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Chapter 5. Cross-country study of perceived legitimacy of the current political authorities

After investigating whether theories of legitimacy travel well across different political regimes and comparing the conceptions of legitimacy in the Netherlands, France, Poland, Ukraine, and Russia, this study will focus on the criteria that explain the perceived legitimacy of real political institutions in these five countries. This study will test whether the variance in perceived legitimacy attributed to the political authorities by participants socialized in different political regimes can be explained with different sets of variables. To illustrate how the potential combinations of these different sets of variables could affect the variance in perceived legitimacy, three ideal-type country models are presented below.

Imagine country A in which there is a broad consensus within the society about what type of political system is preferred. In this country, people generally agree that the system should be democratic, free and fair elections ought to decide about who has the authority to rule, independent courts must make sure that politicians do not act beyond their authority, and fairness and the rule of law needs to guide the behaviour of institutions. Citizens in general consider democracy to be the obvious and right political system choice, which could be caused by a long democratic tradition or bad experience with other forms of government. Despite this consensus, the perceptions of performance and qualities of the current authorities vary widely. Therefore, the perceived legitimacy of the authorities is predicted by perceptions of their performance, rather than general ideas about how the system should work.

Now imagine country B in which there is a broad consensus about how poorly the current authorities perform. In general, citizens agree that the current authorities do not live up to their expectations, do not care for the interests of society at large, and do not treat citizens fairly. This general negative view of the authorities, however, does not translate into common ideas about the right political system for the country. There is no consensus about democracy being the preferred form of government. This can be a result of bad (or no) experience with democratic rules, disagreeing with the principles

of democracy, specific understanding of democracy, or a preference for another political system among some individuals. Therefore the variance in perceived legitimacy is explained by the general ideas about how the system should work rather than by evaluations of their actual performance.

It is also possible to imagine country C, in which citizens are divided on what is the right political system for their country, as well as on how well the current political authorities perform. In this case, the perceived legitimacy of the current authorities will be predicted by systemic preferences as well as by the evaluations of the performance of the authorities.²⁵

To assess which factors predict the evaluation of political authorities in different countries with democratic and non-democratic regimes, a survey was conducted with students in France, the Netherlands, Poland, Ukraine, and Russia (see Appendix B). Students responded to a set of general questions about democracy and democratic institutions and to a set of questions pertaining to their evaluation of the performance of the current political authorities. The questions were linked to the issues of procedural and distributive justice to test H2 (*Procedural justice increases perceived legitimacy of political authorities*) and H4 (*Distributive justice increases perceived legitimacy of political authorities*). Moreover, to check if dependence has an effect on perceived legitimacy if operationalized as socio-economic status, students answered three questions about their material situation and status (Appendix B, p. 188, Q46-Q48). Including the effect of socio-economic status on perceived legitimacy in the analysis allowed testing H6 (*Dependence on political authorities increases perceived legitimacy of the authorities/ The lower the socio-economic status, the higher the perceived legitimacy of the authorities*). Also, students answered several questions measuring their perceived legitimacy of the current institutions in each country (see

²⁵ Of course, it is also possible to imagine country D, in which, just as in country C, the citizens are divided on what is the right political system for the country and on the performance of the current authorities, but where these variables do not predict perceived legitimacy of the authorities. This would be possible if in country D perceived legitimacy is explained by some other (unknown) variables. Given that some of the variables included in the current study explained substantial variation in perceived legitimacy, I refrain from elaborating on country D.

Table 5.1). Using multiple regression, the role of different factors in predicting perceived legitimacy of current institutions was assessed.

Table 5.1. Items measuring perceived legitimacy of the government, parliament, courts, and president.

	Government	Parliament	Courts	President
1	The current government of my country is legitimate.	The current parliament of my country is legitimate.	Courts in my country are legitimate.	The current president of my country is legitimate.
2	I trust the current government of my country.	I trust the current parliament of my country.	Trust courts in my country.	I trust the current president of my country.
3	The current government has the right to make decisions that influence my life.	The current parliament has a right to make decisions that influence my life.	Courts have a right to issue judgments that influence my life.	The current president has the right to make decisions that influence my life.
4	I support the current government of my country.	I support the current parliament of my country.	*	I support the current president of my country.
5	I am willing to obey the current government of my country.	*	I am ready to obey the decisions of courts in my country.	I am willing to obey the president of my country.

* The question about obedience has not been asked in the case of parliaments, because it was decided that obedience relates more to the executive and judicial institutions rather than to the legislative institution. The question about support was not asked in the case of courts, because the support cannot be expressed through elections or membership in a supported political party. This was a deliberate choice linked to the limitations on the number of questions that I was allowed to include in the questionnaire. It did not seem to have negatively affected the reliability of the scales measuring perceived legitimacy of each institution.

As mentioned above, evaluations of the current institutions are based on general ideas about how the political system ought to function (what principles it should be based on) and on the actual functioning of the current institutions (Fraser 1974). Therefore two types of questions were asked to predict perceived legitimacy of institutions. The first type of questions measured the general preferences for political system and views about democracy and its elements, which focused on how the system and authorities ought to be. The second type of questions measured more specific evaluations of the present institutions, which focused on how the current system actually works (Table 5.2). Moreover, linking it with the vignette experiment study

(Chapter 3), each question had at its core the concept of democracy, procedural justice, distributive justice, or personal interests. Each question was also matched with the input, output, and throughput dimension of legitimacy to evaluate the commonalities with the answers about characteristics of legitimate authorities assessed in Chapter 4. Table 5.2 provides variable abbreviations used further in this chapter to refer to the general and specific views.

Table 5.2. Independent variables: survey questions.

Views	Variable abbreviation	Concept	Input / output / throughput
<i>General views</i>			
In general, democracy is the best functioning political system invented so far.	Democracy best	Democracy	Input
In general, political parties are important in representing the interests of citizens.	Parties important	Democracy	Input
Free and fair elections are the basis for a well-functioning political system.	Elections important	Democracy / procedural justice	Input
It is important that courts are able to stop other institutions from acting beyond their authority.	Courts should stop institutions	Democracy / procedural justice	Throughput
Political authorities should secure fair access to goods and services to all citizens.	Authorities should provide access	Distributive justice	Throughput
Political authorities should treat every citizen according to the procedures and laws.	Authorities should treat equal	Procedural justice	Throughput
Political authorities should secure equal chances for all citizens.	Authorities should provide equal chances	Distributive justice	Throughput
<i>Specific views</i>			
Socio-economic status	Socio-economic status	Instrumental gain	Output
The current political system of my country is democratic.	System is democratic	Democracy	Input

Table 5.2 continues			
The current government works for the benefit of all citizens rather than for the benefit of small elite.	Government works for everybody	Distributive justice	Output
The parliament of my country is able to stop the government from acting beyond its authority.	Parliament can stop government	Procedural justice	Throughput
Political parties in my country represent the interests of citizens well.	Parties represent citizens	Procedural justice	Input
Elections in my country are free and fair.	Elections are free and fair	Procedural justice	Input
The courts treat everyone the same in my country.	Courts treat equal	Procedural justice	Throughput
Courts in my country are able to stop the government from acting beyond its authority.	Courts can stop government	Procedural justice	Throughput
The parliament of my country is able to stop the president from acting beyond his authority	Parliament can stop president	Procedural justice	Throughput
The courts of my country are able to stop the president from acting beyond his authority	Courts can stop president	Procedural justice	Throughput
The current president works for the benefit of all citizens rather than for the benefit of small elite.	President works for everybody	Distributive justice	Output

5.1. Comparative descriptive data

Perceived legitimacy of each institution was measured with items listed in Table 5.1. Table 5.3 shows the results of the reliability testing of the perceived legitimacy scale constructed of these items for government, parliament, courts, and president (apart from the Netherlands). The internal consistency of the items measuring perceived legitimacy of each of the institutions for every country was good—Cronbach's α was sufficiently high, indicating that the scales were reliable. I computed the dependent variables, perceived legitimacy of each institution, as the average score for these items (see Table 5.3)

Dutch respondents were the most satisfied with their institutions by comparison with four other countries. In the Netherlands, the average score for all institutions was above 5 (on the scale from 1 to 7) and the standard deviations were the lowest, so the institutions were quite uniformly evaluated as legitimate. Courts had the highest perceived legitimacy of all institutions (5.78). Courts were evaluated the most positively of all institutions also in France and in Poland, received the second highest score in Russia (after the president), and had the lowest perceived legitimacy of all institutions in Ukraine. In France, the institution with the lowest perceived legitimacy score was the president, but all institutions received a score above 4. In Russia, only the parliament was evaluated below 4. All other institutions received a score higher than 4, with president having the largest perceived legitimacy score (4.80). In Poland, respondents were more critical about the government and parliament and evaluated them on average below the neutral point of the scale, whereas the president and courts had scores on the positive side of the scale. The results in Ukraine were mixed too; the president and the government were evaluated more positively, whereas the courts and the parliament received on average rather negative evaluations.²⁶

To provide an overview of the average views of respondents, Table 5.4 shows the mean answers and standard deviations for each independent variable (predictors) included in the analysis. According to this descriptive data, Russia stands out as the country with the lowest score on three general views about the political system: democracy is the best political system, parties are important, and elections are important.

²⁶ These evaluation differences may be linked to the fact that after Yanukovich fled the country, the new president has been chosen (in May 2014) and an inter-regnum pro-revolutionary government installed, but the parliament and courts have not been changed. The parliamentary elections took place at the end of October 2014, whereas the majority of the data for this study was collected before November 2014.

Table 5.3. Scale consistency and mean scores for perceived legitimacy for the government, parliament, courts, and president in the Netherlands, France, Poland, Ukraine, and Russia.

Country (sample N)		Government	Parliament	Courts	President
NL (380)	Cronbach's α	.87	.82	.89	
	M (SD)	N = 373 5.10 (1.11)	N = 374 5.14 (1.03)	N = 378 5.78 (1.02)	
FR (322)	Cronbach's α	.84	.85	.85	.86
	M (SD)	N = 296 4.31 (1.35)	N = 296 4.70 (1.31)	N = 299 5.48 (1.22)	N = 298 4.12 (1.45)
PL (437)	Cronbach's α	.78	.73	.77	.85
	M (SD)	N = 432 3.53 (1.20)	N = 434 3.78 (1.18)	N = 435 4.88 (1.20)	N = 433 4.44 (1.40)
UA (425)	Cronbach's α	.93	.88	.71	.92
	M (SD)	N = 409 4.58 (1.55)	N = 406 3.55 (1.52)	N = 407 3.20 (1.15)	N = 410 5.20 (1.47)
RU (934)	Cronbach's α	.89	.87	.77	.92
	M (SD)	N = 904 4.24 (1.46)	N = 891 3.80 (1.44)	N = 893 4.24 (1.24)	N = 904 4.80 (1.58)

Socio-economic status was measured with three questions (see Appendix B): material situation measured in what the family can afford, placement of the family's income on the scale from the lowest to highest in their society, and social position (class) from the bottom to the top of society (bottom three items in Table 5.4). The material situation of participants in the Netherlands and France was on average the best, whereas in Ukraine it was the worst. However there was similar amount of variance in the data in each country (SD between 0.92 and 1.08). The three items measuring socio-economic status were used to create a scale. The internal consistency of these items was good (Cronbach's α between .72 and .76; see Appendix L) indicating that the scale is reliable. I computed a variable for socio-economic status of a respondent as an average of these three items.

Table 5.4. Means and standard deviations for predictors in all samples.

Variable	NL	FR	PL	UA	RU
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)
Democracy best	4.82 (1.65)	5.23 (1.68)	4.61 (1.83)	5.22 (1.66)	3.82 (1.74)
Parties important	5.25 (1.24)	4.75 (1.76)	4.17 (1.75)	4.36 (1.80)	4.04 (1.66)
Elections important	5.69 (1.47)	5.95 (1.51)	5.74 (1.50)	6.01 (1.34)	5.05 (1.67)
Courts should stop institutions	5.96 (1.16)	5.86 (1.41)	6.26 (1.18)	6.44 (1.03)	5.73 (1.46)
Authorities should provide access	5.42 (1.45)	6.25 (1.32)	6.07 (1.43)	6.49 (0.96)	5.73 (1.58)
Authorities should treat equal	6.01 (1.29)	6.46 (1.07)	6.58 (0.92)	6.58 (0.84)	6.10 (1.37)
Authorities should provide equal chances	5.96 (1.24)	6.42 (1.11)	6.25 (1.35)	6.61 (0.83)	5.84 (1.58)
System is democratic	5.53 (1.26)	5.27 (1.57)	5.31 (1.52)	3.87 (1.64)	3.94 (1.67)
Government works for everybody	4.62 (1.46)	3.58 (1.76)	2.57 (1.54)	3.74 (1.71)	3.35 (1.70)
Parliament can stop government	5.07 (1.47)	4.34 (1.68)	3.25 (1.67)	4.21 (1.71)	3.35 (1.75)
Parties represent citizens	4.43 (1.44)	3.11 (1.60)	2.38 (1.38)	2.31 (1.48)	2.84 (1.57)
Elections are free and fair	6.17 (1.02)	5.65 (1.61)	5.07 (1.76)	3.72 (1.76)	3.38 (1.84)
Courts treat equal	5.02 (1.51)	3.97 (1.87)	3.42 (1.69)	1.64 (1.07)	2.54 (1.61)
Courts can stop government	4.90 (1.50)	4.47 (1.67)	3.93 (1.78)	2.75 (1.73)	2.84 (1.65)
Parliament can stop president		4.22 (1.68)	3.93 (1.66)	4.25 (1.81)	3.10 (1.78)
Courts can stop president		4.33 (1.77)	4.14 (1.77)	2.65 (1.76)	2.82 (1.77)
President works for everybody		3.73 (1.80)	4.08 (1.76)	4.25 (1.73)	4.09 (1.84)
Material situation*	5.29 (0.92)	5.01 (1.03)	4.36 (0.98)	3.74 (1.02)	3.99 (1.08)
Income group*	6.57 (1.50)	6.07 (1.54)	5.61 (1.47)	4.99 (1.48)	5.31 (1.63)
Social status*	5.20 (1.10)	4.36 (1.08)	4.73 (1.06)	4.18 (1.09)	4.32 (1.16)

*Material situation was measured on a scale 1-6, Income group on a scale 1-10, and Social status on a scale 1-10. All the other variables were measured on a scale from 1-7.

5.2. Multiple regression analysis

I used multiple hierarchical regression to assess to what extent the perceived legitimacy of each institution was predicted by general preferences related to political system (step 1) and evaluation of the performance of the institutions (step 2). The results of these analyses are described in sections 5.3–5.7. Because respondents answered the questionnaire about their views on the real political system of their country after the experimental vignette, I first tested whether the hypothetical vignette presented to respondents influenced the perceived legitimacy of real institutions. Only in the case of the Netherlands significant effects of the vignette manipulations on perceived legitimacy of the real institutions were found (i.e., for the government and the courts). To control for these effects they were included in the regression models in the Netherlands in step 1; the general views were entered in step 2, and the specific views in step 3. Results of the ANOVAs testing the effects of the vignette manipulations on perceived legitimacy of the real institutions in all five countries are reported in Appendix M.

5.3. The Netherlands

Perceived legitimacy of the current government

Three specific predictors had a highly significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the government (see Table 5.5). The evaluation of the current government as working for the benefit of all citizens rather than a small elite had the largest effect on perceived legitimacy ($\beta = 0.46$). The evaluation of elections as free and fair had a positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the government too ($\beta = 0.21$). If participants thought that the parliament can check the government, the perceived legitimacy score of the government was higher ($\beta = 0.23$). Of the general predictors, there was only one that had a significant positive effect, namely if respondents thought that political parties are important in representing the interests of citizens, the perceived legitimacy of the government was higher ($\beta = 0.11$). The R^2 change in step 3 (.41) indicates that the evaluations of the performance of the government (specific views) explained substantial amount of variance in perceived legitimacy.

Table 5.5. Linear model of predictors of the current government's perceived legitimacy (N = 290, adjusted $R^2 = .60$, R^2 change step 1 = .03, R^2 change step 2 = .18, R^2 change step 3 = .41, df = 275).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	1.11	0.36	
Step 1	Procedural justice	-0.16	0.08	
Step 2	Democracy best	0.04	0.03	0.06
	Parties important	0.10*	0.04	0.11
	Elections important	-0.02	0.04	-0.03
	Courts should stop institutions	0.02	0.04	0.02
	Authorities should provide access	0.01	0.03	0.01
	Authorities should treat equal	-0.02	0.03	-0.03
	Authorities should provide equal chances	-0.08	0.04	-0.09
Step 3	System is democratic	0.01	0.04	0.01
	Elections are free and fair	0.23***	0.05	0.21
	Parliament can stop government	0.17***	0.03	0.23
	Courts can stop government	0.04	0.03	0.05
	Government works for everybody	0.34***	0.03	0.46
	Socio-economic status	0.02	0.05	0.02

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. VIFs < 1.71. β is not reported for the effect in Step 1 as for this effect a change of 1 SD is not meaningful.

Perceived legitimacy of the current parliament

Three specific predictors had a significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament (see Table 5.6). The evaluation of the elections as free and fair had the largest effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament ($\beta = 0.33$). Respondents who evaluated the political parties as representing the interests of citizens well, had higher perceived legitimacy scores for the current parliament ($\beta = 0.28$). The ability of the parliament to stop the government when it acts beyond its authority had a positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament too ($\beta = 0.24$). The same as in the case of the government, if respondents thought that in general political parties are important in representing the interests of citizens, the perceived legitimacy of the parliament was higher ($\beta = 0.12$). Another general predictor that had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament was the attitude towards authorities' duty to secure equal chances to all citizens. If participants thought that the authorities should do so, then they supported the current parliament less ($\beta = -0.11$). The general view that courts

should be able stop institutions from acting beyond their authority had the smallest significant and positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament ($\beta = 0.09$). In general, specific predictors had the largest effects on perceived legitimacy of the current parliament.

Table 5.6. Linear model of predictors of the current parliament's perceived legitimacy (N = 291, adjusted $R^2 = .53$, R^2 change step 1 = .23, R^2 change step 2 = .33, df = 278).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	0.72	0.35	
Step 1	Democracy best	-0.01	0.03	-0.01
	Parties important	0.11*	0.04	0.12
	Elections important	0.01	0.04	0.02
	Courts should stop institutions	0.08*	0.04	0.09
	Authorities should provide access	0.02	0.03	0.03
	Authorities should treat equal	0.03	0.03	0.04
	Authorities should provide equal chances	-0.09*	0.04	-0.11
Step 2	System is democratic	-0.03	0.04	-0.04
	Elections are free and fair	0.34***	0.05	0.33
	Parliament can stop government	0.16***	0.03	0.24
	Parties represent citizens	0.20***	0.04	0.28
	Socio-economic status	0.08	0.05	0.06

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. VIFs < 1.76.

Perceived legitimacy of the current courts

The hierarchical regression model predicting perceived legitimacy of the current courts included the significant vignette manipulations (procedural justice and procedural justice \times outcome \times dependence interaction as well as all its components) in step 1 (see Table 5.7). Two specific predictors had a highly significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the courts. The perception of courts as treating everybody the same increased perceived legitimacy of the current courts ($\beta = 0.50$). Also, when respondents thought that the courts are able to stop the government from acting beyond its authority, they evaluated the courts more positively ($\beta = 0.23$). The only general significant predictor is the one about courts: if respondents thought that courts should be able to check other institutions, then they perceived the current courts as more legitimate ($\beta = 0.12$).

Table 5.7. Linear model of predictors of the current courts' perceived legitimacy (N = 293, adjusted $R^2 = .53$, R^2 change step 1 = .07, R^2 change step 2 = .18, R^2 change step 3 = .31, $df = 274$).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	2.39	0.35	
Step 1	Procedural justice	-0.29	0.17	
	Dependence	-0.03	0.17	
	Outcome	-0.32*	0.16	
	Procedural justice \times outcome	0.23	0.23	
	Procedural justice \times dependence	-0.15	0.23	
	Outcome \times dependence	-0.22	0.23	
	Procedural justice \times outcome \times dependence	0.66*	0.33	
	Step 2	Democracy best	-0.03	0.03
Parties important		0.05	0.04	0.06
Elections important		-0.03	0.04	-0.04
Courts should stop institutions		0.10*	0.04	0.12
Authorities should provide access		0.02	0.03	0.03
Authorities should treat equal		0.06	0.04	0.08
Authorities should provide equal chances		3.5×10^{-3}	0.04	4.4×10^{-3}
Step 3	System is democratic	0.05	0.04	0.06
	Courts can stop government	0.15***	0.03	0.23
	Courts treat equal	0.32***	0.03	0.50
	Socio-economic status	-0.05	0.05	-0.04

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. For the continuous predictors VIFs < 1.74 . Including interactions of the manipulated factors in the regression yielded high VIF values for the dichotomous predictors (ranged from 3.80 to 7.08). However, this does not indicate multicollinearity. The VIF is not an appropriate index of multicollinearity for dichotomous predictors and their interactions (Cohen *et al.* 2003, p.425). β s are not reported for the effects in Step 1 as for these effects a change of 1 SD is not meaningful.

Conclusions

Respondents in the Dutch sample evaluated the current state institutions in their country very positively. The perceived legitimacy of institutions was high with courts evaluated as the most legitimate institution (Table 5.3).

From the general predictors the significant ones turned out to be those that referred more directly to the institution under investigation. The general predictor that mattered for perceived legitimacy of the current government and parliament was the view that political parties are important in representing the interests of citizens. In other words, if respondents thought that the political parties play an important role, they

attributed more legitimacy to the institutions that are constituted by political parties' representatives. For the courts, the view that courts should stop other institutions when they act beyond their authority was the only significant general predictor. The view that political authorities should secure equal chances for all citizens had a negative effect on the perceived legitimacy of the current parliament, which could indicate that the performance of the parliament does not match the expectations about what the parliament ought to be doing.

The specific predictors of legitimacy of institutions, focusing on their actual performance rather than what they ought to be and do, contributed strongly to the explanation of variance in perceived legitimacy scores. Five specific predictors had significant effects on perceived legitimacy of the institutions. The perception of elections as free and fair had the largest effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament, indicating the importance of procedural justice and input aspect of legitimacy. Obtaining power in a legal and fair way by the parliament members was the most important predictor of their perceived legitimacy. Hence, perceived legitimacy of the legislature was designated mainly by the way in which it came to power—legitimate elections.

Whether the government was perceived as working for the common good had the largest effect on the perceived legitimacy of the government. Here the focus was on the distributive justice, so the output aspect of legitimacy. Moreover, it shows that according to Dutch respondents legitimate governing should be based on the principle of taking care of the interests of the whole society.

The most important predictor of perceived legitimacy of the courts was whether they were thought of as treating everybody the same. Not surprisingly, procedural justice (throughput aspect of legitimacy) was the most important predictor of perceived legitimacy of the judicial branch of power. This shows that, according to Dutch respondents, impartiality and fair processes are relevant for sustaining legitimacy of the courts. The other significant specific predictor related to procedural justice and throughput legitimacy was the division of powers in the state (checks and balances)—the ability of the legislative and judicial bodies to stop the government from acting beyond its authority.

Socio-economic status was not a significant predictor of perceived legitimacy in the Netherlands. It implies that either personal situation was not of importance for the evaluations of legitimacy, or respondents with the lowest socio-economic status are in a good enough situation to value the current institutions anyway.

The analysis of the Dutch sample shows that variables dealing with the actual performance of institutions are the most important factors contributing to perceived legitimacy. In each case, the variance explained by the specific factors was larger than the variance explained by the general factors. In other words, the more abstract ideas about democracy and how the political authorities ought to behave proved weaker at explaining the willingness to transfer power to political authorities. Although the type is not clear cut, the Dutch respondents resemble more the citizens of country A, in which their evaluations of the performance of the current institutions explain most of the variance in perceived legitimacy. The parliament was the only institution in which the general principles that should guide political authorities influenced perceived legitimacy, so in this case they reminded more the citizens of country C—where the variance in perceived legitimacy is explained by both general and specific evaluations of institutions. Those respondents who had more socialist views—supporting the idea that political authorities should secure equal access to goods and services to all citizens—were less favourable of the current parliament. This could be explained by the fact that at the time of the survey the largest political party in the parliament was a conservative-liberal political party (VVD). Therefore, those respondents who disagree with the principles of economic liberalism and support redistributive policies instead, granted less legitimacy to the parliament. The general views about democracy being the best system, however, did not influence perceived legitimacy of any of the analysed institutions.

5.4. France

Perceived legitimacy of the current government

Three specific predictors had a highly significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the government (Table 5.8). The evaluation of the current government as working for the benefit of all citizens rather than a small elite had the largest effect on

perceived legitimacy ($\beta = 0.53$). The evaluation of elections as free and fair had a positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the government too ($\beta = 0.14$). If participants thought that the parliament can check the government, the perceived legitimacy score of the government was higher ($\beta = 0.11$). No general predictors were significant. The R^2 change in step 2 (.41) indicates that the evaluations of the performance of the government (specific views) explained a lot of variance in perceived legitimacy.

Table 5.8. Linear model of predictors of the current government's perceived legitimacy (N = 219, adjusted $R^2 = .57$, R^2 change step 1 = .18, R^2 change step 2 = .41, df = 205).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	0.53	0.45	
Step 1	Democracy best	0.02	0.05	0.02
	Parties important	0.01	0.04	0.01
	Elections important	0.06	0.05	0.06
	Courts should stop institutions	0.01	0.05	0.01
	Authorities should provide access	0.05	0.07	0.04
	Authorities should treat equal	-0.03	0.09	-0.03
	Authorities should provide equal chances	-0.01	0.09	-0.01
Step 2	System is democratic	0.07	0.06	0.08
	Elections are free and fair	0.14**	0.05	0.17
	Parliament can stop government	0.09*	0.04	0.11
	Courts can stop government	0.04	0.04	0.04
	Government works for everybody	0.42***	0.04	0.53
	Socio-economic status	0.10	0.08	0.06

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. VIFs < 2.57.

Perceived legitimacy of the current parliament

Three specific predictors had a significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament (Table 5.9). The ability of the parliament to stop the government when it acts beyond its authority had the largest positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament ($\beta = 0.25$). The evaluation of the elections as free and fair had similar effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament ($\beta = 0.24$). The evaluation of political parties as representing the interests of citizens well had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the current parliament too ($\beta = 0.15$). A general predictor that had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament was the view that the authorities should treat all citizens according to the procedures and laws ($\beta = 0.20$).

Table 5.9. Linear model of predictors of the current parliament's perceived legitimacy (N = 224, adjusted $R^2 = .45$, R^2 change step 1 = .30, R^2 change step 2 = .18, df = 210).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	-0.13	0.50	
Step 1	Democracy best	0.08	0.05	0.10
	Parties important	0.09	0.05	0.11
	Elections important	0.01	0.06	0.01
	Courts should stop institutions	0.02	0.06	0.02
	Authorities should provide access	-0.06	0.08	-0.06
	Authorities should treat equal	0.25*	0.09	0.20
	Authorities should provide equal chances	-0.01	0.10	-0.01
Step 2	System is democratic	0.08	0.06	0.09
	Elections are free and fair	0.20***	0.06	0.24
	Parliament can stop government	0.20**	0.08	0.25
	Parliament can stop president	-0.02	0.08	-0.02
	Parties represent citizens	0.13*	0.05	0.15
	Socio-economic status	0.14	0.08	0.09

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. VIFs < 3.45.

Perceived legitimacy of the current courts

Three specific predictors had a highly significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the courts (Table 5.10). The perception of courts as treating everybody the same had the largest effect and increased perceived legitimacy of the current courts ($\beta = 0.46$). When respondents evaluated the current system as democratic, they perceived the courts as more legitimate ($\beta = 0.22$). Also, when respondents thought that the courts are able to stop the government from acting beyond its authority, they evaluated the courts more positively ($\beta = 0.15$). Socio-economic status was a significant predictor of perceived legitimacy of the current courts ($\beta = 0.14$). The only general significant predictor was the view that political authorities should secure equal chances to all citizens ($\beta = 0.16$).

Table 5.10. Linear model of predictors of the current courts' perceived legitimacy (N = 223, adjusted R² = .63, R² change step 1 = .37, R² change step 2 = .28, df = 210).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	0.09	0.37	
Step 1	Democracy best	0.03	0.04	0.04
	Parties important	-0.02	0.03	-0.03
	Elections important	0.07	0.04	0.09
	Courts should stop institutions	0.06	0.04	0.07
	Authorities should provide access	0.08	0.06	0.08
	Authorities should treat equal	0.10	0.07	0.09
	Authorities should provide equal chances	0.18*	0.08	0.16
Step 2	System is democratic	0.17***	0.04	0.22
	Courts can stop government	-0.06	0.05	-0.08
	Courts can stop president	0.11*	0.05	0.15
	Courts treat equal	0.30***	0.03	0.46
	Socio-economic status	0.20**	0.06	0.14

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001. VIFs < 2.99.

Perceived legitimacy of the current president

Of all factors included in the model, only two specific predictors had a significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the president (Table 5.11). The evaluation of the president as working for the benefit of the whole society and not a small elite increased the perceived legitimacy ($\beta = 0.57$). Also, the ability of the courts to stop the president from acting beyond his authority had a significant effect ($\beta = 0.16$).

Table 5.11. Linear model of predictors of the current president's perceived legitimacy (N = 220, adjusted $R^2 = .53$, R^2 change step 1 = .16, R^2 change step 2 = .40, df = 206).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	0.02	0.50	
Step 1	Democracy best	-0.04	0.05	-0.04
	Parties important	0.05	0.05	0.06
	Elections important	0.10	0.06	0.10
	Courts should stop institutions	-0.06	0.06	-0.06
	Authorities should provide access	0.09	0.08	0.07
	Authorities should treat equal	0.04	0.09	0.03
	Authorities should provide equal chances	0.03	0.10	0.02
Step 2	System is democratic	-0.03	0.06	-0.04
	Elections are free and fair	0.11	0.06	0.12
	Parliament can stop president	0.02	0.05	0.03
	Courts can stop president	0.14**	0.04	0.16
	President works for everybody	0.46***	0.04	0.57
	Socio-economic status	0.13	0.09	0.07

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. VIFs < 2.63.

Conclusions

Respondents in the French sample were on average rather positive about their institutions. The government, parliament, and president received a score above 4 (middle point of the scale), while the courts got the highest perceived legitimacy score above 5.5 (Table 5.3).

In France, similarly to the Netherlands, most of the unique variance in perceived legitimacy was explained by the specific predictors. Again, the strongest predictor of legitimacy of the government was the perception that it works for all citizens and not for a small elite. Two strongest predictors of the perceived legitimacy of the parliament were the evaluation of the elections as free and fair and the ability of the parliament to check the government if it acts beyond its authority. The perceived legitimacy of the courts increased the most if respondents thought that they treat people equally. As in the case of the government, the strongest predictor of perceived legitimacy of the president was the evaluation whether the president works for the common good.

The results imply that distributive justice is the strongest predictor of the legitimacy of the executive institutions (the government and the president). So for these

institutions, the emphasis in the evaluations is on how fairly they deliver the outputs to society. For the legislative institution (the parliament) procedural justice had the strongest effect on perceived legitimacy, i.e. the fairness of elections (input aspect of legitimacy) and securing the checks and balances of the executive (throughput aspect of legitimacy). Procedural justice of the courts—whether they treat everyone the same—was the strongest predictor of their perceived legitimacy.

Like the Netherlands, France in general fits more with the description of country A. Only one general predictor had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the courts and the parliament. There were no significant effects of general predictors on the executive institutions and in no case the variance was explained by the preference for democracy. Instead, the variance in perceived legitimacy was driven by specific evaluations of how the institutions perform and what rules are actually applied by them. In other words, respondents had different assessment of how well the institutions perform.

5.5. Poland

Perceived legitimacy of the current government

Four specific predictors had a significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the government (Table 5.12). The evaluation of the current government as working for the benefit of all citizens rather than a small elite had the largest effect on perceived legitimacy ($\beta = 0.53$). The evaluation of elections as free and fair had a positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the government too ($\beta = 0.09$). If participants thought that the parliament can check the government, the perceived legitimacy score of the government was higher ($\beta = 0.07$). Also, the ability of courts to control the government had a significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the courts ($\beta = 0.09$). From the general predictors only one had a small significant effect, namely if respondents thought that political parties are an important in representing the interests of citizens, then they evaluated the current government better ($\beta = 0.10$). The R^2 change in step 2 (.39) indicates that the evaluations of the performance of the government (specific views) explained a lot of variance in perceived legitimacy.

Table 5.12. Linear model of predictors of the current government's perceived legitimacy (N = 389, adjusted $R^2 = .51$, R^2 change step 1 = .14, R^2 change step 2 = .39, df = 375).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	0.66	0.37	
Step 1	Democracy best	-5.1×10^{-4}	0.03	-7.8×10^{-4}
	Parties important	0.07*	0.03	0.10
	Elections important	0.05	0.03	0.06
	Courts should stop institutions	-0.03	0.04	-0.03
	Authorities should provide access	0.02	0.04	0.03
	Authorities should treat equal	0.03	0.06	0.03
	Authorities should provide equal chances	-0.01	0.04	-0.01
Step 2	System is democratic	0.04	0.04	0.06
	Elections are free and fair	0.09**	0.03	0.14
	Parliament can stop government	0.07*	0.03	0.10
	Courts can stop government	0.06*	0.03	0.09
	Government works for everybody	0.42***	0.03	0.53
	Socio-economic status	-0.04	0.05	-0.03

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. VIFs < 1.66.

Perceived legitimacy of the current parliament

Three specific predictors had a significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament (Table 5.13). The ability of the parliament to stop the government when it acts beyond its authority had the largest positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament ($\beta = 0.35$). If respondents thought that the parliament can stop the government from acting beyond its authority, they perceived the parliament as more legitimate. Also, if respondents thought that the current political system is democratic, they gave higher legitimacy scores to the parliament ($\beta = 0.20$). The evaluation of political parties as representing the interests of citizens well had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the current parliament too ($\beta = 0.17$). A general predictor that had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament was the view that in general political parties are important in representing the interest of citizens: if respondents agreed that indeed political parties are important, perceived legitimacy increased ($\beta = 0.20$).

Table 5.13. Linear model of predictors of the current parliament's perceived legitimacy (N = 392, adjusted R² = .37, R² change step 1 = .10, R² change step 2 = .29, df = 378).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	0.82	0.42	
Step 1	Democracy best	-0.04	0.03	-0.06
	Parties important	0.08*	0.03	0.12
	Elections important	0.07	0.04	0.09
	Courts should stop institutions	-0.05	0.05	-0.05
	Authorities should provide access	-0.02	0.04	-0.02
	Authorities should treat equal	0.03	0.06	0.02
	Authorities should provide equal chances	0.04	0.04	0.04
Step 2	System is democratic	0.16***	0.04	0.20
	Elections are free and fair	0.06	0.03	0.08
	Parliament can stop government	0.25***	0.03	0.35
	Parliament can stop president	0.02	0.03	0.04
	Parties represent citizens	0.15***	0.04	0.17
	Socio-economic status	-0.04	0.06	-0.03

Note. VIFs < 1.67.

Perceived legitimacy of the current courts

Three specific and two general predictors had a highly significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the courts (Table 5.14). The perception of courts as treating everybody the same had once again the largest effect and increased perceived legitimacy of the current courts ($\beta = 0.37$). When respondents thought that the courts are able to stop the president from acting beyond his authority, they evaluated the courts more positively ($\beta = 0.20$). Also, like in France, whether respondents evaluated the current system as democratic had a positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the courts ($\beta = 0.10$). From the general predictors the view that courts should be able to stop other institutions from acting beyond their authority increased perceived legitimacy of the current courts ($\beta = 0.154$). The second general significant predictor that had an effect on perceived legitimacy of the courts was the view that political authorities should treat everybody according to the laws and rules ($\beta = 0.09$).

Table 5.14. Linear model of predictors of the current courts' perceived legitimacy (N = 390, adjusted $R^2 = .44$, R^2 change step 1 = .12, R^2 change step 2 = .33, df = 377).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	0.81	0.39	
Step 1	Democracy best	2.0×10^{-3}	0.03	3.1×10^{-3}
	Parties important	0.04	0.03	0.05
	Elections important	0.02	0.04	0.02
	Courts should stop institutions	0.15**	0.05	0.14
	Authorities should provide access	0.01	0.04	0.01
	Authorities should treat equal	0.12*	0.06	0.09
	Authorities should provide equal chances	-0.01	0.04	-0.01
Step 2	System is democratic	0.08*	0.04	0.10
	Courts can stop government	0.07	0.05	0.11
	Courts can stop president	0.13**	0.05	0.20
	Courts treat equal	0.26***	0.03	0.37
	Socio-economic status	-0.03	0.06	-0.02

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. VIFs < 3.62.

Perceived legitimacy of the current president

Of all factors included in the model, only two specific predictors had a significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the president (Table 5.15). The evaluation of the president as working for the benefit of the whole society and not a small elite had the strongest significant effect on the president's perceived legitimacy ($\beta = 0.68$). Also, the perception of the elections as free and fair increased perceived legitimacy of the president ($\beta = 0.14$). The R^2 change in step 2 of the regression shows that most of the variance in perceived legitimacy of the president was explained by the specific predictors (.55).

Table 5.15. Linear model of predictors of the current president's perceived legitimacy (N = 388, adjusted R² = .62, R² change step 1 = .08, R² change step 2 = .55, df = 374).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	0.55	0.38	
Step 1	Democracy best	-0.04	0.03	-0.05
	Parties important	0.03	0.03	0.04
	Elections important	0.02	0.04	0.02
	Courts should stop institutions	0.03	0.04	0.03
	Authorities should provide access	3.2×10^{-3}	0.04	3.4×10^{-3}
	Authorities should treat equal	0.10	0.06	0.06
	Authorities should provide equal chances	-0.04	0.04	-0.04
Step 2	System is democratic	0.06	0.04	0.06
	Elections are free and fair	0.11***	0.03	0.14
	Parliament can stop president	0.01	0.03	0.01
	Courts can stop president	0.04	0.03	0.06
	President works for everybody	0.54***	0.03	0.68
	Socio-economic status	-0.02	0.06	-0.01

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001. VIFs < 1.72.

Conclusions

Polish respondents on average evaluated their current political authorities less positively than the Dutch and French respondents. The government and the parliament received a score below 4 (middle point of the scale), while the president and the courts got the score above 4, with the latter ones being the most legitimate institution in the eyes of respondents (Table 5.3).

The pattern of explanation of the variance in Poland was similar to the pattern in the Netherlands and France. There were more specific predictors affecting perceived legitimacy than general ones. A general factor that had relatively small significant effect on perceived legitimacy of both the government and the parliament was the view that political parties play an important role in representing citizens. Perceived legitimacy of the government was influenced by four specific predictors and again the evaluation of the government as working in the interest of everybody had the strongest effect. There were three specific predictors that had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament, while the most variance in perceived legitimacy of the parliament was, like in France, explained by its ability to stop the government from acting beyond its authority. Three specific predictors had a significant effect on

perceived legitimacy of the current courts. The most variance was explained again by the evaluation of the courts as treating every citizen the same. The second largest effect was the ability of the courts to provide checks and to balance the power of the president. The general significant predictors were related to the evaluations of how the courts should function: the views that it is important for courts to be able to check other institutions and that authorities should treat citizens according to the rules and laws increased the perceived legitimacy of the courts. Once again, perceived legitimacy of the president was best explained by two specific predictors. The perception of the president as working for the common good had the strongest effect on the perceived legitimacy of the president.

Also in Poland, perceived legitimacy of the executive institutions was best explained by the perception of their performance as benefiting the whole society rather than small elite, so the results indicated the importance of distributive justice in the provision of outcomes. Checks and balances—the ability to stop the government from acting beyond its authority—was the strongest predictor of perceived legitimacy of the parliament. This result implies that procedural justice and the throughput aspect of legitimacy was important for the legislative body. However, the evaluation of the extent of democracy that is present in the current system had a significant effect as well, which shows that the considerations of the input aspect of legitimacy were important for perceived legitimacy of the parliament too. Once again procedural justice—treating all citizens the same—was the most important for the evaluation of legitimacy of the courts. Different general ideas about whether courts should be able to stop other institutions, like in the Netherlands, explained a part of the variance in perceived legitimacy too.

Most of the variance in perceived legitimacy was explained by specific views—evaluations of how the political authorities act. Poland, as the Netherland and France, reminded more the ideal type of country A, where the general views about what political system is the best did not explain perceived legitimacy of institutions and where the specific evaluations did.

5.6. Ukraine

Perceived legitimacy of the current government

Three specific and three general predictors had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the government (Table 5.16). The evaluation of the current government as working for the benefit of all citizens rather than a small elite once again had the largest effect on perceived legitimacy ($\beta = 0.69$). The evaluation of elections as free and fair had a positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the government ($\beta = 0.13$) and seeing the current political system as democratic had a positive effect too ($\beta = 0.11$). Ukraine is the first case in which the view that democracy is the best political system had an effect on the perceived legitimacy of the government. If respondents thought that democracy is the best political system, they saw the current government (of Yatsenyuk) as more legitimate ($\beta = 0.09$). If, however, respondents believed that the authorities should provide equal access to goods and services to all citizens, they evaluated the current government as less legitimate ($\beta = -0.10$). Also, the view that courts should be able to stop other institutions from acting beyond their authority increased perceived legitimacy of the current government ($\beta = 0.09$). The R^2 change in step 2 (.57) indicates that the evaluations of the performance of the government (specific views) explained more variance in perceived legitimacy, but the significance of three general factors implies that they are important too, as each of them explains unique (added) variance in perceived legitimacy.

Table 5.16. Linear model of predictors of the current government's perceived legitimacy (N = 341, adjusted $R^2 = .69$, R^2 change step 1 = .13, R^2 change step 2 = .57, df = 327)

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	1.16	0.60	
Step 1	Democracy best	0.09**	0.03	0.09
	Parties important	-0.04	0.03	-0.05
	Elections important	0.03	0.04	0.03
	Courts should stop institutions	0.14**	0.05	0.09
	Authorities should provide access	-0.17**	0.05	-0.10
	Authorities should treat equal	0.10	0.07	0.05
	Authorities should provide equal chances	-0.10	0.06	-0.05
Step 2	System is democratic	0.10**	0.03	0.11
	Elections are free and fair	0.10***	0.03	0.13
	Parliament can stop government	0.01	0.03	0.01
	Courts can stop government	-0.01	0.03	-0.01
	Government works for everybody	0.62***	0.03	0.69
	Socio-economic status	-0.09	0.06	-0.05

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. VIFs < 1.58.

Perceived legitimacy of the current parliament

Four specific predictors had a significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament (Table 5.17). The ability of the parliament to stop the government when it acts beyond its authority had the largest positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament ($\beta = 0.27$). Also, if respondents evaluated the elections as free and fair, they thought that the parliament is more legitimate ($\beta = 0.25$). The evaluation of political parties as representing the interests of citizens well had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the current parliament too ($\beta = 0.19$). The smallest significant effect was of the evaluation of the current political system as democratic: the government received a higher perceived legitimacy score from respondents who considered the current system democratic. The R^2 change in step 2 shows that most of the variance in perceived legitimacy scores of the parliament was explained by the specific predictors (.29).

Table 5.17. Linear model of predictors of the current parliament's perceived legitimacy (N = 341, adjusted R² = .31, R² change step 1 = .05, R² change step 2 = .29, df = 327).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	0.91	0.90	
Step 1	Democracy best	-0.05	0.05	-0.06
	Parties important	0.02	0.04	0.02
	Elections important	-0.04	0.06	-0.04
	Courts should stop institutions	0.04	0.08	0.03
	Authorities should provide access	-0.02	0.08	-0.01
	Authorities should treat equal	-0.05	0.10	-0.02
	Authorities should provide equal chances	0.06	0.09	0.03
Step 2	System is democratic	0.12*	0.05	0.13
	Elections are free and fair	0.22***	0.05	0.25
	Parliament can stop government	0.24***	0.07	0.27
	Parliament can stop president	2.4×10^{-3}	0.06	2.9×10^{-3}
	Parties represent citizens	0.20***	0.05	0.19
	Socio-economic status	-0.05	0.09	-0.03

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001. VIFs < 2.88.

Perceived legitimacy of the current courts

Only two specific predictors had a highly significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the courts (Table 5.18). As in all countries analysed above, the perception of courts as treating everybody the same had the largest effect and increased perceived legitimacy of the current courts ($\beta = 0.32$). Also, like in France and Poland, if respondents evaluated the current system as democratic they saw the courts as more legitimate ($\beta = 0.11$). None of the general predictors had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the courts, and R² change in step 2 shows that the variance in the perceived legitimacy scored is better explained by the specific factors (.23).

Table 5.18. Linear model of predictors of the current courts' perceived legitimacy (N = 342, adjusted $R^2 = .25$, R^2 change step 1 = .05, R^2 change step 2 = .23, $df = 329$).

Predictors		b	SE	β
	(Constant)	0.91	0.70	
Step 1	Democracy best	0.01	0.04	0.01
	Parties important	0.03	0.03	0.04
	Elections important	0.06	0.05	0.06
	Courts should stop institutions	0.11	0.06	0.09
	Authorities should provide access	-0.02	0.06	-0.01
	Authorities should treat equal	0.01	0.07	0.01
	Authorities should provide equal chances	-0.05	0.07	-0.04
Step 2	System is democratic	0.08*	0.04	0.11
	Courts can stop government	0.11	0.06	0.17
	Courts can stop president	0.08	0.06	0.12
	Courts treat equal	0.37***	0.06	0.32
	Socio-economic status	0.03	0.07	0.02

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. VIFs < 3.99

Perceived legitimacy of the current president

There were 3 specific and 4 general predictors that had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the president (Poroshenko; Table 5.19). The evaluation of the president as working for the benefit of the whole society and not a small elite had the strongest significant effect on the president's perceived legitimacy ($\beta = 0.76$). Also, the perception of the elections as free and fair increased perceived legitimacy of the president ($\beta = 0.11$). If respondents considered the current political system to be democratic, then the president's perceived legitimacy was higher ($\beta = 0.08$).

Three significant general effects were the same in the case of the government. If respondents believed that democracy is the best political system, they thought of the current president as more legitimate ($\beta = 0.08$). If, however, respondents believed that the authorities should provide equal access to goods and services to all citizens, they evaluated the current president as less legitimate ($\beta = -0.07$). Also, the view that court should be able to check and balance other institutions had a positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the president ($\beta = 0.08$). In addition to this three predictors, the view that elections are the basis for well-functioning political system, had a small effect on the perceived legitimacy of the president ($\beta = 0.05$). The R^2 change in step 2 of the regression shows that large part of the variance in perceived legitimacy of the president

was explained by the specific predictors (.61). However, the significance of four general predictors indicated that different ideas about how the political system should work influenced the perceived legitimacy of the president too.

Table 5.19. Linear model of predictors of the current president's perceived legitimacy (N = 341, adjusted $R^2 = .75$, R^2 change step 1 = .14, R^2 change step 2 = .61, df = 327).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	1.41	0.52	
Step 1	Democracy best	0.07*	0.03	0.08
	Parties important	-0.04	0.03	-0.05
	Elections important	0.08*	0.04	0.05
	Courts should stop institutions	0.12**	0.04	0.08
	Authorities should provide access	-0.11*	0.05	-0.07
	Authorities should treat equal	0.06	0.06	0.03
Step 2	Authorities should provide equal chances	-0.10	0.05	-0.05
	System is democratic	0.07*	0.03	0.08
	Elections are free and fair	0.09**	0.03	0.11
	Parliament can stop president	-6.9×10^{-4}	0.02	-8.5×10^{-4}
	Courts can stop president	-0.01	0.03	-0.01
	President works for everybody	0.64***	0.03	0.76
	Socio-economic status	0.03	0.05	0.02

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. VIFs < 1.47.

Conclusions

Ukrainian respondents, opposite to the Dutch, French, and Polish respondents, evaluated the courts the worst of all of political institutions. They were also rather negative about the current parliament of their country. The new government of Yatsenyuk and the newly elected president Poroshenko were evaluated more positively (Table 5.3). These differences in evaluations of particular institutions were reflected in which predictors affected the legitimacy scores of the institutions.

The most variance in perceived legitimacy scores was explained again by the specific predictors—specific views had the largest effects on perceived legitimacy of the institutions. In the case of the parliament and courts the specific views were the only ones with significant effects. Differently than in stable democracies, however, there were many significant effects of general views affecting perceived legitimacy of the current government and the president. Three of them were the same in both cases:

the agreement with the statement that democracy is the best political system invented so far, the belief that the authorities should provide equal access to goods and services to all citizens, and the view that courts should be able to stop other institutions from acting beyond their authority. If respondents represented the view that political authority's duty is to secure equal access to goods and services, they perceived the current government and president as less legitimate. This general view did not have a significant effect in any other country analysed so far. This result can imply that those respondents who might have supported more pro-Russian ideas of the Party of Regions and hence the regime of Yanukovich, were less favourable of the more liberal and pro-European government of Yatsenyuk and president Poroshenko. Also, Ukraine is the first case in which the effect of the belief in democracy being the best political system was a significant variable. If respondents were more democratically oriented, they perceived the government and the president as more legitimate.

The strongest effects show similar patterns to the other countries analysed so far. The best predictor of the legitimacy of the executive institutions was whether they were perceived as working for the common good. This showed again that the distributive justice in providing outcomes to society is of the greatest concern for the evaluation of legitimacy of the government and president. Procedural justice—the ability to stop the government from acting beyond its authority and the fairness of elections were the strongest predictors of perceived legitimacy of the parliament. This result implies that throughput (checks and balances) and input (electoral process) aspects of legitimacy were important for respondents when they evaluated the legislative body. Consistently with the results in the Netherlands, France, and Poland, procedural justice—treating all citizens the same—was the most important for the evaluation of legitimacy of the courts.

The results in Ukraine show that respondents were less unanimous than in stable democracies about what kind of political system they prefer, more specifically to what extent democracy is the best system. This general predictor had a significant effect on two executive institutions. Also, unlike in stable democracies, the view that elections are important had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy indicating that there might have been more variability among respondents regarding the extent of

support for the idea of elections. Another interesting general effect that was significant is the view that authorities should provide equal access to services and goods. This general view was a significant predictor of legitimacy of the executive institutions only in Ukraine. Although specific views—evaluation of institutions' performance—were the strongest predictors of perceived legitimacy, the significance of the above mentioned general views shows that Ukraine, especially in the evaluations of the president and the government, suits better the description of country C, where the idea about what the political system ought to be like and the evaluations of the performance of the authorities explain perceived legitimacy.

5.7. Russia

Perceived legitimacy of the current government

Four specific and three general predictors had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the government (Table 5.20). Consistently with all the other countries, the evaluation of the current government as working for the benefit of all citizens rather than a small elite had the largest effect on perceived legitimacy ($\beta = 0.55$). The evaluation of elections as free and fair had a positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the government ($\beta = 0.17$), the ability of the parliament to stop the government from acting beyond its authority ($\beta = 0.10$), and seeing the current political system as democratic had positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the government too ($\beta = 0.11$).

In Russia, like in Ukraine, the view that democracy is the best political system had an effect on the perceived legitimacy of the government. However, in Russia the direction of the effect was reversed. If respondents thought that democracy is the best political system, they saw the current government (of Medvedev) as less legitimate ($\beta = -0.10$). If, however, respondents thought that authorities should treat all citizens according to procedures and laws, they saw the current government as more legitimate ($\beta = 0.20$). Also, the view that courts should be able to stop other institutions from acting beyond their authority slightly increased perceived legitimacy of the current government ($\beta = 0.06$). The R^2 change in step 2 (.53) indicates that the evaluations of the performance of the government (specific views) explained more variance in

perceived legitimacy, but as in Ukraine, the significance of three general factors imply that they are important too, as each of them explains unique (added) variance in perceived legitimacy.

Table 5.20. Linear model of predictors of the current government's perceived legitimacy (N = 733, adjusted $R^2 = .60$, R^2 change step 1 = .07, R^2 change step 2 = .53, df = 719).

Predictors		b	SE	β
	(Constant)	0.15	0.22	
Step 1	Democracy best	-0.08***	0.02	-0.10
	Parties important	0.04	0.02	0.04
	Elections important	0.04	0.03	0.04
	Courts should stop institutions	0.06*	0.03	0.06
	Authorities should provide access	-0.02	0.03	-0.02
	Authorities should treat equal	0.22***	0.03	0.20
	Authorities should provide equal chances	-0.01	0.03	-0.01
Step 2	System is democratic	0.05*	0.03	0.06
	Elections are free and fair	0.13***	0.02	0.17
	Parliament can stop government	0.09***	0.02	0.10
	Courts can stop government	9.7×10^{-4}	0.02	1.1×10^{-3}
	Government works for everybody	0.47***	0.03	0.55
	Socio-economic status	0.07	0.04	0.04

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. VIFs < 1.97 .

Perceived legitimacy of the current parliament

Four specific predictors and one general predictor had a significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament (Table 5.21). The ability of the parliament to stop the government when it acts beyond its authority had the largest positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament ($\beta = 0.34$). Also, if respondents evaluated the elections as free and fair, they thought that the parliament is more legitimate ($\beta = 0.26$). The evaluation of political parties as representing the interests of citizens well had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the current parliament too ($\beta = 0.15$). Evaluation of the current political system as democratic was the specific predictor with the smallest significant effect: when respondents considered the current political system as democratic, they saw the parliament as more legitimate ($\beta = 0.09$). The general view that had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the parliament was

the view that authorities should treat all citizens according to procedures and laws ($\beta = 0.12$). The R^2 change in step 2 shows that most of the variance in perceived legitimacy scores of the parliament was explained by the specific predictors (.46).

Table 5.21. Linear model of predictors of the current parliament's perceived legitimacy (N = 737, adjusted $R^2 = .48$, R^2 change step 1 = .03, R^2 change step 2 = .46, df = 723).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	0.57	0.25	
Step 1	Democracy best	-0.03	0.03	-0.03
	Parties important	0.01	0.03	0.01
	Elections important	-9.1×10^{-4}	0.03	-1.0×10^{-3}
	Courts should stop institutions	-0.02	0.03	-0.02
	Authorities should provide access	0.02	0.03	0.02
	Authorities should treat equal	0.13**	0.04	0.12
	Authorities should provide equal chances	3.6×10^{-3}	0.03	3.9×10^{-3}
Step 2	System is democratic	0.08**	0.03	0.09
	Elections are free and fair	0.21***	0.03	0.26
	Parliament can stop government	0.29***	0.03	0.34
	Parliament can stop president	0.03	0.03	0.04
	Parties represent citizens	0.14***	0.03	0.15
	Socio-economic status	0.09	0.05	0.05

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. VIFs < 1.98.

Perceived legitimacy of the current courts

Three specific, three general predictors, and socio-economic status had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the courts (Table 5.22). The perception of courts as treating everybody according to procedures and laws, as in all other countries, had the largest effect on perceived legitimacy of the current courts ($\beta = 0.27$). Also, like in France, Poland and Ukraine, evaluating the current system as democratic had a positive effect on perceived legitimacy of the courts ($\beta = 0.22$). If respondents thought that the courts can stop the government from acting beyond its authority, they evaluated the courts as more legitimate ($\beta = 0.18$). The socio-economic status had a small significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the courts ($\beta = 0.06$). The higher the social status of respondents, the more they thought of the courts as legitimate.

Like in the case of perceived legitimacy of the government, the view that democracy is the best political system had a negative effect on perceived legitimacy of

the courts. If respondents thought that democracy is the best political system, they saw the current courts as less legitimate ($\beta = -0.11$). Again if respondents thought that authorities should treat all citizens according to procedures and laws, they saw the current courts as more legitimate ($\beta = 0.19$). Also, the view that courts should be able to stop other institutions from acting beyond their authority slightly increased perceived legitimacy of the current courts ($\beta = 0.09$). The R^2 change in step 2 (.27) indicates that the evaluations of the performance of the government (specific views) explained more variance in perceived legitimacy of courts, but the significance of three general factors imply that they are important too.

Table 5.22. Linear model of predictors of the current courts' perceived legitimacy (N = 741, adjusted $R^2 = .29$, R^2 change step 1 = .03, R^2 change step 2 = .27, df = 728).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	1.06	0.26	
Step 1	Democracy best	-0.08**	0.03	-0.11
	Parties important	0.02	0.03	0.02
	Elections important	0.02	0.03	0.03
	Courts should stop institutions	0.08*	0.03	0.09
	Authorities should provide access	0.02	0.03	0.02
	Authorities should treat equal	0.17***	0.04	0.19
	Authorities should provide equal chances	0.01	0.03	0.01
Step 2	System is democratic	0.16***	0.03	0.22
	Courts can stop government	0.14***	0.04	0.18
	Courts can stop president	0.03	0.03	0.05
	Courts treat equal	0.21***	0.03	0.27
	Socio-economic status	0.10*	0.05	0.06

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. VIFs < 2.26.

Perceived legitimacy of the current president

There were 3 specific and 2 general predictors that had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of the president (Putin; Table 5.23). The evaluation of the president as working for the benefit of the whole society and not a small elite had the strongest significant effect on the president's perceived legitimacy ($\beta = 0.66$). Again, the perception of the elections as free and fair increased perceived legitimacy of the president ($\beta = 0.15$). If respondents considered the current political system to be democratic, then the president's perceived legitimacy was higher ($\beta = 0.06$).

Three significant general effects were the same in the case of the government. If respondents believed that democracy is the best political system, they thought of the current president as less legitimate ($\beta = -0.07$). If, however, respondents believed that the authorities should treat all citizens according to the same procedures and laws, they thought of the president as more legitimate ($\beta = 0.19$).

Table 5.23. Linear model of predictors of the current president's perceived legitimacy (N = 736, adjusted $R^2 = .67$, R^2 change step 1 = .08, R^2 change step 2 = .59, df = 722).

	Predictors	b	SE	β
	(Constant)	0.31	0.22	
Step 1	Democracy best	-0.06**	0.02	-0.07
	Parties important	-0.01	0.02	-0.01
	Elections important	0.01	0.03	0.01
	Courts should stop institutions	0.05	0.03	0.04
	Authorities should provide access	0.03	0.03	0.03
	Authorities should treat equal	0.23***	0.03	0.19
Step 2	Authorities should provide equal chances	-0.02	0.03	-0.02
	System is democratic	0.06**	0.03	0.06
	Elections are free and fair	0.13***	0.02	0.15
	Parliament can stop president	-9.4×10^{-4}	0.02	-1.0×10^{-3}
	Courts can stop president	0.01	0.02	0.01
	President works for everybody	0.58***	0.02	0.66
	Socio-economic status	0.07	0.04	0.04

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. VIFs < 1.95.

Conclusions

On average, Russian respondents were fairly satisfied with their institutions: all current political institutions received a score above 4 (midpoint of the scale) beside the parliament, which was evaluated rather negatively and got a score below 4. Not surprisingly, the current president had the highest average perceived legitimacy of all investigated institutions in Russia (Table 5.3).

Like in all other countries, the most variance in perceived legitimacy scores was explained again by the specific predictors—specific views had the largest effects on perceived legitimacy of the institutions. Differently than in stable democracies and similarly to the other hybrid regime (Ukraine), there were many significant effects of general views affecting perceived legitimacy of the institutions. For three out of four

institutions two or three general views were found significant. The effect that was found in the analysis of perceived legitimacy of all four institutions was the view that authorities should be treating all citizens according to procedures and laws. This effect could imply that respondents who are convinced by the rhetoric of order (understood, however, as following the established laws and procedures rather than random rules) often used by the Russian authorities and media, see the current Russian institutions as more legitimate.

The other general view that had a significant negative effect on perceived legitimacy of the government, the courts, and the president was the preference for democracy as the best political system invented so far. If citizens believed that democracy is indeed the best system, they saw these institutions as less legitimate. The reverse then was true as well: if the democratic system was a less preferred system, respondents considered the current institutions as more legitimate. This finding, however, was accompanied by the effect of a specific view that was found in the analysis of perceived legitimacy of all institutions. If respondents considered the current political system to be democratic, they thought of all the institutions as more legitimate. This finding could perhaps be explained by the fact that those respondents who support democracy as the most suitable political system have a different conception of what democracy is than those respondents who considered the current system democratic.

The strongest effects show similar patterns to all the other countries analysed so far. The strongest predictor of legitimacy of the executive institutions was whether they were seen as working for all citizens rather than for small elite. So, distributive justice in providing outcomes to society was of the greatest concern for the evaluation of legitimacy of the government and president. Procedural justice—the ability to stop the government from acting beyond its authority and the fairness of elections were the strongest predictors of perceived legitimacy of the parliament. This result implies that throughput (checks and balances) and output (electoral process) aspects of legitimacy were crucial for respondents when they evaluated the legislative body. Consistent with the results in all the other countries, procedural justice—treating all citizens the same—was the most important for the evaluation of legitimacy of the courts.

The results in Russia show that respondents were even less unanimous than in stable democracies and in Ukraine about what kind of political system they prefer. The two effects of democracy perceptions showed opposite effects on perceived legitimacy. The general view that democracy is the best political system decreased perceived legitimacy, whereas the opinion that the current political system is democratic increased perceived legitimacy of institutions. Although specific views—evaluation of institutions' performance—were the strongest predictors of perceived legitimacy, the significance of the above mentioned general views shows that in Russia the variance in perceived legitimacy scores is also explained by the different views on the ideal political arrangement. Therefore, Russia fits more with the description of country C, where the variance in perceived legitimacy is explained by both specific and general predictors.

5.8. Comparative discussion and conclusions

The analysis of perceived legitimacy in the five selected countries showed several similarities and differences between the evaluations of political authorities. First of all, institutions in old democracies were on average perceived by respondents as more legitimate than institutions in the new democracy and in the two hybrid regimes.

Second, in all five countries the specific views—views about how well institutions perform—explained a larger part of the variance within perceived legitimacy. The specific predictors that had significant effects were to a large extent similar across countries (see Table 5.24). The most important and consistent predictor of perceived legitimacy of the executive institutions (government and president) was whether they have worked for the common good rather than a small elite (five out of five countries) and whether the elections are considered free and fair (four out of five countries). In both hybrid regimes (Russia and Ukraine) another significant specific predictor of perceived legitimacy of the executive was whether the current regime was evaluated as democratic. The most common predictors of perceived legitimacy of the parliament were whether the parliament can stop the government from acting beyond its authority (five out of five countries), whether political parties represent the interests of citizens well (five out of five countries), and whether the elections are free and fair

(four out of five countries). Perceived legitimacy of courts was predicted by their equal treatment of all citizens (five out of five countries) and the judgment of the political system as democratic (four out of five countries).

Finally, the main differences concerned the significant general predictors. Table 5.25 shows that for the executive institutions, the hybrid regimes in Ukraine and Russia had more significant general predictors than democracies. In contrast, for the parliament and courts, democracies had more general predictors than hybrid regimes.

In the analysed democratic regimes, there was more influence of general predictors on perceived legitimacy of the parliaments and courts than on the executive institutions. This means that respondents in the Netherlands, France and Poland were more divided on the general rules in the case of non-executive institutions. For example, in the Netherlands and Poland perceived legitimacy of the parliament was explained by the extent of agreement with the statement that political parties are important in representing the interests of citizens. In other words, if respondents believed that political parties indeed play an important role, they attributed more legitimacy to the parliament.²⁷ Moreover, both in the Netherlands and Poland the extent of agreement with the statement that courts should stop other institutions from acting beyond their authority determined perceived legitimacy of the courts. Hence there is no uniform opinion about the scope of power that the courts should have and this influences the evaluation of the current courts. Therefore, I conclude that regarding the non-executive institutions, democratic countries were closer to the description of country C, where both ideas about the general arrangement of political system and evaluations of the performance of authorities vary and are responsible for the differences in perceived legitimacy.

There was only one significant general predictor that explained the variance in perceived legitimacy of the current governments in the Netherlands and Poland, namely the perception of political parties as important institution to represent citizens' interests. This is the same general predictor that was significant in the case of the parliament in these two countries. In general, however, general predictors did not

²⁷ In Poland this result is in line with the trend of growing antipathy towards political parties that governed the country in the last 15 years (Centrum Badań Opinii Społecznej 2015). Perhaps a similar phenomenon would explain the result for the Netherlands.

explain the variance in perceived legitimacy of the executive institutions. The differences in their perceived legitimacy were explained prevalingly by the evaluation of the performance. Therefore, I conclude that regarding the executive institutions (governments and presidents) democratic countries matched the description of country A, in which the ideas about the preferred political system and the importance of free and fair elections did not explain differences in perceived legitimacy.

By contrast, in Ukraine the general views explained variance in perceived legitimacy of the executive institutions and not of the parliament and courts. In the case of the government and president, the view that authorities should provide equal access to goods and services to everybody had a negative effect, which implies that respondents who were more in favour of socialism/communism, considered the new liberal executives as less legitimate. Moreover, the preference for a democratic system had a significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of these two institutions. Respondents were divided on what kind of political system is best for the country and these views had an effect on perceived legitimacy of the executive institutions. This means that Ukrainian respondents matched the description of citizens from country C when they evaluated their president and government, whereas they were closer to the model of country A when they evaluated the legislative and judicial institutions (Table 5.24 and 5.22).

Table 5.24. Comparison of “specific” predictors across countries (see text for explanation). If a predictor had a significant effect in a country this is indicated by a check mark (✓). Negative effects are indicated by a minus (-).

Institution	Predictor	Country				
		NL	FR	PL	UA	RU
Government	Government works for everybody	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Elections are free and fair	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Parliament can stop government	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Courts can stop government			✓		
	System is democratic				✓	✓
Parliament	Parliament can stop government	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Parties represent citizens	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Elections are free and fair	✓	✓		✓	✓
	System is democratic			✓		✓
Courts	Courts treat equal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	System is democratic		✓	✓	✓	✓
	Courts can stop government	✓				✓
	Courts can stop president	NA	✓	✓		
	Socio-economic status		✓			✓
President	President works for everybody	NA	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Elections are free and fair	NA		✓	✓	✓
	System is democratic	NA			✓	✓
	Courts can stop president	NA	✓			

Russia was the country in which the highest number of significant effects for the general views was found (Table 5.25). Two common general effects that explained the variance in perceived legitimacy were the preference for democracy as the best political system and the view that political authorities should treat all citizens according to procedures and laws. The first general view had a negative effect on perceived legitimacy of the government, courts, and president (respondents who thought democracy is the best system saw the current institutions as less legitimate). Interestingly, this general view was accompanied by an opposite effect of a specific view regarding democratic performance (Table 5.24). In particular, if respondents considered the current political system to be democratic, they thought of all the institutions as more legitimate. As mentioned above, these opposite directions of

effects could perhaps be explained if respondents who support democracy as the best political system have a different conception of what democracy is than those respondents who considered the current system democratic. Another general view had a significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy of all institutions in Russia. When respondents considered it important for authorities to treat all citizens according to procedures and laws, they perceived all current institutions as more legitimate (Table 5.25). As mentioned earlier, this can be interpreted as an emphasis on order (understood as the rule of law) as an important aspect of political authorities' legitimacy.²⁸ Respondents from Russia were the closest to the description of citizens from country C, where political legitimacy is predicted both by preferences for the political system and assessments of performance of political institutions.

The analysis shows that the specific views explain most of the variance in perceived legitimacy of institutions in each country. The significant effects are similar across all the analysed regimes. The perception that executive institutions work in the interest of the whole society rather than for a small elite was consistently the strongest predictor of their perceived legitimacy. In other words, the perception of distributive justice in the provision of outputs by authorities increased their legitimacy in the eyes of citizens. Hence the H4 (*Distributive justice increases perceived legitimacy of political authorities*) was supported by the results of this study. Also, in each country, the more the courts were seen as treating everybody the same, the more legitimacy was ascribed to them by respondents. Thus, procedural justice—throughput—was the most important aspect of perceived legitimacy of the courts. In the case of the parliament, the input aspect of legitimacy as well as throughput affected perceived legitimacy. More specifically, the perception that the parliament can stop the government from acting beyond its authority (throughput/procedural justice), the perception of elections as free and fair (input/procedural justice) or the system as democratic (input/democracy), and the perception of political parties as representing the interests of citizens well (input/procedural justice) all had a positive effect on perceived

²⁸ This is in line with some interpretations of Putin's legitimacy as based on the provision of law and order, which are appreciated by the Russian citizens after their experience of chaos and disorder in the 1990s (Anderson Jr. 2013, p.133).

legitimacy of the parliaments. Procedural justice, thus, increased perceived legitimacy of institutions in all five countries and therefore H2 (*Procedural justice increases perceived legitimacy of political authorities*) was supported by the data.

Table 5.25. Comparison of “general” predictors across countries (see text for explanation). If a predictor had a significant effect in a country this is indicated by a check mark (✓). Negative effects are indicated by a minus (-).

Institution	Predictor	Country				
		NL	FR	PL	UA	RU
Government	Parties important	✓		✓		
	Courts should stop institutions				✓	✓
	Democracy best				✓	✓(-)
	Authorities should provide access				✓(-)	
	Authorities should treat equal					✓
Parliament	Parties important	✓		✓		
	Authorities should treat equal		✓			✓
	Courts should stop institutions	✓				
	Authorities should provide equal chances	✓(-)				
Courts	Courts should stop institutions	✓		✓		
	Authorities should provide equal chances		✓			
	Authorities should treat equal			✓		✓
	Democracy best					✓(-)
President	Democracy best	NA			✓	✓(-)
	Courts should stop institutions	NA			✓	
	Authorities should treat equal	NA				✓
	Authorities should provide access	NA			✓(-)	
	Elections important	NA			✓	

Dependence (operationalized as socio-economic status) did not have a significant effect on perceived legitimacy of institutions in most of the analysed cases. Also, the direction of the effect (even if not significant) was inconsistent across institutions and countries. For example, in Poland higher socio-economic status had a negative effect on perceived legitimacy (the higher the social status, the lower the perception of legitimacy), whereas in France it had a positive effect on perceived

legitimacy of all institutions (the higher the social status, the higher the perception of legitimacy) of all institutions. Moreover, the direction of the effect changed even within one country depending on the institution under investigation, e.g. in the Netherlands, higher socio-economic status had a positive (insignificant) effect on perceived legitimacy in the case of the government and parliament and a negative (insignificant) effect in the case of the current courts. Therefore the H6 (*Dependence on political authorities increases perceived legitimacy of the authorities/The lower the socio-economic status, the higher the perceived legitimacy of the authorities*) was not supported and more research into the relation between socio-economic status (and dependence) and perceived legitimacy of different institutions is needed.

Moreover, future research could explore the relation between evaluations of the political institutions and partisanship. Partisanship of respondents can influence their perceptions and assessment of political institutions. Moreover, some institutions can be more partisan (e.g. government, president, and parliament) than others (e.g. courts) and the perception of their partisanship could also vary across regimes. Although in the survey I asked a question about political views of respondents, I did not address the partisanship of respondents and institutions directly, therefore I could not control for its effects in my analysis.

To summarize, the analysis suggests that the extent to which the general views explain perceived legitimacy of institutions depends on the type of institutions and the regime type. In the case of democracies, different preferences for the arrangements within the political system (although not the type of the political system itself) explained the differences in the levels of perceived legitimacy granted by respondents to the legislative and judicial institutions. They did not explain much difference in the perceived legitimacy of the executive institutions. The perceived legitimacy of the executive institutions was mainly driven by the negative or positive assessment of their performance. The opposite was true for the hybrid regimes: the general predictors were more important in explaining perceived legitimacy of the executive institutions. Another main difference between democracies and hybrid regimes is that in hybrid regimes there was an effect of viewing democracy as the best system on perceived legitimacy of institutions whereas in democracies this predictor was not significant.

Also, Russian respondents were the closest to the description of citizens of country C of all the analysed countries. This means that among Russian respondents preference for democracy and ideas on how the system ought to work, as well as the evaluations of institutional performance were associated with the level of perceived legitimacy.