalisation of social trust to popular support should occur within *established* democracies; it is, in effect, an indicator of democratic

maturity and is dependent upon attaining a certain level of democratisation. Ruling this out on the basis of the evidence of this chapter would surely be too hasty, but caution must be exercised about assuming eastern support is steeped in cultural norms.

If we were to locate the factors shaping support on a continuum from central to periphery, the short-term influences of partisan heuristics and political-economy have been decisive. Satisfaction with democracy is politicised, with voting intentions providing crucial benchmarks with which the political system is judged. Behind this may lie important issues about representation, along with the consensus-seeking style of party politics. But if winners expect government to legislate in ways that advance their interests, this may heighten demands on a system already burdened with expectations. Managing the economy in line with individuals' expectations nurtures support; it rests upon how individuals cognise the economy and translate political and economy stimuli into responsibility attributions. This confirms that support is, at least in part, a rational response to perceptions of effective delivery.

Another set of conclusions concerns the east-west axis. These modify the picture by demonstrating that net of the impact of other confounding influences, these differences are sizeable and enduring. Further, the research has shown the discrepant ways in which the theories operate in east and west of the country. There are subtly different sources of support between the two parts of Germany, with four pieces of evidence reinforcing this. First, postmaterialism influences support exclusively in the west. As long-term heuristics, postmaterialism operates in the background, gradually taking effect once the requisite *subjective* levels of growth have been attained. If perceptions of growth have not yet reached the required levels in the east—or processes of generationally-acquired values remain incomplete—this may explain the relative paucity of evidence in the east. Second, the analysis also uncovered the importance of socialist values. Whilst these are influential in both parts of Germany, the evidence elevated their importance in the east. Third, it is intriguing that respondents' projections of their *future* financial predicament mediate support in the east but not in the west. This may create a dual pressure on elites, in that eastern support is not only dependent on buoyant national conditions, but on the expectation of favourable personal circumstances in the future. Fourth, analysis of marginal effects confirmed socialist values moderate support across the two regions of Germany, reducing support, but by a greater amount in the east compared with the west. The ways in which deeply-held sentiments in the east continue to impact on

popular support in Germany may be a crucial signpost of the lethargic pace at which some aspects of political culture are changing in Germany—and one part of a broader explanation for why support in the east continues to differ from that of the west.

Equally importantly, this chapter has contributed to understanding the dynamics of support. As noted in the previous chapter, support contracted at the same time as perceptions of the German national economy became more negative; and as these perceptions became more favourable, support restored. Although a definitive cause-and-effect explanation requires a different research strategy, this argument could be undermined if a relationship between these perceptions and support failed to emerge. Yet these perceptions matter decisively. Indeed, they are one of the principal influences of satisfaction with democracy. Any movement within them, therefore, carries important implications for the overall pattern of support in Germany.

It is important, however, to end this chapter on a cautionary note. Above all, the findings focus on one indicator of popular support. Although satisfaction with democracy may function as a bellwether, subsequent chapters will assess if the findings uncovered in this chapter are atypical. At this stage, there is the possibility that there may be other higher-order indicators of support where the pattern is altogether different. It is to these indicators that this study turns next.

Notes

1. The trends feature regularly in analyses of the Pew Research Center, with one recent report linking levels of satisfaction with democracy (p. 13) to support for non-democratic alternatives, p. 8. See, Richard Wike, Katie Simmons, Bruce Stokes and Rhonda Stewart, 'Globally, Broad Support for Representative and Direct Democracy' *Pew Research Center*, October 2017. In addition, as satisfaction with democracy has been a regular item included in the Eurobarometer series, it has featured in reports for the European Commission, see, for example, *Eurobarometer 65: Public Opinion in the European Union*, pp. 29–36: ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/eb/eb65/eb65_first_en.pdf.
2. The item featured in the Eurobarometer series, the World Values Survey (1981), and the ALLBUS survey series (since 1988).
3. The presence of the question in the Afrobarometer is somewhat curious, particularly since it is asked in countries which are not democracies. The answers of the plurality of respondents in Zimbabwe in 2002/2003, for example, who offered the response 'fairly satisfied' raises questions about

whether or not they were evaluating an idealised form of governance—or from what criteria they believed their existing arrangements to be democratic. See, www.afrobarometer.org.

4. Jonas Linde and Joakim Ekman, 'Satisfaction with Democracy: A Note of a Frequently Used Indicator in Comparative Politics', *European Journal of Political Research*, 42, pp. 391–408.
5. Canache, Damarys, Jeffery J Mondak and Mitchell A Seligson (2001) Meaning and measurement in cross-national research on satisfaction with democracy. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 65(4): 506–528.
6. 'On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in …?'
7. See, for example, John R. Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 32–33.
8. 'On the whole are you very satisfied, rather satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy is *developing* in your country?' (emphasis added).
9. In particular, by focussing on the *development* of democracy, respondents' answers may have been coloured by experiences of the previous regime, the disruption during their collapse and the success or difficulties with which new governing arrangements were established.
10. Richard Rose and Bernhard Weßels 'The Absolute and Instrumental Legitimacy of Democracy' *Studies in Public Policy*, N. 524 (Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, 2016).
11. For example, when asked in the Afrobarometer in 2002/2003 a plurality of Zimbabweans responded 'fairly satisfied'. Although it is not inconceivable that respondents were appraising the existing governing arrangements, the context should have prompted hesitancy and suspicion from those answering, and the backdrop of authoritarianism, electoral fraud and egregious violations of human rights invites caution about the validity and comparability of the answers.
12. The Politbaromoter, however, uses a slightly different question formulation, which refers to democracy 'in general': Was würden Sie allgemein zur Demokratie in Deutschland sagen? Sind Sie damit eher zufrieden oder eher unzufrieden?
13. See, for example, the European Social Survey, which asks 'And on the whole, how satisfied are with the way democracy works in [country]'? 0 means extremely dissatisfied and 10 means extremely satisfied. The question also includes a footnote indicating that what is meant is the democratic system in practice, as opposed to how democracy 'ought' to work.
14. Martha Lagos, 'World Opinion: Support for and Satisfaction with Democracy', *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 15/4 (2003), pp. 471–487.

15. Manfred Kuechler, 'The Dynamics of Mass Political Support in Western Europe: Methodological Problems and Preliminary Findings' in Reif, K. Inglehart, R. (eds.) *Eurobarometer: The Dynamics of European Public Opinion, Essays in Honor of Jacques-Rene Rabier*. New York, NY: St. Martin's (1991), p. 279.
16. Christopher Anderson and Christine Guillory, 'Political Institutions and Satisfaction with Democracy: A Cross-National Analysis of Consensus and Majoritarian Systems', *American Political Science Review*, 91/1 (Mar. 1997), p. 70.
17. Harold D. Clarke and Allan Kornberg, *Citizens and Community: Political Support in a Representative Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1992), pp. 67–68.
18. Christopher J. Anderson, Andre Blais, Shaun Bowler, Todd Donovan and Ola Listhaug, *Losers' Consent: Elections and Democratic Legitimacy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (2005), pp. 35–37.
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21. Richard Rose 'Survey Measures of Democracy' *Studies in Public Policy*, No. 294 (Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, 1997), p. 10.
22. Sara B. Hobolt, 'Citizen Satisfaction with Democracy in the European Union'. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 50/1, pp. 88–105.
23. Pablo Christmann and Mariano Torcal, 'The Political and Economic Causes of Satisfaction with Democracy in Spain—A Twofold Panel Study', *West European Politics*, 40/6, pp. 1241–1266.
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26. Anderson, Christopher J (2002) *Good questions, dubious inferences, and bad solutions: Some further thoughts on satisfaction with democracy*. Research paper 116, Binghamton Center for Democratic Performance, State University of New York.
27. Fred Cutler, Andrea Nuesser and Ben Nyblade, 'Evaluating the Quality of Democracy with Individual Level Models of Satisfaction: Or, A Complete Model of Satisfaction with Democracy'. Paper Presented at the ECPR General Conference, Bordeaux, 4–7 September 2013.

28. Christmann and Torcal, p. 1252.
29. Ross Campbell, 'Winners, Losers, and the Grand Coalition: Political Satisfaction in the Federal Republic of Germany'. *International Political Science Review*, 36/2 (2015), pp. 168–184.
30. Monica Ferrin, 'An Empirical Assessment of Satisfaction with Democracy' in Ferrin, M., and Kriesi, H. *How Europeans View and Evaluate Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (2016).
31. Calculated using the effects package in R. See, John Fox and Sanford Weisberg, *An R Companion to Applied Regression*: 2nd Edition. London: Sage (2011).
32. Jeff W. Johnson, 'A Heuristic for Estimating the Relative Weight of Predictor Variables in Multiple Regression', *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, 35/1 (2000), pp. 1–19.
33. There are good reasons for this scepticism as research has shown that standardised Beta coefficients may: (1) exaggerate the relative weight of predictor variables most correlated with the dependent variable; (2) diminish the relative weight of other variables in the model; (3) reverse the signs of some variables; and (4) inflate the weights of variables if the sample size is small.
34. The particular method used is LMG: the R^2 averaged over orderings among regressors, R.H. Lindeman, P.F. Merenda and R.Z. Gold, R.Z. (1980) *Introduction to Bivariate and Multivariate Analysis*, Glenview IL (1980). Scott, Foresman.
35. These are calculated by the relaimpo package in R. See, Ulrike Grömping, 'Relative Importance for Linear Regression in R: The Package relaimpo', *Journal of Statistical Software*, 17/1 (2006), pp. 1–27.
36. These have been graphed using the sjPlot package in R.
37. The reason for this is the infrequent measurement of socialist values item in surveys in which indicators of popular support featured. Having established that socialist values is an important correlate of satisfaction with democracy, omitting it from analysis changes the findings.

CHAPTER 6

Affective Support and Constitutional Patriotism

Introduction

How do democracies nurture an underlying adherence to sustain them during the most testing of circumstances? A standard answer is via nationalism—through the allegiance and affection for one's country. As national attachments generate enduring forms of human association, the failures of successive governments may be overlooked by the need for stable collective decision-making on behalf of that community. Yet how does a country with a particularly difficult relationship with the concept of nationhood engender a sense of group-based allegiance without the logic of exclusion? In short, how does one make affect safe for German democracy? These are some of the most important questions in the study of popular support in Germany. The Third Reich thoroughly discredited nationalism and attempts to rekindle it were decisively rejected. During the post-war period, however, writers developed the concept of constitutional patriotism (*Verfassungspatriotismus*) as a substitute.[1] If Germany required an object around which a deep, horizontal comradeship could form, there were precious few candidates save that of the Basic Law. The Basic Law was thus far more than a text enumerating the functions of government. By prescribing a legal-democratic formula in which Germans could source their political identity, it provided elastic bonds of affection for an inclusive political membership without the restrictiveness and antagonisms of nationalism.

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Despite occupying a central theme in the evolution and persistence of the German political system, there is a lack of research on how this form of support develops, particularly amongst easterners who began their experience of the Federal Republic with comparatively little appreciation of the workings of the Basic Law or the principles upon which it is founded.[2] Equally, one might argue that constitutional patriotism is an historical anachronism—something appropriate given the deeply compromised sense of nationalism in the post-war era, but which has since given way either to a more 'normalised' sense of nationhood or to supranational forms of citizenship.[3] As argued in the first part of the chapter, however, the concept incorporates commitments to universal principles which have relevance to contemporary debates about cohesion and integration. Equally, the concept is being discussed beyond the Federal Republic.[4] Indeed, there are lively debates about how individuals may develop shared allegiances to the EU through its constitution.[5] Yet there is sharp controversy surrounding its measurement. Capturing this subtle form political identity via closed survey questions contains risks. Although a single indicator on pride in the constitution may not be ideal, this form of support is sufficiently important to accept the difficulties of this and proceed to analysis.[6] The second section of the chapter analyses cross-tabulated evidence and presents multivariate models. These are supplemented with graphical displays of marginal effects to understand the substantive effects of the correlates of this form of support. Because the findings reveal comparatively fewer drivers of support in the east, the analysis also focuses on the latest survey for which there is data (2016) to understand if there has been any change over time. The final section draws out the implications of the main findings, distinguishes them from Chap. 5 and reflects upon the structure of constitutional support in Germany.

Constitutional Patriotism: Political Allegiances and Diffuse Support

The starting point is to define constitutional patriotism and enumerate its properties. At its simplest, it is a form of political attachment centring on the norms and values of a liberal-democratic constitution, including the institutions and procedures through which they operate.[7] The concept, therefore, avoids the chauvinistic prejudice of nationalism and the abstract vacuity of cosmopolitanism.[8] Hence, writers claim that it constitutes a new form of political loyalty, centring on a different object, expressed in

a different mode, with new reasons for its development. Subjected to logical scrutiny, however, its essence is not only ambiguous, but is a seemingly contradictory amalgam of incongruous elements. It fuses arid documents about the exercise of authority with an emotional intensity. It purports to replace ascriptive loyalties with an allegiance based upon nationhood.[9] It opposes group-based patriotism, but advocates commitments to political and legal rights operating exclusively within territorially delimited areas.[10] And it engenders suspicion of patriotism, but accepts that group-based identities bring solace to people, whilst criticising the way in which vicarious forms of team-spirit are imposed on people and the ends to which they may be put. Constitutional patriotism, then, is not merely a critique of nationalism, but of forms of cohesion which are sustained via distinctive ways of life with limited possibilities of internal heterogeneity. As a consequence, it rejects authority which is legitimated traditionally or through transcendental appeal, for this leads to the 'moral danger' inherent in nationalism and traditional patriotism, in that it has the potential to commit oneself to a militarised conception of political life.[11]

Constitutional patriotism, then, attempts to detach political identity from nationalism. Its proponents accept that nations may have contributed to fostering democratic values and popular sovereignty, but reject this as a normative basis for citizenship. The *demos* need not be the *ethnos*. Political identity, therefore, should be divorced from the historical, cultural and geographical phenomena comprising national identity, and anchored in a moral and legal framework.[12] This dissociates the historical and political memberships, limits the scope of disagreement to what Rawls termed 'constitutional essentials' *and* advocates styles of claim-making and contestation which have integrating effects.[13] This has (at least) two important implications. First, the identification mechanism is through the norms and principles of the constitution—a point designed to avoid the divisive extremes of ideological conflict and encourage a politics of moderation. As constitutions are commitments towards moderate politics, they combat the tendency towards the purportedly selfish aspects of nationalism by fostering shared modes for resolving key political disputes and balancing interests towards a golden mean. Second, the concept implicitly draws upon the values of the Enlightenment which reject fanaticism and idolatry and cultivate independence of mind, providing it with a depth and thickness, rather than merely an intensity.[14] This has implications for the style of debate and contestation, for by invoking the Habermasian

idea of a 'collective learning process', it denotes the way in which political rule is maintained through public reason.[15] As the principles of the constitution substantially shape social conditions, Habermas anticipated that they would be refined and purified within the public sphere, which would contribute to the rational exercise of political authority.[16]

Does this depend on a 'straw man' construction of nationalism? Constitutional patriotism suggests that loyalty is not always a virtue, particularly if it is animated by a selective reading of history, or via imagery or aesthetically induced memories. On this reasoning, idealising an entity often leads to harmful ends, by fuelling patriotism mobilised on the basis of the latent or actual competition between countries. Rather than political identities being generated from particularistic forms of ethnicity, race and language, constitutional patriotism prescribes cohesion based upon a stable system of law-making in which people are viewed as free and co-equal inhabitants.[17] Yet there are varieties of nationalism, some of which may be functionally positive for identities and political stability.[18] Nationalism need not necessarily denote uncritical conformity or rejection of outgroups and it is not indissolubly bound to questions of origin. 'Constructive' patriots, for example, reject definitions characterised by rigid identification, staunch allegiance and intolerance of criticism, and demarcate aspects which advocate a more searching analysis of the state. Patriotism, in effect, need not be blind; and by avoiding definitions of nationalism which stem from exclusive criteria, it may be reframed it as a critical loyalty underpinned by a desire for positive change.[19] This presents political identity in ways that advocate opposition to policies that violate long-term national interests, whilst also making commitments to improve institutions. Yet there is no guarantee that these constructions are necessarily positive: they may be no less vulnerable to anti-liberal manipulation or strategic exploitation. Even the more benign forms of nationalism may be conditioned by positive evaluations of the nation—or redirected towards that end via fixed or given attributes such as kinship, ethnicity or territory.[20] Constitutional patriotism, by contrast, emphasises values based on rationality, which is designed to neutralise ascriptive criteria, ethnicity and confession. By focusing on a system grounded in liberal rules for the collective exercise of authority, the unity of the state is conceived without the unity of the nation.[21] Constitutional patriotism, in effect, renders affect safe by redirecting it towards universalist constitutional principles.[22]

Constitutional patriotism is not, therefore, a remedy to a specifically German problem; it intersects with wider issues about cohesion, multiculturalism and integration. It is a form of post-national political identification,

functionally substituting for nationalism, whilst advocating commitments to the ground rules of constitutional democracy.[23] This was especially important in Germany in the post-war era, since it was no longer possible to attach oneself to a conception of nationalism which culminated in the *Volksgemeinschaft*.[24] German nationalism had stressed group-members' common origins and was marked by blind, uncritical obedience and sharp hostility towards ethnically-defined outgroups. It lacked reason and critical understanding. As a doctrine, it was discredited and language which made even the most passing reference to its discourses was rejected.[25] This was particularly clear during the *Historikerstreit*, a contentious public debate conducted, in part, in the pages of *Die Zeit* in the 1980s, which focused on attempts by revisionist historians to relativise the unique circumstances of the Holocaust and recast German national identity in a more positive light. This was challenged by Jürgen Habermas, who rejected attempts to launder German history and reconstruct the *Volksnation* as an object of pride. Habermas accepted that the Federal Republic required a collective form of identity, but ruled out nationalism as an integrating force.

A new linkage mechanism was required.[26] German political identity required an object around which it could crystallise. The extraordinary economic success of the *Wirtschaftswunder*—a shared project of economic and political recovery—emerged as a candidate.[27] But this had dangers, notably that German identity could have regressed into a materialist form of 'D-Mark nationalism'. For Habermas, the one object with universalist principles was the Basic Law, which, by providing an attachment to democratic rights and obligations, meant that one could be proud of the way in which citizens of the post-war Federal Republic had built up institutions of democracy premised on the rule of law and that these had endured. Political loyalties would thus be underpinned by democratic values, human rights and a subscription to a system of legal-rational authority in a *Kulturnation*.[28] The challenges of creating this, however, were formidable. After all, what was being advocated was a shared sense of the virtues and accomplishments of the nation without nationalism. Even if this was normatively desirable, transposing it into policy was complicated by the division of Germany, which revived the concept of the nation, by shaping and reinforcing an elite discourse premised on an all-German nation.[29] Yet an inclusive sense of political citizenship also clashed with legal definitions of citizenship. Throughout the division of Germany successive governments retained an exclusive definition of citizenry based on a community of descent and tightly linked to

ethnicity.[30] The concept of constitutional patriotism, then, derives from an historically closed conception of citizenship, elements of which are contained within the constitution.

Overall, then, constitutional patriotism is a subtle and important concept—and yet it is one that is replete with paradoxes. Despite its advocates suggesting that it should be generated via an open process of deliberation, they direct individuals to attach themselves to a constitution never itself subjected to democratic acceptance or popular approval. Furthermore, the development of an inclusive sense of political attachment occurred in a country with an exclusive, 'descent-based' definition of who was German. And whilst the universality and inclusiveness of the Basic Law are often held up as exemplars of the post-national political identity, clauses within it retain principles of ethnic descent.[31]

From Concept to Measure

Few items in this study are more difficult to capture than constitutional patriotism. Regime or institutional support are more straight-forward in that there is a clear line of argument from the concepts to the survey indicators. Constitutional patriotism, however, derives from particular historical experiences which manifest themselves in the democratic *ethos* of the constitution.[32] As it does not merely reside in attitudes directed towards the document itself, aspects of the concept are not easily transposed into empirical measures.[33] Their measurement requires a subtle battery of survey questions, which have been carefully refined to tap into some of the less accessible aspects of the concept. At present, these are unavailable, but in the absence of more nuanced indicators the item tapping pride in the constitution is the best available.

Despite these limitations, there are good reasons for claiming that the indicator on constitutional pride may be a proxy for diffuse support. According to Easton, diffuse support denotes a generalised acceptance of the 'procedures and arrangements through which demands are negotiated and compromised'.[34] As the German constitution provides the framework for this, attitudes towards it may be indicative of system-level loyalty. In addition, diffuse support is independent of outputs: 'it is a kind of support that a system does not have to buy with more or less direct benefits'.[35] This is a point on which the empirical testing of the chapter may adjudicate. But if this indicator is largely unconnected to evaluations of the economy, it may strengthen the evidence that it signifies higher-order support that is unlikely

to dwindle in the face of austere circumstances. Furthermore, diffuse support should withstand testing political upheaval, and this study has already presented some evidence in Chap. 4 that constitutional pride remained firm in the west over the unification period. Although this was not the case in the east, the foregoing analysis may shed some light on why this is the case.

Cross-Tabulated Analysis; Preliminary Evidence

The first step is to cross-tabulate the data (Table 6.1).

This is revealing. A general theoretical point stands out. The balance of evidence from Chap. 5 suggested that postmaterialism reduced satisfaction with democracy, but its influence here suggests that it *increases* constitutional pride—and that it does so in both the east and west of the country. Western postmaterialists have noticeably higher constitutional

Table 6.1 Cross-tabulation, pride in the constitution

	East			*West*		
	Lowest[a]	*Highest*[b]	*Change*[c]	*Lowest*[a]	*Highest*[b]	*Change*[c]
Modernisation						
Postmaterialism	21	33	12	44	60	16
Education	26	30	4	54	66	12
Evaluations of socialism	28	18	−10	53	49	−4
Civil society						
Political interest	20	32	12	35	69	34
Social trust	27	38	11	53	66	13
Political-economy						
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	19	42	23	48	65	17
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	19	31	12	39	58	19
Perceptions of German economy (current)	19	37	18	43	63	20
Perceptions of German economy (future)	22	31	9	46	65	19
Winners and losers						
Winners	24	37	13	54	61	7

Source: ALLBUS Surveys 1988–2016

[a]Per cent proud on lowest point of scale

[b]Per cent proud on highest point of scale

[c]Percentage point difference between lowest and highest point

pride (16 percentage points) compared with materialists, whilst in the east the effect is equally impressive, with constitutional pride differing between materialists and postmaterialists by 12 percentage points. This confirms a basic claim of modernisation approach: postmaterialists discriminate between different objects of the political system and their values stimulate support for higher-order items.

There is also supportive evidence concerning civil society and political-economy. Although the previous chapter found limited evidence surrounding the permeation of dispositions of civil society to support in the east, civil society increases constitutional pride appreciably. The effects are positive and sizeable and operate in the direction predicted by the theory. This applies in both the east and west of Germany—and noticeably strongly in the west. Political interest, for example, increases pride in the west (34 points) and in the east (12 points). Social trust, meanwhile, increases constitutional pride by 13 percentage points in the west compared with 11 in the east. As also shown, however, constitutional pride is not entirely insulated from short-term or politicised factors. At the bivariate level, it appears quite strongly linked to the economy, with assessments of the respondent's current financial circumstances, for example, increasing support by 17 percentage points in the west and 23 percentage points in the east.

Yet not all theoretical approaches operate in the same way between the east and the west. Education, for example, increases support quite strongly in the west (12), whilst the effect is more modest in the east (4). As with so much of the analysis, socio-economic resources are not a straight-forward guarantee of support; their influence depends heavily upon the context. Evaluations of socialism, meanwhile, reduce support in the east (−10) by a greater amount than in the west (−4). And the discrepant effects also include assessments of the future of German economy, which are stronger in the west (19) compared with the east (9), whilst winning is stronger in the east (13) compared with the west (7). Overall, then, this preliminary analysis provides support to the theoretical expectations, but also suggests that different factors may be at work between the east and west of the country.

Multivariate Analysis; Generalised Linear Modelling

This section presents findings from multivariate analyses. As discussed in previous chapters, pride in the Basic Law is a dichotomous variable (scored 1 for respondents who mentioned the Basic Law as something of which there were proud, and 0 if it was not mentioned). As a consequence, logistic

regression procedures are used for this part of this chapter. The first model focusses on the all-German picture. The results are presented in Table 6.2.

Prior to discussing the findings, a preliminary model was run including the socialist values variable. This emerged as non-significant. The marginal effects were also examined and this confirmed that their influence was substantively minimal. Given that the presence of this variable in the model restricts the overall number of cases, the variable has been excluded and the model re-run, thereby increasing the number of observations available.

As shown from the results (Table 6.2), the sources of constitutional support are varied, and are generated via modernisation, civil society, political-economy and winning. A starting point, however, is the influence of postmaterialist values, which reduced satisfaction with democracy, but the multivariate analysis here shows that it has the opposite effect, in that they *positively* influence pride in the Basic Law. Compared with materialist values, postmaterialist values increase the logged odds of expressing pride in the constitution by 0.610. In addition, there are appreciable effects for indicators of civil society, as both coefficients are positive and in the direction predicted by the theory. The evidence is thus mounting that political interest and social trust increase pride in the constitution. In addition, there are effects from the political-economy perspective, with current and future economic circumstances all associated with increasing the logged odds of being proud of the constitution. Although the coefficients are not especially large, they may have potentially important effects. Yet the findings are not straight-forward, since evaluations of the future of the German economy appear to reduce constitutional pride ($B = -0.082$). This is intriguing, since not all of the evidence suggests that this form of support is entirely insulated from the economy. Furthermore, the coefficient for winning and losing confirms that winners are more likely to express pride in the constitution. The effect is strong ($B = 0.298, \text{sig} \leq 0.001$), suggesting that this form of support, although affective, is nevertheless linked to political representation. Finally, there are noteworthy effects from a range of socio-structural variables, which cannot be discounted. Differences between easterners and westerners are particularly striking ($B = -1.07$), along with increasing support amongst males and the educated. In addition, higher support from older respondents stands out in the model, part of the explanation for which may be attributable to the high number of westerners in the sample. Clearly, these individuals have the longest amount of time to familiarise themselves with the Basic Law and experience it at work—points which may lead to them supporting it.

Table 6.2 GLM multivariate logit model, pride in the constitution, all-German model

	B (s.e.)
Constant	**−1.47**[a]
Modernisation	
Postmaterialism (ref: material values)	
Materialist-mixed	**0.509**[a] **(0.076)**
Postmaterialist-mixed	**0.494**[a] **(0.077)**
Postmaterialism	**0.610**[a] **(0.081)**
Evaluations of socialism	–
Education (ref: no degree)	**0.154**[c] **(0.072)**
Civil society	
Political interest	**0.196**[a] **(0.024)**
Social trust (ref: can't be too careful)	
Depends	**0.217**[a] **(0.053)**
Most can be trusted	**0.326**[a] **(0.062)**
Political-economy	
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	**0.063**[c] **(0.031)**
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	**0.127**[a] **(0.044)**
Perceptions of German economy (current)	**0.064**[c] **(0.032)**
Perceptions of German economy (future)	**−0.082**[c] **(0.032)**
Winners and losers (ref: loser)	
Winner	**0.298**[a] **(0.046)**
Socio-economic controls	
East (ref: West)	
East	**−1.07**[a] **(0.059)**
Gender (ref: female)	
Male	**0.112**[c] **(0.046)**
Age (ref: 18–29)	
30–44	0.054 (0.072)
45–59	**0.307**[a] **(0.073)**
60–74	**0.354**[a] **(0.078)**
75+	**0.333**[b] **(0.101)**
N	8780
Pseudo R^2_D (−2 log-likelihood)	0.125 (11,307.626)

German citizens only
East-west weights applied

Source: ALLBUS 1991–2016

[a] $p \leq 0.001$; [b] $p \leq 0.01$; [c] $p \leq 0.05$

As mentioned, the substantive effects of logistic regression analysis may not be entirely intuitive. To assist in the interpretation of the model, the average marginal effects are shown. The predicted probabilities of the independent variables have been graphed with other variables held at the mean. Figure 6.1 thus illustrates the relationships, and they may be summarised as follows. First, postmaterialists are more likely to express pride compared with materialists. Notice, however, that the effects on pride are quite striking between materialist and all other categories. Postmaterialists and both *mixed* categories are quite similar to one another. Second, the positive effects of civil society are also confirmed, with political interest and social trust both increasing the probability of expressing pride in the Basic Law. Regarding social trust, the effects are positive, albeit the confidence interval surrounding those in the trusting category is quite wide. The effects of political interest, meanwhile are substantively interesting, with a clear upward trajectory in the probability towards the more interested end of the scale. Third, the effects of political-economy are intriguing, with perceptions of current and future economic circumstances revealing a modest incline, along with perceptions of the German national economy. Perceptions of the future of the German economy depress the probability of expressing pride—a point alluded to in the statistical analysis of the model. Fourth, winning has substantively interesting effects on pride, with the plot revealing important differences between winners and losers. Fifth, there are a range of intriguing effects from the socio-economic variables, including important differences between males and females, and older respondents. And the influence of east-west is clearly substantively important. Indeed, the disparity between easterners and westerners vividly confirms the pattern uncovered in previous sections of this chapter.

Multivariate Analysis; East-West Models

Given the consistency with which east-west differences in pride have been uncovered, this section presents separate models for the east and west of the country.

The results from Table 6.3 are intriguing. They reveal similarities and differences between the eastern and western models. Regarding the similarities, some crucial points emerge. First, postmaterialism positively influences pride in both parts of Germany. Although analyses from previous chapters cast some doubt upon whether or not it operated

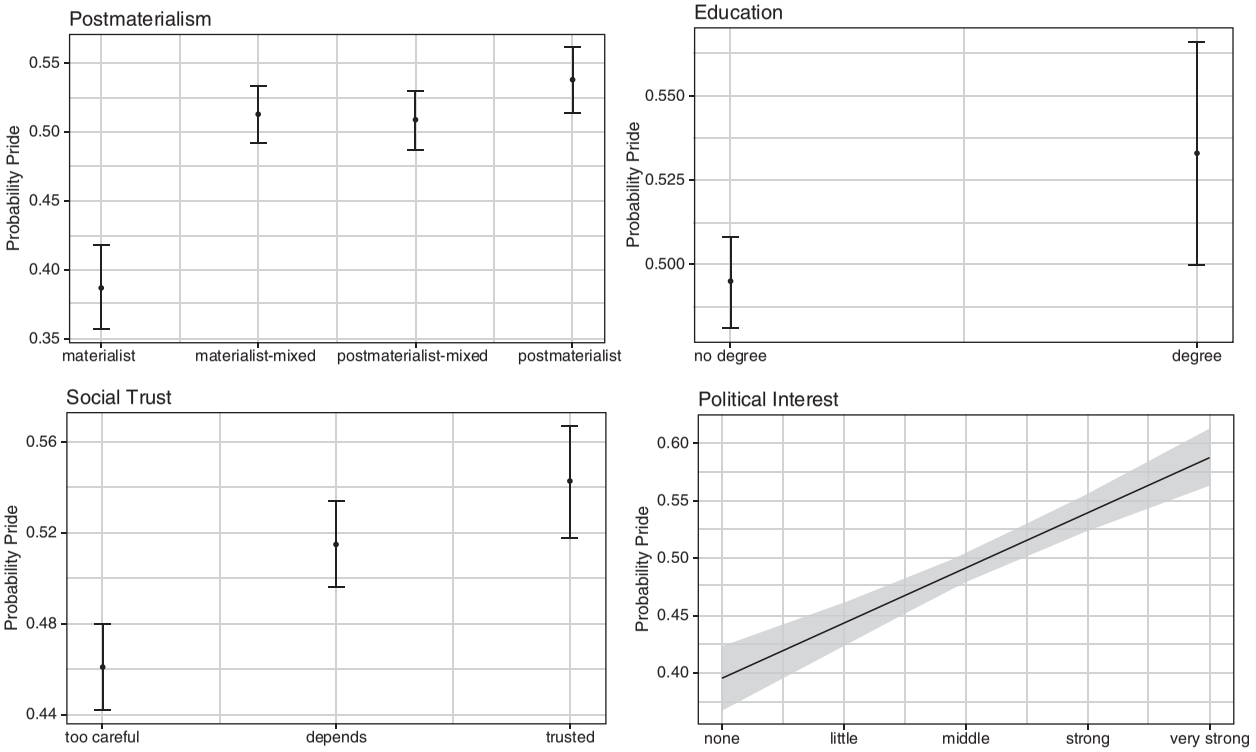

Fig. 6.1 Average marginal effects with 95 per cent confidence intervals (Table 6.2). Source: Table 6.2, ALLBUS 1991–2016

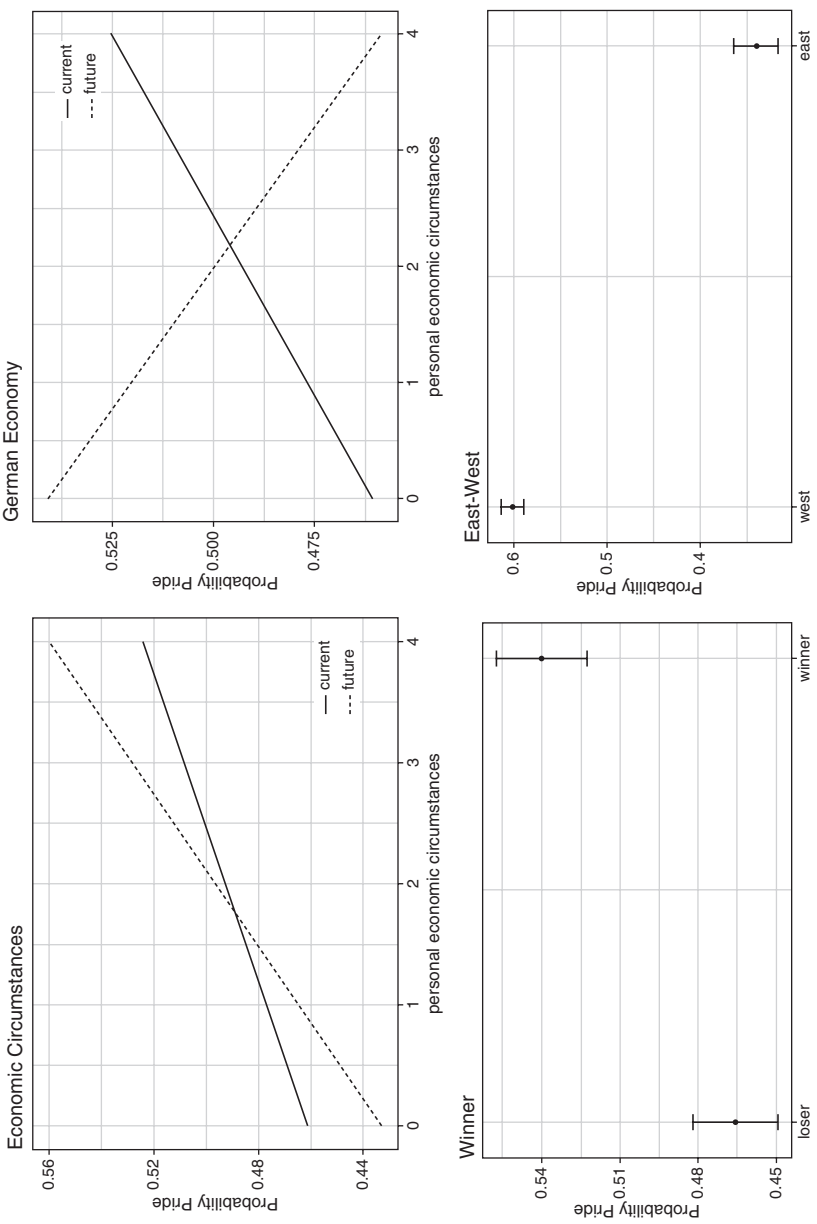

Fig. 6.1 (continued)

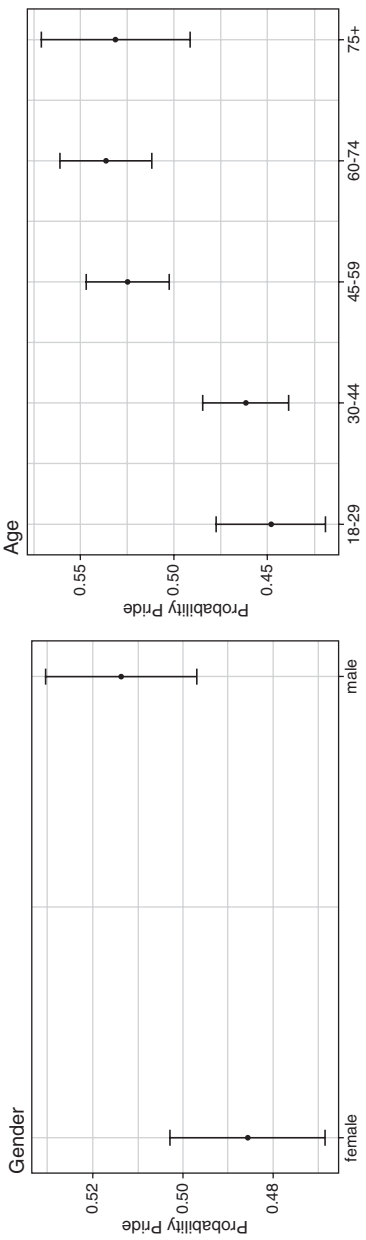

Fig. 6.1 (continued)

consistently in the east and west, it does appear to influence pride in a largely similar way in both parts of Germany. Postmaterialists in both parts of Germany are more supportive of the constitution. Second, political interest stimulates pride: the coefficients are positive and have surpassed the significance threshold. Third, some of the political-economy variables are significant, but different variables appear to be at work. In the east, strong and positive effects are found from future economic circumstances and the current performance of the national economy, whilst in the west the effects are limited to future economic circumstances. Fourth, there are positive effects from winning: winners are more likely to express pride in the constitution compared with losers.

Yet the findings also reveal contrasts. The drivers of pride in the constitution are comparatively fewer in the east, and appear to lack deep roots in social trust and social structure. Social trust, for example, is significant in the west, but not the east. Education, meanwhile, stimulates pride in the west, but not in the east. Gender conditions pride appears to operate in the east, but not in the west. And age is significant in the west, but not in the east.

To examine some of the contrasts in these relationships, the predicted probabilities have been graphed in Fig. 6.2, illustrating the findings from Table 6.3. The effects for postmaterialism, for example, are somewhat similar, in that pride rises towards the postmaterialist end of the scale. Postmaterialists in both parts of Germany are thus more likely to express pride in the constitution compared with materialists. The effects of education are harder to discern from the large confidence interval surrounding them, but appear to be somewhat more important in the west. And the contrasts are also evident from social trust. Socially trusting respondents from the west are more likely to express pride, but the same does not apply in the east. The eastern relationship is noticeably weaker and the confidence interval too wide to suggest a substantively important effect is at work. And there are also subtle contrasts in the effects of gender. Although the relationship is positive in both parts of Germany, it appears to be noticeably more substantive in the east. Yet an especially important point applies to age. In the west, age increases the probability of expressing pride: older respondents are noticeably more likely to express pride in the Basic Law compared with the youngest age cohort. In the east, meanwhile, the effects are largely non-existent. The predicted probabilities barely rise across the age

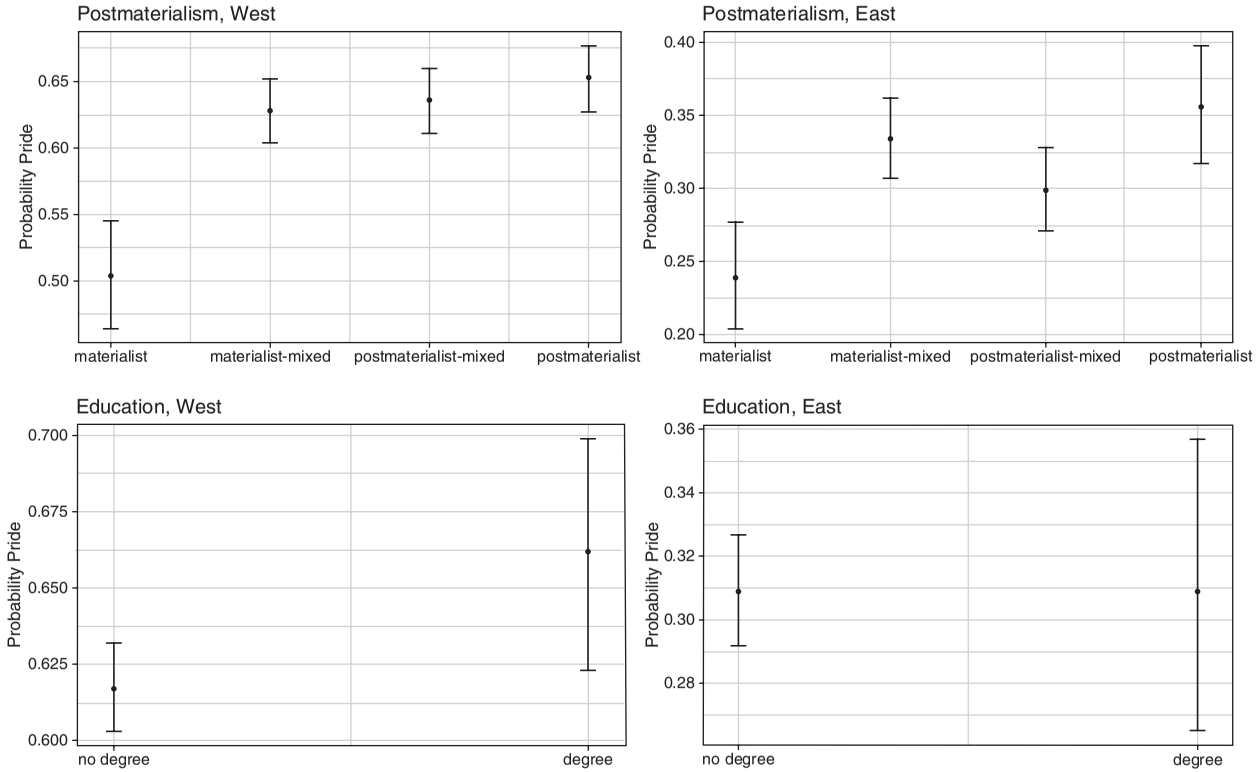

Fig. 6.2 Average marginal effects with 95 per cent confidence intervals, east-west models (Table 6.3). Source: Table 6.3, ALLBUS 1991–2016

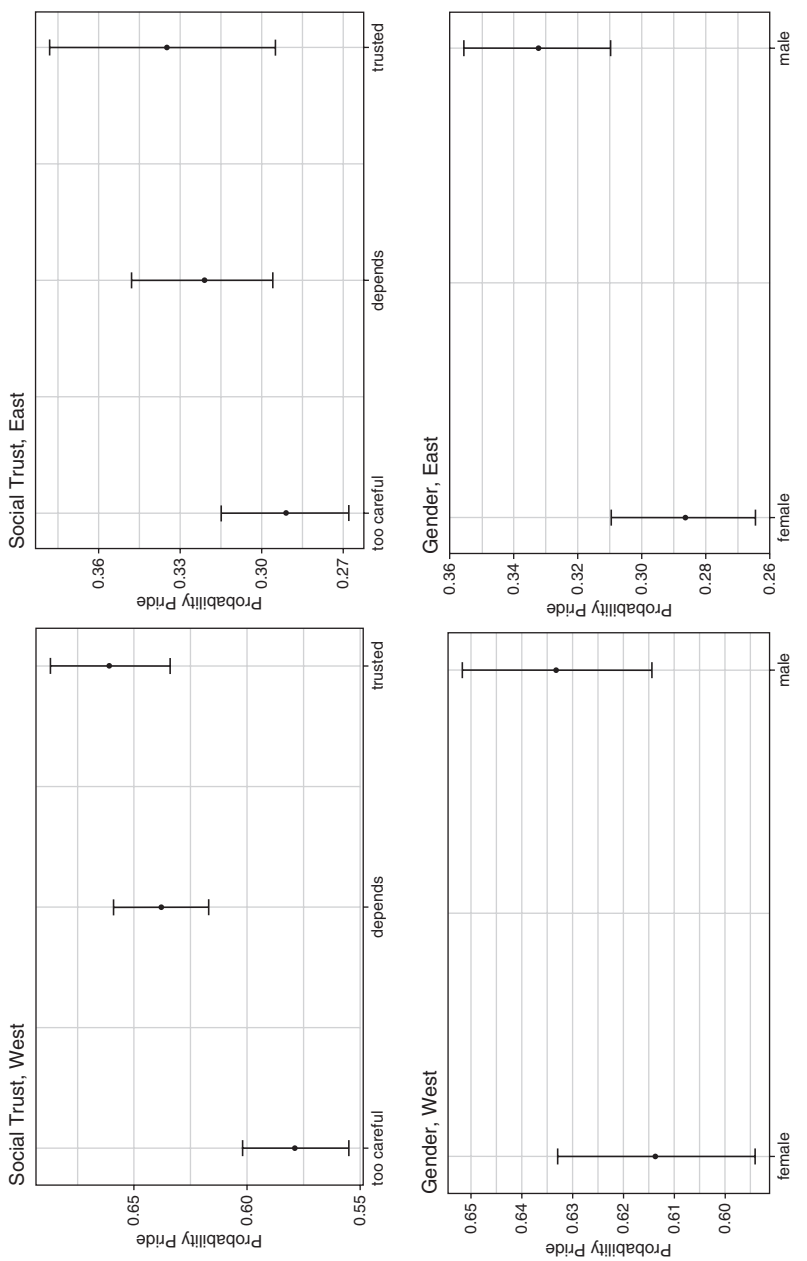

Fig. 6.2 (continued)

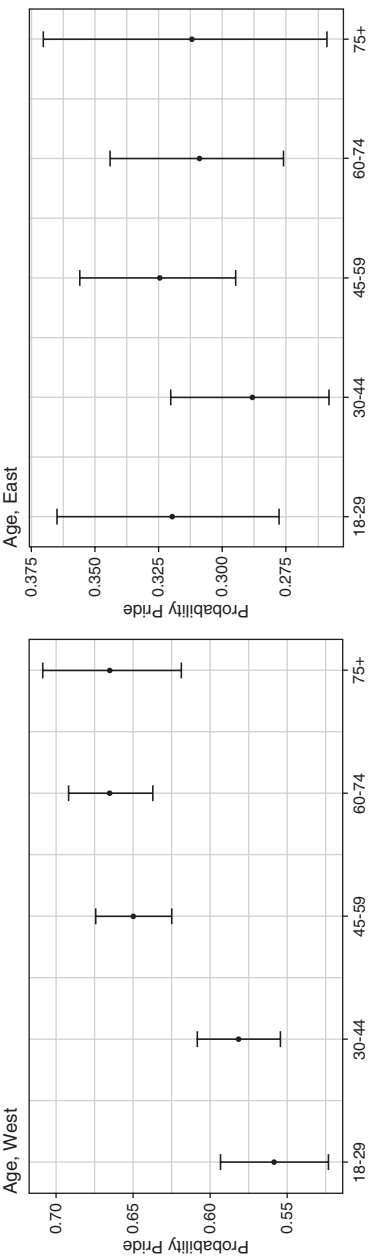
Age, East
Probability Pride
0.375
0.350
0.325
0.300
0.275
18-29
30-44
45-59
60-74
75+
Age, West
Probability Pride
0.70
0.65
0.60
0.55
18-29
30-44
45-59
60-74
75+

Table 6.3 GLM multivariate models, pride in the constitution, east-west

	East	*West*
	b (beta)	*b* (beta)
Constant	**−2.36[a]**	**−1.47[a]**
Modernisation		
Postmaterialism (ref: material values)		
Materialist-mixed	**0.468[a] (0.119)**	**0.506[a] (0.096)**
Postmaterialist-mixed	**0.306[c] (0.124)**	**0.538[a] (0.098)**
Postmaterialism	**0.568[a] (0.139)**	**0.612[a] (0.102)**
Education (ref: no degree)	−0.000 (0.117)	**0.194[c] (0.092)**
Civil society		
Political interest	**0.091[c] (0.039)**	**0.221[a] (0.031)**
Social trust (ref: can't be too careful)		
Depends	0.142 (0.085)	**0.251[a] (0.067)**
Most can be trusted	0.205 (0.112)	**0.350[a] (0.078)**
Political-economy		
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	0.080 (0.049)	0.061 (0.039)
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	**0.133[c] (0.058)**	**0.116[c] (0.049)**
Perceptions of German economy (current)	**0.179[a] (0.052)**	0.041 (0.040)
Perceptions of German economy (future)	**−0.111[c] (0.051)**	**−0.083[c] (0.042)**
Winners and losers (ref: loser)		
Winner	**0.526[a] (0.094)**	**0.234[a] (0.058)**
Socio-economic controls		
Gender (ref: female)		
Male	**0.215[c] (0.077)**	0.083 (0.059)
Age (ref: 18–29)		
30–44	−0.148 (0.125)	0.094 (0.090)
45–59	0.023 (0.125)	**0.384[a] (0.092)**
60–74	−0.049 (0.133)	**0.451[a] (0.098)**
75+	−0.035 (0.170)	**0.451[a] (0.128)**
N	3365	3651
Pseudo R^2_D (−2 log-likelihood)	0.047 (4090.5)	0.051 (6920.8)

German citizens only

Sources: Eastern model: ALLBUS 1991–2016; Western model: ALLBUS 1988–2016

[a]$p \leq 0.001$; [b]$p \leq 0.01$; [c]$p \leq 0.05$

cohorts and are surrounded by wide confidence intervals which cast doubt upon the relationship. Overall, then, the evidence points to important differences in the factors conditioning this form of support. In the west, it is conditioned by postmaterial values, civil society, whilst also being grounded in socio-structural phenomena—especially age. In the east, meanwhile, the sources of this form of support are comparatively

fewer, with weak or limited grounding in civil society and social structure. On this evidence, social trust has not yet spilled over to shape higher-order support for the constitution, whilst there is very little to suggest that age-based effects are at work.

Multivariate Analysis; Eastern Analysis 2016

Has the eastern pictured changed? The final part of the empirical analysis investigates this by centring on the 2016 survey—the latest wave of the ALLBUS for which there are data. Much of the research thus far depends upon surveys collected during the period following unification. But by 2016 change may have occurred. A separate model for the east has thus been run, the results of which are presented below (Table 6.4).

The model is interesting, in that it appears to confirm the previous results (Table 6.4). Generally, eastern support for the Basic Law remains quite limited and largely unconnected to civil society and social structure. On this occasion, postmaterialism and political interest have not surpassed the significance threshold—points which replicate the weaknesses of civil society uncovered in the previous eastern model. If these phenomena ground eastern support for the constitution in durable phenomena, it may important that they are non-significant. Yet there is broader point, namely that the vast majority of variables are conspicuous by their non-significance. From education to social trust, from the measures of political-economy to winning and from gender to age, all have failed to exceed the significance level. In 2016, then, eastern pride in the Basic Law appears more limited as in the general analysis presented in the previous section. Its roots in civil society appear quite shallow, and the evidence of an age-based structure to this form of support remains minimal. In consequence, one may understand why this form of support is comparatively lower in the east. Its basic micro-structure does not appear to have altered and little is driving it. More than twenty-five years after unification, then, connections between pride in the Basic Law and civil society and social structure remain weak

Confirming these findings, the marginal effects of the 2016 model are presented in Fig. 6.3. The patterns previously discussed hold up, in that there does not yet appear to be substantively important effects from civil society or social structure. For example, the probability barely differs between those with and without a university degree, and the confidence

Table 6.4 GLM multivariate model, pride in the constitution, east 2016

	B (s.e.)
Constant	**−2.80[a] (0.571)**
Modernisation	
Postmaterialism (ref: material values)	
Materialist-mixed	**0.710[a] (0.306)**
Postmaterialist-mixed	0.384 (0.313)
Postmaterialism	0.547 (0.322)
Education (ref: no degree)	0.262 (0.197)
Civil society	
Political interest	0.066 (0.074)
Social trust (ref: can't be too careful)	
Depends	0.237 (0.162)
Most can be trusted	0.264 (0.197)
Political-economy	
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	0.107 (0.100)
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	0.249 (0.132)
Perceptions of German economy (current)	**0.316[b] (0.108)**
Perceptions of German economy (future)	0.029 (0.123)
Winners and losers (ref: loser)	
Winner	**0.497[a] (0.147)**
Socio-economic controls	
Gender (ref: female)	
Male	0.151 (0.144)
Age (ref: 18–29)	
30–44	−0.276 (0.273)
45–59	−0.427 (0.258)
60–74	−0.498 (0.272)
75+	−0.457 (0.306)
N	927
Pseudo R^2_D (−2 log-likelihood)	0.080 (1183.2)

German citizens only

Source: ALLBUS 2016

[a]$p \leq 0.001$; [b]$p \leq 0.01$; [c]$p \leq 0.05$

interval is too large to posit a substantively important effect. Similarly, any differences in the predicted probabilities between those who are socially trusting appear to be small and weak and thus confirms that there is limited evidence to substantiate claims that in 2016 eastern pride in the Basic Law was anchored in the orientations of civil society. Age, meanwhile, has limited effect of pride—and the overall balance of the evidence fails to support a substantively positive effect of age in the east. Yet the findings are not all

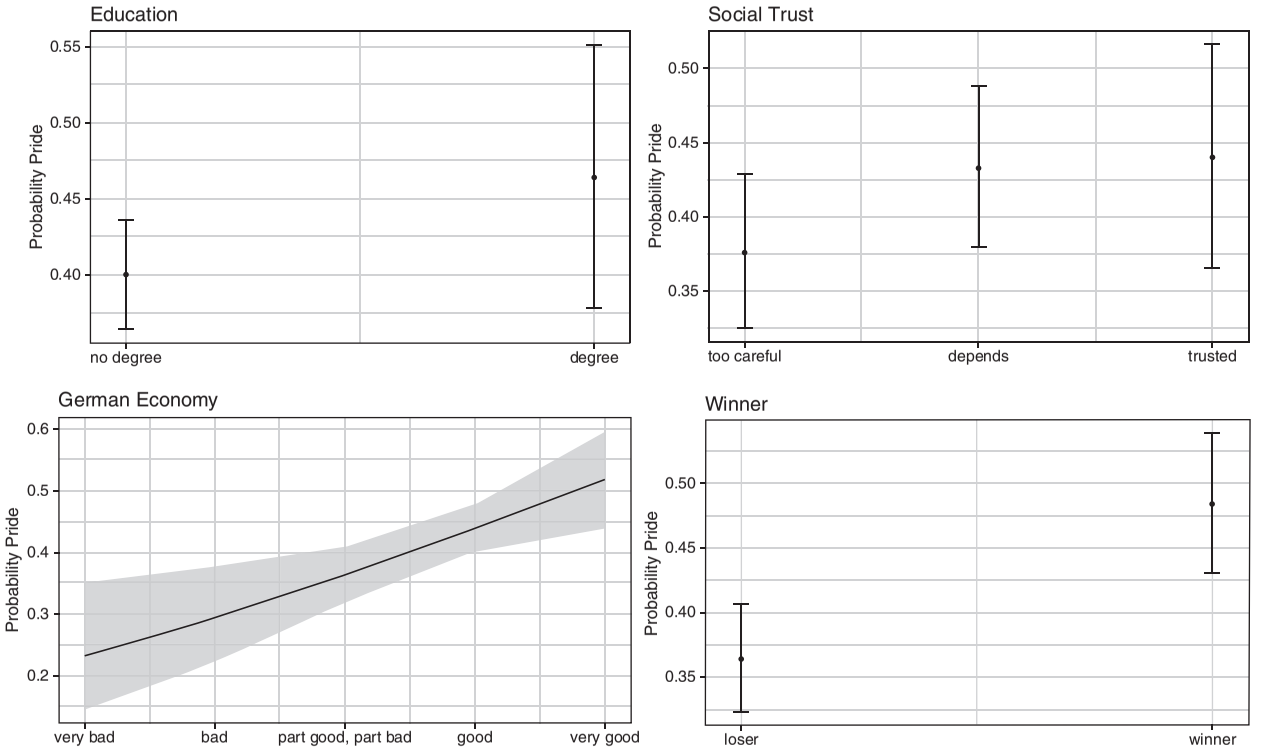

Fig. 6.3 Average marginal effects with 95 per cent confidence intervals, east 2016 (Table 6.4). Source: Table 6.4, ALLBUS 2016

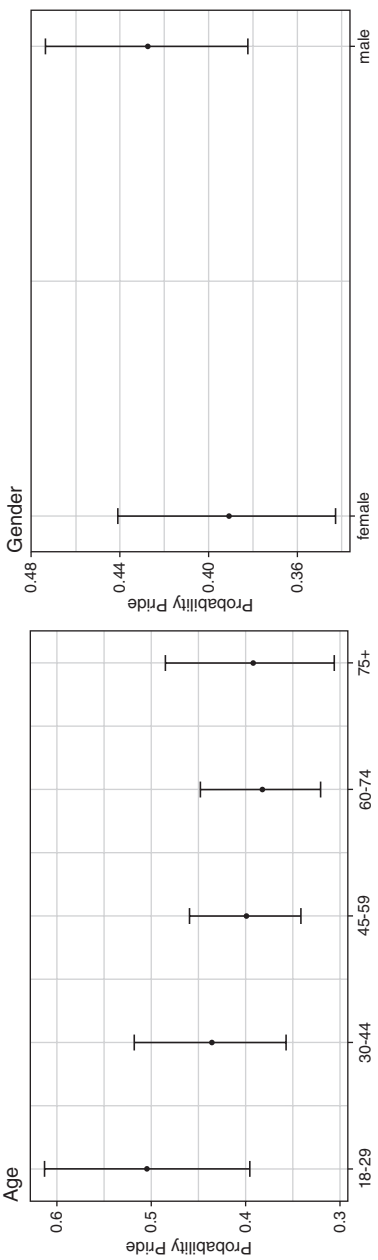

Fig. 6.3 (continued)

weak: winning clearly matters, suggesting that the distribution of winners and losers influences easterners' constitutional support. Equally, there are effects of the German economy, with the probability rising as these evaluations become more positive. Constitutional support, then, is not wholly insulated from political partisanship or economic performance.

Given the wealth of findings uncovered by the models, the main points should be reviewed. At the all-German level, support is multidimensional, with a support structure drawn from modernisation, civil society winning and losing and social structure. This form of support does not appear to be subject to the capricious flux of materialist evaluations—and is thus evidence of a form of support independent of delivery. Yet as one discriminates between the east and west of the country there are clear differences in the structure of constitutional support. A case in point concerns social trust, which influences pride in the west but not in the east. Further, the grounding of pride in the Basic Law in patterns of civil society appears to be somewhat more widespread in the west compared with the east. And in a similar vein, age appears to have an influence in the west that remains absent in the east: older western respondents appear to be noticeably more likely to express pride in the Basic Law compared with their younger counterparts. Thus, pride in the Basic Law appears to be steeped in durable patterns of civil society and social structure that have yet to permeate to the east. The implications of this are developed in the conclusion.

Conclusions

This chapter has examined the development of constitutional pride. Although studies attempt to tap into high-order indicators support, the German context means that it is problematic to measure this form of support through questions on nationalism. History problematises nationalism as a concept and this is borne out by the varying degrees of suspicion it attracts in survey research. Understanding the sense of political coalescence in the German polity—the cohesive cement binding people to the system—has thus been difficult. Yet attitudes towards the Basic Law are not only a key indicator of support for the constitutional order but may well go further and denote aspects of the *Verfassungspatriotismus* in which writers advocated Germans should source their political identity.

A fundamental implication of the research thus concerns the concept of support—and the ways in which the evidence of this chapter differs from that of satisfaction with democracy. This chapter has established that the

constitutional framework attracts support from different factors, suggesting that support is not a unidimensional concept with an undifferentiated set of correlates, but varies depending on the indicators analysed. Whereas satisfaction with democracy was heavily steeped in evaluations of political-economy, constitutional pride is more insulated from the ebb and flow of the economy. Support, then, does not lead inexorably to discussions about material supply, and democracy is not supported mainly or exclusively on the basis of delivery. Aspects of its support appear to be more exogenous from outputs, with allegiance to the Basic Law a case in point. In addition, constitutional support has been linked to postmaterialism, but with the opposite effect than was uncovered with satisfaction with democracy. Postmaterialism *increases* constitutional pride, which confirms that postmaterialists are critically supportive of democracy. Discontent with the day-to-day functioning of democracy may coexist with support for the constitutional order. In addition, there are connections to civil society, with social trust and political interest emerging as important influences. Although these connections were confirmed in the previous chapter, they have now been shown to influence constitutional allegiance—a point which demonstrates the lengths to which these properties generalise and the necessity of the civic fabric of the polity. Furthermore, there are connections to social structure, especially age. The age-based pattern confirms that constitutional support is not directed from one sophisticated section of the population but is relatively widespread controlling for other characteristics. And yet the effects of age clearly demand an interpretation. Age may be a proxy for the comparatively greater experience older western respondents have of witnessing the constitution in action and accumulating evidence of its successful operation—points which may also make sense of its comparative absence in the east.

Whilst connections between constitutional support and social structure provide this form of support with durability, they also make it harder to cultivate. As shown, easterners' support remains noticeably lower compared with westerners and wide differences endure holding a number of factors constant. By separately modelling support in the east and the west, the analyses have cast some light on why this is the case. There is little in its structure suggesting it is deeply-rooted in social or political phenomena. Indeed, most variables failed to have statistically or substantively important effects, meaning that the development of constitutional support stems from far fewer factors and those operating appear to be relatively weak. In the east, the concept lacks theoretical underpinnings which

provide it with structural essence. Social trust, for example, does not appear to have a strong influence—and whilst political interest operated as expected, its effects were modest and inconsistent. Constitutional support, then, does not yet appear to be steeped in the dispositions and resources inhered in civil society. An additional point of departure is the comparative weakness of social structural variables, particularly age. The eastern age groups are similarly low in constitutional support, and the evidence on this applies to the 2016 analysis—a point which illustrates that deep bonds of constitutional loyalty remain underdeveloped in the east. This does not mean that they will inevitably remain so. But it underlines the challenges of nurturing a normative appreciation of the constitutional order in the east of the country and suggests it may be some considerable time before support raises to levels comparable with the west.

Despite these cautionary findings, the picture is not altogether negative. Some theoretical factors condition support, although these are more restricted in the east compared with the west. As shown, the model examining the eastern evidence overall uncovered that postmaterialists are more supportive, which may confirm that postmaterialist values stimulate higher-order support in a relatively new democratic context. As postmaterialists become more numerous in the population, this provides a cautiously optimistic basis from which to anticipate that constitutional support may increase. In addition, there are some indications of the permeation of civil society to affective support, albeit the evidence is limited and the effects somewhat shallow. As many scholars have argued for the restoration of civic community, citing its educative and aggregative functions in creating social consensus and good governance, the research of this chapter has provided additional reasons, by demonstrating that attitudes commonly linked to civic engagement anchor individuals to the foundations of the democratic state. Furthermore, winning stimulates pride, which widens the sources of loyalty to the system but underlines that how winners and losers are distributed in the country—and processes of consensus-reaching and inclusion—impact on the degree to which the constitutional arrangements are supported.

A final implication concerns the path east Germans appear to be taking towards developing constitutional support. Whilst definitive comparisons with West Germany during the post-war period are difficult, there do appear to be some points of departure. Many have accepted that the exceptional economic performance of the West in the post-war period, coupled with war-induced changes in social structure, accelerated the

acceptance of the basic character of German democracy.[36] As shown, east Germans are following a path in which the development of this support is delayed. Yet some of the evidence connected constitutional support to material supply, and this may well contribute to explaining the lethargic pace at which it is developing. This effect may have been delayed, for if economic security was a crucial benchmark from which the political framework as a whole was judged, the relatively severe recession of the early 1990s—and its differentially strong impact on the east—may have inhibited the acceptance of the constitutional structure of the polity. Issues surrounding prosperity and economic security and the ways in which they became increasingly acute during the early 1990s may have delayed the establishment of generalised support. Had the early unification period provided east Germans with economic experiences that aligned with their expectations, it may well have contributed to a more rapid development of reserves of constitutional support. This underlines the importance of the economy during transitions, but it has wider implications for fiscal and economic policy in Germany. In the meantime, however, although there is certainty over the constitutional framework of unified Germany, the mechanisms through which it is developing in the east are taking time.

Overall, this chapter has shown that the German political system is encased with a protective layer of diffuse support. This is a key indicator of the resilience of the system. Yet it does not mean that the polity is devoid of challenge. And one of the most frequently-identified challenges is cultivating trust in democratic institutions. Falling confidence in democratic institutions is a commonly inferred indicator of the failure of governments to elicit the support of those in whose name they purport to govern. More broadly, it may signify a change in the relationship between citizens and the state, from one marked by deference and allegiance to one defined by caution and hesitancy. A significant body of scholarship is thus devoted towards understanding the structure of trust in democratic institutions. This is the task of the next chapter.

Notes

1. Included in the development of the concept are Karl Jaspers, Dolf Sternberger, Jürgen Habermas and, more recently, Jan-Werner Müller.
2. See, for example, Bettina Westle, *Kollektive Identität im vereinten Deutschland: Nation und Demokratie in der Wahrnehmung der Deutschen* (Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 1999).

3. There was pressure to renew German patriotism prior to unification in 1990. See, for example, Charles S. Maier, *Dissolution: The Crisis of Communism and the End of East Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 194. This, however, was part of the objection to German unification from a number of left-wing intellectuals, notably Günter Grass—see, for example, Günter Grass, *Two States—One Nation? The Case Against German Reunification* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1990).
4. See, for example, John Erik Fossum, 'Deep Diversity versus Constitutional Patriotism: Taylor, Habermas and the Canadian Constitutional Crisis'. *Ethnicities*, 1/2 (2001), pp. 179–206.
5. Mattias Kumm, 'Why Europeans will not embrace constitutional patriotism'. *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, 6/1 (2008), pp. 117–136.
6. Allensbacher data, for example, used a simple question asking respondents if they favoured retaining or replacing the Basic Law. See: Renate Kocher, *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie 2003–2009: Die Berliner Republik* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), p. 21.
7. Jan-Werner Müller, *Constitutional Patriotism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), p. 1.
8. Jan-Werner Müller, 'Seven Ways to Misunderstand Constitutional Patriotism', *Notizie di Politeia*, 25/96 (2009), pp. 20–24.
9. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2016).
10. Jan-Werner Müller and Kim Lane-Scheppele, 'Constitutional Patriotism: An Introduction'. *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, 6/1 (2008), pp. 67–71.
11. George Kateb, 'Is Patriotism a Mistake' *Social Research*, 67/4 (2000), pp. 901–923.
12. Justine Lacroix, 'For a European Constitutional Patriotism'. *Political Studies*, 50 (2002) 944–958.
13. Jan-Werner Müller, 'A European Constitutional Patriotism? The Case Restated'. *European Law Journal*, 14/5 (2008), pp. 542–557. See, especially, p. 546.
14. Jürgen Habermas, *A Berlin Republic: Writings on Germany* (London: Polity Press, 1996), pp. 170–171.
15. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (London: Polity Press, 1996), pp. 30–31.
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21. Jan-Werner Muller, 'A European Constitutional Patriotism? The Case Restated'. *European Law Journal*, 14/5 (2008), pp. 542–557.
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23. David Abraham, 'Constitutional Patriotism, Citizenship, and Belonging'. *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, 6/1 (2008), pp. 137–152.
24. Mary Fulbrook, *German Identity after the Holocaust* (London: Polity, 1999), p. 179.
25. Popular discussions about the ban of the National Democratic Party (NPD), along with the judgement by the constitutional court in January 2017, showed that this remains an emotive issue. Although the court accepted that the party opposed the values of the constitution and was working to overthrow the Federal Republic, it concluded that there was no realistic prospect of this and thus rejected the petition, generating a significant political backlash.
26. Jan-Werner Muller 'On the Origins of Constitutional Patriotism'. *Contemporary Political Theory*, 5/3 (2006), pp. 278–296.
27. This was not just a theoretical concern: Almond and Verba discovered strong levels of national pride in their study in 1959, p. 64.
28. Gebhard Schweigler, *Nationalbewußtsein in der BRD und der DDR*. (Düsseldorf: Verlagsgruppe Bertelsmann, 1974).
29. In part, this was connected to the loss of territory during the war and meant that German citizenship covered those—and their descendants—who had been within the boundaries of the former Reich, or who had been deprived of their citizenship. Irrespective of whether they had been to Germany or could speak the language, therefore, individuals had the automatic right to resettle in Germany by virtue of the *jus sanguinis* principles of citizenship, whilst those descending from immigrants—often second or third generation immigrants—found it increasingly difficult to meet the exacting requirements of naturalisation.
30. As Brubaker has argued: '[a]s far as citizenship law is concerned the division of Germany never happened…Common citizenship paved the way for common statehood'. Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (London: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 82.

31. Article 116, for example, restores citizenship to expellees or their descendants on 'ethnic' grounds. Governments, meanwhile, espoused commitments to liberalising naturalisation processes, but did so belatedly whilst requiring candidates to relinquish their original citizenship.
32. David P. Conradt, 'Changing German Political Culture' in Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture Revisited* (London: Sage, 1989), p. 222.
33. David P. Conradt, *The German Polity: Ninth Edition* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company), pp. 76–77.
34. David Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (John Wiley and Sons, 1965), p. 272.
35. Ibid., p. 273.
36. See, for example, Kendall L. Baker, Russell J. Dalton and Kai Hildebrandt, *Germany Transformed: Political Culture and the New Politics* (Cambridge, MA Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 93.

CHAPTER 7

Trust in Democratic Institutions: Evidence and Explanations Beyond Unification

Introduction

One of the central reasons why German democracy has an established reputation for stability is the resilience of its democratic institutions. They have advanced and deepened democracy to levels for which there is no precedent in German political history. The result has been a much-cherished achievement: a continuous tradition of parliamentary government lasting over sixty years. And yet despite ensuring democratic continuity, Germans appear increasingly sceptical of aspects of the representative framework.[1] The scepticism is not wholesale—nor is it even across the population. But the net effect is that a country where the political culture began from fragile underpinnings and then flourished has thus come full-circle to a state of passive resignation.[2] Evidence of change has thus strengthened the case that democratic institutions are suffering from a legitimacy deficit and require reform. The details of reform are contested, but deliberative mechanisms and co-governance initiatives claim to inject the much-needed legitimacy with which the connections between citizens and the state will be restored.[3] The success of these measures, however, depends on understanding how trust begins, for if its sources are isolated, then reforms may be prescribed with a greater degree of certainty about how they will impact on the trajectory of trust.[4] This chapter advances knowledge on this by analysing the origins of trust in democratic

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institutions. The chapter is divided into four main sections. The first examines the concept of trust, evaluating its key components and outlining why it might be desirable for representative democracy.[5] The second section tabulates trust by the principal variables of the four main approaches, establishing a general picture of how it is influenced by modernisation, civil society, political-economy and winning and losing. The third section presents multivariate analyses, along with graphical displays of the effects of key variables. In addition, the third section conducts analyses of how and why trust differs between the east and west of the country. The fourth section presents conclusions.

Trust in Democratic Institutions

Why has trust attracted so much attention? At its simplest, it is an indicator of legitimacy, denoting 'the subjective probability of a citizen believing that the political system, or parts of it, will produce preferred outcomes even if this citizen takes no part in its production'.[6] Representative democracy is a model of government in which sovereignty is transferred from the people to a legislative body. A minority decide on behalf of the majority via fair, free and periodic elections in which parties may lose. Underpinning this is a relationship between citizens and the state, the stability, viability and vitality of which depends, in part, upon trust.[7] Trust underpins the selection calculus, processes of converting votes into government and the day-to-day exercise of authority, meaning that it binds individuals to representatives and makes democracy work.[8] Trust, then, is analogous to glue, since it connects individuals to the institutions and agents representing them, enhancing their legitimacy and contributing to the development of the long-term support on which democracy depends.[9] But there are other reasons why trust is central to theories of representative democracy.[10] One of the most crucial is that trust underpins effective decision-making.[11] Trust serves as a 'creator of collective power', enabling leaders to make commitments on the basis of it and govern more effectively, which enhances institutional capabilities, augments pre-existing support and creates, in effect, a virtuous spiral of good governance.[12] Trust, then, may be likened to oil, since it lubricates the machinery of government and allows office-bearers to legislate more efficiently.[13] By providing 'policy leeway', trusted representatives may be given the benefit of the doubt if they act on privately held information. This may be especially important if governments attempt to secure support for binding legislation which

requires sacrifice.[14] Trusted policy-making processes create the basis for mass compliance that is lacking where they are overshadowed by procedural suspicion.[15]

Discussions, however, dispute if trust in government is feasible or normatively desirable. Some claim that trust may only be directed towards agents: it is, in effect, a cultural predisposition that is action-centred and underpinned by the discourse of agency. Whilst it denotes judgements about how individuals perform roles within boundaries set by institutions, institutions merely establish the rules by which those agents are constrained, meaning that it is unfeasible that the institutions themselves may be trusted. Abstractions cannot be the recipients of trust. The evidence from which trust derives is reputational or relational. As Giddens has argued: 'trust is demanded where there is ignorance—either of the knowledge claims of technical experts or of the thoughts and intentions of intimates upon whom a person relies. Yet ignorance always provides grounds for scepticism or at least caution'.[16] A crucial point here concerns knowledge, which may be weak or insufficiently grounded in fact. This is particularly applicable to government. As government is a complicated amalgam of branches, populated with those with whom the general public have no direct contact, people do not possess the relevant information to trust.[17] Trust, then, is a cognitive concept grounded in knowledge derived 'thick' relations, which depend on the predictability built up from face-to-face experience: 'out of past experience develops a present orientation concerning the anticipation of future behaviour'.[18] In circumstances in which these experiences are lacking, trust stems from 'weak inductive knowledge'. It is for this reason that Hardin is especially sceptical about trust in government. According to Hardin, trust is conceived as 'encapsulated self-interest', meaning that it should be extended exclusively when it is in one's interests and the motivations are known. Because people lack knowledge about government, they lack the basis from which to trust it.[19] Trust is, in effect, a gamble. Future actions of government cannot be calculated with any degree of certainty, nor can the circumstances in which government will operate be predicted. The uncertainties are sufficiently detailed that people can rarely be in an epistemological position to trust.[20] Depleted trust in government, then, is unproblematic, since it is not a concept which is normatively desirable.[21]

But this depends on an overly rational construction of trust. Knowledge may be acquired via different sources than relational experiences. Full information is not required, but a sufficient amount to trust on the basis of what

is known. If trust in government is, in part, culturally conditioned, it is generalised from face-to-face interactions that reflect reliability and credibility.[22] Reputations may thus constitute an accessible short-cut enabling one to decide on the trustworthiness of individuals. In addition, one may not have full knowledge of the motives and interests of the trusted, but they may be trusted on the assumption that they have internalised ethical expectations accompanying their offices, some of which constrain their actions through sanctions and rewards. This shared knowledge reduces the vulnerability of trusting. In addition, processes underpinning democratic institutions are known and grounded in law. Democratic institutions are premised on norms embedded in their constitutive rules and practices, which may function as short-cuts. The extension of trust is thus epistemologically possible.[23]

Overall, then, trust is central to attitudes towards democracy.[24] Any reductions, if long-term, may be a profoundly important signal of the changing relationship between citizens and the state.[25] Pervasively low trust can scarcely be regarded as evidence of a healthy relationship between citizens and the state, but it need not signal corrosion. People may lack knowledge or experience to judge the trustworthiness of institutions, or they may be uncertain in the face of conflicting evidence—a position more conducive to scepticism. Government combines multiple departments and levels, and as demands on it have increased, decision-making has become increasingly diffused and information more complex, the result of which may prompt people to withhold trust. Moreover, if costs are incurred in obtaining the information, trust may be prohibitively demanding. This does not mean, however, that it will be extended automatically. Trust can be misplaced, suspended or modified. There are circumstances in which it is unwanted, particularly when the evidence suggests caution is more appropriate, but retaining trust through temporary disappointments may constitute loyalty. Equally, temporary reductions may be an unreliable guide to the long-term trajectory of trust, since trust is changeable. Evidence, therefore, devoid of careful reference to political events, may be misleading.[26] If aspects of government involve conflict over goods and resources, trust may be a temporary casualty of heighted partisanship or entrenched sectional interests.[27] This, however, need not preclude allegiance to the system. As has been shown in this study, people combine feelings, some of which are supportive whilst others are critical.[28] *What* is evaluated may be the all-important criterion.[29] Frustrations about the proper role of institutions, or misgivings about the intrusiveness of aspects of government, may well accumulate for different reasons depending on the objects analysed.[30]

Trust in Democratic Institutions; Cross-tabulated Analysis

As argued in Chap. 4, the shape and trajectory of trust has altered in Germany in the time-frame analysed.[31] The picture, however, is not an across-the-board repudiation of democratic institutions. Trust declined in the more partisan institutions, but there has been recovery and the aggregate pattern is sceptical. To what extent, however, are the four theoretical approaches connected to trust? Answers to this are presented in Table 7.1, which cross-tabulates the mean trust for the Constitutional Court, Judiciary, Parliament and Federal Government for the lowest and highest values on each indicator, along with the difference. This shows how trust alters when each variable increases.

Table 7.1 Cross-tabulation, trust in democratic institutions

	East			*West*		
	Lowest[a]	*Highest*[b]	*Change*[c]	*Lowest*[a]	*Highest*[b]	*Change*[c]
Modernisation						
Postmaterialism	10.7	11.6	0.9	13.9	12.7	−1.2
Education	10.8	12.0	1.2	13.1	14.2	1.1
Evaluations of socialism	11.5	8.9	−2.6	13.2	11.6	−1.6
Civil society						
Political interest	8.9	11.3	2.4	12.1	13.3	1.2
Social trust	10.6	13.2	2.6	12.2	14.4	2.2
Political-economy						
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	6.9	13.6	6.7	9.5	15.4	5.9
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	7.0	11.1	4.0	9.5	15.5	6.0
Perceptions of German economy (current)	7.9	12.4	4.5	9.7	14.7	5.0
Perceptions of German economy (future)	7.2	11.8	4.6	10.5	12.9	2.4
Winners and losers						
Winners	10.5	12.5	2.0	12.5	14.6	2.1

Source: ALLBUS surveys 1984–2008
[a]Mean on lowest point of scale
[b]Mean on highest point of scale
[c]Difference between lowest and highest point

As a general finding, the table supports the theories, with the majority of the findings in the expected direction. One finding, however, that stands out as counterintuitive is education. Modernisation suggests that it should reduce trust. As individuals are equipped with cognitive skills, so their expectations of government become more demanding and institutions are evaluated against more exacting standards. The leads to reductions in trust. But the evidence suggests that education operates in a more conventional way: it increases trust in both parts of Germany.

Overall, however, modernisation, civil society, political-economy and winning all appear to influence trust in democratic institutions in Germany. And the nature of their effect is, in some cases, noticeably strong. The effects of postmaterialism are pronounced, but vary between the east and the west of the country. There are, meanwhile, increases from civil society, with each indicator boosting trust in the expected direction and confirming that social norms spill over and generate trust in democratic institutions. The influence of political-economy, meanwhile, is often regarded as self-evident, but the degree to which trust is more extensive amongst the economically optimistic or advantaged is striking. As shown, political-economy increases trust substantially, boosting the average amount between those who are least and most satisfied with the current state of the German economy. Similar effects are traced to respondents' assessments of their personal economic circumstances. And winning also increases trust by around 2 points on the scale, demonstrating that party choices and political representation carry implications for trust in democratic institutions.

Yet there are important east-west differences. First, postmaterialism operates in the west, but not in the east. Whilst western postmaterialists have lower trust compared with materialists, eastern postmaterialists have slightly higher trust—a point that contradicts the theory's conventional predictions. Second, there are cross-regional differences in how socialist values influence trust. They depress trust in both parts of Germany, but the decline is steeper in the east. Third, political interest operates discrepantly, increasing trust by a greater amount in the east compared with the west—a somewhat counterintuitive finding given the ambiguous evidence uncovered thus far about the permeation of civil society to popular support. Fourth, whilst perceptions of political-economy shape trust, different mechanisms are at work. Eastern trust appears to be sensitive to current assessments of the national economy, along with respondents' projections about the future of their personal financial situation, suggestive of a reasoning whereby trust is contingent upon the national economy cultivating more favourable per-

sonal circumstances. Western trust, by contrast, appears to be influenced by respondents' assessments of their current financial situation, along with the future of the German national economy, suggestive of a reasoning whereby trust depends more heavily upon personal conditions contributing to buoyant national conditions.

Trust in Democratic Institutions; Multivariate Models

The above provides an intriguing basis with which to investigate trust through multivariate modelling. The first model focusses on the all-German picture, regressing trust in democratic institutions against the four approaches. The results are presented below in Table 7.2.

Overall, the model performs reasonably well, explaining an appreciable amount of the variance in trust in democratic institutions (17 per cent). In addition, the model is supportive of the theoretical expectations, in that modernisation, civil society, political-economy and winning all influence trust in the anticipated direction. Postmaterialism, for example, reduces trust. Compared with materialists, those with postmaterial values have trust which is lower by 1.54 net of the impact of other variables in the model. Evaluations of socialism, meanwhile, also depress trust, with each one-unit increase reducing trust by 0.585 holding other variables in the model constant. Counterbalancing these negative effects, however, are those from the three remaining approaches. Both indicators of civil society, for example, boost trust. Compared with cautious individuals, socially trusting individuals have trust in democratic institutions which is higher by 1.22. Each one-unit increase in political interest, meanwhile, elevates trust by 0.413. As expected, moreover, political-economy increases trust: all indicators, save that of the respondent's assessment of their future economic circumstances, increase trust. The impact of the political-economy variables, meanwhile, is noticeably strong, with each increment in current perceptions of the national economy increasing trust by 0.483 net of other variables. Equally, one must not discount the impact of winning: its influence is real, substantial and survives the influence of other factors within the model. Compared with losers, trust amongst winners is higher by 0.753. Reviewing these findings overall, then, trust in democratic institutions is multidimensional; its essence comprises a number of social, political and economic factors. As shown, however, there is one other influence at work that is highly significant, for the model reveals that trust varies between easterners and westerners. Compared with westerners,

Table 7.2 OLS trust in democratic institutions, all-German model

	b	Beta
Constant	**9.04**[a]	
Modernisation		
Postmaterialism (ref: material values)		
Materialist-mixed	**−1.39**[a]	**−0.142**
Postmaterialist-mixed	**−1.88**[a]	**−0.187**
Postmaterialism	**−1.54**[a]	**−0.145**
Evaluations of socialism	**−0.585**[a]	**−0.132**
Education (ref: no degree)	0.209	0.013
Civil society		
Political interest	**0.413**[a]	0.095
Social trust (ref: can't be too careful)		
Depends	0.277	0.028
Most can be trusted	**1.22**[a]	**0.110**
Political-economy		
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	**0.671**[a]	**0.110**
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	−0.075	−0.010
Perceptions of German economy (current)	**0.483**[a]	**0.072**
Perceptions of German economy (future)	**0.815**[a]	**0.117**
Winners and losers (ref: loser)		
Winner	**0.753**[b]	**0.081**
Socio-economic controls		
East (ref: West)		
East	**−1.13**[a]	**−0.119**
Gender (ref: female)		
Male	0.337	0.036
Age (ref: 18–29)		
30–44	−0.358	−0.036
45–59	−0.456	−0.043
60–74	−0.327	−0.030
75+	0.771	0.037
N	1224	
Multiple R^2/Adj. R^2	0.179/0.167	

German citizens only
Source: ALLBUS 1994–2000
[a]$p \leq 0.001$; [b]$p \leq 0.01$; [c]$p \leq 0.05$

easterners are noticeably less trusting of democratic institutions. All other factors held constant, their trust is lower by 1.13.

Supplementing the findings from Table 7.2 are the graphs of the marginal effects (Fig. 7.1). These estimate how the theoretical factors

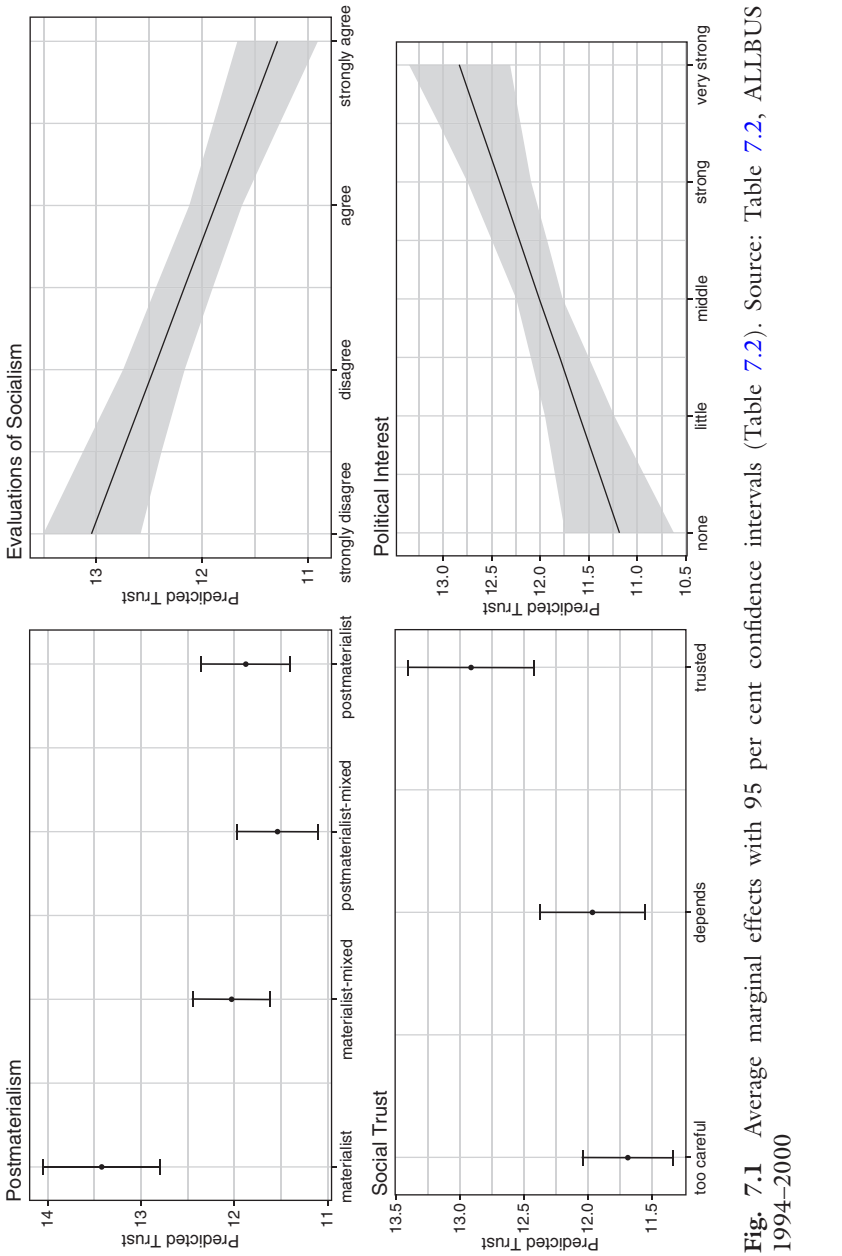

Fig. 7.1 Average marginal effects with 95 per cent confidence intervals (Table 7.2). Source: Table 7.2, ALLBUS 1994–2000

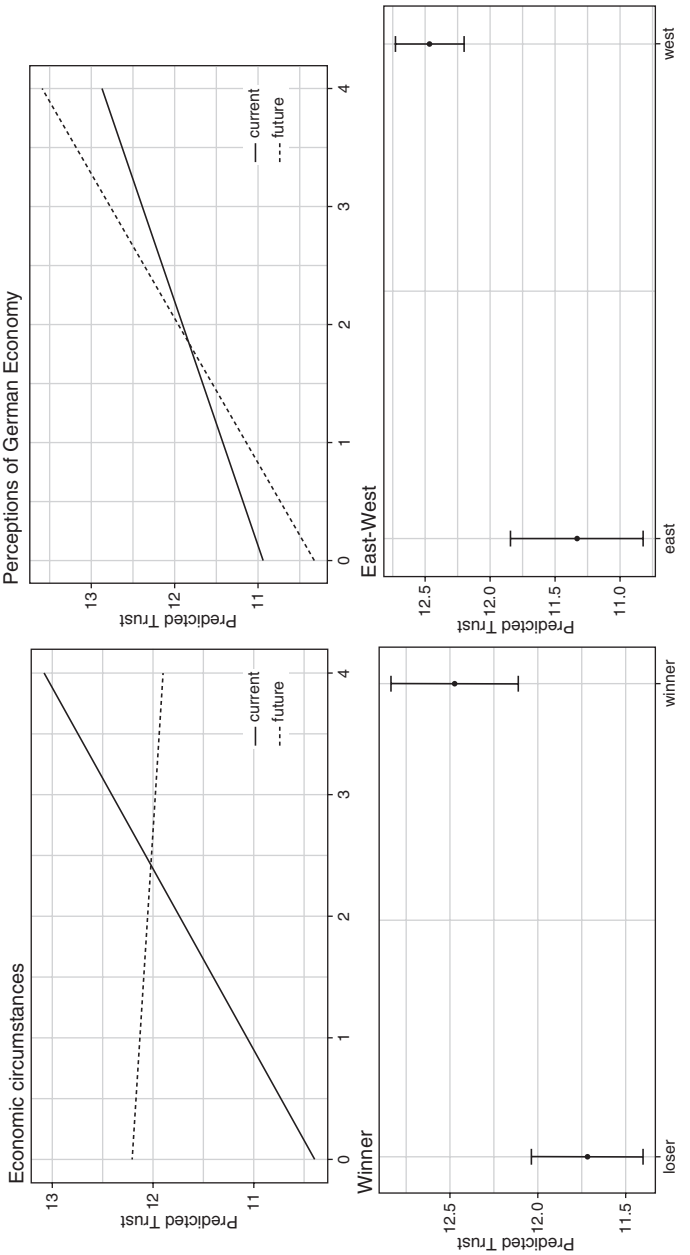

Fig. 7.1 (continued)

influence trust when the remaining variables are held at the mean. The first four plots illustrate the effects of modernisation and civil society. As shown, the first plot demonstrates how postmaterialism reduces trust; those with postmaterialist values have noticeably lower trust in democratic institutions compared with materialists. Interestingly, however, respondents in the 'mixed value' categories do not generally differ from one another. The differences are between materialist and postmaterialists. Equally, the plot of evaluations of socialism shows how trust reduces as agreement on the socialism indicator strengthens. These values, which are widely found across Germany, exert downward pressure on trust in democratic institutions. But, as shown, civil society exerts a positive influence. Both social trust and political interest increase trust in democratic institutions. And the influence of these variables is appreciable. The plot for social trust, for example, shows how it underpins trust in democratic institutions, as the estimated rise from the more cautious to the more socially trusting values is noticeably steep.

In addition, political-economy strongly influences trust in democratic institutions. To aid the interpretation, the confidence intervals have been removed from the plots. As there are two estimates for each indicator of political-economy (current and future), these have been simplified and plotted together for each variable—perceptions of the economy and economic circumstances. Along with the findings from the table, these clarify which political-economy factors influence trust in democratic institutions. Perceptions of the German economy, for example, matter decisively. The upward movement of the lines vividly testifies to the degree to which trust rises amongst those more favourable about the German national economy. Those who are more satisfied with the present performance of the German economy—or who are more optimistic about its future condition—are more trusting of democratic institutions. As shown, however, the effects of individuals' economic circumstances differ. Those satisfied with their current material conditions are more trusting, whilst those optimistic about future conditions appear to be no more or no less trusting than those who are less sanguine.

As discussed, however, the sources of trust in democratic institutions are also political, and the plots reveal important effects from winning and losing. Overall, the plot confirms that those who intend to vote for the winning parties have higher trust in democratic institutions compared with those who do not. Once again, the winning phenomenon has been shown to be a statistically significant and substantively important driver of popular support in Germany.

Cutting across these theoretical findings, however, is the east-west axis. With the statistical confirmation of the east-west differences established in Table 7.2, the graph illustrates the degree to which eastern trust is lower than that of the west. These effects hold up net of quite conservative set of controls and illustrate that the differences are real, significant and have substantive implications for the shape of trust in democratic institutions in Germany.

Trust in Democratic Institutions; East-West Multivariate Models

The preceding section suggests that the sources of trust in democratic institutions differ for eastern and westerners. Developing this, however, it is possible that different theoretical approaches are operating in the east and west of the country. By separately modelling trust in democratic institutions in east and west, this is investigated and the results are presented below in Table 7.3.

The results confirm the importance of this approach, and modify the findings in three crucial respects. First, the western model performs slightly better compared with the eastern model; the adjusted R^2 is somewhat higher in the western model (16 per cent compared with 12 per cent), suggesting that it provides a better explanation of the variation in trust in democratic institutions. Second, postmaterialism matters in the west, but not in the east. Compared with materialists, those with postmaterial values have lower trust in democratic institutions, but this applies to the west only. Second, the civil society variables are significant in west only. Both political interest and social trust spill over to nurture trust in democratic institutions, but the syndrome is exclusively western. As the social foundations of civil society have not yet developed into a stable basis for eastern trust in democratic institutions, the findings thus justify claims that the sources of trust appear somewhat narrower in the east compared with the west. Third, eastern trust appears to be more contingent upon the economy. Three out of the four indicators of political-economy emerge as significant in the east, with both 'here-and-now' variables having noticeably strong effects. In the west, by contrast, two variables are significant: perceptions of current economic circumstances and perceptions of the future condition of the national economy, attesting to a slightly different calculus.

The importance of the east-west distinctions in trust is further confirmed by analysing the relative importance of the predictors within the models (Fig. 7.2). As in previous chapters, the proportionate contribution of the five most important variables have been graphed. Overall, these suggest

Table 7.3 Trust in democratic institutions east-west models

	East	*West*
	b (beta)	*b* (beta)
Constant	**7.40**[a]	**9.58**[a]
Modernisation		
Postmaterialism (ref: material values)		
Materialist-mixed	0.020 (0.002)	**−1.78**[a] **(−0.194)**
Postmaterialist-mixed	0.055 (0.005)	**−2.38**[a] **(−0.243)**
Postmaterialism	1.11 (0.088)	**−2.15**[a] **(−0.228)**
Evaluations of socialism	**−0.988**[a] **(−0.186)**	**−0.490**[a] **(−0.119)**
Education (ref: no degree)	0.119 (0.007)	0.325 (0.021)
Civil society		
Political interest	−0.187 (−0.042)	**0.584**[a] **(0.139)**
Social trust (ref: can't be too careful)		
Depends	−0.129 (−0.013)	0.424 (0.046)
Most can be trusted	0.414 (0.030)	**1.34**[a] **(0.137)**
Political-economy		
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	**0.736**[a] **(0.120)**	**0.617**[b] **(0.103)**
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	−0.024 (−0.003)	−0.157 (−0.022)
Perceptions of German economy (current)	**0.900**[a] **(0.131)**	0.338 (0.053)
Perceptions of German economy (future)	**0.907**[a] **(0.120)**	**0.776**[a] **(0.122)**
Winners and losers (ref: loser)		
Winner	**1.21**[a] **(0.123)**	**0.696**[c] **(0.081)**
Socio-economic controls		
Gender (ref: female)		
Male	−0.567 (−0.059)	**0.586**[c] **(0.068)**
Age (ref: 18–29)		
30–44	−0.241 (−0.059)	−0.454 (−0.048)
45–59	−0.712 (−0.064)	−0.496 (−0.051)
60–74	0.367 (0.032)	−0.514 (−0.050)
75+	0.418 (0.021)	0.942 (0.045)
N	450	776
Multiple R^2/Adj. R^2	0.152/0.119	0.175/0.156

German citizens only
Source: ALLBUS 1994–2000
[a]$p \leq 0.001$; [b]$p \leq 0.01$; [c]$p \leq 0.05$

firstly that different variables matter in the east and west. In the east, for example, evaluations of socialism, along with the economic variables and winning are of principal importance. East Germans' appreciation of socialism, how they evaluate the economy and whether or not they vote for winning parties condition their trust of democratic institutions. Western trust,

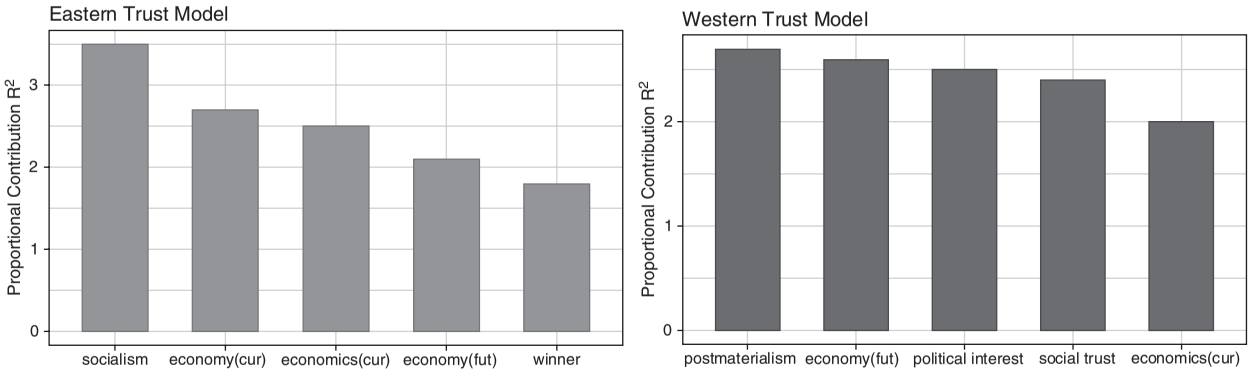

Fig. 7.2 Relative importance of predictors of trust, LMG method (Table 7.3). Source: Table 7.3, ALLBUS 1994–2000

by contrast, is heavily influenced by postmaterialism, social trust, political interest and evaluations of the economy. The presence and relative importance of the two civil society variables within the western model confirms the potentially important differences in the underlying structure of trust between the east and the west. Perceived downturns in the economy may be counterbalanced by the way in which trust is anchored in civil society.

The different mechanisms at work may be further explored by examining their marginal effects (Fig. 7.3). To clarify these, those of east and west Germany have been brought together in the same figure. Three important points are reinforced in the plots. First, the plot for postmaterialism shows that trust diminishes in the west as we move towards the postmaterialist side of the scale, whilst in the east, the movement is minimal. If anything, it increases slightly towards the postmaterialism side of the scale. Overall, however, postmaterialism has theoretically consistent effects in the west only. The effects of evaluations of socialism, meanwhile, not only confirm the downward direction in which they pull trust, but the nature of the lines—and particularly the strikingly negative effect in the east—suggests that we might probe into this in greater detail. These values depress trust in democratic institutions, but they may do so to a greater degree in the east compared with the west. Second, the effects of civil society are more straight-forward: both indicators increase trust in the west only. The evidence on this from the east is consistently pointing to a lack of spill over from civil society to democratic institutions. Social trust has little effect in the east, as trust barely rises towards the socially trusting end of the scale and is surrounded by wide confidence intervals. The lines for political interest, meanwhile, confirm its strongly positive influence in the west and its lack of substantive effect in the east. Third, whilst the effects of political-economy are strongly positive, it appears that current perceptions of the German national economy influence trust to a greater extent in the east compared with the west—both eastern lines have noticeably more upward trajectories compared with the west.

Multivariate Models; East-West Interactions

This section develops the analysis further, by investigating if the effects of some of the most important correlates of trust vary between the east and west. To do this, two separate regression models have been run concentrating on three indicators of political-economy and socialist values. The models thus examine two different theoretical variables: political-economy and political values, permitting analysis of both short and long-term effects

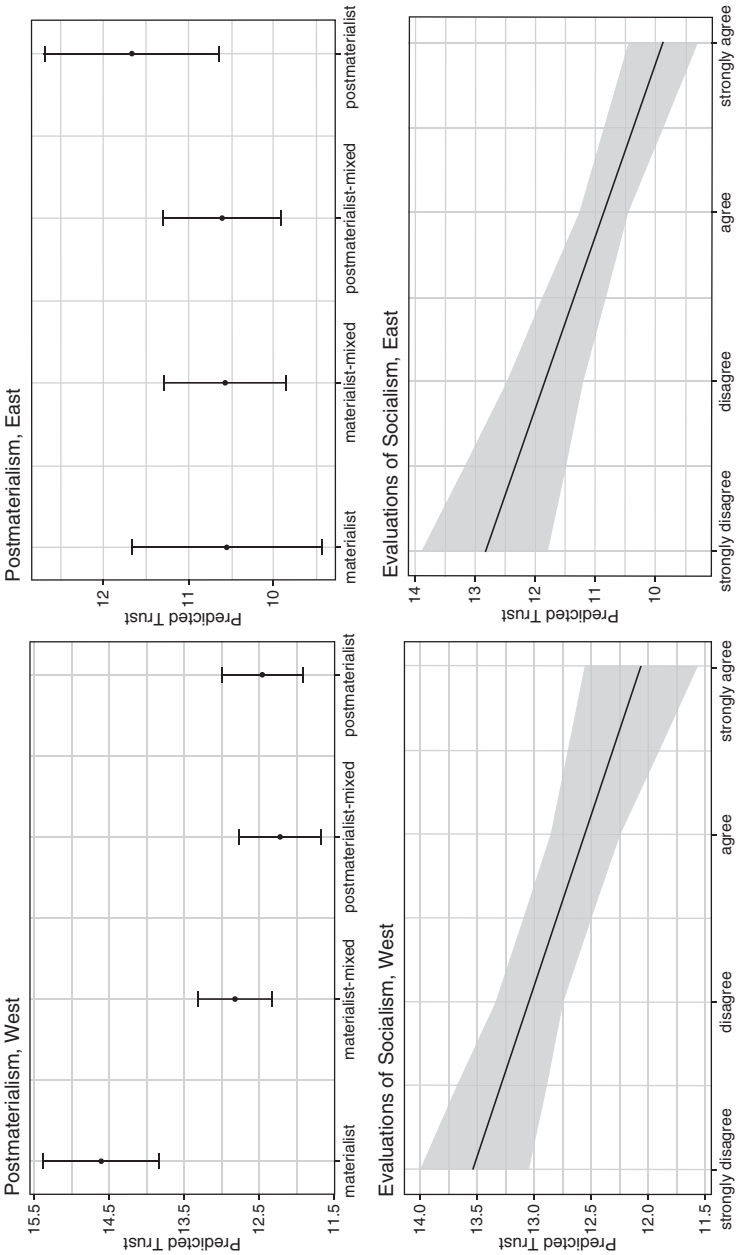

Fig. 7.3 Average marginal effects with 95 per cent confidence intervals (Table 7.3). Source: Table 7.3, ALLBUS 1994–2000

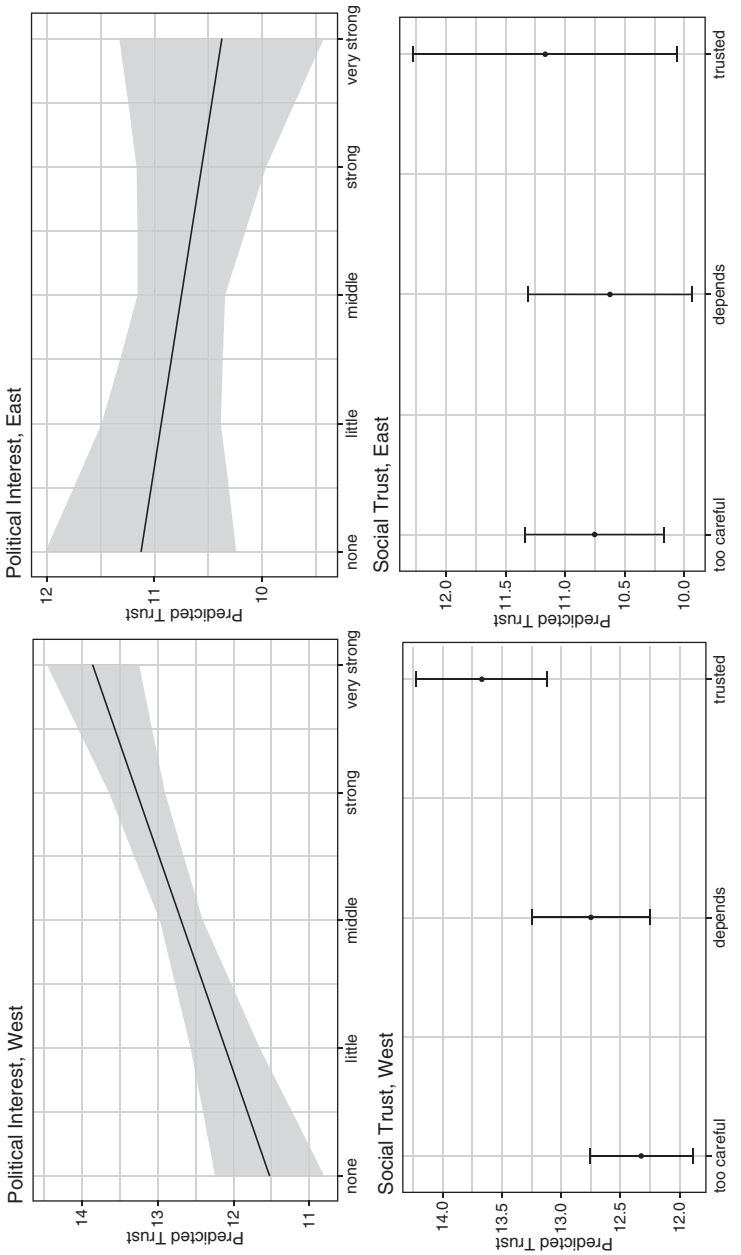

Fig. 7.3 (continued)

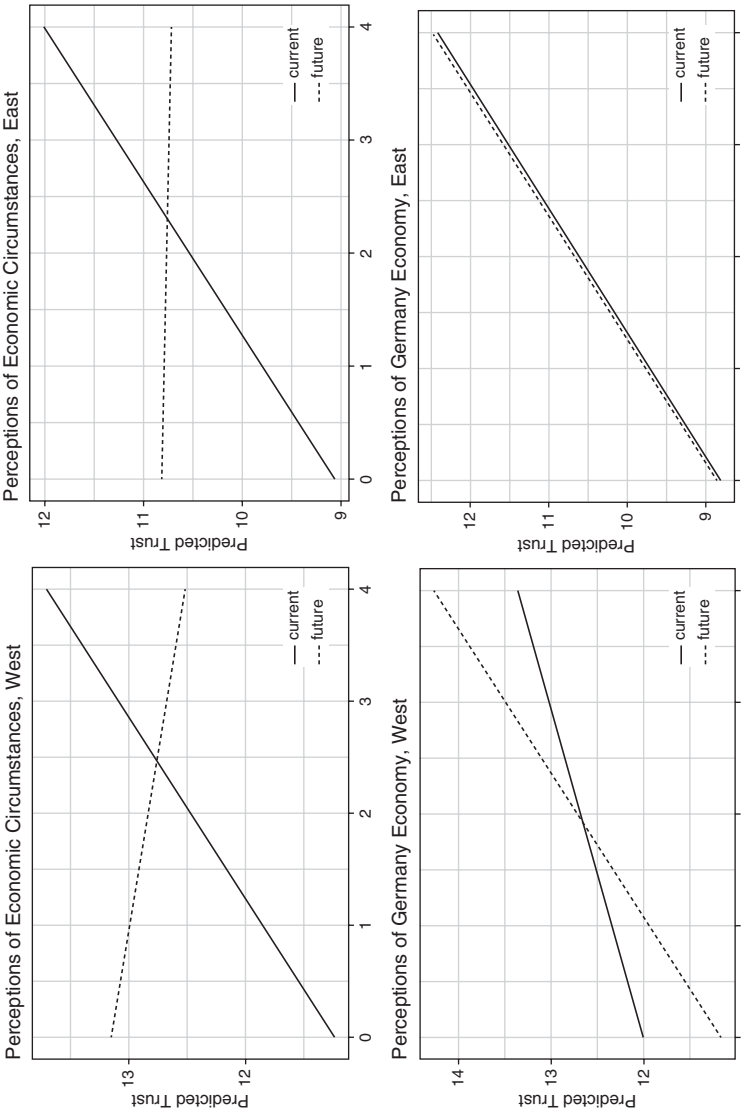

Fig. 7.3 (continued)

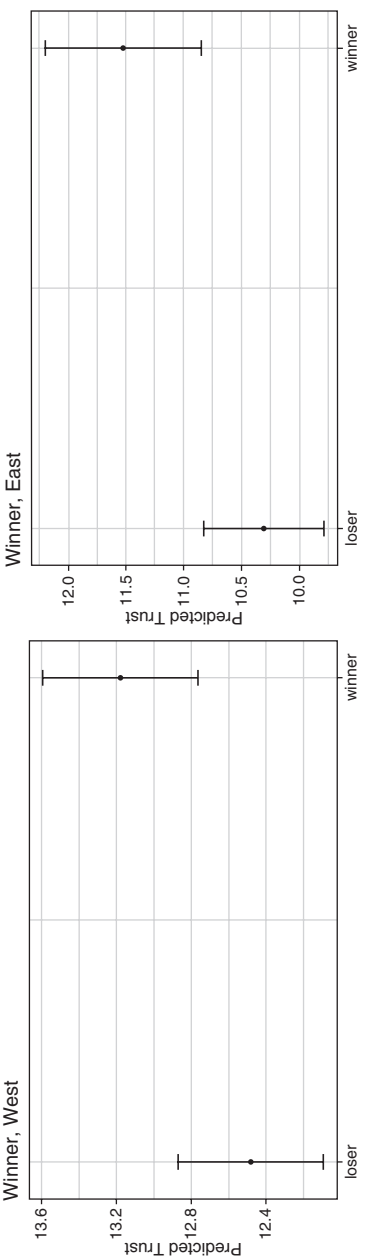

Fig. 7.3 (continued)

on trust, and sensitising the findings on the basis of the models indicating that different theoretical factors may be at work in the east and west. The first model confirms the effects of these indicators, establishing their influence on trust in democratic institutions. In model two, each indicator is then multiplied by the east-west variable, enabling the analysis to probe the interactions; i.e., whether the effects of political-economy or socialist values vary between the east and west.

The findings of Table 7.4 contribute supplementary insights to the analysis of trust in democratic institutions in Germany. Overall, they suggest important ways in which socialist values and political-economy may vary between the east and west. Model one confirms the importance of their effects: socialist values and political-economy influence trust in the expected directions, and the east-west coefficient is sizeable, negative and significant, showing that trust is lower in the east compared with the west. Model two, meanwhile, indicates that two of the interaction terms have emerged as significant. These are the terms for perceptions of the future of the German economy x west-east, which has surpassed the significance

Table 7.4 OLS models with interactions

	Model 1	*Model 2*
	b (s.e.)	*b* (s.e.)
Constant	**8.27[a] (0.283)**	**8.52[a] (0.316)**
Main effects		
East-West (ref: West)		
East	**−1.96[a] (0.166)**	**−2.88[a] (0.750)**
Evaluations of socialism	**−0.579[a] (0.063)**	**−0.514[a] (0.011)**
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	**0.735[a] (0.086)**	**0.725[a] (0.099)**
Perceptions of German economy (current)	**0.877[a] (0.087)**	**0.814[a] (0.096)**
Perceptions of German economy (future)	**0.803[a] (0.083)**	**0.707[a] (0.091)**
Interaction effects		
Evaluations of socialism × East	–	**−0.374[c] (0.170)**
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current) × East	–	0.008 (0.203)
Perceptions of German economy (current) × East	–	0.312 (0.227)
Perceptions of German economy (future) × East	–	**0.503[a] (0.218)**
N	4576	4576
Multiple R^2/Adj. R^2	0.147/0.146	0.149/0.148

German citizens only
Source: ALLBUS 1994–2000
[a]$p \leq 0.001$; [b]$p \leq 0.01$; [c]$p \leq 0.05$

threshold (*b*: 0.503, sig. ≤ 0.05), along with evaluations of socialism x west-east (*b*: −0.374, sig. ≤ 0.05). Despite this supportive evidence, there are important statistical reasons for analysing their marginal effects visually. The algebra of the regression formula has altered, meaning that the interaction terms may not be interpreted in the same way as in previous models. Visualising the effects of the terms, however, provides a clearer sense of how these terms influence trust. The following graphs thus plot the slopes for all of the interaction terms, distinguishing between the east and west of Germany, whilst the remaining variables are held at the mean.

Figure 7.4 visualises the trajectory of trust based on the east-west interactions. The top two plots visualise the effects of the two interaction terms which were not significant in model 2. These were: (1) evaluations of the German economy; and (2) assessments of their current personal economic circumstances. One may understand why these terms were not significant by examining the slopes. In many respects, they are somewhat parallel, with each slope elevating trust in democratic institutions as evaluations of political-economy become more positive. Crucially, however, these indicators of political-economy do not appear to increase trust by a greater amount in either part of Germany: although trust begins from lower levels in the east, it follows a largely similar upward trajectory as in the west. The effects of these indicators of political-economy, although important to the shape of trust in democratic institutions in Germany, do not appear to differ between the east and west.

A different picture emerges in the bottom two plots of Fig. 7.4, which visualise the effects of the two interaction terms which were significant in Table 7.4. Turning first to the plot for respondents' assessments of the future of the German economy, the slopes appear to differ subtly between the east and west. Whilst the western slope follows a largely stable path, increasing trust as respondents' evaluations improve, the eastern slope rises more appreciably towards the upper end of the scale, suggesting that easterners who are more optimistic about the future condition of the German national economy are more trusting of democratic institutions compared with westerners. On this evidence, the future of the German national economy has been an important benchmark for assessing the trustworthiness of democratic institutions in Germany, but more so in the east compared with the west.

Equally important are the effects concerning evaluations of socialism (Fig. 7.4). As shown in the plot, the effects are negative in both parts of Germany. But whilst the western slope falls steadily, gradually reducing trust as evaluations of socialism increase, the eastern slope reduces more

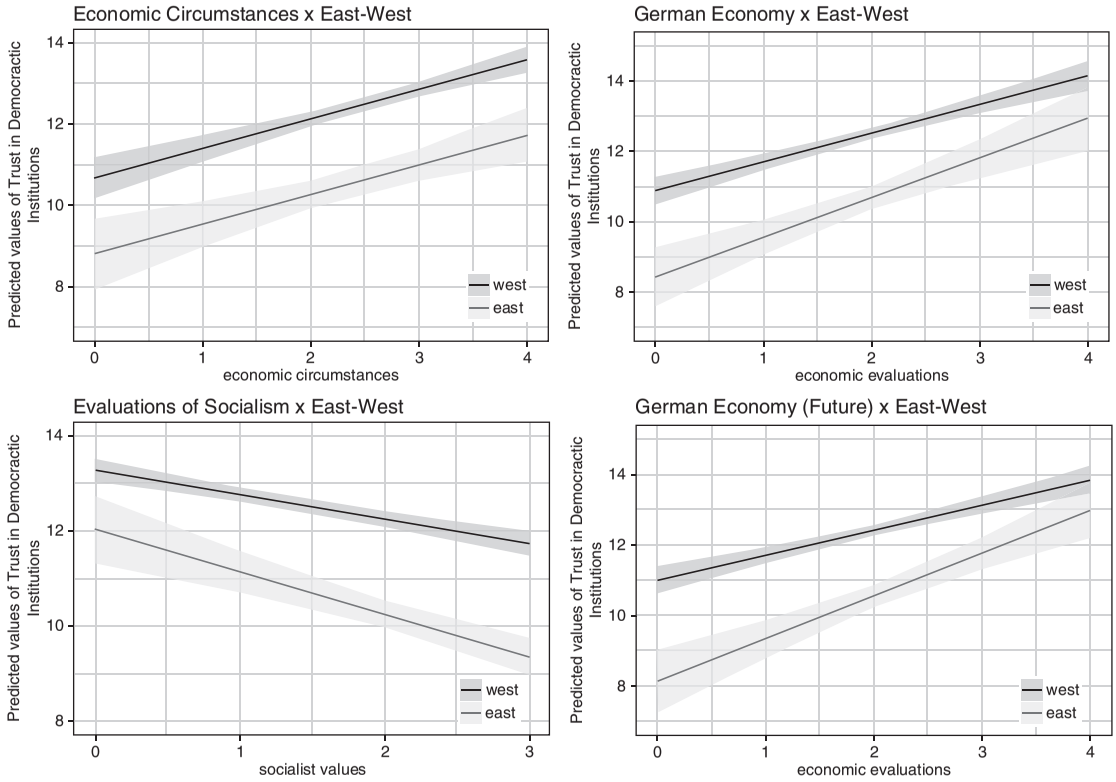

Fig. 7.4 Average marginal effects interaction model (Table 7.4). Source: Table 7.4, ALLBUS 1994–2000

appreciably, especially towards the upper end of the socialism scale. This suggests that easterners who strongly value socialism are particularly low in trust in democratic institutions—perhaps more so than westerners. These values depress trust, but there is evidence that their effects are somewhat more pronounced in the east compared with the west.

Taken together, then, the empirical findings are summarised as follows. First, all four approaches work at the bivariate level, which confirms that modernisation, civil society, political-economy and winning stimulate trust. As this pattern held up through the first stage of the multivariate analysis, this is an important headline in the analysis of trust in democratic institutions: trust is shaped by a conflation of the four theoretical approaches. Second, the findings also highlighted differences between easterners and westerners—differences, indeed, which held up net of the impact of conceptual and demographic controls. This, in turn, raised the possibility that different theoretical factors are operating in the east and west. Subsequent modelling confirmed this to be the case. By distinguishing between the east and west, the models uncovered that indicators of civil society and political-economy do not condition trust in the same way between the east and the west. More evidence of political-economy was uncovered in the east, and there was little to suggest a spill over from civil society to trust in democratic institutions has taken place. Third, some factors operate differently in the east and west of the country. Not all influence trust evenly. Indeed, the latter part of the multivariate analysis suggested differential effects for evaluations of socialism and assessments of the future condition of the German national economy in the east.

Conclusion

Trust in democratic institutions is multidimensional. The research has pinpointed its values-based components, its rootedness in civil society, its performance-based aspects and its grounding in political partisanship.[32] Cumulatively, then, the evidence cautions against the view that trust is principally or exclusively rational. Although material conditions matter, trust is not a straight-forward economic exchange, easily earned and flowing seamlessly from institutional effectiveness or prosperity. Trust is more complex, in that it is grounded in long-term political stimuli which make it more ossified, resistant to short-term change and set on a firmer trajectory. As such, these findings counter suggestions that trust is exclusively specific in nature. Trust is not wholly conditioned within the sphere of political-economy. Indeed,

there are links to patterns of sociability and deep-rooted political values, and given the lethargic pace at which values change, they may be particularly crucial for the long-term pattern of trust in democratic institutions in Germany. There are elements of the concept that are thus exogenous to the economy, suggesting that trust may be partially diffuse in nature.

An important finding, however, is the east-west axis. Differences in trust remain between easterners and westerners, confirming the difficulties of cultivating trust in post-communist context, even in circumstances where people accede to a 'ready made' state.[33] The research has not only shown that trust differs, but that it is conditioned in different ways between the east and the west. First, the factors associated with trust are broader in the west compared with the east. The absence of eastern connections between civil society, for example, underlines the challenges of overcoming a legacy of interpersonal suspicion in ways that anchor trust in more stable phenomena. Although this supports the findings of the previous chapter, there may be broader implications. If the economy is perceived to falter, trust may be lacking in circumstances in which it is most needed. In tandem, social and political trust may become locked in a vicious circle. As social trust fails to spill over and spur trust in democratic institutions, it limits support; and yet as decision-making is taken on the basis of restricted support, it may reinforce apathy in the realm of civil society. Second, perceptions of the economy matter in different ways. There is emphasis on 'here-and-now' perceptions in the east, and the interaction analysis demonstrated that eastern trust may also be more contingent upon assessments of the future of the German economy. This confirms that trust may be especially brittle if the economy contracts or where individuals are subjected to sustained periods of austerity. Third, there are differences in the effects of socialist values. As shown in the analyses, these values matter, but more so in the east compared with the west. True, there may be different ways to interpret these values, with one clear possibility that they denote a more activist role for the state in welfare policy. But if the state is to widen and deepen its remit, this requires greater trust in government departments and agencies through which resources are collected.[34] It also requires that resources which are collected via general taxation are allocated efficiently resources in circumstances in which individuals or collective sacrifice.[35]

Amongst the factors influencing trust, however, is winning. The consistency of its impact on trust adds to the emerging body of evidence confirming its importance in the development of popular support. Winning

has been shown to be a powerful yardstick with which Germans assess the trustworthiness of their democratic institutions. This being the case, it is important to underline the short and long-term components into which it is partitioned. As elites are expected to govern in a manner which align with winners' interests, short-term increments in trust may follow. The phenomenon may lead to trust to the system. And yet electoral systems may give rise to a differential sense of political equality, the long-term effects of which impact upon trust. The effects of winning may be cumulative and reinforcing, for trust is linkage-based, it stems from the ability of the elected to convince citizens that they are represented effectively. If citizens are persistently on the winning or losing side, however, this may create a lens through which the political system is evaluated in increasingly positive or negative terms.

The analysis of this chapter, however, has not commented on change—on whether or not different factors drive trust over time in Germany. The reason for this is straight-forward. By uncovering the importance of evaluations of socialism, the analysis is limited in the time-frame in which trust may be analysed. The only occasions in which the trust battery and the socialism item featured together in ALLBUS were 1994 and 2000—a time interval too limited to comment on change. An alternative strategy might be to omit socialist values from the model, yet this would neglect analysis of a durable set of values that have been shown to be statistically and substantively important. Employing different data sources, meanwhile, is not problem free, for if different sampling techniques have been used any findings could reasonably be attributed to variations in methodology. The upshot of this is that change may have been occurring—and indeed it would be surprising if the impact of these values had not weakened over time. At present, however, there is insufficient evidence to investigate if this is the case.

A fundamental set of implications from the findings concern democratic reform. A great deal of the academic literature prescribes institutional and democratic reform as a remedy to faltering trust. But are these really needed—and would they restore trust? As shown, different trust mechanisms operate between the east and the west, asymmetries which would need to be recognised and incorporated into analyses of democratic reform. In the east, for example, it is tempting to prescribe a role for local initiatives which impart political skills and spur community in areas that might otherwise be relatively quiescent. The possibility of this is already in place, since localities are endowed with

significant rights.[36] But the evidence is mixed—to the extent indeed that prescribing reforms may not alleviate disaffection.[37] Implementing reforms on the assumption that they will restore trust in democratic institutions may well reinforce parochial interests and identities—or may simply deflect from national challenges on which democratic institutions focus. There may be other reasons for doing so, but the wide variety of long- and short-term factors influencing trust suggests that it is not an easy form of support to restore.

As argued in this study, German institutions do not operate within a vacuum. The polity has evolved in important ways in the light of Germany's European vocation. European institutions have had a substantial influence on the development of German democracy. Since its foundation, the European Union has widened the range of its membership through successive waves of enlargement, deepened the scope of its policy-making and confronted formidable challenges which have been transnational in scope. As noted in Chap. 4, however, the institutions of the EU remain objects of pervasively low trust. The following chapter contributes to explaining why.

Notes

1. Robert Rohrschneider and Rüdiger Schmitt-Beck, 'Trust in Democratic Institutions: Theory and Evidence Ten Years after Unification'. *German Politics*, 11/3 (1998), pp. 35–58.
2. See, for example, Kendall Baker, Russell J. Dalton and Kai Hildebrandt, *Germany Transformed: Political Culture and the New Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981). The authors write: '[T]he post-war regime has inspired widespread support among the general public and this support has become at least partially diffuse … Satisfaction with the political system was more or less universal in 1972' (p. 270).
3. The details of these proposals are complex and sharply contested—not least since it is disputed if reforms will reverse the erosion of trust. Although voters are undoubtedly confronted with an increasingly demanding electoral setting, it is far from clear that creating greater access points generates increased efficacy. Indeed, they may complicate voters' ability to hold representatives accountable, spread their attention more thinly or simply result in them perceiving that each vote is of diminished significance. Equally, whilst instruments of transparency are widely lauded for having diversified and democratised citizens' access to information, the long-term consequences of this may not necessarily contribute to nurturing public trust in democracy.

4. David Beetham, 'The Future of Parliaments', in Sonia Alonso, John Keane and Wolfgang Merkel (eds.) *The Future of Representative Democracy* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 124–143.
5. See, for example, Mark Warren, 'A Second Transformation of Democracy?' In Bruce E. Cain, Russell J. Dalton and Susan E. Scarrow, *Democracy Transformed? Expanding Political Opportunities in Advanced Industrial Democracies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 223–249.
6. Hans-Dieter Klingemann and Dieter Fuchs, Citizens and the State: A changing relationship? In *Citizens and the State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 22.
7. Geoffrey Brennan, 'Democratic Trust: A Rational-Choice Theory View' in Margaret Levi and Valerie Braithwaite, *Trust and Governance* (New York, NY: Russell Sage, 1998), pp. 197–217.
8. This point is outlined most clearly by Giddens, who argues that the processes of modern democratic government implicitly depend upon trust. Electoral systems, for example, secure representation but also facilitate access points which connect citizens to elites. Manifestos, handshaking and the imagery surrounding leaders and parties, meanwhile, are embedded in conceptions of trustworthiness. See Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*. London: Polity Press (1990), p. 91.
9. Ross Campbell, 'Values, Trust and Democracy: Still in Search of 'Inner Unity'?' *European Journal of Political Research*, 51/4 (2012), pp. 646–670.
10. William T. Mishler and Richard Rose, 'Trust in Untrustworthy Institutions: Culture and Institutional Performance in Post-Communist Societies', *Studies in Public Policy* 310 (Centre for the Study of Public Policy; University of Strathclyde, 1998).
11. William T. Bianco, *Trust: Representatives and Constituents* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1994), 23.
12. William Gamson, *Power and Discontent* (Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press, 1968), pp. 42–43.
13. Tom Tyler, 'The Psychology of Public Dissatisfaction with Government'. In John R. Hibbing and Elisabeth Theiss-Morse, *What is it About Government that Americans Dislike?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 227–242.
14. Levi makes the point via obligations: compliance stems from 'the perception that all relevant interests have been considered, that the game is not rigged'. See, for example, Margaret Levi, 'A State of Trust', in Margaret Levi and Valerie Braithwaite, *Trust and Governance* (New York, NY: Russell Sage, 1998), p. 90.
15. See, for example, Tom Tyler and Peter Degoey, 'Trust in Organizational Authorities: The Influence of Motive Attributions on Willingness to Accept

Decisions', in Roderick M. Kramer and Tom Tyler (eds) *Trust in Organizations* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Russell Sage, 1998).

16. Giddens, ibid., p. 89.
17. Russell Hardin, 'Do We Want Trust in Government?' *Trust and Governance* (New York, NY.: Russell Sage, 1998), pp. 22–41.
18. Claus Offe, 'How Can we Trust our Fellow Citizens?' in Mark E. Warren (ed.), *Democracy and Trust* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 50.
19. Mark E. Warren, 'Introduction' in Mark E. Warren (ed.), *Democracy and Trust* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 1–21.
20. Russell Hardin, 'Trust in Government', in Margaret Levi and Valerie Braithwaite, *Trust and Governance* (New York, NY.: Russell Sage, 1998), pp. 9–27.
21. Ibid. p. 23.
22. Piotr Sztompka, *Trust: A Sociological Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 24–25.
23. Claus Offe, 'How Can we Trust our Fellow Citizens?' in Mark E. Warren (ed.), *Democracy and Trust* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 42–87.
24. Russell J. Dalton, *Democratic Challenges Democratic Choices: Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
25. Michel Crozier, Samuel P. Huntington and Joji Watanuki, *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission* (New York, NY.: New York University Press, 1975), pp. 6–7.
26. Jack Citrin, 'Political Alienation as a Social Indicator: Attitudes and Action', *Social Indicators Research*, 4 (1977), pp. 381–419, especially, p. 392.
27. Brian D. Silver, 'Political Beliefs of the Soviet Citizen: Sources of Support for Regime Norms' in James R. Millar, *Politics, Work, and Daily Life in the USSR* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 100–141.
28. Jack Citrin, 'Comment: The Political Relevance of Trust in Government', *American Political Science Review*, 68 (1974), pp. 973–988 (pp. 974–975).
29. William Mishler and Richard Rose, 'Trajectories of Fear and Hope: Support for Democracy in Post-communist Europe'. *Comparative Political Studies*, 28/4 (1995), pp. 553–581.
30. Arthur Miller, 'Political Issues and Trust in Government' *American Political Science* Review, 68, 951–972 (p. 951)
31. These trends largely confirm research findings uncovered by other scholars. See, for example, Renate Köcher, *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie 2003–2009: Die Berliner Republik* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH,

2009), p. 120. Detlaf Pollack, 'Trust in Institutions and the Urge to be Different', *German Politics*, 8/3 (1999), p. 98.

32. Ross Campbell, 'The Sources of Institutional Trust in Germany; Civic Culture and Economic Performance?' *German Politics*, 24/1 (2004), pp. 401–425.
33. Richard Rose, Wolfgang Zapf, Wolfgang Seifert and Edward Page, 'Germans in Comparative Perspective' *Studies in Public Policy* 218 (Centre for the Study of Public Policy, 1993).
34. Oscar Gabriel and Eva-Maria Trüdinger, 'Embellishing Welfare State Reforms? Political Trust and Support for the Welfare State Reforms in Germany', *German Politics*, 20/2 (2011), pp. 273–292, especially, p. 284.
35. Perhaps the most persuasive account of this is Marc J. Hetherington, *Why Trust Matters: Declining Political Trust and the Demise of American Liberalism* (Princeton, NJ.: Princeton University Press, 2005).
36. Article 28 paragraph 2 of the Basic Law states that 'Municipalities must be guaranteed the right to regulate all local affairs on their own responsibility'.
37. Brigitte Geissel, 'Participatory Governance: Hope or Danger for Democracy? A Case Study of Local Agenda 21', *Local Government Studies*, 35/4 (2009), pp. 401–414.

CHAPTER 8

Trust in the EU and Governing Without Consensus

Introduction

Few areas of German public opinion are as contentious as that of the EU. Anti-EU sentiment has been decisive to the electoral fortunes of the *Alternative für Deutschland* (Alternative for Germany, AfD), which has harnessed and channelled voters disaffected with the ways in which the EU limits governments' ability to control immigration, exposes fiscally responsible states to the profligacy of those which are less disciplined and inhibits institutions from curbing the worst excesses of the global economy.[1] Although the AfD's breakthrough has been relatively recent, public misgivings about the EU have been long-standing. They predate the Euro and migrant crises, were latent during the Maastricht Treaty and were developing as Helmut Kohl was elected Chancellor. They could be overlooked, however, as long as they remained less salient and the radical right lacked following and mobilisation potential. But in an increasingly open electoral marketplace, their sharp politicisation provides an uncomfortable amount of issue space in which the AfD may compete. If it survives in the long-term, the German government will face irresistible pressure to reconcile long-standing elite commitments to deeper integration with an increasingly costly electoral backlash. Analysing why individuals support the EU, whilst theoretically important, is thus also timely, and the sequencing of the chapters enables us to establish the degree to which the factors conditioning support for the EU differ from those of previous chapters.

R. Campbell, *Popular Support for Democracy in Unified Germany*,
New Perspectives in German Political Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-03792-5_8

The chapter focuses on trust in the executive and representative institutions of the EU—the Commission and the Parliament. Although these constitute but two of the institutions of the EU, attitudes towards them are sufficiently important to provide an indication of how Germans view its political configuration. The chapter is divided into four principal sections. The first argues that over the long-term, the 'permissive consensus' that once characterised Germany's approach to the EU has steadily eroded. The shallow pools of support upon which it draws suggests it lacks the affection indicative of emotional roots. Germans, no less than citizens of other European countries, appraise the EU as a largely functional enterprise, in that it is evaluated on the basis of what it delivers. The second section analyses the drivers of trust in the EU, presenting bivariate evidence about the four approaches, before turning to multivariate modelling. These models and post-estimation analyses reveal that trust in the EU bears the clear imprint of social structure. Net of other theoretical variables, age and gender both reduce trust in the EU. This may contribute to explaining why its trajectory over time has been largely static. As the pattern suggests different factors at work compared with other chapters, this is one of the most important findings of the empirical analysis. The third section draws conclusions and reflects on the challenge Germany faces in the twenty-first Century—the challenge of governing without consensus.

Germany's European Vocation: From Historical Vision to 'Reluctant Hegemon'

Falling support for the EU is out of step with Germany's historically strong pro-European stance. As the division of Europe froze the continent in a seemingly permanent confrontation, the foundation of the EU enabled the FRG to forge strategic alliances and pursue shared interests within a multilateral framework, presenting a viable path to rehabilitation and normalisation. The post-war Republic, formally occupied until 1955, was thus provisional, with the power of the Chancellor constrained and the state dependent on the allies for its protection—especially the United States. There was thus considerable external and internal anxiety about how Germany would operate within the international community.[2] But German interests could be pursued with reassurance if they were part of institutions based upon partnership, negotiation and compromise. In addition, as the competences of the EU deepened and Germany played a greater role in its

governance, sharing sovereignty meant reclaiming sovereignty. Engagement with the EU was thus a strategic necessity to normalise the German state, but it was also a long-term tactical success, which generated regional security and nurtured Franco-German relations from shattered enmity into an alliance of first resorts.[3] Without the Franco-German accord, in turn, it is doubtful whether the EU would have developed in the way that it did, especially in the economy. As Bulmer and Paterson have written, 'without European integration as a political arena of co-operation, West German economic performance would have been perceived as a threat'.[4] But German support for the EU was not merely a defining feature of the Cold War or for providing access to export markets; it built up reserves of diplomatic support upon which Germany could draw during unification. Assurance that European rather than national interests remained priorities assuaged Anglo-American concerns about the new European power dynamics by anchoring united Germany within a stable political alliance structure.[5]

Despite its historical importance, public malaise towards the EU is central to German political attitudes.[6] The origins of this have not only been traced to the institutional configuration of the EU, but the manner in which it has evolved and the issues institutions they have confronted. Additional levels of supranational policy-making presented few structural problems for a polity with multilayered governance. The question, however, was how they might attract legitimacy?[7] This has been a sensitive topic in Germany, since the politics of integration sat uneasily with the territorial representation of *Länder* interests. As the *Länder* were represented within the Federal structure but not directly at the European level, on key areas national interests clashed with those of the *Länder*—particularly on policy areas where the *Länder* had a veto or the capacity to defend their interests in the Bundesrat. It is not surprising, therefore, that disaffection has been institutionally targeted, particularly on the EU's political structures. Scholars argued, however, that if national governments are legitimate, this spills up, legitimating decisions in EU fora. But this is unconvincing.[8] As shown in this study, legitimacy is object-specific, with a range of attitudinal components and people separate their views depending on the institutions evaluated. The evidence from standard behavioural indicators, moreover, is clear-cut. Consistently low turnout at EU elections, for example, deprives Parliament of the input legitimacy on which its work as a democratic institution is premised. Engagement at EU elections is driven by national rather than European issues, underlining the argument that the Parliament offers limited representation and lacks credibility

and guiding force. Moreover, the malaise surrounding the Parliament suggests that it is misaligned with voters' views of the classic functions of assembly-based democracy: the integration and reconciliation of conflicting points of view, authorisation and representation.[9] The case seems equally weak as a policy-making vehicle, for as extensive legislative influence resides in the overly technocratic Commission, it strengthens the case that EU policy lacks 'through-put' legitimacy, exacerbating the problems with the EU as it is presently configured.[10] Major policy initiatives are subjected to debate and discussion in narrow circles which omit ordinary citizens and national parliaments and thus reinforce low trust and confidence.

An alternative source of legitimacy is the outputs of the EU; i.e., its capacity to delivery unprecedented levels of economic growth and regional security and withstand the challenges of globalisation.[11] The EU single market may be a mechanism which has 'lifted all boats', but it has not done so evenly and the ways in which some states have been adversely affected through the structure of EU capitalism has given the disaffection with the EU an important regional dimension. Whilst the transformations of global capitalism spawned ultra-competitive forces through technological competition, financial expansion and the emergence of new markets, the European Single Market was designed to mitigate these pressures: protectionism was addressed by pooling economic sovereignty and embracing globalisation. Overall, Germany has undoubtedly benefitted from the single market, which encompasses all member states and provides coveted access to over 500 million consumers and one of the largest currency zones in the world. But elite narratives have not only failed to alleviate popular misgivings, but have reinforced the view that economic harmonisation is increasingly out of sync with the standard principles of German economic policy. The Euro and sovereign debt crises, for example, brought two pillars of the post-war republic into opposition: integration and economic policy.[12] Germany's historical commitment to liberal economic policy (*Ordnungspolitik*) has classically been rules-based, placing priority upon monetary stability and fiscal discipline within an institutional configuration designed to ensure international competitiveness. Yet as economic sovereignty is pooled, it undermines aspects of the rules-based system on which the German economy is founded—particularly as it attempts to address structural imbalances in states prone to fiscal laxity.

Despite these concerns, the direction of travel of Germany's EU policy has been marked by increased elite willingness to share competences in

overlapping policy domains.[13] Characterisations of its relationship with the EU reveal this quite clearly.[14] Bulmer, for example, argued that in the post-war period Germany moved from a position of 'dependence to interdependence', referring to Germany's impaired status and its acceptance of French leadership.[15] Paterson, meanwhile, has written of 'reflexive multilateralism',[16] recognising the enduring collective insecurities about the unilateral exercise of German power, ingrained institutional commitments and a policy of leading from behind. Similarly, Katzenstein termed the model of governance 'associative sovereignty', inferring that German-EU relations are heavily marked by coalition building and consensus seeking underpinned by the principle that Germany operates within multilateral institutions in which the transfer of sovereignty is a constant.[17] These terms not only recognise the way in which the EU developed, but the elite endorsements of integration that were espoused by most Chancellors. For example, the 'Rhineland vision', commonly associated with the Kohl era, can be traced to Konrad Adenauer, and included a shared consensus from the major political parties and key interest groups on the need for deeper integration and a significant degree of elite autonomy to realise it—a view that seems profoundly dated. The manner in which this has moved into a sphere of sharp electoral contest signifies the breakdown in political consensus about the formation of an entity with all the attributes of internal and external sovereignty.[18]

Why has this occurred? A crucial factor is that Germany has been a disproportionate contributor to the EU budget, which enabled it to exercise considerable economic leverage during negotiations and manoeuvre its interests to the centre stage. But the long-term consequences of this—especially during more austere times—generated mass resentment and irresistible pressure to reform.[19] In addition, Germany's advocacy of successive waves of enlargement affirmed its commitments to integration, but accession has been an area where mass opinion has been noticeably cool—especially during the 2004 enlargement which incorporated parts of the former Eastern bloc. This coincided, moreover, with immigration becoming a primary concern of voters—and, indeed, there is evidence that from the 1998 Federal Election onwards immigration was the number one priority. At the same time, the abandonment of the *Deutsche Mark*—the quintessential symbol of the post-war recovery—was undoubtedly important, as was the abolition of the Bundesbank, an institution synonymous with Germany's stability and economic prowess. True, this led to new institutions (European Central Bank, ECB), enabling the EU to confront

different pressures more dynamically. The Federal Republic benefitted, however, from the measure of institutional and personnel transfer. But despite the more coordinated approach to monetary policy and the opportune economic position, harmonisation has attracted significant domestic opposition.[20] The manner in which those institutions evolved, whilst undoubtedly to German advantage, failed to assuage public concerns about the direction in which the EU is moving.

If pooling sovereignty is a principal area of elite-mass disconnect, it is not one that has developed evenly across Germany's democratic institutions—or without backlash. It is important to appreciate that the Constitutional Court has taken its role as guardian of the Basic Law extremely seriously, and in a series of rulings has sought to demarcate the competencies of the European Court of Justice from that of the Constitutional Court.[21] It has, in effect, laid down some ground rules for pooling sovereignty. In addition, the elite-mass disconnect about integration has also not developed recently. Indeed, research has confirmed that German enthusiasm for the EU has fallen precipitously over a number of years, with Allensbacher data usefully pinpointing the timing of the some of the most important changes. Between 1970 and 1979, clear majorities of the German population favoured developing the EC into a political community, with support between 68 and 73 per cent.[22] But this was the high point. Between 1982 and 1992, support for a rapid process dropped from 50 to 13 per cent, whilst support for a slower pace increased from 6 to 38 per cent.[23] Perceptions of the advantages of EU membership, meanwhile, also changed. Between 1977 and 1992, the proportion of Germans believing membership to be advantageous remained broadly similar, between 13 and 17 per cent.[24] But the proportion who believed that there were disadvantages increased sharply from 25 to 36 per cent, with clear pluralities citing the disproportionately high costs of membership and processes of subsidising poorer member states.

The picture, however, is not one of a straight-forward rejection of the EU. Indeed, Germans are more discriminating, with three examples from Allensbacher data confirming this. First, it is unclear whether Germans' political identity embraces the EU. A minority identify with the European Union—answers which potentially undermine suggestions of an affiliational understanding of European citizenship. When asked if they identified as German or European more than 75 per cent identified as German, with less than 20 per cent identifying as European.[25] These data, however, are not conclusive, for it is debateable whether being German or European are mutually exclusive options. If respondents have a complementary sense of political

identity, this question may be a poor instrument with which to detect the points of intersection. Second, there is intriguing evidence on motivation, for interest in the European Union is noticeably lower compared with domestic politics. An interest in politics generally does not necessarily denote an interest in the EU. Majorities report not being particularly interested in the EU (54 per cent), whilst majorities remain interested in politics more generally (55 per cent).[26] Despite the increasing importance of the competences of the EU, cognitive engagement with it is thus low and a general interest in politics does not appear to overlap with interest in the EU. Third, questions about Germany's future in the EU indicate that clear majorities favour European unity and envision Germany's future within the EU.

But there is a lack of settled agreement on the details of Germany's trajectory. Economically, the picture is mixed. There is support for the ECB, which is one of the most trusted European institutions. Fully 88 per cent have a great deal or a lot of trust in the ECB.[27] But there is evidence of 'D-Mark nostalgia', which remains the preferred currency of a majority of Germans (56 per cent), whilst a sizeable majority (62 per cent) continue to calculate costs in D-Marks rather than Euros.[28] The mental transition to the Euro has thus been formidable and remains incomplete. The data on the financial crisis, meanwhile, suggest that the German public did not attribute it to underlying structural problems in the global economy. Clear majorities cited the speculative practices of the financial market (87 per cent), yet many believed the German economy was sufficiently robust to withstand the crisis—a point underlined by the lack of increase in economic anxiety. Majorities anticipated higher prices (76 per cent) and increases in taxation (59 per cent). But this did not signal a wholesale loss of confidence in the Euro or the single market. In fact, a clear majority of respondents favoured strengthening the regulatory framework of the financial markets (71 per cent)—a point which could form the basis of a revised German European policy.

Politically, meanwhile, distinctions are found between widening and deepening integration.[29] These have been discussed in detail following the migrant crisis, and particularly given the ways in which the enthusiasm (*Willkommenskultur*) altered into a more ambivalent outlook.[30] But concerns about this have been long-standing. In particular, there has been significant caution about widening the EU to include Turkey. Fully 62 per cent of Germans are against Turkish membership, with equally clear majorities citing the different cultural and political traditions of the country as the principal impediments.[31] But it is questionable if the public prefers arresting political integration overall. The data on deepening the EU indicate that

pluralities support the EU constitution, but a majority (59 per cent) believe the Basic Law should take precedence over it.[32] Since Germans continue to believe that the Basic Law should be pre-eminent, there are clearly live questions about the role that the EU constitution would fulfil. In addition, growing numbers believe that Germany's influence on the EU has diminished. Successive waves of enlargement have thus reinforced the view that Germany's role is more diffuse and contingent. And whilst clear majorities believe that Germany should continue to work closely with the United States on international affairs, a majority would prefer to work in partnership with other EU member states and would prefer to see greater independence from the U.S. in areas of foreign policy.

Overall, then, whilst there are challenges in some areas of public opinion towards the EU, the data caution against sweeping conclusions. Germans distinguish in their attitudes towards the EU and support for it varies. How support is nurtured is the focus of the next section of the chapter.

Popular Support for the EU

Bivariate Analysis

As shown in Table 8.1, trust in the EU is influenced by the four approaches. All are at work, but with varying effects. Modernisation has a counterintuitive effect: postmaterial values *increase* trust in the EU, albeit minimally (0.2 east; 0.3 west). Given the downward effect of postmaterialism on trust in institutions of the nation-state (Chap. 7), this is intriguing. In addition, winning and losing operate in the predicted direction, increasing trust in the EU (0.8 in the east; 0.6 in the west). Behaviours at Federal elections thus stimulate supportive attitudes at the supranational level, despite the fact that within the democratic fora of the EU there is greater scope for compromise and concession and there are separate EU elections. Equally, there is support for the political-economy approach. Assessments of the economy impact quite noticeably on the EU. In particular, how Germans project the development of their economic conditions impacts on their trust in the EU. The effect is noticeably strong, boosting trust by 2.8 in the east and 2.5 in the west.

Yet there are important east-west differences. First, education is stronger in the east compared with the west. Overall, it depresses trust in the EU, but more appreciably in the east (−0.6) compared with the west (−0.2). Second, differences are found in the two indicators of civil society.

Table 8.1 Cross-tabulation, trust in European institutions

	East			*West*		
	Lowest[a]	*Highest*[b]	*Change*[c]	*Lowest*[a]	*Highest*[b]	*Change*[c]
Modernisation						
Postmaterialism	4.3	4.5	0.2	4.9	4.6	0.3
Education	4.7	4.1	−0.6	4.9	4.7	−0.2
Evaluations of Socialism	4.4	4.3	0.1	4.7	4.8	0.1
Civil society						
Political interest	3.8	4.0	0.2	4.1	4.7	0.6
Social trust	4.1	5.1	1.0	4.6	5.1	0.5
Political-economy						
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	3.3	3.0	−0.3	4.0	5.3	1.3
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	2.9	5.7	2.8	3.5	5.0	2.5
Perceptions of German economy (current)	3.1	4.8	1.7	4.2	5.1	0.9
Perceptions of German economy (future)	2.7	5.4	2.7	3.6	4.5	0.9
Winners and losers						
Winners	4.2	5.0	0.8	4.5	5.1	0.6

Source: ALLBUS surveys 1994–2008
[a]Mean on lowest point of scale
[b]Mean on highest point of scale
[c]Difference between lowest and highest point

Social trust has a stronger effect in the east, boosting trust by 1 increment on the scale, whilst in the west the increase is 0.5, whilst political interest has a stronger effect in the west compared with the east. Third, most indicators of political-economy contrast between the east and west. Evaluations of the current condition of the German economy, for example, are strong and positive in the east, but less so in the west. Evaluations of respondents' personal circumstances, meanwhile, are strong, but different mechanisms may be operating. Western trust appears tied to the here-and-now, whilst eastern trust is future-oriented.

Multivariate Analyses; All-German Model

Having investigated the bivariate pattern, the analysis now turns to the multivariate picture, beginning with all-German models.

As shown, the models are intriguing (Table 8.2). The first model demonstrates the non-significance of the evaluations of socialism indicator. These values impacted strongly on trust in democratic institutions (Chap. 7) and the previous section suggested that they depress trust in the EU. Multivariate analyses, however, have demonstrated that their effects have faded, and this especially important, since the inclusion of this variable confines the analysis to two surveys (1994 and 2000). Omitting it enables an updated regression to include the 2008 survey, meaning that the analysis draws on a larger number of cases and thus presents more secure findings.

This is presented in model 2, the results of which may be compressed into three central points. First, a range of theoretical factors are at work. An important starting point is that modernisation shapes support for the EU. As shown, postmaterialist values decrease trust; their effects are appreciable and surpass the significance threshold. Compared with materialists, postmaterialists trust is lower by 0.440. Civil society also matters, although the effects are limited to social trust. Compared with more cautious individuals, socially trusting respondents have higher trust in the EU by 0.516. In addition, there are effects driven by respondents' evaluations of political-economy. Buoyant evaluations of the condition and development of the German economy stimulate support, as does optimistic appraisals of future economic circumstances. As winning also matters, it confirms that trust in the EU is conditioned by partisan electoral behaviour. A second point concerns trust differences between easterners and westerners. These appear to be clear and statistically important. Net of the impact of the statistical controls, easterners' trust is lower by 0.228. The east-west axis thus constitutes an important mechanism through which trust in the EU is conditioned. Third, there are important demographic factors at work. Indeed, this form of support is heavily conditioned by age and gender. Age is particularly important, with all cohorts having considerably less trust in the EU compared with those aged 18–29. The effects are strongly negative for those aged 30–44, but are equally noticeable in the other cohorts. Similarly, male respondents ($b = -0.341$) are significantly less trusting of the EU compared with females.

Overall, then, there is some evidence linking trust in the EU to the main theoretical factors identified in this study. A conflation of influences drawn from modernisation, civil society, political-economy and winning and losing are at work. Some effects are long-term, with postmaterial values eroding trust in the EU. But, in addition, drivers of trust in the EU are demographic, and it is here where the evidence is especially crucial. Key sections of the German population are significantly less trusting of the EU—and this may explain why the levels have been static over the years.

Table 8.2 OLS trust in European institutions, all-German models

	Model 1	*Model 2*
	b (beta)	*b* (beta)
Constant	**3.94**[a]	**3.83**[a]
Modernisation		
Postmaterialism (ref: material values)		
Materialist-mixed	**−0.770**[b] **(−0.134)**	**−0.317**[a] **(−0.053)**
Postmaterialist-mixed	**−0.912**[a] **(−0.155)**	−0.253 (−0.042)
Postmaterialism	**−1.02**[a] **(−0.165)**	**−0.440**[b] **(−0.065)**
Evaluations of socialism	−0.121 (−0.046)	–
Education (ref: no degree)	−0.306 (−0.034)	0.235 (0.028)
Civil society		
Political interest	−0.004 (−0.001)	−0.002 (−0.001)
Social trust (ref: can't be too careful)		
Depends	0.081 (0.014)	0.117 (0.020)
Most can be trusted	**0.752**[a] **(0.117)**	**0.516**[a] **(0.077)**
Political-economy		
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	**0.239**[a] **(0.065)**	0.066 (0.020)
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	−0.231 (0.052)	**0.185**[c] **(0.046)**
Perceptions of German economy (current)	**0.267**[c] **(0.066)**	**0.259**[a] **(0.072)**
Perceptions of German economy (future)	0.151 (0.037)	**0.315**[a] **(0.081)**
Winners and losers (ref: loser)		
Winner	**0.320**[c] **(0.059)**	**0.553**[c] **(0.100)**
Socio-economic controls		
East (ref: West)		
East	−0.286 (0.051)	**−0.228**[c] **(−0.039)**
Gender (ref: female)		
Male	−0.274 (−0.050)	**−0.341**[a] **(0.061)**
Age (ref: 18–29)		
30–44	−0.362 (−0.062)	**−0.817**[a] **(−0.129)**
45–59	**−0.614**[c] **(−0.101)**	**−1.01**[a] **(−0.165)**
60–74	**−0.672**[c] **(−0.104)**	**−0.871**[a] **(−0.136)**
75+	0.552 (0.044)	**−0.607**[c] **(−0.057)**
N	1096	3445
Multiple R^2/Adj. R^2	0.081/0.065	0.067/0.062

German citizens only
Source: Model 1: ALLBUS 1994–2000; Model 2: ALLBUS 1994–2008
[a]$p \leq 0.001$; [b]$p \leq 0.01$; [c]$p \leq 0.05$

This pattern is confirmed by the marginal effects analysis in Fig. 8.1. Overall, the effects of the main theoretical approaches stand out. Postmaterialism depresses trust: as one moves from the materialist to post-materialist end of the scale, trust falls. Social trust, meanwhile, has quite positive effects, in that trust raises quite noticeably between those who are more cautious and those who are socially trusting. Political-economy also has quite an appreciable influence, increasing trust as individuals become more satisfied with the current condition of the German economy and optimistic about their personal circumstances. And winning, meanwhile, positively influences trust in the EU; there are quite striking differences between winners and losers. In addition, however, although there are important socio-demographic effects, claims of differences between the easterners and westerners are more difficult to sustain on the basis of the wide confidence interval surrounding the effect. However, there are differences on the basis of gender, with males particularly lacking in trust. Furthermore, the effects of age demonstrate that trust is higher amongst those aged 18–29, but drops in older age cohorts. Irrespective of the theoretical reasons for the effect, the demographic factors at work—especially age and gender—limit the development of popular support for the EU.

Trust in the European Union; East-West Models

The comparatively small differences between easterners and westerners do not rule out the possibility that different factors condition trust in the east and west of the country. The regressions presented in Table 8.3 bear directly on this issue.

Overall, the models modify the picture of how trust in the EU is conditioned. Examining the results, there are similarities between the models. Social trust, for example, positively influences trust in east and west Germany, confirming the lengths to which this form of trust may generalise to political institutions. The previous chapter uncovered that social trust may generalise to national institutions, but this chapter confirms it may go even further to supranational institutions. Perceptions of the German economy, meanwhile, also boost trust. The present condition and future development of the economy shape Germans' trust in the EU. In addition, winners are more trusting of the EU. Equally, the demographic factors operate as uncovered in the all-German model. Age reduces trust, with older respondents less trusting compared with those that are younger. Gender-based effects, meanwhile, hold up, with males noticeably less trusting of the EU compared with females.

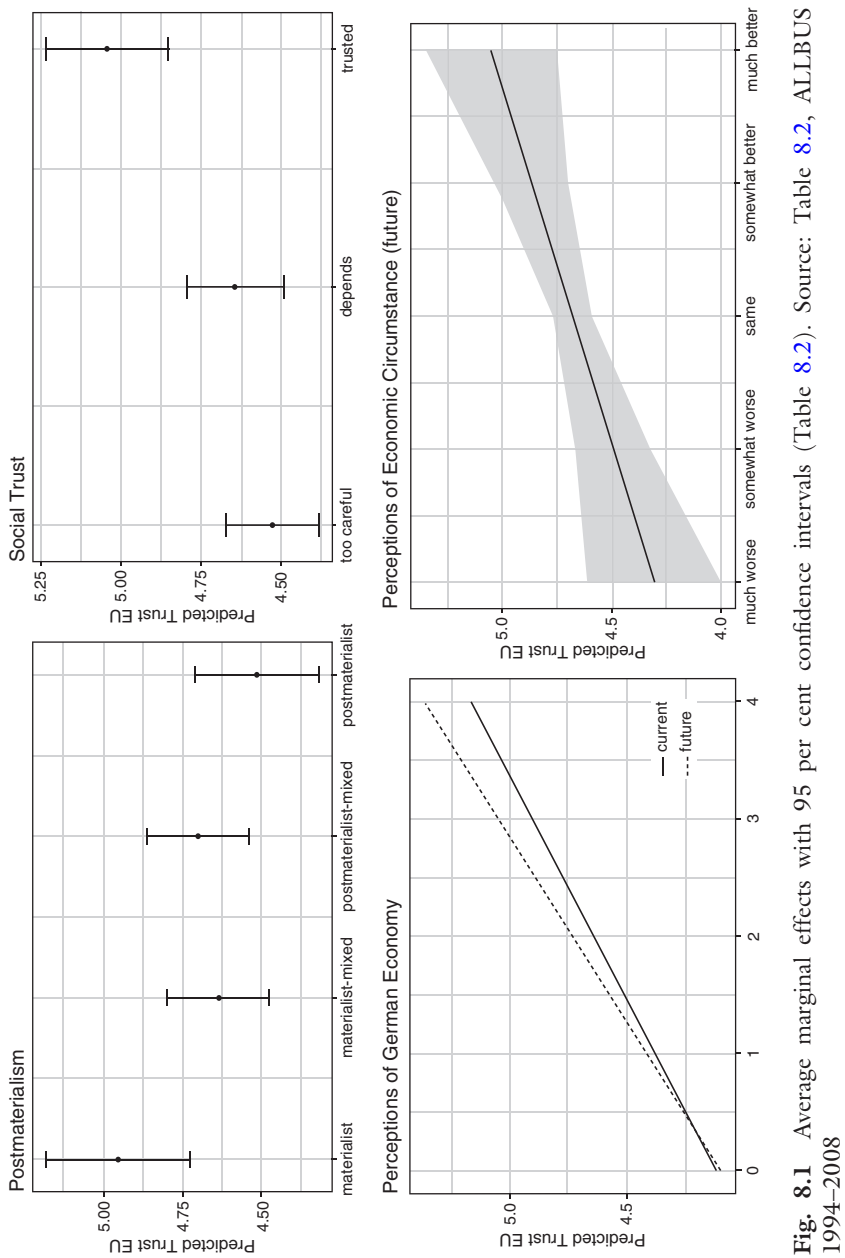

Fig. 8.1 Average marginal effects with 95 per cent confidence intervals (Table 8.2). Source: Table 8.2, ALLBUS 1994–2008

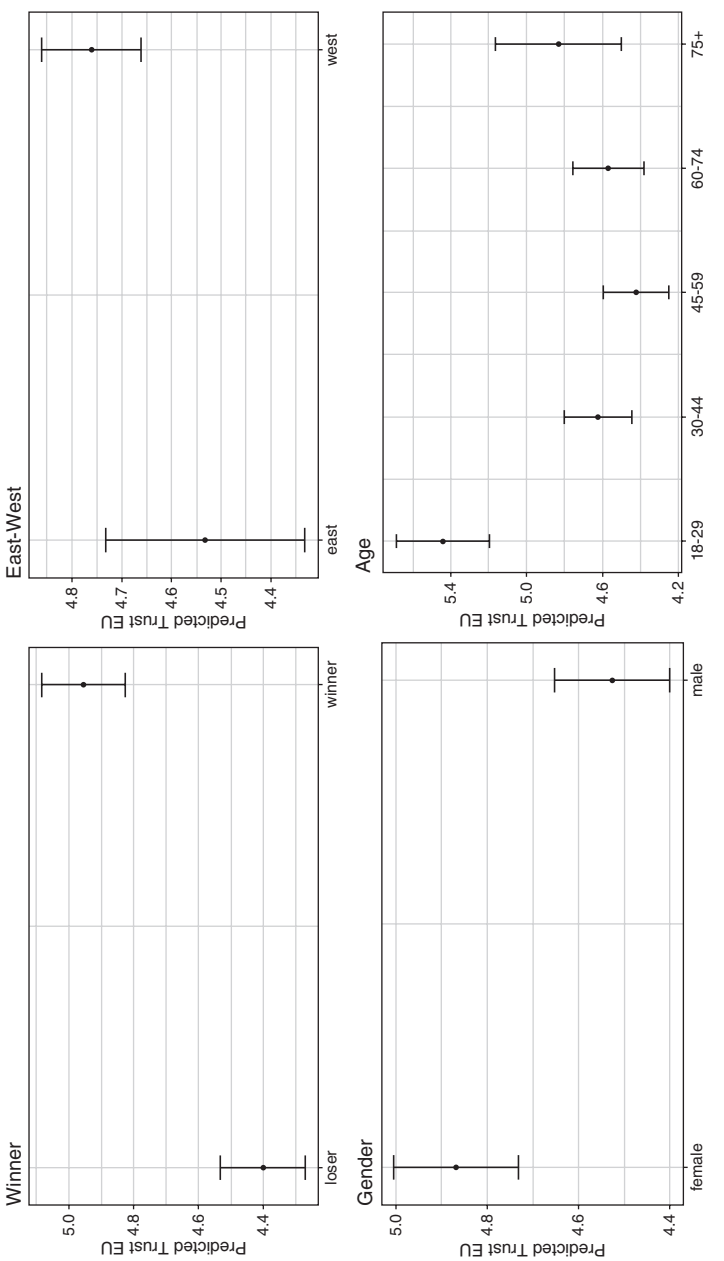

Fig. 8.1 (continued)

Table 8.3 Trust in European institutions, east-west models

	East	*West*
	b (beta)	*b* (beta)
Constant	**2.82**[a]	**4.07**[a]
Modernisation		
Postmaterialism (ref: material values)		
Materialist-mixed	−0.028 (−0.004)	**−0.381**[c] **(−0.064)**
Postmaterialist-mixed	−0.082 (−0.013)	**−0.273 (−0.004)**
Postmaterialism	−0.069 (−0.008)	**−0.492**[b] **(−0.078)**
Education (ref: no degree)	−0.217 (−0.025)	**0.356**[c] **(0.044)**
Civil society		
Political interest	0.012 (0.004)	−0.015 (−0.005)
Social trust (ref: can't be too careful)		
Depends	0.323 (0.055)	0.054 (0.009)
Most can be trusted	**0.639**[b] **(0.079)**	**0.474**[b] **(0.076)**
Political-economy		
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	**0.212**[c] **(0.062)**	0.032 (0.010)
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	**0.376**[b] **(0.093)**	0.127 (0.032)
Perceptions of German economy (current)	**0.305**[b] **(0.082)**	**0.240**[b] **(0.068)**
Perceptions of German economy (future)	**0.298**[c] **(0.075)**	**0.328**[a] **(0.089)**
Winners and losers (ref: loser)		
Winner	**0.675**[a] **(0.117)**	**0.509**[a] **(0.093)**
Socio-economic controls		
Gender (ref: female)		
Male	**−0.720**[a] **(−0.125)**	**−0.243**[c] **(−0.044)**
Age (ref: 18–29)		
30–44	**−0.996**[a] **(−0.151)**	**−0.761**[a] **(−0.124)**
45–59	**−1.01**[a] **(−0.158)**	**−1.00**[a] **(−0.166)**
60–74	**−0.995**[a] **(−0.152)**	**−0.806**[a] **(−0.127)**
75+	**−1.13**[b] **(−0.100)**	−0.489 (−0.047)
N	1165	2263
Multiple R^2/Adj. R^2	0.112/0.099	0.057/0.050

German citizens only
Source: ALLBUS 1994–2008
[a]$p \leq 0.001$; [b]$p \leq 0.01$; [c]$p \leq 0.05$

But there are three key differences. First, value-based explanations operate in the west but not the east. Postmaterialism, for example, reduces western trust. This is significant, given that postmaterialism is a long-term mechanism with precipitous effects. The manner in which it inhibits the formation of trust may be crucial to its overall pattern in the west. Second, education increases trust in the west, but is non-significant in the east. Education has consistently failed to operate in the manner outlined by modernisation approaches but here the evidence confirms a more orthodox influence: it stimulates support. Third, there are effects from political-economy in the east that appear to be absent in the west. Evaluations of personal economic circumstances, for example, stimulate eastern trust. Both current and prospective assessments are positive and significant, suggesting that eastern support is more strongly conditioned by perceptions of economic performance.

Figure 8.2 illustrates these effects. It shows the average marginal effects for a select group of variables from Table 8.3. The focus is on those variables shown to operate differently in east and west Germany. The cross-regional differences in postmaterialism, for example, are striking. In the east, the effect is largely absent, suggesting that trust does not depend on respondents' placement on the materialist-post-materialist scale. In the west, however, postmaterialism operates as hypothesised, eroding trust in the EU as respondents fall on the post-materialist side of the axis. The effect is not dramatic, but important. The wide confidence intervals surrounding education, however, are sufficient to rule out conclusive comments about an effect. Finally, the effects of perceptions of economic circumstances are intriguing. They appear similar between the east and west, elevating trust in both regions.

The evidence of east-west differences is strengthened further by the illustration of the predictors' relative importance (Fig. 8.3). The five principal variables in each of the models have been graphed. A mixture of factors dominate, with variation between east and west Germany. However, two essential points require reinforcing. First, prospective evaluations of political-economy influence eastern trust in the EU. As economic forecasts form important eastern benchmarks, trust may be especially vulnerable in circumstances in which expectations are not carefully managed. Second, age emerges as important in both models. This is supplemented with gender in the eastern model. This underlines a central finding from the multivariate analyses: in Germany the difficulties of cultivating trust in the EU are not merely economic or politi-

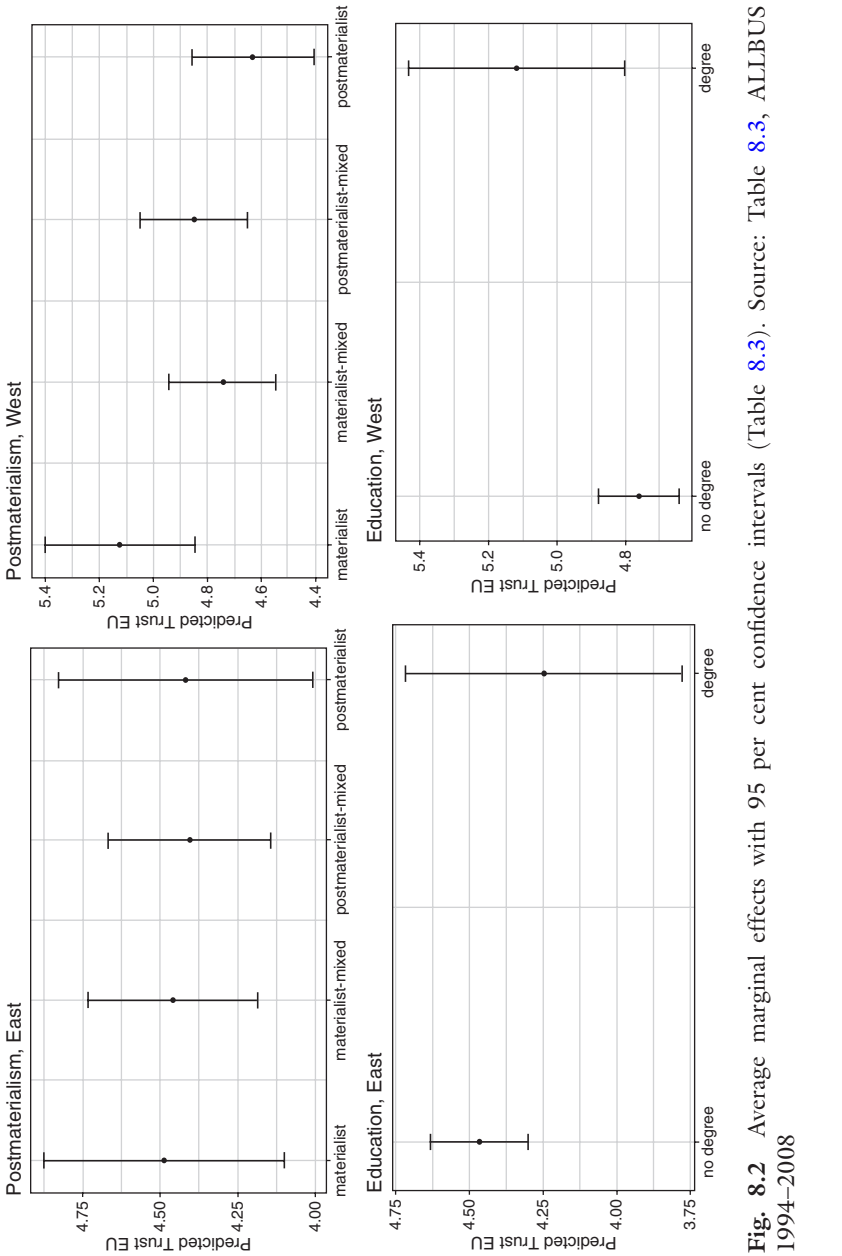

Fig. 8.2 Average marginal effects with 95 per cent confidence intervals (Table 8.3). Source: Table 8.3, ALLBUS 1994–2008

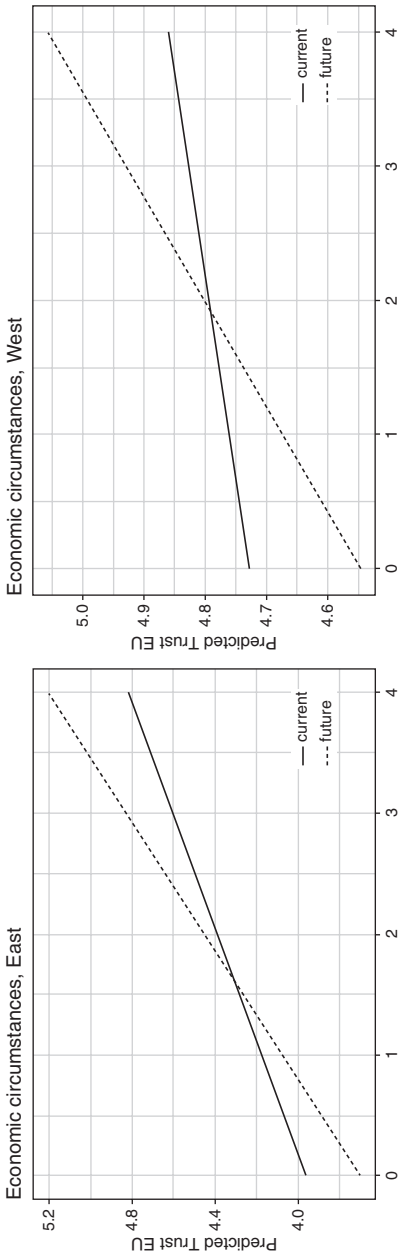

Fig. 8.2 (continued)

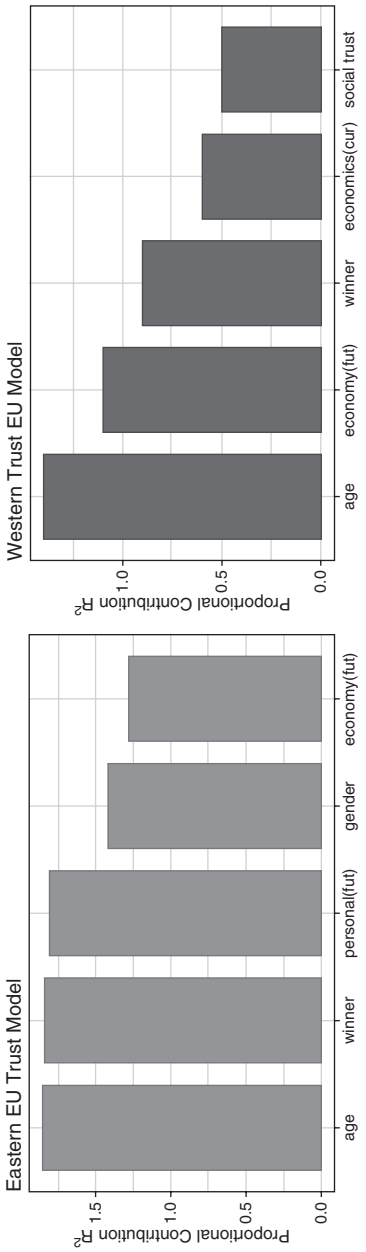

Fig. 8.3 Relative importance of predictors in trust in the EU (Table 8.3). Source: Table 8.3, ALLBUS 1994–2008

cal, but demographic. As trust is grounded in socio-demographic phenomena, this may make it resistant to short-term change, thereby contributing to explaining why trust in the EU exhibits such continuity over the years.

Trust in the European Union; Change Across Time

One final question to be addressed concerns change over time. Is there any evidence of change in the drivers of trust in the EU in more recent surveys? This question is answered by re-running the analysis from the final survey in which data are available: 2008 (Table 8.4).

The models both modify and supplement the findings. On the modifications, postmaterialism and social trust fail to surpass the significance threshold in the western model. This may be an aberration, given the consistency with which these findings have been uncovered in preceding sections of the analysis. Equally, the findings confirm a common pattern to the influence of political-economy, with evaluations of the current and future condition of the national economy stimulating trust in both the east and the west. The cross-regional influence of winning, meanwhile, also remains, whilst education increases trust in the west only.

Yet the models confirm the challenges of nurturing support for the EU. Once again, gender and age emerge as significant influences, with male respondents, along with those older than 18–29, significantly less trusting of the EU. The effects, moreover, appear strong. Compared with respondents within the 18–29 cohort, trust is lower for westerners aged between 45 and 59 and lower for easterners in the equivalent age group. Overall, then, these are not background influences confined to one age group, which have changed over time. They reinforce the point that sizeable sections of the German population, encompassing most age groups, lack trust in the EU.

Figure 8.4 supports these conclusions. The predicted levels of trust appear quite similar to the general findings of previous sections. Younger respondents in both east and west have noticeably high levels of trust. But trust falls sharply in older cohorts, with the predicted levels amongst those aged 45–59 especially low. Irrespective of whether this in the east or west, the substantive conclusion applies: trust in the EU is particularly low and one the principal factors connected to this is demographic.

Table 8.4 Trust in European institutions, east-west models, 2008

	East	*West*
	b (beta)	*b* (beta)
Constant	**2.57**[a]	**4.06**[a]
Modernisation		
Postmaterialism (ref: Material values)		
Materialist-mixed	−0.128 (−0.020)	−0.128 (−0.021)
Postmaterialist-mixed	−0.005 (−0.009)	0.103 (0.017)
Postmaterialism	−0.067 (−0.007)	−0.047 (−0.007)
Education (ref: no degree)	−0.331 (−0.037)	**0.586**[c] **(0.076)**
Civil society		
Political interest	0.049 (0.017)	−0.003 (−0.001)
Social trust (ref: can't be too careful)		
Depends	0.384 (0.064)	0.022 (0.003)
Most can be trusted	0.390 (0.047)	0.245 (0.038)
Political-economy		
Perceptions of economic circumstances (current)	0.198 (0.060)	−0.029 (0.009)
Perceptions of economic circumstances (future)	0.265 (0.069)	0.098 (0.025)
Perceptions of German economy (current)	**0.443**[b] **(0.125)**	**0.211**[c] **(0.061)**
Perceptions of German economy (future)	**0.478**[b] **(0.119)**	**0.425**[a] **(0.112)**
Winners and losers (ref: loser)		
Winner	**0.640**[b] **(0.110)**	**0.703**[a] **(0.126)**
Socio-economic controls		
Gender (ref: female)		
Male	**−0.514**[c] **(−0.125)**	**−0.321**[c] **(−0.058)**
Age (ref: 18–29)		
30–44	**−1.01**[b] **(−0.141)**	**−0.999**[a] **(−0.157)**
45–59	**−1.11**[a] **(−0.174)**	**−1.24**[a] **(−0.204)**
60–74	**−1.09**[b] **(−0.168)**	**−1.00**[a] **(−0.157)**
75+	**−1.39**[b] **(−0.127)**	**−0.883**[b] **(−0.091)**
N	748	1510
Multiple R^2/Adj. R^2	0.129/0.109	0.074/0.063

German citizens only
Source: ALLBUS 2008
[a]$p \leq 0.001$; [b]$p \leq 0.01$; [c]$p \leq 0.05$

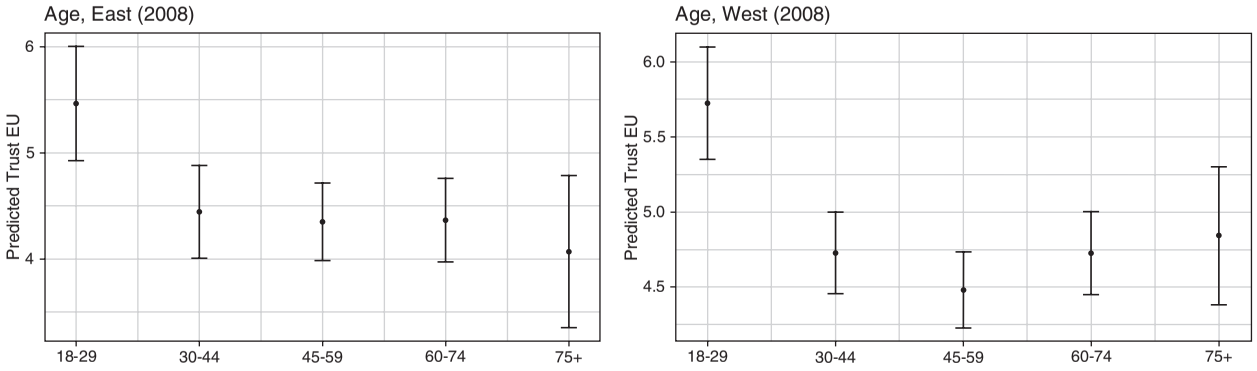

Fig. 8.4 Average marginal effects with 95 per cent confidence intervals (Table 8.4). Source: Table 8.4, ALLBUS 2008

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the foundations of trust in the EU. There is evidence that the four approaches shape trust, but they explain a noticeably smaller amount of the variance compared with other indicators. This suggests that trust in the EU may be more issue-specific or conditioned by other mechanisms not captured in these theories. In itself, however, this is an important finding, for given the variables encompassed by the approaches, the fact that the explanation is more limited suggests trust in the EU is a somewhat different form of support. This is, however, not to discount the approaches wholesale. Indeed, the analysis uncovered long-term effects from postmaterialism, which depress trust in the EU, confirming that postmaterialists' criticism of institutions of political authority extends to the EU. This creates a challenging context in which to nurture trust in the EU. In addition, the implications of the findings from civil society are challenging. This operated inconsistently. On the one hand, social trust spilled over to EU institutions, providing evidence about the lengths to which it generalises and suggesting that trust in people is part of a broad syndrome of attitudes reflecting whether or not one has a relatively positive attitude towards the political world. On the other hand, however, political interest was non-significant. As it stimulates support on indicators which are nationally but not supranationally focused, those cognitively engaged with politics are not unconditionally supportive. A general interest in politics and supportive attitudes towards the EU do not tend to go together.

In addition, short-term factors matter. Political-economy positively influenced trust in the EU, and if this demonstrates an awareness of the ways in which the EU is entwined with national economic decision-making, it suggests that people apply a standard reward-punishment logic, supporting the EU in more favourable times and sanctioning it in more testing circumstances. Yet different logics apply in the east and west. Western trust is nationally-centred; competent stewardship of the economy results in dividends of support, whilst in the east personal conditions supplement the salient criteria from which trust develops. Finally, winning matters, adding evidence to an approach that has already been demonstrated to be remarkably consistent across the research. Yet are the two concepts of the winning approach (marginal utility and cognitive dissonance) operating intuitively? At the EU level, gains through marginal utility may be comparatively less compared

with national institutions, since the number of preferences is considerably higher and the requirements to compromise increased. The potential for cognitive dissonance, meanwhile, may be diminished as the results of national elections are out of sync with those of the EU parliament. Despite these ambiguities, perhaps the core reason for winners' attitudes engendering support for EU institutions is representation. Winners may trust that the government will represent their interests in European fora, even if the likelihood of securing positive outcomes is comparatively lower.

Yet there are clear ways in which the evidence of this chapter is profoundly challenging. Chapter 4 found pervasively low trust in the institutions of the EU and little movement over time, and this chapter has contributed to explaining why, for unlike other forms of support, low trust in the EU has been sourced to two socio-demographic variables: age and gender. Other forms of support commonly fall back upon stronger effects from economic evaluations or a stable syndrome of support from civil society. This chapter, however, has found little to suggest that trust will be restored via institutional effectiveness, competent economic stewardship or creative strategies that nurture social trust and a cognitive engagement with politics. The twin effects of age and gender, in turn, mean that trust in the EU is less susceptible to the type of short-term movement from which an imminent recovery would follow. Key sections of the population lack trust in the EU. This encompasses the four older age groups—in effect those aged 30 and older. Placed within the demographics of the country, a conservative estimate would suggest that this covers approximately 76 per cent of the population. In addition, trust is lower amongst males, who constitute just under 50 per cent of the population. These demographics illustrate the scale of the challenge if trust in the EU it is to be recovered.

In consequence, therefore, they intersect with the political agenda. At present, the direction of German European policy is unclear. Despite significant domestic pressure, there has been no sudden shift in the dominant narrative of elite commitment to integration and the core freedoms upon which EU membership is premised. Further, there is no evidence of an emerging vision of how Germany's relationship with the EU might be recalibrated in the light of popular misgivings and shifting party alliances. This is not overly surprising; the lack of trust in the EU is being politicised in ways that inhibit rather than facilitate solutions. Any revised position would not only require agreement among

the major parties, but between them and maintaining cohesion amongst coalition partners is becoming increasingly challenging. In the short-term, it may pay greater electoral dividends to attack the centrist assumptions underpinning the approaches of the CDU and SPD. Harnessing the latent disaffection with the EU may be easier than designing an EU policy that acknowledges the discontent, whilst building a coherent narrative from the incongruous fragments of seemingly supportive polling data. Elite debate on these issues is much-needed and surely long overdue. As long as it is forestalled, however, it vacates important policy space into which smaller parties may move and entrench themselves. This leaves a difficult political dilemma: if the permissive consensus has eroded, caution may well remain the preferred approach; and yet a status quo strategy in which no clear policy is forthcoming may well lead to the established parties losing further votes to smaller parties.

At this point, the four approaches have been tested against a range of indicators of support for the German political system. The theoretical spine of the study emphasised the importance of modernisation, civil society, political-economy and winning and losing approaches. These were not conceived as separate theories, but as complementary approaches with important points of cross-fertilisation. By appraising them against indicators tapping into the functioning of German democracy (Chap. 5), the Basic Law (Chap. 6), trust in democratic institutions (Chap. 7) and the institutions of the European Union, a significant amount of empirical evidence has been presented. The evidence has been wide-ranging, and drawing out the central findings and their implications for German democracy is the final task to which this study now turns.

Notes

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20. Simon Bulmer, Charlie Jeffery and Stephen Padgett, 'Democracy and Diplomacy: Germany and Europe' in Simon Bulmer, Charlie Jeffery and Stephen Padgett (eds.) *Rethinking Germany and Europe: Democracy and Diplomacy in a Semi-Sovereign State* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 1–21.
21. The Constitutional Court's ruling on the Lisbon Treaty is a case in point. Whilst there was no constitutional objection to integration, it laid out a number of core state functions that could not, save in restrictive circumstances, be transferred to the European Union.
22. Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and Edgar Piel, *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie 1978–1983* (Munich: K.G. Saur), p. 598.
23. Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and Renate Köcher, *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie 1993–1997* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1997), p. 1157.
24. Ibid, p. 1158.
25. Ibid, p. 1151.
26. Renate Köcher, *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie 2003–2009* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), p. 285.
27. Ibid, p. 288.
28. Ibid, p. 298.
29. Douglas Webber, for example, distinguishes between vertical and horizontal integration. See, Douglas Webber, European Disintegration? The Politics of Crisis in the European Union (London: Macmillan, 2019), p. 14.
30. It is important to point out that these predate the 'migrant crisis'; i.e., the movement of large numbers of people following the humanitarian crisis in the Middle East and North Africa. Indeed, some evidence has emerged suggesting that whilst concerns about the scale of the influx remain, there remains broad adherence to the underlying humanitarian goals and positive experiences of migrants.
31. Ibid, p. 296.
32. Ibid, pp. 292–293.

CHAPTER 9

Popular Support and German Democracy; Resilience and Restoration

Introduction

This study has examined the structure and development of popular support in Germany. A key *descriptive* aim explored how much support there is in Germany. Are Germans satisfied with the functioning of their democracy? Are there attachments to the constitution? And how trusting are they of the major representative and judicial institutions, including those which are supranational? Supplementary descriptive aims assessed the extent to which support has been stable or dynamic and varies between those on either side of the former East-West border. A key *analytical* goal, meanwhile, explained how support develops by testing theoretical approaches and weighing the evidence. Which approaches are at work—and the particular variables operating—have profound implications for support in Germany. Some approaches posit long-term effects driven by value profiles acquired through the formative conditions in which individuals are socialised. Others suggest support is dynamic and is revised and adjusted on the basis of contemporaneous processes of experiential learning. In addition, by evaluating the approaches in the east and west of the country, the research analysed if the factors from which support begins are different from how it is maintained. Each of these tasks are important in themselves. They tell us much about the reserves of support underpinning the German polity. But the cumulative picture they build up is more than the sum of the parts and has broader consequences for the present condition and future trajectory of German democracy.

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A Sceptically Supportive Public

A central conclusion is that support is a finely-grained concept. Whilst the forms in which it is directed are closely-related and mutually reinforcing, it should not be discussed in dichotomous terms, but carefully partitioned into its component parts in recognition that people do not either accept or reject democracy, but merge shades of support in a pattern in which the central tendency is sceptical neutrality. Satisfaction with democracy averaged on or around the mid-point on the scale, demonstrating a mildly supportive but sceptical public. Since the majority of the population falls in the middle of the scale, support may transition in different directions and cannot be taken for granted.[1] Because it may erode abruptly and take years to regain, a broader allegiance is required, and aspects of this have been pinpointed through the deepening reserves of constitutional support which encase the political system within a protective layer. In the west, these withstood the challenges occasioned by unification. In the east, meanwhile, constitutional support is more limited. Indeed, just over 40 per cent of easterners are supportive on this dimension and it is being cultivated with considerable lag. Yet its steadily increasing trajectory suggests there are grounds for cautious optimism about the consolidation of democracy in the east. Support is increasing, there is no shortage of demand for democracy and the constitutional framework appears to be 'the only game in town'. In Germany as a whole, then, there is mild satisfaction with the functioning of democracy, cautious trust in democratic institutions and strong—and growing—constitutional support. By any criteria, then, the German political system seems to attract attitudes signifying stable and legitimate democratic government.

These conclusions apply to trust in democratic institutions—one of the most frequently-analysed indicators of support. As shown, Germans are cautiously trusting of democratic institutions. Trust is not extended in unqualified leeway or withdrawn in blanket repudiations, but is carefully partitioned between the core structures of the *Rechtsstaat*. It is more extensive towards judicial institutions and lower amongst those which are partisan, demonstrating how Germans distinguish amongst the structures of their political system, separating their evaluations of those who initiate and enact policies (Government and Parliament) from those who adjudicate upon their legality and constitutionality (Judiciary and Constitutional Court). And in circumstances in which it is vogue to lament vanishing trust in democracy, this study has shown that a proportion of it

has returned and Germans are more trusting of their democratic institutions than at any point since unification. Trust, then, is a property of political systems, which, once lost, may be reclaimed, meaning that democratic institutions that temporarily fail to meet public expectations are not irretrievably consigned to lack public confidence.[2] In fact, they may replenish public favour. Admittedly, this appears to occur lethargically, in a long-term process of rebuilding and repairing and in ways that are independent of the electoral cycle—or political scandal. These latter points are crucial. Elections and changes in government, whilst undoubtedly important for representation and accountability, do not necessarily act as a watershed from which injections of trust follow organically. The perspective of ordinary people is longer and the calculus of trusting is not exclusively partisan. Similarly, it is unclear if political scandal, commonly believed to trigger plummeting public confidence, impacted on German evaluations of democracy. During 1999/2000, the country was engulfed in a party finance scandal fuelled by illegal donations to the CDU. As the scandal endured, it hastened the departure of Helmut Kohl and paved the way for the rise of Angela Merkel. As has been shown, however, support for aspects of democracy around this time changed minimally, if at all. One interpretation is that the scandal reinforced pre-existing discontent—as has been shown, support was at a low ebb and the scandal may have contributed to inhibiting its recovery. Another interpretation, however, is that people distinguished between party, Chancellor and system, and punished the CDU at the ballot box quite independently of how they appraised democracy overall. Equally, as the individuals involved in the scandal were sanctioned by the courts, this may have strengthened people's support for the judicial and constitutional parts of system, meaning that partisan discontent acted as a stimulant of constitutional support rather than as a threat to the vitality of democracy.

Despite the many positive findings, clear challenges remain. Support for the EU is in short supply, with trust in its institutions pervasively low and showing no signs of recovering. This is not isolated to one section of the population or one time point. By contrast, it is systematic, enduring and entrenched, which creates challenges for German governments, for as policy-making is increasingly conducted in EU fora, it reinforces pre-existing discontent, compounding the legitimacy deficit and paving the way for populist appeal. The lack of trust, moreover, may be channelled into the political sphere in ways that disturb established political alignments and make policy-making more difficult and protracted.

Where policies require compromises, Germans must trust that they have been developed fairly, since they often require sacrificial behaviour—some of which may be long-term.[3] Trust is, in effect, the basic commodity on which policies are founded and on which their successful execution depends, especially where multilateral decision-making necessitates give and take amongst a larger number of actors with competing agendas. But a pervasive lack of trust in EU institutions may constrain governments from reaching a solution or acting in risky or uncertain environments. It may limit policy options and make compromise and consensus more difficult to achieve—and, in extremis, perhaps create a descending spiral of distrust. Overall, as elites seek to realise commitments to deeper integration in a low trust environment, so they govern without consensus.

The Pattern of Popular Support: Decline and Restoration

Despite providing an analysis of popular support, it may be possible to refine the picture even further with a more creative approach to survey questions. This is not a critique of the ALLBUS, which has provided an extensive picture of Germans' changing views of the political system over a period exceeding twenty years. Nor is it merely a plea for more data, but for different data, which examine additional aspects of the political system that are not commonly included in surveys. Examining the role of *Länder* in the Federal system, for example, is long overdue. Their governments scrutinise and implement Federal legislation, but they also act as a linkage mechanism between the tiers of government, sharing information and providing expression to regional interests in a tightly knit web of continuous bargaining. And yet there are so few survey questions evaluating their performance directly—indeed, the last included in the ALLBUS was in 1998. Questions about tensions between Federal government and the *Länder*—and about precise make-up of any regional discontent—thus remain difficult to establish. Related omissions apply to the Bundesrat, which represents regional interests and has formal input into Federal legislation. If different party-political majorities operate in the two chambers, it means that legislation is passed with a greater degree of political consensus. In addition, its consent (*Zustimmung*) is required where Federal legislation encroaches on the competences of the *Länder*. And yet despite being an important vehicle for representing regional interests, its omission from the questions on trust in democratic

institutions has made it difficult to establish how Germans view this aspect of their representative framework. How well do Germans perceive it is fulfilling its constitutional role? And how do ordinary people view the various proposals about its reform?

A related point follows about the Federal President. Although the role has traditionally been ceremonial, the incumbent is not entirely divorced from policy-making. And the competencies of the President are clear in circumstances where government formation proves difficult. This was especially the case following the 2017 Federal election, when attempts to form a coalition between the Union, FDP and Greens collapsed, bringing the President into the negotiation process, with the distinct possibility that fresh elections would be required. This may have been aberration, but as electoral change has increased the number of effective parties, it suggests that future coalitions may prove equally difficult to form, meaning that the role of the President may become more politicised in ways that are interesting to track.

Supplementing the surveys with new questions would thus refine the analysis, but as would increasing the frequency with which some questions are asked. A case in point is the European Union. Questions on its institutions were last asked in the ALLBUS in 2008, thereby missing crucial aspects of the global financial and sovereign debt crises, along with the migrant crisis. Understanding how these issues interlock with existing EU fatigue is essential to establishing public concerns about the EU. Although there are a great number of ways to investigate this, at least two ways emerge from the research of this study. By including other institutions of the EU—economic and administrative—would permit an analysis of whether discontent is politically focused and targeted or more widespread. But, in addition, some of the discontent may centre on specific aspects of sovereignty i.e., about the expectations of EU institutions within a multilateral system of governance and how they interface with those of the nation-state. If people believe there is a disconnect between German and EU institutions, where exactly is the breakdown most important and what is the role of the EU in contemporary German governance?

In spite of their many pitfalls, the surveys developed a picture of support which has longitudinal depth, enabling it to distinguish temporary movements from more enduring change. Two movements have been critical. The first was a steep and sharp decline following unification, which profoundly influenced appraisals of democracy—on some aspects up to

and including the present day. Importantly, this did not occur without rhyme or reason; Germans were responding to a major turning point in their political history and evaluating the everyday reality with varying degrees of support. Yet there was a second movement in which support recovered. As much of the recovery occurred gradually, it suggests that support may be swift to collapse and difficult to restore. Yet the crucial point is that this study has documented a new chapter in popular support in Germany—one in which the reserves of institutional support, which collapsed in the early 1990s, have been replenished. The recovery has been long-term and remains incomplete, and there is no guarantee that it will be maintained. But the restoration of support means that the overall pattern in Germany is less defined by its collapse following unification. The study, therefore, cautions against interpretations, which suggest there was a 'systematic erosion', or 'trendless fluctuation', of support. Support did not vanish irretrievably or change inexplicably; it reacted to the political times and the seasons.

The Varied Origins of Popular Support

In addition to charting the levels and movement of popular support, the research also made critical insights into how it begins. The study pinpointed where short- and long-term factors are at work and how these mediate support for different objects of the political system. Amongst the long-term factors, this study systematically tested the proposition that mass value change leads to an erosion of institutional support and declining deference towards authority, and the evidence confirming it has been pervasive. Postmaterialist values consistently engendered criticism of the institutions of political authority, along with the functioning of the democratic process. Postmaterialists are less satisfied with democracy, less trusting of democratic institutions and less supportive of the political structures of the EU. Since postmaterialists appraise the real-life workings of democracy with exacting standards, they heighten pressure on the system by demanding that it perform and deliver. Even if it meets these demands, however, as it is evaluated against increasingly taxing benchmarks, it runs the risk of becoming trapped in an expectations gap whereby demands become harder to fulfil and additional distemper is created. If postmaterialist values are the outgrowth of modernisation and become more widely held amongst the population, they will create a context in which aspects of democracy

will necessarily encounter popular disaffection targeted on governments and elites.

Yet it is for this reason that connections between postmaterial values and high-order forms of support are so important. Postmaterialists are not cynically rejecting of democracy, but critically supportive, in that they distinguish between principles and practice and adhere to the basic constitutional order when its institutions and elites have forfeited confidence. Germans may be demanding that the institutionalised reality of democracy correspond more closely to its constitutional ideals, pushing for a fuller expression of the constitution in the day-to-day exercise of authority. The issue, then, centres on how to achieve this. Authors have proposed that democracy should be revamped in a more direct and participatory style to create multiple and varied channels for citizen input.[4] On this argument, reforms which make decision-making more transparent, horizontal and interactive, cultivate appreciation of the workings of democracy and are more likely to generate compromises in decision-making.[5] This connects directly to postmaterialists' desire to be more involved in the democratic process, creating circumstances in which policies may be conceived to mutual benefit via an educative process.[6] But would they necessarily restore public confidence? The evidence is equivocal. They may not be more efficient mechanisms for addressing imbalances of power, creating better policies or accommodating the preferences of people where there is sharp polarisation of views. In short, they may change national political cultures without doing so in a direction that is necessarily more supportive. Although there are good reasons for evaluating the set-up of government more closely, without evidence that specific measures would counterbalance falling support, the normative case for their implementation is less compelling.

The modernisation approach, however, is not confirmed in entirety. Education was largely unrelated to support, a finding which counters standard claims that the educated should be more critical of institutions but supportive of democracy overall. Across four separate chapters, education generally failed to surpass the significance threshold, suggesting that the theorised relationship is present at a bivariate level but fades as statistical controls are applied. Clearly, the effects may be indirect or entwined with other variables which make disentangling the relationship more complicated. Yet the implications of this are that although educated citizens may be more cognitively mobile, the effects of this on support appear limited. Educated individuals may be equipped with the skills and resources to

navigate the political world for themselves and take more independent decisions about it, but this may not necessarily lead to support or its erosion. Education may enhance cognition, but its effects appear to be largely benign as the educated evince sceptical neutrality.

The research has also affirmed the importance of dispositions inhered within civil society, confirming the long-established tradition which postulates that citizens who are supportive of democracy are those who are active within the public realm on a voluntary basis. The evidence of this is wide-ranging. Social trust positively influenced all indicators of support, confirming not only that social trust permeates to politics but the lengths to which it generalises. The relationship was found towards the functioning of democracy, constitutional support, trust in its democratic institutions and trust in the EU. Trust in people appears to be part of a syndrome of beliefs denoting generally favourable dispositions, binding individuals together and binding them to the actors and institutions of government. This provides democracy with an all-important source of support independent of delivery. As support is grounded in mutual sympathy and loyalty, communal affect appears to be a central fly-wheel of a well-functioning relationship between citizens and the state. If it is possible to incentivise the creation of social infrastructure which nurtures faith in people, the evidence suggests that this has normative worth and practical value. Clearly, however, the evidence was more compelling in the west and the underdevelopment of eastern civil society—and the comparative lack of permeation of trusting attitudes to the political realm—remains sobering. The implications therefore extend to nurturing structures of organised pluralism in new democracies. All too often, discussions of state building prioritise structural features, especially institutional design. But the trusting attitudes on which those institutions rest are critical to their development and maintenance.

In addition, support is responsive to short-term economic stimuli, confirming that institutional performance matters: people are guided by responsibility attributions, crediting government for nurturing buoyant economic circumstances and sanctioning it in less favourable times. As shown, economic evaluations impact strongly on all indicators of support, but weakly on pride in the Basic Law. Yet the ways in which attitudes to the Basic Law are insulated from the economy evidences their diffuse properties, revealing that the system attracts support independent of what is produced—a key indicator of democratic maturity. At other levels, however, multivariate analyses confirmed that evaluations of the economy influence support. Support for institutions, for example, appears to be a *quid pro quo* for the fulfilment

of expectations. Perceptions of the economy ranked highly amongst the predictors, demonstrating that the political-economy of attitudes towards democracy is real and substantively important. There are, to be sure, asymmetries in how these perceptions appear to influence support. Even when the macro-economy is strong, support may not return. One interpretation of this is that people are far more willing to sanction government for failure whilst crediting themselves for material well-being. Support, therefore, may be swift to collapse in adverse circumstances, but slow to recover in a more sanguine environment. Alternatively, the sources from which information about the economy are obtained add growing complexity to responsibility attributions. There are multiple and competing streams of information, as macro-economic decision-making is taken in a range of institutions, including those which are regional. Assigning credit and responsibility in these circumstances is not straight-forward. Competent economic stewardship, therefore, may nurture support, but this should not be taken too far. Its effects, whilst real, may be limited.

One of the most consistent sources of support, however, is winning and losing, which shaped support for all objects of the political system. How people vote in national elections influences their support, confirming that it is a function of being part of the political majority or minority. Winners were more satisfied with democracy, expressed pride in the constitution and were more trusting of democratic institutions, including the EU. Since winning is a general steering mechanism operating across levels, elections not only decide 'who gets what, when and how', but condition the support with which parties and leaders govern. The implications of this are considerable. Electoral volatility has diminished the proportion of voters supporting the two main parties and increased the number of effective parties in the system. Yet how this influences support in the long-term is an open question. Voters responded to Grand coalition in 2005 in much the same way as when other governments were formed: distinctions between winners and loser obtained. But if they become the norm, this may fuel disaffection by making it harder for voters to hold the incumbent government to account—or to reject specific directions in public policy.

The Glass That Is Half-Full; Eastern Support

During the first ten years of unification, deep, reinforcing and persistent east-west differences contributed much to the character of German political attitudes. This study has shown the east-west axis remains real and

salient. Indeed, it not only structures attitudes towards to democracy but is one of the principal influences. And by separately modelling support in the east and west of the country, the research has also shown that how support begins in a new democracy contrasts with how it is maintained in an established democracy.[7] Three points from the research in the east illustrated this. First, eastern support is more closely linked to personal material well-being and democracy's ability to deliver. The speed with which support in the east drained away during the early 1990s coincided with negative appraisals about austere personal finances, confirming that political tensions strongly intersected with the socio-economic course of the country. Second, there are strong effects from socialist values, which negatively influenced evaluations of the practice of democracy along with the trustworthiness of democratic institutions.[8] Enduring effects from these values contributed to persistently lower support in core institutions, thereby underlining their importance and cautioning against assumptions about the rapid reorientation of ideological values in transitional contexts. Third, there is the comparative underdevelopment of eastern civil society, with social trust weakly associated with support. The focus is not on the existence of freely formed organisations, but about the speed with which the attitudes developed therein permeate to the political realm, and the evidence shows that more time may be needed for this to occur.

Yet, as shown, the picture is not entirely pessimistic. Although east and west Germans continue to look at aspects of democracy quite differently, steadily increasing constitutional support shows the ways in which the east has moved beyond the nadir of support in the early 1990s, when discontent suffused institutional structures and the everyday reality of democracy. This is no longer the entire story. Easterners are more trusting of democratic institutions and more satisfied with democracy than at any point since unification. As easterners have become somewhat more supportive of the institutions and processes, they may have accepted that democracy is less a normative utopia than a mechanism for aggregating interests and regulating political conflict. Any remaining discontent may be manageable within the democratic formula. Regional parties constitute important outlets for particular grievances, whilst assemblies offer some prospect of resolving them. As they are channelled into the political arena via political parties and they may be functional for German democracy.

Despite its durability, however, storm-warnings about German democracy have been common-place. Political science is replete with inferences that, imminent or impending, parliamentary democracy is regressing into

a state of crisis. These arguments suggest that parts of the system are inherently fragile or in terminable decay.[9] These concerns, dressed up in various academic garb, have emerged periodically during the lifespan of the Federal Republic. They dominated the post-war years and were the motivation behind much of the initial survey research. They were amplified by some of the findings of the Civic Culture study, injecting important momentum into the comparative and behavioural traditions. They reappeared during the 1970s, when theoretical discussions of a 'legitimacy crisis' intersected with confrontations with left-wing terrorism.[10] Milder versions resurfaced when the Greens gained parliamentary representation at the Federal elections in 1983. And unification raised concerns about the viability of democracy in a former hard-line socialist state. Yet on every occasion the essential stability of the system was confirmed. At the time of writing, similar concerns have been made regarding the rise and breakthrough of the *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD). On this reasoning, the strength of party's electoral support evidences the further fracturing of the party system. And the inability of parties to form a government demonstrates squabbling inanition and the proclivity towards *immobilisme*. The ways in which the party's nationalist discourse is wrapped in anti-democratic and Islamophobic rhetoric threatens the consensus style of German politics and social cohesion. These concerns should not be trivialised or dismissed. They are real and serious and have been justifiably elevated to the top of the agenda of the study of German politics.

Yet they should not overlook the support that the system attracts. Although parts of it are reeling from the breakthrough of the AfD, it is far from clear that there is a basic challenge to the system—or indeed that the party profited from an *increase* in discontent; it may well have harnessed pre-existing anxieties more effectively than other parties. Nor should it be inferred that its breakthrough equates to a rejection of democracy; the discontent may be policy-centred and elite-focussed. And one should not overlook the normative support uncovered in this analysis, which evidences the wider durability of German democracy. During the time-frame analysed, the polity not only vividly demonstrated that it is a stable and legitimate parliamentary democracy, but it confirmed that it is one which is adaptable and has integrative capacity. It absorbed over sixteen million easterners, who had little experience of living in democratic arrangements, participating in free elections and exercising basic

democratic rights. As easterners entered unified Germany with heightened expectations, the early years of unification were thus not only ones of broken promises, hopes dashed and a prolonged politics of austerity, but they put immense strain on the system. And yet German democracy has overcome these challenges and Germans cooperate together within a common—and accepted—political framework. Many of the problems that are front and centre in German politics are broader challenges confronting democratic governance in the twenty-first century—inequality of condition, fracturing party systems, a backlash to migration and the need to realign multilateral decision-making structures with those of the nation-state. The solutions to them are not straight-forward. Yet by confronting them with deep reserves of support, German democracy may in an enviable position.

Notes

1. Richard Rose and Bernhard Wessels, 'The Absolute and Instrumental Legitimacy of Democracy', *Studies in Public Policy* (Glasgow, University of Strathclyde: Centre for the Study of Public Policy).
2. On the importance of this, see: Jean Cohen 'Trust, Voluntary Association and Workable Democracy: The Contemporary American Discourse of Civil Society' in Mark E. Warren, *Democracy & Trust* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 208–249.
3. Marc Hetherington, *Why Trust Matters: Declining Political Trust and the Demise of American Liberalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).
4. Donatella della Porta, *Can Democracy be Saved* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013).
5. Archon Fung, *Empowered Participation: Reinventing Urban Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).
6. Carole Pateman, *Participation and Democratic Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).
7. Richard Rose, William Mishler and Christian Haerpfer, *Democracy and Its Alternatives: Understanding Post-Communist Societies* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998).
8. Edeltraud Roller, 'Einstellungen zur Demokratie im vereinigten Deutschland: Gibt es Anzeichen für eine abnehmende Differenz', in Peter Krause and Ilona Ostner (eds.) *Leben in Ost und West Deutschland: Eine sozialwissenschaftliche Bilanz der deutschen Einheit 1990–2010* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2010), pp. 597–614.

9. See, for example, 'Germany's Conservative Meltdown The Approaching End to Merkel's Tenure'. *Der Spiegel*, 22nd June 2018. http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/migrant-policy-conflict-could-spell-the-end-for-merkel-a-1214503.html. Also, Alexander Neubacher writes of the death of the German Party system: Crisis in Berlin The End of German Politics As We Know It. http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/csu-merkel-conflict-means-german-politics-is-changing-a-1216204.html.
10. Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis* (Boston Beacon Press, 1975).

Appendix

This appendix provides additional information about the variables used in the analyses.

Dependent variables:

- Satisfaction with Democracy. 'How satisfied are with democracy as it is practised in the Federal Republic of Germany?' Responses: 1 = very satisfied; 2 = fairly satisfied; 3 = somewhat satisfied; 4 = somewhat dissatisfied; 5 = fairly dissatisfied; 6 = very dissatisfied. The polarity of the variable was reversed and recoded 0–5, with 0 denoting very dissatisfied and 5 denoting very satisfied.
- Pride in the Basic Law. The question used is: 'On these cards you will find a number of things one can be proud of as a German, Please select the three things you are most proud of.' *The Basic Law*, The German Parliament ('Bundestag'), The achievements of German athletes, Economic successes, German art and literature, scientific achievements, social welfare achievements.
- Trust in democratic institutions. This has been obtained from the following question: 'I am now going to read out a number of public institutions and organisations. Please tell me for each institution or organisation how much trust you place in it. Please use this scale. 1 means you have absolutely no trust at all 7 means you have a great

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deal of trust You can differentiate your answers using the numbers in between. What about the—Health service, German constitutional court, German Parliament, Municipal administration, Army, Catholic church, Protestant church, Judicial system, Television, Newspapers, Universities and other institutes of higher education [Hochschulen], German government, Trade unions, Police, Job centres, State pension system, Employer associations'. The scale was recoded 0–6 with higher values indicating more trust.

- Trust in the European Union. The question used is similar to that for domestic institutions: 'And now I will name a few institutions of the European Union. Once again, please tell me how much trust you have in the individual institutions. 1 means you have absolutely no trust at all 7 means you have a great deal of trust. What about—The European Commission, The European Parliament, The European Court of Justice'. The scale was recoded 0–6 with higher values indicating more trust.

Independent variables:

Modernisation

- Materialism-Postmaterialism. The following statements were used to construct the standard materialist-postmaterialist index: 'Looking at the list below, please tick a box next to the one thing you think should be COUNTRY's highest priority, the most important thing it should do. Highest priority COUNTRY should … (1) Maintain order in the nation (2) Give people more say in government decisions (3) Fight rising prices (4) Protect freedom of speech. And which one do you think should be COUNTRY's next highest priority, the second most important thing it should do? Next highest priority should … (1) Maintain order in the nation (2) Give people more say in government decisions (3) Fight rising prices (4) Protect freedom of speech.'
- Evaluations of Socialism. The following statements are about the situation in the old and new federal states. 'Please tell me for each statement whether you: completely agree, tend to agree, tend not to agree or do not agree at all: Socialism is basically a good idea, it was just put into practice badly'. The strong agreement was coded to have the higher values.

- Education. Recoded dummy variable in which respondents with a university degree were coded 1, respondents without a university degree were scored 0.

Civil Society

- The question on political interest used was: 'How interested in politics are you? (4) Very strongly? (3) Strongly? (2) Middling? (1) Very little? (0) Or not at all?'
- The question on social trust is: 'Some people think that most people can be trusted. Others think that one can't be careful enough when dealing with other people. What do you think?' The variable was recoded: 0 'one can't be careful enough'; (1) 'it depends'; and (2) 'most people can be trusted'.

Political-Economy

- Perceptions of current personal economic circumstance. 'How would you rate your own current economic circumstance?' Responses were: very good, coded 1; good, coded 2; part good, part bad, coded 3; bad, coded 4; and very bad, coded five. The polarity of this variable was reversed.
- Perceptions of future personal economic circumstance. 'How would you rate your economic circumstances in one year's time?' Responses were: considerably better, coded 1; somewhat better, coded 2; the same, coded 3; somewhat worse, coded 4; and considerably worse, coded five. The polarity of this variable was reversed.
- Perceptions of current macroeconomic circumstance. 'How would you rate the current economic situation in Germany?' Responses were: very good, coded 1; good, coded 2; part good, part bad, coded 3; bad, coded 4; and very bad, coded five. The polarity of this variable was reversed.
- Perceptions of future macroeconomic performance. 'How would you rate the economic situation in Germany in one year's time?' Responses were: considerably better, coded 1; somewhat better, coded 2; the same, coded 3; somewhat worse, coded 4; and considerably worse, coded five. The polarity of this variable was reversed.

Winning-Losing

- Winner-Loser. 'Which party do you intend to vote for in the next Federal election?' Note: this question refers to the second vote, Zweite Stimme. Responses: 1 = CDU-CSU; 2 = SPD; 3 = FDP; 4 = Die Grünen; 5 = Die Republikanner; 6 = PDS/Die Linke; 7 = NPD; 30 = DKP; 90 = Other Party; 97 Refused to provide response; 98 = don't know; 99 = No Answer. This variable was recoded to form the winner-loser distinctions for each survey in which the question featured.

Controls

- Age. Self-reported age in years.
- Gender. Male coded 1, female coded 2.
- East-West. west coded 0, east coded 1.

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