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Chapter 4. What makes political authority legitimate? An analysis of ideas about legitimacy in the Netherlands, France, Poland, Ukraine, and Russia

In the vignette experiment study in Chapter 3 I tested the influence of specific factors on perceived legitimacy in five countries. These factors have been identified by earlier studies of perceived legitimacy, but the previous studies measuring their influence on perceived legitimacy were usually limited to the context of one country. Here, the vignette experiment has been conducted in five countries in which the level of democracy varied and the importance of these factors was compared. Participants of the study all reacted to the same stories about a hypothetical government and evaluated the legitimacy of this government on the basis of the combination of four factors: personal positive outcome, dependence on the help from the government, distributive justice, and procedural justice. In short, this experiment showed that distributive justice had the largest effect on perceived legitimacy in each country, that procedural justice had a significant effect independent from the regime in which the participants were socialized, and that both instrumental (personal outcome) and normative (justice) motives were relevant when evaluating this hypothetical government in each country. Following from that, there were no large cross-country differences detected when it comes to the importance of the four manipulated factors. In each country a government was perceived as more legitimate when it distributed help in a just way, delivered personal positive outcomes, and gave people voice in decision-making process. Hence, political socialization in different regimes did not have a big influence on the evaluations of legitimacy. This does not mean, however, that political socialization does not play a role at all and that it does not lead to differences in what is considered to be the base of authorities' legitimacy in different regimes. There might be other factors that participants would normally take into account to evaluate the legitimacy of political authorities in their countries. In this chapter, I explore what these other factors are and compare them cross-country to learn whether the participants in different political regimes use other evaluation schemes to deem political authorities legitimate.

As shown in Chapter 1, various criteria of evaluation of legitimacy can be used within objective approaches to legitimacy. Similarly, within subjective approaches, different scholars use different factors that should be evaluated to arrive at a judgment about the state of legitimacy of a country, institution, or authority. Like in the vignette study, here too I use the subjective approach focusing on the individuals' evaluation criteria. By investigating the views of citizens about what makes authorities legitimate, this study could be described as a study into folk political philosophy (see Chapter 1, pp. 12-18). It tries to enhance our understanding of the system of judgments that people use when evaluating the right of others to rule—exercise power—over them. Taking the folk philosophy perspective is suitable to discover how people reason about and justify the presence and influence of political authorities, regimes, and systems.

In this chapter, I investigate what criteria young educated people find important for evaluations of political authorities' legitimacy in their countries. As in the vignette experiment, I compare the views of respondents from old European democracies (France and the Netherlands), a new post-communist democracy (Poland), and two hybrid regimes—one post-Soviet hybrid experiencing a political and economic crisis and one post-Soviet hybrid regime that steadily shows more and more authoritarian features (Russia). The comparison is based on the assumption that because culture, history and values vary across societies, we can expect that what citizens expect the political authorities to be like may vary across countries (Schmidt 2013, p.10).

Public opinion surveys often imply that citizens in the countries with authoritarian regimes might have a default preference for a more authoritarian rule and therefore they should find authoritarian leaders more legitimate. Especially in the context of Russia, scholars and observers of politics find outputs of political authorities such as order and stability to be more important for evaluations of authorities than democratic rights and freedoms (Sil and Chen 2004, pp.348–349). These observations are supported by public opinion surveys that consistently show that around 40 % of Russians are ready to trade, for example, their freedom of speech and the right to travel abroad for a normal salary and decent pension (Levada Center 2015). Scholars also emphasise the proneness of Russians toward authoritarian rule or strong leadership

(Hahn and Logvinenko 2008; summary of studies in Hale 2011). However, to what extent these preferences constitute criteria for perceived legitimacy is not clear for several reasons. Firstly, the phrasing of the survey questions often does not allow for other important characteristics of authorities to be evaluated simultaneously or in the context. Although it may be true that strong leadership is important for Russian citizens, we do not know whether this means that the leader does not need to go through the electoral process or can breach laws and limit other freedoms of citizens to achieve goals of order or financial security for citizens (Hale 2011). Although public opinion surveys can be very informative, the respondents never pick the legitimacy-granting attributes they could answer about, so we cannot be sure what the scope and importance of possible answers is. Moreover, we do not know how their requirements for legitimate authorities compare to citizens' in other countries. Secondly, the preference for order or strong leadership can be expressed because of the lack of viable or better alternatives in the current situation in the country (Holmes 2015, p.51). Therefore such data about preferences for strong leadership do not tell us enough about what constitutes an ideal legitimate authority according to the citizens. We cannot be sure that expressing a preference for, for example, an authoritarian leader means that this is a criterion which must be fulfilled for the leader to be legitimate or that it reflects norms or beliefs of citizens (Fleron 1996, p.236). It might simply be an expression of support driven by conformity, instrumental gains, or fear of violence (Marquez 2016). Considering the widespread rhetoric of democracy as well as easier access to information in today's hybrid regimes and (new) authoritarian systems, it is possible that the democratic criteria for evaluating political authorities prevail even there.

According to Huntington (1991, pp.46–58), the survival and legitimacy of authoritarian regimes depends heavily on their economic performance, i.e. their output. The legitimacy of democracies, by contrast, is based mainly on input: shared ideas about what the political system represents and relatively durable electoral procedures that assure representation of citizens' interests (Easton 1975, p.447). It is not sure, however, if citizens socialized in different political regimes differ in the emphasis they put on the input and output in their legitimacy evaluations. In this study, I compare the

criteria for evaluation of regimes used by respondents socialized in different political regimes and interpret the differences also using the input, output, and throughput distinction suggested by Schmidt (2013).

In an attempt to address the above issues dealing with perceived legitimacy, I asked students in Russia, Ukraine, Poland, the Netherlands and France an open question: 'In your opinion, what characterizes legitimate authorities?'. Students were asked to name up to five characteristics in order of importance. To be able to analyse the answers, a coding scheme was created in order to organize the results and prepare them for the analysis and interpretation. The details about the procedures used to organize the data and information about the methodology are in Chapter 2 and Appendix G. Moreover, the lists with two types of codes assigned to the answers of respondents—representational and hypothesis-guided—are also in Chapter 2. Several hypotheses posed in Chapter 1 (see section 1.3) will be assessed using the data provided by respondents about their ideas on what constitutes a legitimate political authority:

H7: The most important motives citizens have to grant legitimacy to/support authorities in non-democracies are of instrumental nature

H8: Procedural justice (throughput) is a more important factor for perceptions of legitimacy among democratic citizens than among citizens socialized in new democracies and mixed regimes.

H9: Citizen participation (input) is more important for perceived legitimacy in old democracies.

H10: Distributive justice has a more important role in perceptions of legitimacy among citizens socialized in post-communist regimes than among citizens socialized in democracies

H11: Based on previous evidence, stability and order are expected to be important for evaluations of legitimacy of political authorities in Russia.

4.1. Results

This section presents the results of representational coding. 5148 answers provided by respondents from five countries were coded in a uniform way. Firstly, I present and discuss the results country by country. While reporting the results, I also discuss the coding choices that were made regarding specific words and phrases. Subsequently, I compare the results from all five countries in two ways: (1) I compare the frequencies of the representational coding; (2) I analyse and compare the frequencies of the hypothesis-guided coding.

Results of representational coding

The Netherlands

In the Netherlands, 1048 answers of respondents were analysed (see Table 1 in Appendix K). Most frequent answers (more than 7% of the answers) to the question about the characteristics of legitimate authorities were transparency (9.15%), elections (8.30%), legal validity/legality (7.16%), and checks & balances (7.06%). In the category of transparency most of the answers were expressed with the words such as openness, transparency, clarity, overtness. There were only six mentions directly related to corruption (6 of 96; 6.25%). The answers categorized as elections were often qualified by adjectives such as fair, free, and democratic (39 of 87; 44.83%).

The other frequent answers that constituted 5% or more of the entire sample were honesty/fairness (6.97%), impartiality (5.82%), (de facto) authority (5.73%), and representation/pluralism (5.06%). The category honesty/fairness included answers that used the words *eerlijk* and *eerlijkheid*. The category impartiality included answers such as 'equal treatment', 'objectivity', 'independence', 'equality before the law', and 'not racist'. The category '(de facto) authority' included all words and phrases that referred to the actual power to govern and to having the executive capacity. Some of the answers that were assigned to this category were 'possesses power', 'ability to execute decisions', 'authority', and 'effective'.

The answers that were the least frequent (less than 1% of answers) were security/order/stability, acceptance/approval, welfare/economic prosperity,

traditional/religious, leadership/charisma, national interest/sovereignty, efficiency, ideological, international recognition, foreign policy, patriotism/nationalism, and national unity.

Respondents were asked to name the characteristics of legitimate authorities in order of importance, so the first answer reflects the most important characteristic of legitimate authorities. Table 2 in Appendix K shows the frequencies of answers given on the first position—the most important characteristic of legitimate authorities according to Dutch respondents. The answer given by far most frequently was elections—20.14% (59 of 292). The second most important characteristic of legitimate authorities was honesty/fairness, which was named by 9.22% of respondents (27 of 292). The next three most frequent answers were given all by 7.85% of respondents (23 of 292 each) and these were transparency, legal validity/legality, and reliability. Reliability was a category that included answers that expressed an expectation that the authorities will do what they promise (words and phrases such as 'reliability', 'keep their promises', and 'do what they say').

Codes that were assigned to the answers only once or not at all were expertise, acceptance/approval, leadership/charisma, traditional/religious, national interest/sovereignty, efficiency, ideological, international recognition, foreign policy, and patriotism/nationalism.

France

In France, 701 answers of respondents were analysed (see Table 3 in Appendix K). Most frequent answers to the question about the characteristics of legitimate authorities were elections (15.83%), justice (8.13%), citizen participation/consultation (6.56%) and integrity (6.42%). The word elections was often accompanied by an adjective or qualification such as 'free and fair', 'universal suffrage', 'democratic', 'direct', and 'chosen by the majority' (64 of 111 answers; 57,66%). Justice was a category that included answers that used the word *équité* and *juste*. '*Équité*' translated to 'equity' refers to 'the quality of assigning to each what he deserves by reference to the

principles of natural justice; impartiality'[23]. This is to differentiate the meaning from equality, which was expressed by the word '*égalitaire'*, although the two belong to the same field of meaning. The third most popular category was citizen participation/consultation at 6.56% and the fourth most frequent answer was integrity at 6.42%. Citizen participation/consultation included answers such as referendum, taking the opinion of the people into account, listening to the people, dialogue, and accessibility. The category of integrity included answers such as loyal, respectful, determined, responsible, and coherent.

The other common answers that constituted 5% or more of the entire sample, were acting for the common good/for citizens (5.71%), checks & balances (5.71%), (de facto) authority (5.42%), and representation/pluralism (5.28%).

The least frequent answers of French respondents (less than 1% of answers) were leadership/charisma, trust/support, honesty/fairness (*honnête*), national interest/sovereignty, national unity, patriotism/nationalism, ideological, traditional/religious, and international recognition. It is worth noting that the categories trust/support and honesty/fairness were in the top 10 most frequent answer in all the other countries, whereas in France they constituted only 0.71% and 0.57% respectively.

Table 4 in Appendix K shows the frequencies of the answers given on the first position—the most important characteristic of legitimate authorities. The answer that was given most frequently by French respondents was elections—46.03% (87 of 189) respondents named it as the characteristic of the highest priority for legitimacy, which is a much higher proportion of answers than in any other country. The second most important characteristic was justice, which was named by 8.99% of respondents (17 of 189). The next three most frequent answers were given by only 5.25% of respondents (10 of 189): integrity, representation/pluralism, and acceptance/approval.

There were many codes that were assigned to the answers only once or not at all. These codes were checks & balances, expertise, reliability, protection of individual rights and freedoms, leadership/charisma, honesty/fairness, welfare/economic

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[23] Definition of the word équité in French: 'Qualité consistant à attribuer à chacun ce qui lui est dû par référence aux principes de la justice naturelle ; impartialité' (from the French online dictionary at http://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/%C3%A9quit%C3%A9/30712).

prosperity, national interest/sovereignty, national unity, patriotism/nationalism, ideological, traditional/religious, and international recognition. Elections clearly dominated among the answers, therefore other characteristics were not mentioned often as the most important characteristic of legitimate authorities.

Poland

In Poland, 1046 answers of respondents were analysed (see Table 5 in Appendix K). Most common answers to the question about the characteristics of legitimate authorities were trust/support (12.69%), justice (9.46%) and legal validity/legality (8.41). As in other cases, the code trust/support was assigned to the answers using the exact words 'trust' and 'support'. Justice was a category that included answers that used the word '*sprawiedliwość'* [spravedlivoshch] and (like in the case of Ukrainian '*справедливість'* and Russian '*справедливость'*) designated reference to justice, justice system, social justice, or just behaviour. The third most popular category, legal validity/legality, included words and phrases such as 'legality', 'law-abidingness', 'constituted according to the law', 'following the laws', 'consistent with the constitution'.

The other popular answers (5% or more of the entire sample) were integrity (7.46%), (de facto) authority (7.36%), acting for the common good/for citizens (7.07%), and elections (5.93%). Surprisingly and differently than in the other countries, elections were not among the top three popular answers.

The least frequent answers in the Polish sample (less than 1% of answers) were national interest/sovereignty, ideological, leadership/charisma, traditional/religious, foreign policy, welfare/economic prosperity, patriotism/nationalism, international recognition, and national unity.

Table 6 in Appendix K shows the frequencies of the answers given on the first position—the most important characteristic of legitimate authority. In Poland the largest percentage of respondents thought that trust/support is the most important basis of legitimacy of political authorities. The second most frequent answer listed on the first position was justice (41 respondents, 15.24%). The third top answer was elections, which was the only different category in the top three by comparison with the top three

most frequent categories in general. Almost a quarter of respondents (66 of 296) named elections as the most important characteristic of legitimate authorities (23.42%).

The least common answers given on the first position (less than 1% of participants) were representation/pluralism, security/order/stability, efficiency, leadership/charisma, transparency, checks & balances, equality, ideological, traditional/religious, foreign policy, welfare/economic prosperity, patriotism/nationalism, international recognition, national unity.

Ukraine

In Ukraine, 1019 answers of respondents were analysed (see Table 7 in Appendix K). Most common answers given by respondents to the question about the characteristics of legitimate authorities were transparency (11.09%), elections (10.89%) and integrity (10.79%). The category of transparency encompassed mainly answers of 'transparency', 'openness', and references to 'no corruption'. The absence of corruption as an important characteristic of legitimate authorities was listed 47 times out of 113 (41.59%) words and phrases coded as transparency. Respondents who listed elections as an important characteristic of legitimate authorities in many cases added an adjective to specify what kind of elections are needed to secure legitimacy (85 out of 111; 77.27%). Among the most popular adjectives were fair, legal, free, and democratic. The answers coded as integrity referred to the moral standing and qualities and values that political authorities should have or represent. In general, these were characteristics that make someone a good politician that did not fit with any of the more specific codes. The most frequent words in this category were 'responsibility', 'decency', and 'loyalty'.

Other answers that were frequently given by respondents from Ukraine were legal validity/legality (8.15%), acting for the common good (7.56%), honesty/fairness (6.48), trust/support (6.08%), and justice (5.10). Since there is some meaning overlap between honesty/fairness and justice, the coding needs some clarification. Each answer that pertained to justice, justice system, social justice, or just behaviour and was expressed by the word '*справедливість*' [spravedlyvist'] was coded as justice, whereas each answer that pertained to the quality of being honest or fair(-play) and was

expressed by the word '*чесність*' [chesnist′] was coded as honesty/fairness. Despite the fact that semantically both words are very close to each other, they were often used by respondents as two different characteristics of legitimate authorities, i.e. frequently the same respondent named both of these qualities as separate characteristics they would require from legitimate authorities. Therefore, for the purpose of representational coding—keeping the codes as close to the answers of the respondents as possible—these two aspects of fairness were assigned separate codes.

The least popular answers (less than 1% of) were national unity, protection of individual rights and freedoms, welfare/economic prosperity, equality, ideological, international recognition, national interest/sovereignty, security/order/stability, and leadership/charisma.

Table 8 in Appendix K shows the frequencies of the answers given on the first position—the most important characteristic of legitimate authority. The largest percentage of respondents thought that elections (free, fair, democratic, and legal) are the most important basis of legitimacy of political authorities. More than a quarter of respondents (71 out of 271) named elections on the first position (26.20%). The second most frequent answer on the first position was honesty/fairness (29 respondents, 10.70%) and third was trust/support (27 respondents, 9.96%).

The least frequent answers given on the first position (less than 1% of participants) were exactly the same as the least frequent answers in general (Table 7 and 8 in Appendix I).

Russia

In Russia, 1333 answers of respondents were analysed (see Table 9 in Appendix K). Most frequent answers to the question about the characteristics of legitimate authorities were legal validity/legality (12.09), elections (11.71%) and a slightly less popular category of trust/support (7.21). The category of legal validity included words and phrases such as 'legality' 'law-abidingness', 'lawfulness', 'following the laws', 'constitutionality'. This category included all notions referring to the legality of obtaining power (e.g. constitutionality, coming to power on the basis of laws) and all notions referring to the legality of behaviour of political institutions. The second most

common answer among Russian respondents was elections. As in the other cases, the majority of answers (101 of 156; 64.74%) were qualified with an adjective such as fair, free, democratic, legal, involving multiple parties, or without forgeries. The code trust/support in all cases was used when the exact words 'trust' and 'support' were used by respondents.

Other answers that were frequently given by respondents from Russia (5% or more of the answers), were transparency (6.64%), justice (5.71%), and acting for the common good/for citizens (5.48%). The code transparency was assigned to words like 'openness', 'transparency', 'publicness', and words and phrases linked to corruption ('no bribes', 'no corruption', 'not corruptible', 'fight corruption'). There were 34 (39.53%) corruption related answers of 84 answers coded as transparency.

The least common answers in the Russian sample (less than 1% of answers) were international recognition, leadership (the category that included answers like 'Putin', 'charisma', 'authoritarian'), security/order/stability, foreign policy, patriotism/nationalism, ideological, and traditional/religious.

Table 10 in Appendix K shows the frequencies of the answers given on the first position—the most important characteristic of legitimate authority. The largest percentage of respondents thought that elections (free, fair, democratic, and legal) are the most important basis of legitimacy of political authorities. Almost a quarter of respondents (99 of 409) named elections on the first position (24.21%) and also in the Russian sample it was clearly the dominant answer. The second most frequent answers on the first position were answers coded as legal validity/legality (62 respondents, 15.16%). Trust/support was on the third place among most popular answers and the last one that was mentioned by more than 10% respondents (52 respondents, 12.71%). In Russia the first three most frequent answers listed on the first position by respondents were exactly the same as the first three most frequent answers listed on all five positions.

The least common answers given on the first position (less than 1% of respondents) were the same as all least frequent answers in general. Moreover, less than 1% of respondents mentioned equality, expertise, reliability, representation/pluralism, and national interest/sovereignty.

4.2. Comparison of the representational codes

To compare the results from all five countries, Table 4.1 shows the rank orders of codes used to categorize all the answers (from all five positions). This table helps to identify the differences and similarities in the ranks of specific answers given by respondents. Table 4.2 shows the top ten most popular answers (from all positions). By providing percentages of the answers, Table 4.2 indicates to what extent the answers differed across countries. Answers pertaining to elections were the most frequent answers in general (looking at the total of answers from all five possible positions) only in France. France was also the only country, in which the most popular answer—elections—clearly dominated over the next frequently given answers. Elections were named 15.83% of the time, whereas the second most popular answer—justice—constituted 8.13% of the answers (difference of 7.7%). In all the other countries the difference between the top answer and the second most frequent answer was much smaller (between 0.38% in Russia and 3.64% in Poland), making elections clearly the most important answer in France. Elections, however, were important also according to the respondents from Ukraine (10.89% of answers), Russia (11.71%) and the Netherlands (8.30%), where it was the second most frequently given answer. Poland was the only country in which elections were not among the top two most popular answers: in Poland elections constituted 5.93 % of all the answers and were on the seventh position of most popular answers.

The answers that were the most frequent in Ukraine and in the Netherlands belonged to the category of transparency. In Ukraine transparency constituted 11.09% of all answers and in the Netherlands 9.15%. The distribution of answers categorized as transparency in these two cases differed though. In Ukraine 41.59% of answers coded as transparency, directly named the absence of corruption as the most important characteristic of legitimate authorities. In the Netherlands, only 6.25% of answers were directly related to corruption. In Russia, transparency was also ranked relatively high. It was the fourth most frequent answer making for 6.46% of the answers. Similarly to Ukraine, almost 40% of the answers were emphasising that legitimate political authorities should not be corrupt.

Table 4.1. Rank orders of codes (all answers).

Code	NL	FR	PL	UA	RU
Transparency	**1**	14	13	**1**	**4**
Elections	**2**	**1**	7	**2**	**2**
Legal validity / legality	**3**	11	**3**	**4**	**1**
Checks & balances	**4**	**5**	18	12	8
Honesty / fairness	**5**	24	11	6	12
Impartiality	6	10	13	15	12
(De facto) authority	7	7	**5**	9	10
Representation / pluralism	8	8	15	14	17
Integrity	9	**4**	**4**	**3**	7
Citizen participation / consultation	10	**3**	16	11	14
Reliability	10	16	10	15	22
Justice	12	**2**	**2**	8	**5**
Democracy	13	13	19	17	21
Acting for the common good / for citizens	14	**5**	6	**5**	7
Expertise	14	12	12	10	18
Other	16	16	8	21	9
Protection of individual rights / freedoms	17	18	16	19	16
Trust / Support	18	23	**1**	7	**3**
Equality	19	9	22	25	20
Security / order / stability	20	20	19	23	25
Acceptance / approval	21	14	8	13	11
Welfare / economic prosperity	22	21	27	19	15
Traditional / religious	23	29	25	28	28
Leadership / charisma	24	22	25	28	24
National interest / sovereignty	25	24	23	21	19
Efficiency	26	19	21	28	30
Ideological	26	28	24	27	28
International recognition	26	30	30	23	23
Foreign policy	29	30	27	28	26
Patriotism / nationalism	30	27	29	18	26
National unity	31	24	31	25	30

Note. Double (or triple) ranks (e.g. within a country two or three codes with the same rank number) mean that those codes were mentioned the same number of times in a sample.

In Poland, the most common answer was trust/support, which constituted 13.10% of the answers. This category was also popular in Russia, where 7.21 % of respondents said that a characteristic of legitimate authority is that people trust or support it. In Russia this was the third most popular answer. In Ukraine, trust/support constituted 6.08% of the answers and it was the seventh most frequent answer. In France and the Netherlands, trust/support was not among top ten answers provided by respondents (23rd and 18th answer respectively).

Legal validity/legality was among the most common codes in four out of five countries. In Russia, it constituted 12.09% of the answers and it was mentioned the most often (elections were only 0.38% less popular though). Legal validity/legality was the third most frequent answer in Poland (8.41%) and the Netherlands (7.25%) and it was the fourth and similarly popular category in Ukraine (8.15%). Only in France, legal validity/legality was not among the top ten most frequent answers (rank eleven).

Although legal validity/legality was not a common expression used to describe a legitimate authority in France, the second most frequently used word was justice, which has a meaning related to legal validity/legality category. Justice was the second most frequent answer in France (8.13%) as well as in Poland (8.41%). It was the fifth most frequent answer given by the Russian respondents (5.71%) and eighth by the Ukrainian respondents (5.10%).

The word justice and related phrases were not used often by the Dutch respondents, however, other codes touching upon similar themes were assigned frequently to their answers, such as mentioned above legal validity/legality and the words and phrases coded as impartiality (5.82%), which are also related to the theme of justice.

Integrity was among the top most frequent answers in all five countries. It was the third most frequent category in Ukraine (10.79%), the fourth in Poland and France (7.46% and 6.42% respectively), the seventh in Russia (4.95%) and the ninth in the Netherlands (4.96%).

Another answer that appeared in every sample was (de facto) authority. (De facto) authority was the fifth most popular answer in Poland (7.36%), the seventh in

the Netherlands and in France (5.73% and 5.42% respectively), and the ninth in Ukraine and Russia (4.91% and 4.13% respectively).

The category 'acting for the common good/for citizens' was emphasised by respondents in four countries: in Ukraine (7.56%), Poland (7.07%), France (5.71%), and Russia (5.48%). It was not among the top ten most frequent answers only in the Netherlands.

Instead, in the Netherlands, there was more emphasis on representation and pluralism (5.06%) and citizen participation and consultation (4.58%). The latter two types of answers were present also only in France, where citizen participation/consultation was the third most frequent answer (6.56%) and representation/pluralism was the eighth most frequent answer (5.28%). In all three post-communist countries representation/pluralism was named less often: in Poland it was ranked fifteenth (2.58%), in Ukraine fourteenth (2.36%), and in Russia seventeenth (2.40%). In the latter case, more answers pertained to majoritarian representation rather than to pluralism. Also citizen participation/consultation was not among the most popular codes in these three countries. It was ranked sixteenth in Poland (2.39%), eleventh in Ukraine (3.53%), and fourteenth in Russia (3.08%).

Table 4.2. Ten most frequent answers in the Netherlands, France, Poland, Ukraine, and Russia (answers from all positions).

	NL (N = 1048)	%	FR (N = 701)	%	PL (N = 1046)	%	UA (N = 1019)	%	RU (N = 1333)	%
1	Transparency	9.15	Elections	15.83	Trust/Support	12.62	Transparency	11.09	Legal validity/ legality	12.09
2	Elections	8.30	Justice	8.13	Justice	9.46	Elections	10.89	Elections	11.71
3	Legal validity/ legality	7.25	Citizen participation/ consultation	6.56	Legal validity/ legality	8.41	Integrity	10.79	Trust/Support	7.21
4	Checks & balances	7.06	Integrity	6.42	Integrity	7.46	Legal validity/ legality	8.15	Transparency	6.46
5	Honesty/fairness	6.97	Acting for the common good	5.71	(De facto) authority	7.36	Acting for the common good	7.56	Justice	5.71
6	Impartiality	5.82	Checks & balances	5.71	Acting for the common good	7.07	Honesty/fairness	6.48	Acting for the common good	5.48
7	(De facto) authority	5.73	(De facto) authority	5.42	Elections	5.93	Trust/Support	6.08	Integrity	4.95
8	Representation/ pluralism	5.06	Representation/ pluralism	5.28	Acceptance/ approval	4.11	Justice	5.10	Checks & balances	4.80
9	Integrity	4.96	Equality	4.42	Reliability	3.82	(De facto) authority	4.91	(De facto) authority	4.13
10	Citizen participation/ consultation	4.58	Impartiality	3.85	Honesty/fairness	3.35	Expertise	4.42	Acceptance/ap proval	3.83

Table 4.3 shows the differences between the most common first answers (the most important characteristic of legitimate authorities) in all five countries were not large either. Here, elections were named as the most important characteristic of legitimate authorities by the most respondents in Ukraine (26.20%), Russia (24.21%), France (46.03%), and the Netherlands (20.14%), but once again in Poland it was ranked lower—the third most popular answer (13.24%). Justice was the second most frequently named characteristic on the first position in Poland (15.24%) and in France (8.99%). In the Netherlands and Ukraine the second most frequently named characteristic was honesty/fairness (9.22% and 10.70% respectively), and in Russia legal validity/legality (15.15%). Trust/support was among the most frequent answers only in post-communist countries in the sample: in Poland it was mentioned the most often (23.42%), while in Ukraine and Russia it was the third most popular answer (9.96% and 12.71% respectively).

Table 4.3. Ten most frequent first answers in the Netherlands, France, Poland, Ukraine, and Russia (the most important characteristic of legitimate authorities).

	NL (N = 292)	%	FR (N = 189)	%	PL (N = 269)	%	UA (N = 271)	%	RU (N = 409)	%
1	Elections	20.14	Elections	46.03	Trust/Support	23.42	Elections	26.20	Elections	24.21
2	Honesty/fairness	9.22	Justice	8.99	Justice	15.24	Honesty/fairness	10.70	Legal validity/legality	15.16
3	Transparency	7.85	Integrity	5.29	Elections	13.75	Trust/Support	9.96	Trust/Support	12.71
4	Legal validity/legality	7.85	Representation/ pluralism	5.29	Acceptance/ approval	6.69	Transparency	7.75	Acceptance/ approval	6.60
5	Reliability	7.85	Acceptance/ Approval	5.29	Legal validity/ legality	6.32	Legal validity/ legality	7.38	Justice	5.87
6	Impartiality	6.83	Democracy	4.23	(De facto) authority	5.95	Justice	7.01	Acting for the common good	4.89
7	(De facto) authority	6.14	Acting for the common good	3.70	Acting for the common good	4.09	Acting for the common good	5.90	Honesty/fairness	4.40
8	Justice	5.46	Equality	3.17	Honesty/fairness	2.97	Acceptance/ approval	4.06	Transparency	3.67
9	Democracy	5.46	Legal validity/ legality	3.17	Reliability	2.97	(De facto) authority	3.32	(De facto) authority	3.18
10	Checks & balances	4.78	Citizen participation/ consultation	2.12	Impartiality	2.23	Integrity	2.95	Integrity	2.93

To sum up, the scope of answers given by respondents did not differ much across the five countries. The specific words to talk about the legitimacy of authorities varied, but the general concepts that the answers referred to seemed to be very similar. In their conceptions of legitimacy, however, respondents prioritized the most important characteristics of political authorities slightly differently.

Two clear differences were detected between the old democracies and post-communist countries. Firstly, a bigger priority was given to trust/support by respondents from post-communist countries (Poland, Ukraine, and Russia), indicating that perhaps they experience political authorities in their countries as not trustworthy and not deserving the support. Another possible explanation is that a vote in election on itself does not necessarily indicate support or trust for particular political authority. It can be a sign of disappointment with incumbents or no viable alternatives: following Rose (1995, p.550), if 'the choice offered is between more or less distrusted parties, then voters can only be 'negatively represented' by voting to turn the rascals out or keep the less unsatisfactory alternative in office'. By emphasising the importance of trust and support of citizens for the authorities as important characteristic for recognizing them as legitimate, they express the need of genuine preference for these authorities rather than voting for someone simply because they are the most acceptable option among all bad ones. Moreover, for respondents from the post-communist countries the idea of elections as purely ritualistic and meaningless act might be more salient, because of their parents' experience with the communist involuntary mobilization (Palma 1991). Therefore, beside the procedures of free and fair elections, they express the need to be able to trust and support the authorities.

Secondly, in the old democracies citizen participation/consultation and representation/pluralism were emphasised more than in the post-communist countries. As hypothesised in Chapter 1, the communist past was linked to the lower level of activism and this effect might have spilled over also to the younger generations in these countries. By comparison with other post-communist countries, the percentage of mentions of citizen participation in Ukraine was higher. This can reflect the events that preceded the data collection—the mass protests referred to as Euromaidan that were attended by many students.

The French respondents stand out in their emphasis of elections and general suffrage as the most important characteristic of legitimate authorities. This is in line with the priority given to the idea of representative democracy rather than associational democracy, with the emphasis of the state mission to protect the general interest rather than particularist or group interests (Saurugger 2007). The Dutch respondents stand out as the only ones that did not mention acting for the common good as one of the most important characteristics of legitimate authorities. However, Dutch respondents emphasised 'impartiality' and 'reliability' more than respondents in other countries. In this way they focused on the characteristic of the individuals in power rather than the outcomes they should deliver. Having these characteristics though can be seen as a precondition to deliver the common good and act for the citizens' benefit.

In the next step of the analysis of answers about legitimacy of political authorities, the codes were organized according to the input, throughput, and output dimensions of legitimacy. The next section compares the answers of respondents from the five countries using these hypothesis-guided codes.

4.3. Comparison of the hypothesis-guided codes

Another way to analyse the answers of respondents is to use the theoretical distinction between input, throughput, and output dimensions of legitimacy (see Chapter 1.1). To test whether the responses in different countries varied across this distinction, answers from the first position (see Appendix I) that belonged to each aspect were summed up according to earlier defined terms (see Table 2.3). The total frequencies are shown in Table 4.4. To test whether frequency distributions of the first answers differed across countries, I analysed frequencies with a Pearson's Chi-square test. There was a significant association between the legitimacy aspects and country, χ^2 (8) = 46.16, p < .001. To assess which frequencies contributed to the association, I examined the standardized residuals (Field 2013, pp.726–746). Standardized residuals are an index how much the observed frequency in a cell deviates from the expected frequency for that cell based on the row and columns totals (i.e., the number of times a theme was mentioned across all countries and the total frequency for each country). Standardized residuals indicated that input was mentioned significantly less often (than

expected) in the Netherlands (std. residual = -3.04, p < .01) and significantly more often in France (std. residual = 3.43, p < .001), and that throughput was mentioned significantly less often in France (std. residual = -2.68, p < .01) and significantly more often in the Netherlands (std. residual = 3.34, p < .001). No significant cell deviations were observed for output, but the frequency of output in France (6.99%) was marginally lower than expected (std. residual = -1.92, p = .055).

Table 4.4. Frequency of dimensions per country (answers from first positions only).

	NL	FR	PL	UA	RU
Input	103 (35.40%)	121 (65.05%)	130 (49.24%)	125 (46.30%)	195 (48.51%)
Throughput	154 (52.92%)	52 (27.96%)	96 (36.36%)	112 (41.48%)	158 (39.30%)
Output	34 (11.68%)	13 (6.99%)	38 (14.39%)	33 (12.22%)	49 (12.19%)
total	**291 (100%)**	**186 (100%)**	**264 (100%)**	**270 (100%)**	**402 (100%)**

Table 4.5 shows the frequencies of answers from all positions organized according to the legitimacy dimension.

Table 4.5. Frequency of legitimacy dimensions per country (answers from all positions).

	NL	FR	PL	UA	RU	M%
Input	270 (26.60%)	246 (36.12%)	315 (31.47%)	281 (27.96%)	399 (31.54%)	30.74%
Throughput	593 (58.42%)	312 (45.81%)	475 (47.45%)	546 (54.33%)	621 (49.09%)	51.02%
Output	152 (14.98%)	123 (18.06%)	211 (21.08%)	178 (17.71%)	245 (19.37%)	18.24%
total	**1015 (100%)**	**681 (100%)**	**1001 (100%)**	**1005 (100%)**	**1265 (100%)**	

The results of cross-country comparison of frequencies of all answers align with the results of the test for the first answers. Throughput was mentioned most often by Dutch respondents (58.42%) whereas it was mentioned least frequently by French participants (45.81%). Also input results were similar: input was least frequently mentioned in the Netherlands (26.60%) and most frequently in France (36.12%). Some variation was observed for the frequencies of output with the highest frequency in Poland (21.08%) and the lowest frequency in the Netherlands (14.98%).

These results are in line with the findings based on representational coding. Once again the analysis showed that for the French respondents input—elections, representation, and citizen participation—were a priority requirement to be fulfilled by legitimate authorities. The Dutch respondents emphasised the throughput more, which included characteristics of political conduct such as impartiality, transparency, and professionalism. At the same time, they prioritized the output—acting for the common good, welfare, security, and protection of individual rights—less than respondents in other countries.

4.4. Conclusions

This study of perceived legitimacy was concerned with the ideas about legitimacy of political authorities held by citizens socialized in different political regimes. Because political legitimacy is in the eye of the beholder, different agents—academics, politicians, leaders, citizens, ethnic groups, generations—can have different conceptions of legitimacy. This study researched students' conception of legitimacy in five different countries by focusing on their ideas about the most important characteristics of legitimate authorities. Moreover, political socialization literature and works on the different bases (sources) of legitimacy in different political regimes suggested that we might expect different conceptions of legitimacy across different countries. Therefore the second goal was to compare the content of perceived legitimacy in two old democracies, a new democracy, a hybrid regime in political crisis, and a hybrid regime with authoritarian tendencies.

First important conclusion from the process of coding of students' answers is that in all five countries similar concepts and themes were used to express what the

characteristics of legitimate authorities are. This implies that in the process of political socialization, similar ideas and words filled the concept of legitimacy. Moreover, the least popular answers were very similar across all cases. The issues linked to foreign policy, national identity, and patriotism were not the main criteria of legitimacy of political authorities.

Public opinion surveys and literature on regime survival suggested that the bases of legitimacy in non-democracies like Russia might be different than in stable democracies. This was not confirmed by the results of this study. Output—the aspect of legitimacy that included answers such as welfare, order, stability, acting for the common good, and answers expressing the power to execute decisions—was not the most important aspect of perceived legitimacy in any of the analysed countries. Hence, it cannot be concluded that it plays a larger role in the evaluations of legitimacy in non-democratic regimes than input or throughput and the H10 (*Distributive justice has a more important role in perceptions of legitimacy among citizens socialized in post-communist regimes than among citizens socialized in democracies)* was not supported. Moreover, the output category of legitimacy, which contained words that could indicate the importance of instrumental gains for the assessment of legitimacy, was not the largest category in any of the five countries, so H7 (*The most important motives citizens have to grant legitimacy to/support authorities in non-democracies are of instrumental nature*) was not supported either. Also H11 (*Based on previous evidence, stability and order (output) are expected to be important for evaluations of legitimacy of political authorities in Russia*) cannot be supported. However, if order is understood not as a preference for a strong leader, but for the rule of law, then the results can be interpreted as supporting this hypothesis. In Russia, the characteristic of legitimate authorities named most frequently by the respondents was legal validity/legality. Issues such as justice and impartiality ranked high on the list of answers too.

Throughput (fair procedures, legality, and integrity of authorities) and input (election, trust/support/and representation) were in general much more frequent answers than output in all five countries. It does not imply that output is unimportant for any evaluation of political authorities or cannot be more important for decisions such as what party a citizen is going to vote for. It rather implies that output is not as

important as throughput and input for the judgments concerning legitimacy of authorities. The findings about the throughput in general do not support the H8 (*Procedural justice (throughput) is a more important factor for perceptions of legitimacy among democratic citizens than among citizens socialized in new democracies and mixed regimes*). Issues such as transparency were mentioned most frequently in the Netherlands and in Ukraine. However, the content of this category varied between them. While words such as transparency and openness prevailed in the category of transparency in the Netherlands, the words expressing concern with corruption were much more common in this category in Ukraine. This shows that the general the idea that transparency is important for legitimacy is shared, but what needs to be done to either achieve it (in Ukraine) or sustain/improve it (in the Netherlands) may differ depending on the current state of transparency in a given country and the most urgent political issues in the eyes of citizens. While in Ukraine and Russia 'the abuse of entrusted power for private gain' was underscored by respondents, making sure that authorities 'act visibly and understandably, and report on their activities' seems to have been more important in the Netherlands (Transparency International[24]). What could potentially explain the high number of mentions of transparency by Dutch respondents is the practice of elite driven 'politics behind closed doors' and a demand to make some of the hidden processes more open, e.g. coalition formation, elections of mayors, information sharing. Corruption, on the other hand, is one of the problems that frustrates young people in Ukraine and one of the causes that some of them took to the streets in 2004-2005 as well as in 2013-2014. Perceptions of corruption of political authorities and bureaucracy are wide-spread also in Russia (Levada Center 2014).

Two main differences were found between post-communist countries and old democracies. First, although input was in general important in each country, the post-communist countries emphasised trust/support more than France and the Netherlands. In France, elections were the most frequently mentioned characteristic of legitimate authorities among the answers concerned with input. Second, a larger emphasis was given to citizen participation and consultation in the old democracies than in Poland, Ukraine, and Russia. This supports the H9 (*Citizen participation (input) is more*

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[24] https://www.transparency.org/what-is-corruption#define

important for perceived legitimacy in old democracies) and, in line with the earlier studies, can be explained by the experience of communism and the lack of willingness to engage in politics and social activism in the post-communist era.

A final point worth mentioning is the fact that the conceptions of legitimacy in each country contained multiple ideas linked to democracy and democratic rule. The most important characteristics of legitimate authorities were legal validity, elections, transparency, citizen participation and consultation, checks & balances, and representation and pluralism in different combinations in different countries. The emphasis on a specific aspect of democratic rule can be linked to the experience of either regime transition or regime functioning. For example, it is possible to imagine that citizens in a country that does not have free and fair elections (e.g. Russia), will prioritize the rule of law (legal validity/legality) that can secure the fairness of electoral process, whereas the elections themselves might be chosen as the most important characteristic of legitimate authorities where legality is more likely to be taken for granted (e.g. France). Similarly, as mentioned above, a bigger priority given to trust and support by respondents from post-communist countries (Poland, Ukraine, and Russia), might indicate that a vote in election on itself does not necessarily indicate support or trust for particular political authority. Hence, although the list of characteristics of democratic rule might be very similar according to citizens across the regimes, depending on the context in which these citizens operate, they might give greater value to different specific criteria of democratic or, in a broader sense, fair rule.

To sum up, this study provided a detailed picture of ideas about what characteristic legitimate authorities should have according to respondents in five countries under investigation. The respondents in all countries gave a set of answers that showed that they have rather nuanced views about what conditions should be fulfilled by political authorities to be recognized as legitimate. In general, most answers given in each country were concerned with the issues related to the process of governing—throughput—such as fairness/justice, impartiality, legality, transparency, and mechanisms of checks & balances, as well as with the personal traits of the authorities that can assure that the process of governing can be as such, namely integrity, reliability, and expertise. This implies that the full scope of throughput

variables should contribute greatly to perceived legitimacy evaluations in all five countries. The output characteristics were the least frequently mentioned criteria for legitimate authorities, which suggests that although it might be important for the stability of regimes, output does not seem to be the most important aspect of the legitimacy of authorities. Another way to think about it is that authorities that follow fair procedures and laws, who have integrity and skills, and who engage with citizens, are expected to be able to secure best and socially just outcomes.