

European Integration, Equality Rights and People's Beliefs: Evidence from Germany

Jürgen Gerhards^{1,*} and Holger Lengfeld²

Abstract: At the outset, this article describes in detail how the European Union has replaced the nation-state concept of equality with a transnational idea of equality for all European citizens. It then investigates the extent to which German respondents support the idea of non-discrimination between German nationals and other Europeans. The existing literature argues that the process of opening up the borders of the nation-states will challenge the traditional symbolic code of equality held by citizens, and impact negatively on the existing distribution of resources. In particular, those people who lack economic resources and hold more traditional or right wing political orientations are likely to oppose the notion of Europe-wide equality. However, the empirical results show that the majority of the German population supports the idea that citizens from other European countries should enjoy the same rights as nationals. Most of this paper's hypotheses are either falsified or correlations are rather weak, and these findings bring us to the conclusion that, at least as far as the German population is concerned, there is no evidence for a strong socio-structural or value-orientated cleavage with regard to equal rights for all Europeans.

Introduction

European integration began with the creation of a common market for the coal and steel industries. Over time, other policy fields were incorporated into the integration process: a customs union was created, a common market and monetary union were formed, and, finally, a common currency regime was established by many EU countries. This extension of European cooperation corresponds to the expansion of European institutions, which have increasingly been assuming more responsibilities and gaining greater independence. In turn, this has increased exchange between Member States of the EU, weakened the borders of the constituent nation-states and contributed to structural integration. Indeed, there is considerable empirical evidence that Europe's political integration has also led to a Europeanization of the Member States' societies (Kaelble, 2007; Münch, 2008; Fligstein, 2008).

The political process behind European integration has not only advanced the structural integration of the Member States by increasing exchange between them, it

has reframed the nation-state concept of equality. The idea of nationally bounded freedom to move, settle, and work is being Europeanized and replaced by an idea according to which all citizens of Europe are regarded as equals, meaning that they can move, settle, and work in any European Union Member State (Ferrera, 2003, 2005; Bartolini, 2005; Delhey and Kohler, 2006; Mau, 2010). In addition, the freedom of movement rule includes several additional social rights, including, among other things, the entitlement to the same social security and tax benefits as national citizens. Finally, the European Union guarantees a set of political rights for all EU citizens, particularly the right to vote and to stand as a candidate for municipal elections in the Member State of residence. Step by step, the European Union has replaced the nation-state concept of equality with the idea of a Europe-wide equality for all European citizens, by establishing a European citizenship status consisting of equal economic, social, and political rights.

In this article, we examine whether EU-citizens support the notion that within their nation-state citizens from other European countries should enjoy the same

¹Institut für Soziologie, Freie Universität Berlin, Garystr. 55, 14195 Berlin, Germany; ²School of Business Administration, Economics and Social Sciences, University of Hamburg, Welckerstr. 8, 20354 Hamburg, Germany. *Corresponding author. Tel: 00493083857651, Fax: 00493083857652; Email: j.gerhards@fu-berlin.de

economic, social, and political rights as themselves. In the 'From National to Europeanized Equality' section, we consider in more detail how the European Union has replaced the nation-state concept of equality by a transnational one. In the following sections, we examine citizens' approval of the idea of a Europeanized conception of equality. We start by having a closer look at the existing literature, which comes to a rather sceptical conclusion. It is argued that the process of opening up national borders will first of all challenge the traditional symbolic code of equality held by citizens, and secondly will have a negative impact on the existing distribution of resources which will then lead to intensified cultural conflicts and competition in the labour market (Ferrera, 2005; Kriesi *et al.*, 2006, 2008). It is assumed that, in particular, people lacking economic resources and holding more traditional values or right wing political orientations will oppose the notion of Europe-wide equality and will make up the constituency of a new cleavage structure. Therefore, we ask whether and to what extent preferences towards Europeanized equality are influenced by socio-economic interests and ideological beliefs related to an emerging cleavage structure.

In 'Data, Variables, and Methods' section, we explicate the data sets, methods and variables used in our study. As we rely on two surveys conducted in Germany, the data sets do not allow us to derive any generalizations about other European countries. However, Germany seems to be a relevant test case, as it is one of the most attractive target countries for persons planning to leave their country of origin and to move to another Member State of the European Union (Brücker and Weise, 2001). In 'Empirical Results' section, we examine the extent to which German respondents support the idea of equal treatment of German nationals and other Europeans. In contrast to theoretical expectations, the descriptive findings show that the majority of the German population supports the idea of Europeanized rights. Cleavage theory supporters would argue, however, that even though two-thirds of the population support the principle of Europeanized equal rights, the remaining third who oppose the principle may play a crucial role in the political process if they form a determined, socially coherent cleavage group. Using multivariate analysis, we therefore test whether and to what extent preferences towards Europeanized equality are influenced by socio-economic interests (measured by employment position, educational degree, place of residence) and ideological beliefs (political beliefs, societal values). But again, results contradict most of the theoretical expectations, insofar as they are either falsified or correlations are rather weak. These findings bring us to the conclusion that, at least as far as the German population is

concerned, there is no evidence for a strong socio-structural or value-orientated cleavage with regard to Europeanized economic, political, or social rights.

From National to Europeanized Equality

European societies of the 19th and 20th century are generally characterized as nation-state societies. One of the main characteristics of the nation-state is the monopolization of military force, with the aim of stabilizing national borders and retaining control over all internal affairs. The extension of power over internal affairs is achieved with the penetration of society by police, bureaucracy, and the creation of a domestic, institutional structure. These institutions range from the educational, social security, and health-care systems to the political system and the constitution of the national economy. Alongside the creation of these institutions, people who live within a specific nation-state are included into its social structures. Obviously, nation-state building, democratization, and the extension of the welfare state are associated with an exclusive coding of equality. As a result, non-members (i.e. members of other nation-states), are excluded and treated unequally, with the exception of universal and codified human rights that apply to all humans. Hence, nation-state building must be understood as a process of boundary building in two ways: '(i) as the demarcation of physical space through the deployment of effective instruments of territorial defence—primarily of a military and administrative nature—and (ii) as the creation of explicit codes and forms of distinction (e.g. citizenship rights) between insiders and outsiders and nationals and non-nationals' (Ferrera, 2003: p. 617).

For British sociologist Marshall (1949/1983), the reinforcement of national citizenship status is one of the most significant pre-conditions for intrastate social inclusion (Marshall, 1949/1983). He defines citizenship as consisting of three types of rights: civil rights, especially those of economic freedom, political rights, such as freedom of speech and the right to vote, and social rights, most notably social security. The gradual implementation of these rights has caused the inclusion of citizens within their nation-state, and it has simultaneously excluded those who do not belong to a particular nation-state (Marshall, 1949/1983).¹

However, since the mid-20th century, European integration has consistently changed the exclusive concept of an equality-based single nation-state citizenship. The European Union ensures that all Member States'

Table 1 Nation-state rights and European citizenship status

	Civil rights	Political rights	Social rights
<i>Nation-state</i>	Protection of person, property right, freedom of contract, freedom of speech and religion	Equal active and passive right to vote (municipal/regional/national)	Compulsory schooling, social security rights, basic social care
<i>European Union</i>	Freedom of establishment, access to national labour markets, freedom of contract and trade	Equal active and passive right to vote (municipal, European Parliament)	Access to the national educational systems, (limited) access to the national social security system

citizens have open access to all national labour markets within the European Union and, by association, to the national social security systems, and they are allowed to take part in local, municipal, and communal elections. Using Marshall's terminology, it is possible to interpret this process as the establishment of a European citizenship status (Ferrera, 2003, 2005; Maas, 2007). The nationally limited coding of equality is being replaced by a European-limited one, in which all citizens of the European Union are regarded as equals and in which borders of legitimized inequality shift outwards towards the boundaries of the European Union. Table 1 shows the similarities between national and Europeanized equality rights.

Economic rights

In the labour market sphere, the idea of Europe-wide equality has been implemented almost completely (see Gerhards, 2008). Following the Single European Act of 1987, the European common market was launched in 1993 with the so-called 'Four Freedoms': people, goods, services, and capital should be able to move just as freely within the European Union as they do in national markets. Freedom of movement does not apply only to workers, but also to people outside of the labour force, for instance students and pensioners. The crucial regulation for our research question is the so-called freedom of movement for employees. This regulation guarantees that every EU citizen may look for employment in another Member State under the same conditions as a national of that country.² As a consequence of implementing the freedom of movement rule, the idea of European equality has become a Europe-wide legal right that guarantees equal opportunities in the labour market. However, transition periods were applied to Eastern European accession countries, because some of the old EU Member States, especially Germany and Austria,

expected substantial incoming migration movements (cf. Kvist, 2004). Even though the transition rules have been agreed upon for new EU countries, they only extend to May 2011.

Political rights

The European Union guarantees a number of fundamental political rights for all EU citizens: freedom of speech and assembly, right of petition, freedom of association, and the right to elect the European Parliament. Since the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, the European Union has integrated these rights under the umbrella of 'EU citizenship'. In most respects, EU citizens have the same or very similar rights compared to native citizens in any particular Member State. The rights granted to EU citizens also include the right to vote and to stand as a candidate for municipal elections in the Member State of residence. Nevertheless, the right to participate in national elections is still reserved for citizens of the respective nation-state.

Social rights

The freedom of movement rule appends additional rights which are connected to welfare rights (Ferrera, 2003, 2005), including the entitlement to the same social security and tax benefits as nationals have, as well as the right to subsidized housing. Regardless of nationality, every foreign EU-employee is entitled to live with his or her family, and the family is entitled to receive the same family allowances as nationals. The freedom of movement rule also implies complete coordination of social security benefits. Pension and retirement rights, as well as rights to other social services, are transferred across national borders. Consequently, the employee's acquired rights must be preserved, even if he or she settles in another Member State. Contributions made to social

security in different countries are counted, regardless of the Member State in which they were made. This has been established in order to ensure that spatially mobile employees are always insured, and so that they are immediately able to benefit from insurance in the target country, if necessary.

Explaining Citizens' Attitudes towards Europeanized Equality Rights

It remains an open question whether people support the institutional blueprint concerning the equality of all European citizens, or whether they prefer the idea of a nation-state bounded equality, which differentiates between nationals and foreigners. The existing literature comes to a rather sceptical conclusion. Ferrera (2005: p. 229) argues that opening up the borders of the nation-state will challenge the traditional symbolic code of equality, a code which has a long heritage and is deeply internalized by the people. In addition to a potential cultural conflict, Ferrera (2005: p. 229) assumes that the implementation of the idea of a Europeanized equality will 'disturb the existing distribution of material resources and life chances among natives'. If foreign employees are perceived as a threat to the respondent's own status and identity, it then becomes more likely that the citizens would support closing-off national borders. Kriesi and colleagues argue that the opening of national markets enhances the degree of economic competition, predominantly for firms operating in domestic sectors (Kriesi *et al.*, 2006, 2008). In addition, immigration processes which started at the beginning of the 1990s have led to an increase in cultural diversity in Western European nation-states. The authors assume that rising competition and the entry of cultural 'outsiders' will mobilize the objections of insiders. This hypothesis is underlined by recent empirical evidence based on data from European Values Survey. It is shown that a majority of respondents reject free access to domestic labour markets for foreign workers (Gerhards, 2008). About 40 per cent support the idea of equal access to all European labour markets in old EU Member States and only 13 per cent in Central and Eastern European countries. Following this line of argument, it seems unlikely that large parts of the Western European population will support the idea of Europeanized equality. Thus, our first hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H1: The majority of the German population will reject the idea of Europeanized economic, political, and social rights.

As already mentioned, cleavage theory assumes that citizens are differently affected by Europeanization processes depending on their actual socio-economic position and their ideological orientations because advantages and disadvantages of Europeanization seem to be distributed unequally (Ferrera, 2003, 2005; Bartolini, 2004, 2005; Kriesi *et al.*, 2008; Fligstein, 2008). Kriesi *et al.* (2008) assume that the losers include (i) employees and all workers whose firms operate in domestic markets which have been protected by the state in former times, (ii) low-skilled workers who experience an increase in the risk of being laid-off and a relative decline in wages, and (iii) citizens who strongly identify with their nation-state and who perceive immigration as a threat to the collective identity of the native population (Kriesi *et al.*, 2008: pp. 6). On the other hand, workers in firms operating in foreign markets, highly skilled employees and culturally transnational-oriented citizens are at an advantage from Europeanization.³

Starting with socio-economic factors, the bulk of research argues that discrimination and hostility towards a minority group will increase when the minority group is perceived as a threat with respect to economic resources. Unfortunately, the data used in our analysis does not allow us to test the most elaborate version of the theory as it was presented by Bobo and Hutchings (1996), as some of the variables are missing.⁴ However, we are able to test the broader idea, that if citizens from other European countries are perceived as competitors, it becomes more likely that the respondent would support closing-off the domestic labour market. This hypothesis is in line with a large body of empirical studies from different countries (Olzak, 1992; Quillian, 1995; Scheepers, Gijberts and Coenders, 2002; Rajman, Semyonov and Schmidt, 2003; Gorodzeisky and Semyonov, 2009). We assume that this hypothesis does not hold true only for attitudes towards equal access to the labour market, but also for attitudes towards social equality, and, to a lesser extent, towards political equality at the municipal level. More specifically, we can formulate four related hypotheses which are in line with previous studies.

*H2a: Employment position—*Low-skilled employees will anticipate a worsening of their employment prospects and are therefore more likely to reject the idea of Europeanized equality. This may also hold true for the unemployed. In contrast, clerks working in the public service sector and the self-employed should be in favour of the idea. Whereas the former's employment chances are not affected by opening the borders, the latter may benefit from increased competition in the labour market as they may be able to pay lower wages or have better access to highly skilled employees (see Gabel, 1998;

Scheve and Slaughter, 1999; Raijman, Semyonov and Schmidt 2003; Hooghe and Marks, 2005).

H2b: *Generalized human resources*—Persons holding high educational degrees will get additional opportunities to become spatially mobile at European labour markets (Verwiebe and Eder, 2006; Favell, 2008). However, the impact of education might not only be related to different economic opportunities, but also stem from different ‘world views’. Following Inglehart, higher levels of education lead to ‘cognitive mobilization’, i.e. traditional concepts will be questioned and possibly rejected, rather than being automatically accepted (Inglehart, 1990; Achterberg and Houtman, 2006). A variety of studies have demonstrated that people holding higher educational degrees argue for equal rights for foreign workers and against ethnic exclusion (Coenders and Scheepers, 2003; Semyonov, Raijman and Gorodzeisky, 2006; Raijman *et al.*, 2008). Thus, we hypothesize that the higher the level of a person’s education, the more he or she will approve the generalized principle of Europeanized equality.

H2c: *Regional disparities*—In line with hypothesis H2a, we suggest that people living in a region with a high unemployment rate may oppose the opening of the labour market to foreign employees. In Germany, the largest regional welfare disparity persists between East and West Germany (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2008: pp. 109). In addition, right-wing extremism and xenophobia are much more widespread in Eastern than in Western regions of Germany (Semyonov *et al.*, 2004; Decker and Brähler, 2008). Both arguments—the labour market and the related cultural one—lead to the assumption that Eastern Germans will be more sceptical about equal opportunities for European foreigners than people from Western Germany.

H3a: *Political orientation*—As prejudice research indicates, politically right wing-oriented citizens tend to deny foreign workers the same political and social rights as they themselves have (Raijman, Semyonov and Schmidt, 2003).⁵ Semyonov, Raijman and Gorodzeisky (2006) show for EU societies that between 1988 and 2000, the effect of political attitudes on approving equal rights for foreigners (European Union and Non-European Union) seems to have increased, whereas the impact of individual socio-economic characteristics remains stable over time. Thus, we expect people with a left wing orientation to support European equality, whereas right-oriented people are more likely to support a nationally bounded concept of equality.

H3b: *Societal values*—According to Inglehart, increased opportunity to satisfy material needs leads to a shift from materialist to post-materialist values (Inglehart, 1997). Materialist values include preferences towards

satisfying economic living conditions, security, national identity, and national exclusion. Post-materialist values, in contrast, are characterized by the desire for self-fulfilment and participation, internationalism, and the opening of national boundaries. Sagiv and Schwartz, for example, provide evidence that people who share universalistic and self-deterministic values show a greater readiness for social contact with members of other ethnic groups than people who prefer values of tradition, security, and conformity (Sagiv and Schwartz, 1995). Accordingly, we expect that respondents holding preferences for materialist values will express less support for Europeanized equality than people with post-materialist value orientations.

Data, Variables, and Methods

Our data come from two surveys conducted in Germany in 2006. The first one is a special survey of the ‘German Socio-economic Panel’ (GSOEP).⁶ By using multi-regional stratified sampling and random walk design, in June 2006, 1,063 household members >15 years were asked to answer a series of questions. The authors were given the opportunity to insert several questions about the acceptance of the right for EU foreigners to participate in the German labour market into this survey (see description below).

The second data set comes from the weekly poll ‘Politikbus’ carried out by opinion research institute ‘TNS Infratest Berlin’. In this poll, 1,000 respondents >18 years were surveyed using the CATI-technique. The poll is constructed as a multi-stratified household sample, based on regional districts and randomly chosen respondents in the selected household. It guarantees non-biased samples, in particular to avoid the ‘not-at-home effect’. In essence, the Politikbus-survey measures political attitudes, mainly concerning voting and party preferences. The authors were allowed to include new questions regarding attitudes towards Europeanized political and social rights in this survey.

In both surveys, respondents were asked to what extent they agree with the generalized rule that all EU citizens, regardless of their national origin, should have access to the German labour market and to the German social security system and have the right to vote at municipal elections in Germany. Possible answers ranged from ‘totally agree’ and ‘tend to agree’, to ‘tend to disagree’ and ‘totally disagree’.

- Economic rights: ‘The European Union permits any employee who belongs to one of its Member States to work throughout the European Union. What is your opinion of the following statements? Is it fair

that employees from a foreign EU Member State should be allowed to work in Germany, even if it becomes more difficult for some Germans to find a job?' (GSOEP, special survey).

- Political rights: 'The European Union says that any EU citizen residing in another EU Member State is entitled to participate in local elections there. What is your opinion about the following statements? (...) Foreign EU citizens living in my municipality should be allowed to vote here, even if their votes become decisive for elections' (Politikbus survey).
- Social rights: 'European law allows any EU citizen working in another EU Member State to receive the same social security benefits as the locals, for example, supplementary benefits and child allowance. What is your opinion of the following statements? (...) It would be fine with me if EU foreigners working in Germany receive the same social security benefits as Germans' (Politikbus survey).

These questions are characterized by three features which are important for the implementation of our research questions. First, generalized support for the principle of Europeanized equality is measured by differentiating economic, political, and social rights. Second, the items refer to the European Union as an actor who has been responsible for institutionalization of Europe-wide equality of opportunity. Third, items are formulated in a rather restricted way in that they refer to the idea of equality under constrained conditions. We have used these wordings because other studies show that people often deviate from their assumed values if they anticipate costs and unpleasant consequences (Diekmann and Preisendörfer, 2003). By including the potential consequences of the idea of a Europe-wide equality, we try to ascertain which values people 'really' believe in.

Attitudes towards equal opportunity may vary due to an immigrant's country of origin. Therefore, respondents were asked to what degree they support the idea of equal rights for citizens from *different* European countries. We have chosen three origins, varying by the level of welfare and by culture: (i) France as an established EU Member State and, with regard to economy and culture, relatively similar to Germany, (ii) Poland as a new EU Member State, economically less developed, shaped by a strong catholic tradition and by a considerable peasant population, and (iii) the actual accession candidate Turkey characterized by a significantly less developed economy, a largely peasant population, and Islamic culture. Hence, the German respondents were asked whether they

support equal rights for French, Polish and Turkish people concerning the three types of rights mentioned above.

In order to test hypotheses H2a–H3b, we use a range of variables which have been either measured identically in both data sets or can be recoded to identical variables (see Appendix Table A1 for details). The respondent's socio-economic status is measured by his or her actual employment status⁷ and degree of formal education.⁸ In order to measure respondents' value orientations we make use of two well-established scales (left–right self-assessment, Inglehart-index). Unfortunately, the GSOEP 2006 special survey does not cover the two latter scales, so we can only estimate the effects of these values on attitudes towards equal political and social rights.

Due to the fact that prejudice research has shown a positive effect of age on attitudes towards restrictive migration policies (e.g. Raijman, Semyonov and Schmidt, 2003; Sides and Citrin, 2007), we add the respondent's age to our regression models. However, we do not expect age to be a socio-economic feature which causes the formation of interest groups or which is picked up by political organizations to exert influence on national or European politics. Hence, we use age as a control variable but do not posit a related hypothesis.

Finally, a variable measuring the place of residence (Western/Eastern German regions) is added in order to measure both economic and ideological differences between the two regions.

To test Hypothesis 1 (refusal of Europeanized rights), we compute the relative frequencies of generalized and origin-specific rights. Both approval and disapproval categories have been merged, respectively. In order to test our causal hypotheses, we assume that attitudes towards Europeanized rights can be identified as latent constructs, each comprising generalized and origin-specific attitudes. To test whether these latent variables exist, we have carried out a principal component factor analysis. Because, we make use of two separate data sets, we had to compute two separate factor analyses; due to restriction in space results are not shown but are available by request. As factor analysis results concerning labour market related items show, all items load on one factor; factor loadings are relatively high (from 0.8 to 0.9). Also two separate factors have been extracted for the political and social rights items, one standing for political rights, the other for social rights; all latent constructs are characterized by high factor loadings and high eigenvalues. These results allow us to keep the factor scores of the one (GSOEP), respectively, two (Politikbus) latent constructs as dependent variables in our multivariate analysis.

Table 2 Attitudes towards Europeanized equality (approval rates)

	<i>Economic rights</i> Access to German labour market ^a	<i>Political rights</i> Right to vote in local elections ^b	<i>Social rights</i> Access to social benefits ^b
<i>Generalized equality</i>	62.4	69.7	82.8
<i>Equality for:</i>			
French	72.9	73.1	84.5
Poles	62.9	67.6	82.5
Turks	54.3	63.5	81.6
<i>N</i>	977	895	895

Sources: ^aGSOEP 2006, special survey. ^bTNS-infratest Politikbus 2006. Relative frequencies, weighted, rounded. Both approval and disapproval categories have been merged, respectively.

To test causal hypotheses H2a–H3b, we calculate step-wise extended OLS regressions. Since GSOEP data does not include generalized value orientations, the first regression model (M1) only estimates effects of the socio-economic and regional variables on attitudes towards free access to the labour market. The calculations based on Politikbus data are each two-tiered. The respective first models compute the effects of the socio-economic variables on the right to vote (M2) and the right to access to social benefits (M4) variables, and the following models (M3, M5) additionally test the effects of the generalized value orientations. By doing so, we ensure that regressions based on different data sets can be compared with regard to the socio-economic variable's influence on observed attitudes.

Empirical Results

Table 2 (first row) indicates that, in contrast to our Hypothesis H1, the majority of the German respondents support the idea of equal treatment and equal rights between German nationals and European foreigners. Nearly two-thirds are in favour of allowing foreign EU employees to work in Germany. More than 80 per cent want them to receive the same social benefits as they themselves receive. This also holds true for political rights. More than two-thirds of the respondents want EU foreigners to have the same right as nationals to vote in municipal elections. The observation that the support rate for equal access to social benefits is higher than the support rates for access to the labour market and for the right to vote might go back to the fact that from the respondent's view, the latter can be interpreted as a zero sum game whereas the former can be seen as a positive sum game. Access to social benefits for EU citizens does not automatically reduce the benefits of the nationals as

those benefits are usually provided by the state. In addition, allowing EU foreigners to vote in local elections might be interpreted to be connected with less costly consequences compared to equal access to the labour market.

Overall, the vast majority of Germans support the idea of treating nationals and European foreigners equally. The latter result is in line with recent findings from the Eurobarometer survey (European Commission, 2010: p. 13). In this poll, 52 per cent of German respondents agree with the sentence that EU foreigners should have the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in regional elections.

However, attitudes differ according to the country of origin. French people are consistently more likely to be treated equally than Poles and Turks (who are not yet citizens of the European Union). Moreover, degrees of support vary depending on the type of rights. With respect to political rights and especially social rights, differences are rather marginal (from 84.5 for the French to 81.6 for the Turks). In contrast, support for free access to the German labour market ranges from 72.9 per cent for the French to 54.3 per cent for Turks. It seems to us that these differences can be traced back to perceived economic and cultural differences between Germany and the three countries potential immigrants originate from. As Turkey has one of the least developed economies in Europe and its population would be the second largest in the European Union, respondents may be concerned about potentially large immigration flows in case of accession. Additionally, Turkey is quite different to Germany in terms of values and religion (Gerhards, 2007). On the other hand, differences in terms of the situation of the labour market, wage levels and shared cultural tradition between France and Germany are relatively small. This might explain why German respondents are more sympathetic to French

Table 3 Determinants of attitudes towards Europeanized equal opportunity (OLS-regressions)

	Access to labour market ^a		Right to vote in local elections ^b		Access to social benefits ^b	
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	
<i>Socio-demographic characteristics</i>						
Age (in years)	-0.064 (-1.66)	-0.068 (-1.70)	-0.066 (-1.67)	0.064 (1.59)	0.067 (1.66)	
Employment position (Reference: self-employed)						
Blue-collar	-0.128* (-2.55)	-0.007 (-0.15)	0.019 (0.40)	-0.000 (-0.00)	0.012 (0.23)	
White-collar	-0.125* (-2.15)	0.013 (0.21)	0.025 (0.42)	0.124* (2.01)	0.129* (2.09)	
Civil servant	-0.030 (-0.78)	0.025 (0.58)	0.025 (0.58)	0.050 (1.11)	0.047 (1.08)	
Not in labour force	-0.090 (-1.29)	-0.036 (-0.60)	-0.006 (-0.10)	0.039 (0.64)	0.053 (0.88)	
Unemployed (= 1)	-0.100* (-1.97)	-0.008 (-0.20)	0.003 (0.08)	0.102* (2.43)	0.107* (2.55)	
Education (ref.: without grad., less than secondary school.)						
Secondary school	0.083* (2.23)	-0.023 (-0.47)	-0.038 (-0.80)	-0.130** (-2.68)	-0.139** (-2.89)	
High school	0.230*** (5.91)	0.154** (3.03)	0.116* (2.30)	-0.000 (-0.00)	-0.017 (-0.34)	
Place of residence (1 = East-Germany)	-0.114** (-3.43)	0.002 (0.06)	-0.001 (-0.28)	-0.041 (-1.18)	-0.056 (-1.54)	
<i>Generalized value orientations</i>						
Values (1 = materialistic, 4 = post-materialistic)	-		0.146*** (4.15)		0.051 (1.43)	
Political orientation (0 = strong left, 10 = strong right)	-		-0.098** (-2.79)		-0.080* (-2.22)	
R ² (corr.)	0.07	0.04	0.07	0.02	0.03	

* $P_t < .05$, ** $P_t < .01$, *** $P_t < .001$.

OLS-regression models, standardized regression coefficients are indicated; *t*-values in brackets.

Source: ^aGSOEP 2006 special survey, $n = 908$. ^bTNS-Infratest Politikbus 2006, $n = 824$.

than they are to Poles. Given the lower wage expectations in the Polish and other Central Eastern European economies, Germany is likely to be one of the most attractive target countries for employees from those countries after the expiration of the labour market transition period in May 2011 (Brücker and Weise, 2001).

Table 3 presents the results of five regression models. Model 1 refers to economic rights. In line with H2a, blue-collar workers and the unemployed (as well as white-collar workers) are significantly less in favour of equal opportunities for EU employees than the self-employed. Confirming hypothesis H2b, higher levels of education cause higher agreement rates. The same holds true for H2c: East Germans take a more

sceptical view towards free labour market access than persons living in Western German regions. In order to determine whether this regional effect reflects either labour market disparities or attitudinal differences concerning xenophobia between East and West Germans, we carried out additional regressions including regional employment rates (16 NUTS-I regions) instead of the respondent's place of residence. For this purpose, we calculated multi-level mixed effects regressions controlling for unobserved effects on the regional level (NUTS-I), and, alternatively, Huber-regressions with robust standard errors, clustering the respondents by region (Huber, 1967; results not shown but available by request).⁹ For all dependent variables, both analyses do not show significant effects from regional unemployment

rates. Hence, we assume that it is not the labour market situation in Eastern German regions which causes lower approval rates, but cultural differences between East and West Germans, and in particular a higher incidence of xenophobia among East Germans. Because the data sets do not include related items, we cannot separate this effect statistically.

According to Model 2, only the highly educated are significantly more likely to allow EU foreigners to participate in local elections (H2b). Model 3 takes the respondents' value orientations into account. Consistent with H3a, the citizen's political orientation effects attitudes towards political rights, and respondents with post-materialistic convictions speak out in favour of Europeanized voting rights more strongly than those who are predominantly materialistically oriented (H3b).

Models 4 and 5 show that the unemployed and white-collar workers are more in favour of Europeanized social rights than the self-employed, and respondents with low educational qualifications support the idea of social rights to a greater extent than those with a secondary qualification. These effects are statistically robust but theoretically unexpected. It is possible to conjecture that the unemployed and less educated obviously regard themselves as socially needy and therefore do not differentiate between EU foreigners and nationals. Finally, Model 5 indicates, that people who hold rightist orientations are more likely to dismiss the idea of an Europeanization of social rights (H3a).

What conclusions can be drawn from these findings? As outlined above, cleavage theory would argue that although two-thirds of the Germans support the principle of Europeanized rights, relatively high approval rates may conceal social and political cleavages within the population. Multivariate analysis now suggests that this assumption seems to be fairly unlikely. Undoubtedly, there are some observable socio-structural and normative forces which structure the individual's equality attitudes. In particular, education and generalized value orientations have an impact, but effects remain relatively weak, and explained variances do not exceed 3 per cent (social rights) and 7 per cent (economic/political rights). Hence, weak correlations lead us to the conclusion that there is no evidence for a strong socio-structural or value-orientated cleavage with regard to Europeanized economic, political or social rights.

Conclusions

Equal opportunity for all European citizens is a central element of the EU's policies. EU regulations forbid discrimination against European foreigners, stating that

domestic citizens as well as citizens from other Member States should be treated equally. By interpreting European law and EU policies, we have described how the idea of nationally bounded equality was replaced by an idea in which all EU citizens have the same economic, political, and social rights, regardless of their actual place of residence. In fact, citizens' acceptance and support of EU regulations are significant in determining the legitimacy of European policies due to the fact that democracies are structurally dependent on the support of their citizens. By analysing two survey data sets, both covering the German population, we come to the conclusion that the vast majority supports the idea of equal opportunities for nationals and European foreigners, the process of systemic and institutional integration is backed up by citizens' attitudes (social integration).

However, even though the majority supports the principle of Europeanized equal rights, a significant minority may constitute the basis of a new cleavage structure if they form an interest based or culturally determined social group. But again, the empirical results contradict this suggestion. There is little evidence that those rejecting Europeanized rights share specific socio-structural or ideological characteristics. Hence, the probability that cleavages, which form the basis for populist political parties in Germany, will occur, seems to be rather low.

However, our data refers to Germany only. Specific features of the German labour market and welfare system may influence equality attitudes. Compared to other European countries, the German labour market is rather rigid: workers are strongly protected by law, especially by employment protection, as well as by powerful trade unions and a relatively strong collective bargaining system (Siebert, 1997). This may be one of the reasons why German workers feel relatively unthreatened by potential immigrants from other European countries. Thus, comparative data is required to determine whether Europeanized equality is accepted by a vast majority of all European citizens, whether attitudes are distributed reciprocally between countries with different levels of modernization, different welfare state systems and cultures. Additionally, it remains to be seen whether our findings will be stable over time. One can assume that since the beginning of the financial crisis in 2008, citizens may have become more sceptical towards allowing equal rights to EU foreigners. We do not know how resilient people's attitudes are in case of deteriorating labour markets, even though we have tried to make clear that Europeanized equality might evoke certain disadvantages for the respondents and their national co-citizens. Finally, low actual migration rates may partially explain why Germans are not worried

about other Europeans moving to Germany. These open-minded attitudes may dissolve when employees from Eastern European accession states are allowed to work in Germany without any juridical restrictions after transitional agreements expire in May 2011.

Notes

1. In contrast, Soysal (1998) assumes that European post-war era is characterized by a reconfiguration of citizenship status. Rights that used to belong to nationals only are extended to guest workers, asylum seekers and other groups of foreigners, so that residence and universal personhood and not citizenship becomes the crucial determinant of post-national rights. However, we would argue that access to a national territory and its related institutional structure still is controlled by the nation-states. It is the nation-state which provides and implements post-national rights for non-citizens, and most of these rights still depend on holding a national citizenship status.
2. The regulation also applies to self-employment and extends to spouses, children <21 years and other relatives the EU immigrant lives with.
3. Our research question is also related to other research fields, e.g. studies which have explored attitudes towards immigrants and minority groups (McLaren 2002; Semyonov, Raijman and Gorodzeisky, 2006; Gorodzeisky and Semyonov, 2009), welfare support for immigrants (Van der Waal *et al.*, 2010), attitudes towards the European Union in general (Hooghe and Marks, 2005) and towards extending the European Union in particular (McLaren 2007; De Vreese, Boomgaarden and Semetko, 2008).
4. Bobo and Hutchings (1996) differentiate between four theoretical accounts that explain why minorities are interpreted as a competitive threat: simple self-interest models, classical prejudice models, stratification beliefs models, and Blumer's (1958) theory of group positions. The different models are not opposed to each other, but can be interpreted as different and step by step more elaborated versions of the same more general idea.
5. In contrast, van der Waal *et al.* (2010) argue that the leftist notion of equality is a particularistic one, supporting equality between own national citizens,

but excluding foreigners, an orientation which the authors (van der Waal *et al.*, 2010) call, 'welfare chauvinism'.

6. The GSOEP is a panel survey, which has been annually conducted in Germany since 1984 by the 'German Institute for Economic Research' (Wagner, Frick and Schupp, 2007). Using face-to-face CAPI-technique, all members of a randomly chosen household >15 years were interviewed.
7. As both data sets do not include ISCO codes we are not able to compute EPG classes or ISEI measures.
8. To measure educational status we do not construct CASMIN scale because one of the data sets do not include variables on vocational training. In order to have comparable variables in the regression models, we make only use of a more basic educational measurement.
9. In GSOEP-data, one NUTS-I region (Saarland) is missing.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Jürgen Schupp and Gert Wagner (both German Institute for Economic Research) for the opportunity to integrate questions in the GSOEP special survey 2006.

References

- Achterberg, P. and Houtman, D. (2006). Why do so many people vote 'unnaturally'? A cultural explanation for voting behaviour. *European Journal for Political Research*, 45, 75–92.
- Bartolini, S. (2004). Old and new peripheries in the processes of European territorial integration. In Ansell, C. K. and Di Palma, G. (Eds.), *Restructuring Territoriality: Europe and the United States Compared*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 19–44.
- Bartolini, S. (2005). *Restructuring Europe. Centre Formation, System Building and Political Structuring between Nation-state and the European Union*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Blumer, H. (1958). Race prejudice as a sense of group relation. *Pacific Sociological Review*, 1, 3–7.
- Bobo, L. and Hutchings, V. L. (1996). Perceptions of racial group competition: extending Blumer's theory of group position to a multiracial social context. *American Sociological Review*, 61, 951–972.
- Brücker, H. and Weise, C. (2001). EU-Osterweiterung: Abschottung oder regulierte Öffnung? Zu den

- Übergangsfristen für die Arbeitnehmerfreizügigkeit [EU eastward enlargement: insulation or regulated opening? Transition periods of free movement of labour]. *DIW-Wochenbericht*, **31**, 473–481.
- Coenders, M. and Scheepers, P. (2003). The effect of education on nationalism and ethnic exclusionism: an international comparison. *Political Psychology*, **24**, 313–343.
- De Vreese, C. H., Boomgaarden, H. G. and Semetko, H. A. (2008). Hard and soft. Public support for Turkish membership in the EU. *European Union Politics*, **9**, 511–530.
- Decker, O. and Brähler, E. (2008). *Bewegung in der Mitte. Rechtsextreme Einstellungen in Deutschland 2008 – mit einem Vergleich von 2002 bis 2008 und der Bundesländer [Movement within the Centre. Right-extremist Attitudes in Germany in 2008. A Comparison between 2002 and 2008 and between the Federal States of Germany]*. Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Forum Berlin.
- Delhey, J. and Kohler, U. (2006). From nationally bounded to Pan-European inequalities? On the importance of foreign countries as reference groups. *European Sociological Review*, **22**, 125–140.
- Diekmann, A. and Preisendörfer, P. (2003). Green and greenback: the behavioral effects of environmental attitudes in low-cost and high-cost situations. *Rationality and Society*, **15**, 441–472.
- European Commission (2010). *Electoral Rights of EU Citizens*. Analytical Report, available from: <http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_292_en.pdf> [accessed January 2011].
- Favell, A. (2008). *Eurostars and Eurocities: Free Moving Urban Professionals in an Integrating Europe*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Ferrera, M. (2003). European integration and national social citizenship. Changing boundaries, new structuring? *Comparative Political Studies*, **36**, 611–652.
- Ferrera, M. (2005). *The Boundaries of Welfare. European Integration and the New Spatial Politics of Social Protection*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fligstein, N. (2008). *Euroclash. The EU, European Identity, and the Future of Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gabel, M. (1998). Public support for European integration: an empirical test of five theories. *The Journal of Politics*, **60**, 333–354.
- Gerhards, J. (2007). *Cultural Overstretch? The Enlargement of the European Union and the Cultural Differences between Old and New Member States and Turkey*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Gerhards, J. (2008). Free to move? The acceptance of free movement of labour and non discrimination among citizens of Europe. *European Societies*, **10**, 121–140.
- Gorodzeisky, A. and Semyonov, M. (2009). Terms of exclusion: public views toward admission and allocation of rights to immigrants in European countries. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, **35**, 401–423.
- Hooghe, L. and Marks, G. (2005). Calculation, community and cues. Public opinion on European integration. *European Union Politics*, **6**, 419–443.
- Huber, P. J. (1967). The behavior of maximum likelihood estimates under non-standard conditions. In LeCam, L. M. and Neyman, J. (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Berkeley Symposium on Mathematical Statistics and Probability*. Vol. I, Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 221–233.
- Inglehart, R. (1990). *Cultural Shift in Advanced Industrial Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Inglehart, R. (1997). *Modernization and Postmodernization. Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kaelble, H. (2007). *Sozialgeschichte Europas: 1945 bis zur Gegenwart [Social History of Europe: from 1945 to the Present]*. München: Beck.
- Kriesi, H. et al. (2006). Globalization and the transformation of the national political space: six European countries compared. *European Journal of Political Research*, **45**, 921–956.
- Kriesi, H. et al. (2008). *West European Politics in the Age of Globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kvist, J. (2004). Does EU enlargement start a race to the bottom? Strategic interaction among EU member states in social policy. *Journal of European Social Policy*, **14**, 301–318.
- Maas, W. (2007). *Creating European Citizens*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Marshall, T. H. (1949/1983). *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development. Essays*. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- Mau, S. (2010). *Social Transnationalism. Lifeworlds beyond the Nation State*. London/New York: Routledge.
- McLaren, L. M. (2002). Public support for the European Union. Cost/benefit analysis or perceived cultural threat? *The Journal of Politics*, **64**, 551–566.
- McLaren, L. M. (2007). Explaining opposition to Turkish membership of the EU. *European Union Politics*, **8**, 251–278.
- Münch, R. (2008). Constructing a European society by jurisdiction. *European Law Journal*, **14**, 519–541.
- Olzak, S. (1992). *The Dynamic of Ethnic Competition and Conflict*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Quillian, L. (1995). Prejudice as a response to perceived group threat. Population composition and

- anti-immigrant and racial prejudice in Europe. *American Sociological Review*, **60**, 586–611.
- Raijman, R. *et al.* (2008). What does a nation owe non-citizens? National attachments, perception of threat and attitudes towards granting citizenship rights in a comparative perspective. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, **49**, 195–220.
- Raijman, R., Semyonov, M. and Schmidt, P. (2003). Do foreigners deserve rights? Determinants of public views towards foreigners in Germany and Israel. *European Sociological Review*, **19**, 379–392.
- Sagiv, L. and Schwartz, S. H. (1995). Value priorities and readiness for out-group social contact. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **69**, 437–488.
- Scheepers, P., Gijberts, M. and Coenders, M. (2002). Ethnic exclusionism in European countries: public oppositions to civil rights for legal migrants as a response to perceived threat. *European Sociological Review*, **18**, 17–34.
- Scheve, K. F. and Slaughter, M. J. (1999). *Labor-Market Competition and Individual Preferences Over Immigration Policy*. NBER Working Paper No. 6946. Cambridge: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Semyonov, M. *et al.* (2004). Population size, perceived threat and exclusion: a multiple indicators analysis of attitudes toward foreigners in Germany. *Social Science Research*, **33**, 681–701.
- Semyonov, M., Raijman, R. and Gorodzeisky, A. (2006). The rise of anti-foreigner sentiment in European societies, 1988–2000. *American Sociological Review*, **71**, 426–449.
- Sides, J. and Citrin, J. (2007). European attitudes toward immigration: the role of interests, identities, and information. *British Journal of Political Science*, **37**, 477–504.
- Siebert, H. (1997). Labor market rigidities: at the root of unemployment in Europe. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, **11**, 37–54.
- Soysal, Y. N. (1998). Toward a postnational model of membership. In Shafir, G. (Ed.), *The Citizenship Debates. A Reader*. Minneapolis/London: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 189–217.
- Statistisches Bundesamt (Ed.) (2008). *Datenreport 2008. Ein Sozialbericht für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung [Data Report 2008. A Social Report for the Federal Republic of Germany]*.
- Van der Waal, J. *et al.* (2010). Some are more equal than others. Economic egalitarianism and welfare chauvinism in the Netherlands. *Journal of European Social Policy*, **20**, 350–363.
- Verwiebe, R. and Eder, K. (2006). The positioning of transnationally mobile Europeans in the German labour market. An analysis of its causes and effects. *European Societies*, **8**, 141–167.
- Wagner, G., Frick, J. R. and Schupp, J. (2007). The German socio-economic panel study (SOEP) – scope, evolution and enhancements. *Schmollers Jahrbuch*, **127**, 139–169.

Appendix 1

Table A1 Variables and descriptive statistics (mean, SD, percentage) from GSOEP 2006 and TNS-INFRATEST POLITIKBUS 2006

Variables	Definition	Mean (SD)/ Rel. Freq.
<i>GSOEP 2006 (n = 908)</i>		
Equality rights ^a	Foreign EU citizens should be allowed to work in Germany ^b	2.78 (0.98)
	Citizens from France should be allowed to work in Germany ^b	3.04 (0.89)
	Citizens from Poland should be allowed to work in Germany ^b	2.80 (0.97)
	Citizens from Turkey should be allowed to work in Germany ^b	2.58 (1.03)
	Age	Age in years
Employment position, (per cent)	Blue-collar workers	9.9
	White-collar workers	20.3
	Civil servant	3.3
	Self-employed	6.5
	Not in active labour force	49.1
	Currently unemployed	10.9
Educational degree	Without graduation / less than secondary school	41.6
	Secondary school	32.3
	High school	26.1
Place of Residence	East-Germany = 1	20.3
<i>TNS-Infratest Politikbus 2006 (n = 824)</i>		
Equality rights ^a	Foreign EU citizens should be allowed to vote here ^b	3.01 (0.10)
	Citizens from France should be allowed to vote here ^b	3.07 (0.10)
	Citizens from Poland should be allowed to vote here ^b	2.94 (1.04)
	Citizens from Turkey should be allowed to vote here ^b	2.83 (1.07)
	EU foreigners should receive the same social security benefits as Germans ^b	3.30 (0.90)
	Citizens from Poland should receive the same social security benefits as Germans ^b	3.31 (0.91)
	Citizens from Turkey should receive the same social security benefits as Germans ^b	3.29 (0.92)
	Citizens from France should receive the same social security benefits as Germans ^b	3.36 (0.87)
Age	Age in years	45.82 (15.35)
Employment position, (per cent)	Blue-collar workers	10.8
	White-collar workers	39.2
	Civil servant	6.9
	Self-employed	9.3
	Not in labour force	28.8
	Currently unemployed	5.0
Educational degree	Without graduation / less than secondary school	19.4
	Secondary school	35.4
	High school	45.2
Place of residence	East-Germany = 1	18.6
Political orientation	Left = 0, right = 10	4.65 (1.81)
Societal values (Inglehart-index)	Materialistic only = 1; mat. first, postmat. second = 2; post-mat. first, mat. second = 3; post-mat. only = 4	2.88 (0.10)

^aFor item formulations see 'Data, Variables, and Methods' section.

^bAll items were coded on 4-point-scale (recoded; 1 = completely disagree, 2 = tend to disagree, 3 = tend to agree, 4 = completely agree).