Chapter 2. Methodology

2.1. Comparative study of perceived legitimacy

The main goal of this research project is to find and compare the criteria on the basis of which people attribute the right to rule to political authorities in different political regimes. To answer the research questions and test the hypotheses proposed in Chapter 1, I used three methods and conducted a survey in five countries to collect comparative data. To be able to say something about perceived legitimacy in hybrid regimes, I investigated them in a comparative perspective and included democratic cases in the case selection. In the choice of countries, I followed the diverse cases selection strategy to achieve variation on two variables: regime type and experience with communist rule (Gerring 2008, p.650). Since I am interested in differences between democratic and hybrid regimes, I selected contrasting cases: on one end I included two post-communist (and post-Soviet) hybrid regimes, namely Russia and Ukraine, on the other end there are two old democracies—the Netherlands and France. In between these contrasting cases there is a new post-communist democracy—Poland. Including Poland in the dataset allows for controlling for similarities between countries that share the communist past. Apart from the differences and similarities between the contrasting countries, I am also interested in the differences and similarities between the "relatively similar" cases (Dogan and Pelassy 1990, p.132), namely between old democracies, between post-communist countries, and between post-Soviet hybrid regimes.

Hybrid regimes: Russia and Ukraine

The debate on the 'grey-zone' regimes in democratisation studies and the proliferation of regimes that do not fall into the clear-cut categories of democracy and authoritarianism, led to conceptual stretching and confusion in taxonomies of regimes (Collier and Levitsky 1997; Armony and Schamis 2005). Scholars initially labelled these grey-zone regimes with adjectives indicating that they represent diminished types of democracy, e.g. defective, delegative, electoral, managed, and illiberal (Kubicek 1994; O'Donell 1994; Lipman and McFaul 2001; Zakaria 2003; Gilbert and Mohseni 2011). The trend in classifying these regimes changed in the 2000s when adjectives

were added to indicate diminished subtypes of authoritarianism, e.g. electoral, competitive, new, innovative, and deliberative (Diamond 2002; Levitsky and Way 2002, 2010; Ottaway 2003; Schedler 2006; Bogaards 2009; Bunce and Wolchik 2010; He and Warren 2011). Categorizing a country as one type of regime or the other depends on the criteria that are used to evaluate it.

Russia and Ukraine since the 1990s both were categorized as hybrid regimes—unconsolidated democracies or unconsolidated autocracies (Way 2005)—and many parallels were drawn between Ukraine's transition from communism under Kravchuk (1991-1994) and Kuchma (1994-2004) and Russia's under Yeltsin (1991-1999) and Putin's early regime (from 1999). From the moment Putin started to introduce reforms that increased his powers, curbed competition, and led to the marginalization of democratic opposition, Russia's and Ukraine's paths started to diverge more visibly (Kuzio 2006). While Putin established the party of power—United Russia— which dominated the legislative institutions (Wilson 2009; White and Kryshtanovskaya 2011, p.558), in Ukraine this has never happened and each election reflected strong competition between two blocks that had their support bases in different regions: national-democrats oriented more towards the EU were supported by the Western and Central regions and the pro-Russian Communists/socialists were supported by the industrial regions in the East and South.

In Ukraine, the spectacular protests known as the Orange Revolution of 2004/2005 (Kubicek 2009, p.327) resulted in the re-vote of the falsified second round of presidential elections and the victory of Yushchenko, who became the president of Ukraine in January 2005. He was the politician running against the pro-incumbent candidate—Yanukovych. This, nevertheless, did not end internal battles between the two camps that have essentially two opposite visions of the development of the country (especially that Yanukovych's Party of Regions won the parliamentary elections in 2006 and he became the prime-minister) as well as internal battles within the Orange camp between Yushchenko and Tymoshenko (who served as prime-minister in 2005 and 2007-2010). The conflicts within the Orange coalition, corruption, and the lack of improvement of the economic situation in the country made the young supporters of Maidan disillusioned about the government. Tymoshenko lost the run for presidency to

Yanukovych in 2010 and this began the reversal of the started democratizing reforms (Brudny and Finkel 2011, p.827). The crucial moment that led to another serious upheaval in Ukraine was the refusal by Yanukovuch to sign the Association Agreement with the European Union in 2013. This caused another wave of protest, which turned into a confrontation between the security forces and the protesters. The events in the winter of 2013/2014 at Maidan had even more serious consequences this time, as Russia, who supported Yanukovych and his rejection of the closer association with the EU, used the moment of political and civic chaos to annex Crimea under a fabricated pretext of defending their compatriots (Russians living on the peninsula). Moreover, Russia has been (unofficially) supporting separatists from the Eastern and Southern regions of the country in their fight against the newly installed government in Kiev. The UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine reported in June 2015 that the death toll in the conflict zone of Eastern Ukraine by conservative estimate has been 6,417 people (including 626 women and girls) and the number of wounded was 15, 962 people (United Nations Human Rights 2015). Despite the Minsk ceasefire agreement from February 2015, the violence continues as Russia denies its involvement while escalating the hostilities between the separatists in the Donetsk and Lugansk regions and the pro-governmental forces (Kardaś and Konończuk 2015).

In this dynamic situation in both countries, the categorization of the regime becomes problematic and the regime scores change depending on the exact timing of data collection as well as the criteria of assessment. Polity IV Project (Marshall and Jaggers 2013) classified Russia as anocracy with a score of 4 (open anocracy)[5]. Russia's score decreased from 6 to 4 in 2007 after 7 years of being in the category of democracies. The Polity IV score is a rather optimistic ranking for Russia. Freedom House[6] ranks Russia as 'not free' since 2005 (2015) and Levitsky and Way (2010, p.371), based on civil liberties, elections, and playing field, categorized Russia as full authoritarian regime from 2008. According to The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU; 2011, 2014), Russia's democratic record deteriorated between 2011 and 2014 (it fell from the 117th to 132nd place of 167 countries) and it was classified as an authoritarian

[5] The scale for Polity IV runs from 10 (full democracy) to -10 (autocracy).
[6] Freedom House uses the scale from 1 (most free) to 7 (least free).

regime with overall score of 3.39 on the scale from 1—authoritarian, to 10—democratic. Also The Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BSTI) shows the trend towards authoritarian rule and in 2014 classified Russia as a moderate autocracy by comparison with highly defective democracy in 2012 (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016)[7].

By comparison, Ukraine received a score between 6 and 7 between 1995 and 2013 from Polity IV (Marshall and Jaggers 2013), which puts it in the category of (not full) democracies. Freedom House ranked Ukraine as free between 2006 and 2010 and as partially free from 2011 until 2015 (2015). Levitsky and Way considered it a democracy in 2008 (2010, p.371). The Economist Intelligence Unit (2011, 2014) classified Ukraine as a hybrid regime in 2011 and 2014, but its overall score fell from 5.94 (which was on the border between hybrid regime and flawed democracy) in 2011 to of 5.42 in 2014. The Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index ranked Ukraine's democratic performance the same in 2012 and 2014 with the score of 6.1 and classified it as defective democracy (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016).

These rankings indicate that in general both countries are considered as hybrid regimes that combine electoral mechanisms and other democratic institutions with authoritarian practices. Ukraine, however, throughout the 2000s moved in the direction of democracy (albeit not without setbacks), whereas Russia has been moving towards full authoritarianism.

Democracies: Poland, Netherlands, and France

Next to these two post-communist—and also post-Soviet—hybrid regimes, another post-communist case was included, Poland. Since 1989 Poland embarked on a transition to democracy. Poland is currently a member of the European Union and considered one of the examples of successful democratization. From the beginning of the 2000s, Polity IV gave Poland the highest score of 10—full democracy. Freedom House classified Poland as free already in 1990 and from 2005 assigned it the most positive freedom score. The Economist Intelligence Unit categorized Poland as a flawed democracy with the score of 7.12 in 2011 and with the score of 7.47 in 2014.

[7] Bertelsmann Stiftung experts evaluate aspects of transformation on the scale from 10 to 8.5 (democracy in consolidation) on one side to below 4 (hard-line autocracy) on the other.

Poland was ranked very high in The Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (fifth most advanced transformation) and was categorized as democracy in consolidation in 2014.

The Netherlands is consistently placed among the most democratic countries in the world. It is a full democracy according to Polity IV, it has been considered free by Freedom House since 1973 (the first round of evaluation), and it is in the top ten of full democracies according to The Economist Intelligence Unit. France's regime record is similar to the Netherlands. It is a slightly lower ranked full democracy than the Netherlands and only in 2011 France was categorized by The Economist Intelligence Unit the same as Poland—flawed democracy—with the score of 7.77. These two cases represent old democracies, however with different political systems. While the Netherlands is a constitutional (parliamentary) monarchy, France is a semi-presidential republic. Choosing these two different old democracies, allows checking whether there are common legitimacy ideas and perceived legitimacy patterns that associated with the fact of being an old democracy.

Table 2.1 summarizes the discussed categorizations and characteristics of the regimes of the five countries selected for this study.

Table 2.1. Comparison of regimes: evaluations by different institutions and projects

	Russia	**Ukraine**	**Poland**	**Netherlands**	**France**
Previous regime	Communist/Soviet	Communist/ Soviet	Communist	Democracy	Democracy
Current political system	Presidential	Semi-presidential	Semi-presidential	Parliamentary	Semi-presidential
Polity IV -10 (autocracy) to 10 (full democracy)	1991-2000: open anocracy (1-5) 2000-2007: Democracy (6) 2007-2013: Open anocracy (4)	1991-1993: Democracy (6) 1994: open anocracy (5) 1995-2013: Democracy (6-7)	1991-2000: Democracy (6-9) 2001-2013: Full democracy (10)	Full democracy (10)	Democracy (9)
Freedom House 1 (most free) to 7 (least free)	1999-2005: partly free (4.5-5) Since 2005: not free (5.5-6.0)	1999-2005: partly free (3.5-4.0) 2006-2010: free (2.5) Since 2011: partly free (3.0-3.5)	Free since 1999 (1.0-1.5)	Free since 1999 (1)	Free since 1998 (1-1.5)
EIU 1(authoritarian) to 10 (democratic)	2006: hybrid regime (5.02) 2015: authoritarian (3.31)	2006: flawed democracy (6.94) 2015: hybrid regime (5.70)	2006: flawed democracy (7.30) 2015: flawed democracy (7.09)	2006: full democracy (9.66) 2015: full democracy (8.92)	2006: full democracy (8.07) 2015: flawed democracy (7.92)
BSTI 10 (democracy in consolidation) to 1(hard-line autocracy)	2006: highly defective democracy (5.7) 2015: moderate autocracy (4.4)	2012: defective democracy (7.1) 2015: defective democracy (6.8)	2006: democracy in consolidation (9.2) 2015: democracy in consolidation (9.5)	-	-

2.2. Sample

Because this project aims to test theories (instrumental vs. normative motives) as well as compare conceptions of legitimacy among citizens socialized in different regimes, the group of citizens that I selected for the investigation is the same in each country. I used student samples between the age of 16 and 25[8]. In each country I collected samples of students, because they are a comparable social category in the cross-cultural context: they come from similar backgrounds, have a similar social position (at least relative to other groups within their respective societies), more often than other groups use the internet as a source of information, and—most importantly—because of their similar age, they were equally recently socialized into their respective political communities. In this way many variables were kept constant and this allowed assessing the differences in the evaluation process to the different political contexts in which the respondents grew up. Students are a homogenous population, so they constitute a suitable population for experimental research, which is one of the methods used in this dissertation.

Also, student samples can be used for researching political attitudes and believes for several reasons. First, students are potential voters and typically participate in political and associational life. Second, they are a population that is on average more informed. Third, they have more sophisticated ideas about political systems and are more familiar with the concepts researched in this study (see Mintz *et al.* 2006, p.769). Also, they can be considered more representative of the public than the elites (Mintz *et al.* 2006). Some studies from the USA support this idea and suggest that the views of students and the general population overlap to a large extent and the distributions on the variables of interest to political scientists are very similar for students and general public (Druckman and Kam 2011, pp.51–52). In addition, students can be considered

[8] In the Netherlands students were prevailingly recruited from history and political science programmes; in France they were recruited among others from economy and management, applied studies of foreign languages, sociology, political science, law, and art history; in Poland from journalism, economy, management, public administration, American studies, national security, international relations, and social communication; in Ukraine among others from history, linguistics, political science, languages, journalism, law, ecology, and engineering; in Russia students were recruited from the most diverse programmes ranging from university to professional education.

as future political leaders (Mickiewicz 2014). Lastly, students were the most accessible and the least costly group to sample, which allowed for collecting large samples from five countries.

Sampling from a student population has its limitations. The main issue is the limited possibility to generalize what the young people think to the whole society in their country. There is, however, growing evidence that effects of experimental studies conducted with convenience samples such as students or online opt-in samples, recruited with various software tools (e.g. Mechanical Turk) replicate with representative samples (Mullinix *et al.* 2015)[9]. Representativeness, however, is not the main purpose of this study. The student sample is suitable for the goals that this research wants to achieve, namely theory testing and cross-country comparison of a similar population. As mentioned above, thanks to the student sample it is possible to keep many variables constant and to investigate causal links using experimental methodology, as well as compare similar cohorts that were all socialized after the fall of the communist block and lived most of their lives in the 2000s. If there are striking differences in students' ideas about what constitutes a legitimate authority in hybrid regimes and if these differences reflect the ideas promoted by the regimes, this could imply that students are socialized to internalize different ideas about state-society relations. In other words, if socialization into different political culture matters for the establishment of values important for evaluating what is legitimate, then even students should mention some of these culturally-determined characteristics. For this reason, using a student sample is a powerful test of the political socialization theory. The choice for student samples thus allows for relatively straightforward comparative interpretation of the results.

2.3. Survey

The data was collected through a survey that was divided into three parts. The first part included a vignette experiment, in which students were asked to read a hypothetical story and answer several questions about the legitimacy of the government in the story.

[9] This is not to say that effects of any study conducted with student population can be replicated with representative samples or that they can substitute them.

Participants then answered manipulation check questions and basic demographic data including the study programme they were admitted to. The second part of the survey contained survey questions about respondents' political system preferences as well as evaluations of the actual institutions in their country. The last part of the survey contained a couple of open questions and three questions measuring the socio-economic status of participants (see the full survey in Appendix B).

The survey was administered as a pen-and-paper task in the Netherlands, Poland, France, and partially in Russia. Additional data in Russia was collected online and the Ukrainian sample was collected fully online. The hard-copy version and online version of the study were designed to make them as similar as possible. Even though the software allowed for more options of randomization in the online version than pen-and-paper version (e.g. randomization of all the questions), the decision was made to follow the most similar design in both versions, so the data remained comparable. Both the online and the pen-and-paper versions of the survey were preceded by instructions and informed about the possibility to leave or withdraw from the study at any time, that their responses were anonymous, and provided information about what was expected from participants if they proceed to the survey (see Appendix C).

To check whether the mode of data collection influenced the results, analyses were conducted to compare the online and pen-and-paper samples from Russia. The online and pen-and-paper samples were compared for the experimental vignette study (Chapter 3) and for the correlational study (Chapter 5). In general, in the vignette study (involving an evaluation of a hypothetical government) the level of perceived legitimacy was higher in the online sample than in the pen-and paper sample. All effects, however, had the same direction in both samples. The difference was in the magnitude of the effects; they were larger in the online sample than in the pen-and-paper sample (see Appendix D). Also the comparison of the online sample and the pen-and-paper sample for the correlational study showed that perceived legitimacy of three institutions (government, courts, and president) was higher in the online sample and also that all effects were in the same direction in both samples (for more details see Appendix D). The results of these analyses show that the results (observed effects of

manipulations, correlations between variables) were not caused by differences in the mode of data collection and did not affect inferences regarding the tested hypotheses.

The data collection in the Netherlands took place at the University of Leiden in September and October 2014. The French sample was collected at the University of Lyon in November and December 2014[10]. The data collection in Poland took place at universities and higher education institutions in Poznan and Krakow in May, June, and December 2014. The data collection in Ukraine was conducted using Qualtrics online survey software. Participants of the survey were recruited from universities in Kiev and Mykolaiv and completed the online survey between June and November 2014. The data collection in Russia was conducted using two methods. The first bulk of data was collected in May and June 2014 in a survey administered as a pen-and-paper task. The second bulk of data was collected in June and September-December 2014 using Qualtrics online survey software. For the pen-and-paper task, participants were recruited from the Higher School of Economics in Moscow and 303 responses were collected. To recruit additional participants, an online link to the survey was circulated on social networks for students by a research assistant based in Moscow. Participants of the online survey included in the analysis came from around 300 different universities and higher education institutions located in many regions of Russia (see Appendix E for the full list).

In each country the study was conducted in the native language of respondents and the questions were included or excluded only on the basis of applicability to a given political system (e.g. a set of questions about the president did not apply to the Netherlands). The English text was the basis for all translations, although the translators of the Ukrainian and Russian version consulted also the wordings in Russian and Polish, respectively. All translations were done or proof-read by native speakers and assured the closest similarity to the original while keeping it understandable in a specific national context.

[10] This was several months before the terrorist attack on the offices of the French satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo in Paris on 7 January 2015 that led to a nation-wide protest.

Experimental vignette

Randomized experiments became a more prominent research method in political science in the last couple of decades (Druckman *et al.* 2006). Experiments are a research method that facilitates 'causal inference through the transparency and content of their procedures, most notably the random assignment of observations (a.k.a. subjects or experimental participants) to treatment and control groups' (Druckman *et al.* 2011, p.3). Thus, what distinguishes experiments from other research methods is the possibility to control the factors that influence participants of the experiment, i.e. the possibility to manipulate exactly the factors that the experimenter wants to manipulate. This kind of control is not present in either public opinion surveys (usually exploring correlational relations between variables) or interviews. Moreover, thanks to the experimental design, researchers have better tools to achieve internal validity by randomly assigning participants to different experimental conditions and to establish causality (which is often not the case with other methods), i.e. they can check whether the experimental stimulus indeed had an impact on the dependent variable. The lack of internal validity can render any study (not only experimental ones) useless; therefore the priority of any experiment is to make sure that the manipulation has an effect on the subjects and to ensure 'experimental realism' (Druckman and Kam 2011, p.44).

The type of experiment used to study perceived legitimacy in this project is the factorial vignette experiment[11]. The aim of vignette experiments (and factorial surveys) is to 'determine the underlying principles behind human judgments (or evaluations) of social objects' (Rossi and Anderson 1982). A vignette 'is a short, carefully constructed description of a person, object, or situation, representing a systematic combination of characteristics (Atzmüller and Steiner 2010, p.128). Factorial vignette experiments use stories (vignettes) to manipulate a set of variables (factors) in all their possible combinations and check the effect of these variables and their interactions on the dependent variable. This method allows for controlling the influence of selected factors on the dependent variable. It also allows providing context to the evaluation of, for example, political authorities by presenting a story with several variables that are

[11] It is also known as factorial survey. The term factorial survey is more often used in case of nationally representative studies.

expected to play a role when people judge the legitimacy and performance of institutions and politicians. This helps to establish external validity, because participants are confronted with a realistic story. Moreover, participants can weigh different aspects of the political process and their own situation before making a legitimacy judgment. The possibility of measuring the beliefs and perceptions after providing standardized, controlled, and carefully constructed context is considered one of the biggest advantages of vignette experiments (Finch 1987, pp.105–106).

The vignette text in the experiment conducted for this thesis described a hypothetical situation in which a government made a decision about helping the victims of a flood that had occurred in their country. In the vignette four factors (see Chapter 1) were manipulated each taking two levels: being strong/present (level 1) or being weak/absent (level 2). This 2 (procedural justice) × 2 (distributive justice) × 2 (dependence) × 2 (personal outcome) design yielded 16 versions of the story. The same 16 vignettes were presented to students socialized in five different countries in their native language (see Appendix F for all 16 versions of the vignette in all languages). The survey was administered as a paper-and-pen task to students in the Netherlands, Poland, France, and Russia and online to students in Ukraine and Russia. The pen & paper version of the study was administered to students after or during larger lectures in the class-rooms with the help of lecturers. The samples were collected at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow and around 300 other universities and polytechnics across Russia (see the list of higher education institutions in Appendix E). In Poland the sample was collected at the universities in Poznan, Pila, and Krakow, in the Netherlands in Leiden, in France in Lyon, and in Ukraine in Kiev and Mikolayiv (in Southern Ukraine).

Each participant was presented with one vignette only so that all manipulations were between-subjects. Participants received an instruction explaining that the story they are about to read is a hypothetical one and that they should imagine that they and their families are in the described situation before answering the questions. The procedural justice manipulation was inspired by the manipulation used by Tyler and Caine (1981, p.650) in their study of endorsement of formal leaders, where the City Councilmen made a voting decision either based on a meeting with his

constituents or based on his own feelings. In the present experiment a governmental commission either organized a series of meetings with victims of the flooding during which they had a chance to talk about the damages they suffered and propose forms of help that the government could offer them or a governmental commission refused to meet with the victims. The manipulation of dependence on the help of the government referred to the loss the respondent and his family suffered because of the flooding: the respondent either suffered a marginal loss (the family lost only a car that they were using in the weekends) or the house and possessions of the family suffered damages and they had limited access to primary goods like food and other essentials. The manipulation of personal outcome referred to either reception of the governmental help or to its lack. The manipulation of distributive justice referred to whom the government offered their help—either providing the benefits to everybody who needed the help most or omitting certain groups.[12] To illustrate how the text of the vignette was constructed, below is one of 16 versions of the vignette used to manipulate procedural justice (present), distributive justice (present), dependence (absent), positive outcome (present).[13]

> [**The same in each version**]There was a flooding in your region. The water is gone now. [**Independence from the authorities**] The house and most possessions of your family did not suffer damages. Your family has access to primary goods like food and other essentials. However, your family lost a car that you used in the weekends. **[The same in each version]** The government

[12] For reasons of keeping the vignettes internally consistent (and still keeping the balanced design of the experiment), the manipulation of outcome was slightly different in one combination of dependence and distributive justice. Because it was impossible for a distributively just government (distributive justice condition) to provide no help to the people who needed it the most (dependence condition), the help was provided (despite the negative outcome condition), but did not improve the material situation of the victims of flooding. The manipulation of distributive justice and negative outcome in this case was: '[**Distributive justice part 1**] Then the government decided to provide benefits for every flood victim whose house or crop fields were damaged. **[Negative outcome]** Although you will receive the benefit, it is useless. The benefit is not even close to the minimum that is needed to help your family to get back on their feet. [**Distributive justice part 2**] Also farmers from your region will receive this kind of benefits to compensate for the destruction of their crop fields that were the only source of income for their families.' The manipulations in this shape were used in V13 and V14 (see Appendix F).

[13] Pre-tests with international and Dutch students at the University of Leiden (N = 87) and a pre-test with Russian students at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow (N = 16) tested whether the manipulations have worked as intended. Short (15 min) informal focus groups with the students who completed the questionnaire helped to improve the phrasing and coherence of the manipulations.

> has enough available resources to offer help. A governmental commission came to your region to estimate the damages and write a report. **[Procedural justice]** Before writing the report, the commission held a series of meetings with victims of the flooding. The victims had an opportunity to talk about the damages they suffered and propose forms of help that the government could offer them. Everybody got a chance to present their point of view and the report guided the decision of the government. **[Distributive justice part 1]** Then the government decided that every flood victim will receive a benefit in proportion to the losses they suffered. **[Outcome]** As a consequence, you will receive a benefit that will help you buy a car. **[Distributive justice part 2]** Farmers from your region will receive benefits to compensate for the destruction of their crop fields that were the only source of income for their families.

After reading the vignette, participants completed the following questions about perceived political legitimacy: 1) The government has the right to take this kind of decisions; 2) Decisions of this government should be respected; 3) I would trust this government; 4) I would like it, if in the future, this government made decisions on this type of issues that influence my life; 5) On the whole this government is legitimate; 6) I would be ready to protest against this decision of the government; 7) If this situation is representative of how the government acts, I would like this government to rule in my country. The following questions served as manipulation checks: 1) After the flooding, I was dependent on the government for help; 2) The way in which the government arrived at this decision was fair; 3) The decision of the government represented a fair distribution of help; 4) The decision of the government had a positive effect on my personal financial situation. For all questions participants indicated their answers on a 7-point scale from 1 = Fully disagree to 7 = Fully agree.

Open question study

The word legitimacy is used in many academic and public debates. It appears frequently in the press and other mass media. However, many scholars believe that using the word itself to ask a question about legitimacy to citizens is too confusing, too difficult, or too abstract. Legitimacy is a latent concept and scholars often debate and contest its meaning and devise proxies for empirical measurement. It is unclear to what extent the understanding of scholars coincides with the meaning assigned to the word

by broader educated audience, especially in cross-cultural context. While the proxies used so far might give indication about the trends in legitimacy, people's understanding of it could bring new insights into the weight of different supposed components of legitimacy. Following this approach, I conducted a study that could be described as a study of folk political philosophy, in which participants got a chance to answer an open question about what they think the most important characteristics of legitimate authorities are. On the basis of their answers, the research contributed to clarifying hierarchy in the dimensions of the concept in different political regimes.

Data and methodology: development of the coding scheme

Students from the Netherlands, France, Poland, Ukraine, and Russia answered an open question 'In your opinion, what characterizes legitimate authorities? Please list up to five characteristics in order of importance (1 = most important).'[14] The same samples of students were used to analyse the open question answers as for the vignette experiment study. Participants could name up to five characteristics of legitimate political authorities in order of importance. In each country only a part of participants responded to the open question and only a portion of those gave all five answers (see Table 2.2).

[14] The question was translated into five languages. In Dutch: Wat zijn volgens u de kenmerken van legitieme autoriteiten? Noem maximaal vijf karakteristieken in volgorde van belangrijkheid (1 = meest belangrijk). In French: Quelles sont les caréristiques d'une autorité légitime? Veuillez lister jusqu'à cinq caractéristiques par ordre d'importance (1= le plus important). In Polish: Czym charakteryzuje się władza posiadająca legitymizację? Proszę nazwać do pięciu cech w porządku od najważeniejszego (1 = najważniejsza cecha). In Ukrainian: Чим, на Вашу думку, характеризується легітимна влада? Вкажіть, будь ласка, до п'яти характеристик, починаючи від найбільш важливої (1 = найважливіша риса). In Russian: Чем характеризуется легитимная власть? Пожалуйста, назовите до пяти характеристик в порядке важности (1 = самое важное).

Table 2.2. Numbers of answers to the open question.

Country	Answer 1	Answer 2	Answer 3	Answer 4	Answer 5	Total
Ukraine	271	254	218	160	118	1021
Russia	409	352	270	177	125	1333
Poland	269	251	212	173	141	1046
France	189	179	146	111	76	701
The Netherlands	292	271	224	152	110	1048

In the first round of coding each of two coders received a random sample of 10% of participants from one country who gave at least one answer to the question. Coder 2 received a 10% random sample of participants from the Netherlands and Coder 3 received a 10% random sample of participants from Poland. I coded both random samples (Coder 1). Coders 2 and 3 received an instruction, in which they were asked to code the answers in two ways.

First, the coders were asked to evaluate the surface meaning of the answers (a meaning the closest to the intention of the respondent) to make sure that we get at a detailed picture of what kind of answers participants provided. This kind of coding is sometimes referred to as 'representational coding': using codes that represent what is 'out there' as closely as possible (Sapsford and Jupp 2006, pp.170–171). The idea behind this coding is to represent as closely as possible the answers of respondents while grouping these answers into categories (hence, reducing the number of answers). The difficulty is to find the right balance between the number of categories (codes) and the number of phenomena and ideas expressed by respondents.

Second, the coders were asked to interpret the answers from the theoretical point of view and categorize them according to the input, throughput and output aspects of legitimacy drawing on the work of Scharpf (2003) and Schmidt (2013) outlined above. The coders, who are familiar with the political legitimacy literature, received a brief description of each of the three categories[15]. This type of coding is

[15] **Input:** is about governing by (and of) the people; in democracies usually referring to representation of interests through a vote in elections, in authoritarian regimes it could be, for example, ideology; Scharpf (2003). **Output**: is about governing for the people; Scharpf (2003). **Throughput**: is about governing with the people; emphasises the role of the quality of processes in decision-making, e.g. efficacy, accountability, transparency, inclusiveness and openness to interest intermediation (Schmidt 2013, p.3).

referred to as ‘hypothesis-guided coding’, in which a theoretical distinction guides the process of assigning specific codes (Sapsford and Jupp 2006, pp.170–171). There were three rounds of coding involving three coders and two rounds of discussion involving two coders that led to achieving reasonably high inter-coder reliability (see Appendix G for details regarding the development of the coding scheme).

In the final round Coder 1 and Coder 2 achieved 77.39% of complete agreement. Coder 1 and Coder 3 completely agreed about 81.73%. The final list of codes used to categorize the answers of respondents is presented in Table 2.3. The trade-off between keeping such a large number of codes and inter-coder reliability is discussed in more detail in Appendix F.

The hypothesis-guided code list is presented in Table 2.4. For the purpose of further analysis based on the theoretical distinctions between input, throughput, and output, the definitions of each of these aspects of legitimacy had to be specified. In this study, input was defined as the basis on which authorities are representing the people—it refers to the reasons people hold to designate others to act on their behalf. This includes the ways in which the interests of the citizens can reach (potential) authorities, who in turn can become their representatives, so any input of ideas or interest of citizens in the political process is included.[16] Throughput refers to the process of the use of power and personal characteristics of authorities that influence how the authorities govern. Output was defined as including all (expected) results of governing—in other words, the outcomes of the use of power (Bovens 2005). The representational codes from Table 2.2 were assigned to the aspects of legitimacy that they fitted the most within. Table 2.3 lists the representational codes that were assigned to each of these aspects of legitimacy.

[16] This understanding of input is close to Beetham’s ‘consent’ dimension of legitimacy in the modern state in its electoral and mobilizational forms (1991, pp.150–158).

Table 2.3. List of representational and hypothesis-guided codes (used in the last coding phase).

	REPRESENTATIONAL CODES	***HYPOTHESIS-GUIDED CODES***
1	**ELECTIONS** Reference to the choice of the people, free and fair elections, legally chosen	INPUT
2	**JUSTICE** Refers not to the actors/politicians, but to the system and how it operates, when the word 'justice' or 'righteousness' is used	THROUGHPUT
3	**LEGAL VALIDITY/LEGALITY** Constitutionality, being formed on the basis of law, lawfulness, refers to the legal acquisition of power—legality, following the laws, not breaking of the laws	THROUGHPUT
4	**CHECKS & BALANCES** Checks and balances between institutions, courts, acting within given authority, separation of powers, control by citizens	THROUGHPUT
5	**EQUALITY** When this exact formulation is given	THROUGHPUT
6	**IMPARTIALITY** Equal treatment, just treatment, objectivity, independence, not subject to pressures	THROUGHPUT
7	**HONESTY/FAIRNESS** Using 'fair-play' rules, sincere; can refer to some sort of distributive justice too, honesty/fairness of the actors/politicians; in general use the code when the word honesty/fairness is used	THROUGHPUT
8	**TRANSPARENCY** Openness, no corruption, clarity, transparency	THROUGHPUT
9	**(DE FACTO) AUTHORITY** Taking decisions, (being able to) making laws, executing decisions/laws, effectiveness	OUTPUT
10	**RELIABILITY** Doing things as promised, eliciting belief—credibility, completing postulates, trustworthiness	THROUGHPUT
11	**ACTING FOR THE COMMON GOOD/FOR CITIZENS** Acting not for their own interest, acting for citizens, altruism, selflessness	OUTPUT
12	**TRUST/SUPPORT**	INPUT
13	**ACCEPTANCE/APPROVAL** Recognition by citizens, acceptance, respect from citizens, obedience, no protest, voluntariness, consent	INPUT
14	**SECURITY/ORDER/STABILITY** Taking care of the state security	OUTPUT
15	**EXPERTISE** Knowledge, competence, experience necessary to take good decisions/actions	OUTPUT
16	**REPRESENTATION** Referring to the representation of certain interests, party's electorate	INPUT

Table 2.3 continues

17	**WELFARE/ECONOMIC PROSPERITY** Referring to economic development, improvement of living standards, help to the poor etc.	OUTPUT
18	**INTEGRITY** References to moral standing/qualities and values, characteristics that make someone a good politician; used for moral qualities and characteristics that do not fit with other categories and are encompassed by the term integrity (including responsibility, truth-telling, respect)	THROUGHPUT
19	**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION/CONSULTATION** Turnout, referenda, civil society, consulting with citizens, deliberation, listening to the citizens, accessibility, rallies	INPUT
20	**PROTECTION OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS & FREEDOMS** Tolerance, freedom, respect for an individual	OUTPUT
21	**DEMOCRACY** When only the word 'democracy' or 'democratic' is used	INPUT
22	**IDEOLOGICAL** When a specific ideology is named (e.g. conservative, liberal, socialist)	INPUT
23	**TRADITIONAL/RELIGIOUS**	INPUT
24	**EFFICIENCY** Efficient way of acting, only about the process	THROUGHPUT
25	**FOREIGN POLICY**	OUTPUT
26	**INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION**	INPUT
27	**NATIONAL INTEREST/ SOVEREIGNTY**	OUTPUT
28	**LEADERSHIP/CHARISMA** References to leadership, the rule of strong leader, charisma	THROUGHPUT
29	**PATRIOTISM/NATIONALISM** National identity, national values, patriotic	OUTPUT
30	**NATIONAL UNITY**[* **] Appeared in the French dataset several times	OUTPUT
31	**OTHER**[**]	OTHER

[* *] If an answer did not fit in any of the listed categories, it was assigned the code 'other'.

[***] The code 'national unity' was added by Coder 1 when coding the French sample (after the Polish and Dutch samples)

Table 2.4. Hypothesis guided codes: representational codes according to input, throughput, output criteria.

INPUT	THROUGHPUT	OUTPUT
1. Elections	1. Justice	1. (De facto) authority
2. Trust/support	2. Legal validity/legality	2. Acting for the common good/for citizens
3. Acceptance/approval	3. Checks & balances	3. Security/order/stability
4. Representation/pluralism	4. Equality	4. Welfare/economic prosperity
5. Citizen participation/ consultation	5. Impartiality	5. Protection of individual rights & freedoms
6. Democracy	6. Honesty/fairness	6. Foreign policy
7. Ideological	7. Transparency	7. National interest/sovereignty
8. Traditional/religious	8. Reliability	8. Patriotism/nationalism
	9. Expertise	9. National unity
	10. Integrity	
	11. Efficiency	
	12. Leadership/charisma	

Note. International recognition did not fit within any of the aspect of legitimacy, as all other codes pertained to domestic politics and domestic capacity of authorities to act. This code had a very low frequency, so it was not problematic to exclude them from the analysis.

Correlational study

The third empirical study included in this project involves exploring the views of participants about the institutions in their country. Questions 1-39 (see Appendix B) were used to test the relation between the perceived legitimacy, views about how the ideal political system should look like and the evaluations of performance of the political regime in the fields linked to perceived legitimacy as defined in Chapter 1. This correlational study will analyse what drives the variance in perceived legitimacy scores in the five selected countries.