

Chapter 4

Critical citizens in the United States and Western Europe

The extensive and rich literature on citizen's social psychological orientations towards government most commonly suggests that established democracies have experienced a long-term erosion of systems support and civic engagement. In the United States, a chorus of commentators has drawn attention to problems which are perceived to be facing American democracy, whether thought to be arising from eroding social capital (Putnam), low or falling voting turnout (Teixiera), popular discontent (Craig) and voter anger (Tolchin), declining party loyalties (Aldrich), lack of trust in government (Nye, Zelikow and King), negative news about public affairs (Patterson), or mistrust of Congress (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse).¹ Others emphasize a similar litany of concerns about the state of representative democracy elsewhere. Hence scholars argue that in Western Europe, people hate politics (Hay), party identification has weakened (Franklin et al, Dalton and Wattenberg), party membership has steadily plummeted (Mair and Biezen), and electoral turnout has fallen (Franklin), or that we are past democracy's hay-day (Crouch), although in Europe the jury still remains out concerning contemporary trends in social capital.² Russell Dalton presented the most comprehensive review of cross-national survey evidence across a range of established democracies, concluding that these countries have experienced growing public discontent with parties, parliaments, and governments.³ In commenting on the implications of these developments, the most pervasive assumption in the literature is that long-term changes in citizen's orientations towards the nation-state, even if not a 'crisis', still represent a threat to the quality of representative democracy. These developments are widely believed, in particular, to have serious consequences if they undermine civic engagement and mass participation, limit the public policy agenda, and raise fundamental challenges to the legitimacy of the state.⁴ Yet a minority perspective challenges these assumptions, speculating that if they help to mobilize reform movements, critical citizens may prove to be democracy's salvation.⁵

To consider these arguments, Part I summarizes the previous literature. Scholarly concern about trust and confidence in governing institutions has risen and fallen over time, tending to reflect global waves of democratization and the impact of contemporary political events. Part II sets out the interpretative framework, emphasizing that when describing and interpreting trends in citizen's orientations, close attention should be paid to *when*, *where*, and *what* has changed. This chapter focuses upon comparing established democracies, as the longest and richest time-series survey data is available in these societies. Part III documents the longitudinal trends evident in the United States and

Western European societies, all affluent societies with extensive experience of democracy for many decades and even centuries (see chapter 3). Using the conceptual distinctions drawn earlier, we start by analyzing developments in the most specific levels of support towards particular actors and agencies, and then move upwards to consider more diffuse indicators of confidence in regime institutions, satisfaction with the general performance of democratic regimes, and the strength of core attachments to the nation state.

After reviewing the available longitudinal evidence within the United States and Western Europe, the conclusion challenges the conventional view of an inevitable downward spiral of public disenchantment with politics observable across all established democracies. In particular, when changes in system support do occur, it is usually far more common to observe fluctuations over time in successive surveys, rather than straightforward linear or uniform downward falls. Some simultaneous changes in system support do occasionally occur --symbolized by the events of 9/11, after which support for government appears to peak simultaneously across many countries -- but these are rare. In terms of 'where' changes occur, persistent differences can also be observed over many years even among relatively similar nations, such as contrasting levels of confidence in government in Italy and Spain, different levels of trust in parties in the Netherlands and Belgium, and diverse patterns of national pride in Germany and France. During the last decade, a few established democracies (notably the UK and Portugal) experienced steadily growing mistrust of government institutions, an issue which should raise red flags in these countries, although during the same period, Belgium and Finland experienced the reverse. Lastly in terms of 'what' changes occur, instead of a uniform pattern, contrasts in public attitudes towards different branches of government are apparent within each country, including in the United States, exemplified by levels of trust and confidence in the legislature and in the courts. Perhaps most importantly for an accurate diagnosis, at the most diffuse level, public satisfaction with the general performance of democracy in Western Europe has usually strengthened over time, not weakened, and attachments to the nation-state remain strong and stable.

This complexity indicates the need for differentiated and nuanced arguments which can account for cross-national *variance* and the *dynamics* of longitudinal changes in political support. These patterns suggest that it would probably be most fruitful to consider short and medium-term explanations of any changes, abandoning over-simple claims about steadily growing public disenchantment with politics across all established democracies – or indeed across the world.⁶ Arguments suggesting changing standards of probity in public life, and the instrumental performance of governments and public sector

institutions, become more plausible candidates to explain medium-term fluctuations in public opinion, rather than propositions which posit glacial sociological changes, such as cultural shifts in modern societies. The next chapter builds upon these results by comparing the broader range of countries included in the pooled World Values Survey and the Global-Barometer surveys, setting developments in the US and Western Europe within a global perspective.

I: The debate about critical citizens in established democracies

The earliest surveys of American public opinion towards government were conducted during the decade after the end of World War II, at a time when the role and functions of the federal government had expanded greatly under the New Deal Roosevelt administration, and when the United States had recently emerged as victorious and economically dominant in the world. It was often assumed that during this era American public opinion was relatively favorable towards the role of government. Rather than a 'golden age', however, the earliest studies conducted by Hyman and Sheatsley in 1954, McClosky in 1958, and Mitchell in 1959 described American post-war attitudes as ambivalent towards government; public opinion typically expressed pride in U.S. democracy and yet considerable skepticism about the morality and honesty of elected politicians. The American, Mitchell concluded, "tends to expect the worst in politics but hopes for the best".⁷

Systematic comparative work on public opinion towards government originated during the late-1950s and early-1960s, with Almond and Verba's landmark study of *The Civic Culture*. The theoretical impetus for this work reflected contemporary concern to understand the underlying causes of regime instability during the second great reverse wave of democracy.⁸ The context included the historic rise of Nazi Germany and Italian fascism and the global disruption of the Second World War, as well as the collapse during the 1960s of fledgling parliamentary democracies in many newly independent African states emerging from colonial rule, and the checkered political experience of Latin America, due to a succession of military coups, populist dictators, and Communist revolution.⁹ The central message emerging from *The Civic Culture* emphasized that political stability required congruence between culture and structure. Almond and Vera argued that the democratic public needed to be finely balanced in equilibrium between the dangers of either an excessively deferential, apathetic and disengaged citizenry, on the one hand, or an overly-agitated, disenchanting, and heated engagement, on the other. An optimal level of political trust was posited in stable democratic states, such as Britain and the U.S., where active and watchful citizens checked the powerful, without succumbing to the destabilizing forces of either excessive loyalty and deference, at one pole, or else excessive disaffection and alienation, at

the other extreme. The idea that societies differed in their political culture was hardly novel; indeed it had been the subject of philosophical speculation for centuries, in classic works from Montesquieu to de Tocqueville. But one of the more radical aspects of the civic culture study was the way that support for the theory was derived from a path-breaking cross-national opinion survey, demonstrating that citizen's orientations could be examined empirically. The study analyzed the mass publics in Mexico, the United States, Italy, Britain, and Germany during the late-1950s.

Almond and Verba concluded that the United States (and to a lesser extent, Britain) exemplified their notion of a *civic* culture: "Respondents in the United States, compared with those in the other four nations, are very frequently exposed to politics. They report political discussion and involvement in political affairs, a sense of obligation to take an active part in the community, and a sense of competence to influence the government. They are frequently active members of voluntary associations. Furthermore, they tend to be affectively involved in the political system: they report emotional involvement during election campaigns, and they have a high degree of pride in the political system. And their attachment to the political system includes both generalized system affect as well as satisfaction with specific government performance."¹⁰ By contrast, Italy (and to a lesser extent, Mexico) exemplified an *alienated* political culture: "The picture of Italian political culture that has emerged from our data is one of relatively unrelieved political alienation and distrust. The Italians are particularly low in national pride, in moderate and open partisanship, in the acknowledgment of the obligation to take an active part in local community affairs, in the sense of competence to join with others in situations of political stress, in their choice of social forms of leisure activity, and in their confidence in the social environment."¹¹ *The Civic Culture* therefore emphasized the cross-national variations, even among relatively similar post-industrial societies, such as Italy and Germany. This influential study did much to establish the conventional view that during the Eisenhower era, a period of economic abundance and cold war politics, Americans held positive views about their political system.

The mid-1960s and early-1970s, however, saw mounting concern about the capacity of democratic institutions to serve as an outlet to contain public dissent in the United States and in Western Europe. The era experienced the outbreak of tumultuous protest politics, with urban riots in Philadelphia, Watts, Newark, and Detroit symbolizing a radicalization of race relations and a breakdown of social control in the United States. Mass demonstrations on the streets of London, Paris and Bonn catalyzed similar concerns in Western Europe. These events triggered new cross-national survey research seeking to understand the causes of protest activism.¹² The gloomier prognostications which

became common during these decades received their strongest endorsement from Crosier, Huntington and Watakuki, who published a major influential report written during the mid-1970s for the Trilateral Commission, which diagnosed a 'crisis' of democratic legitimacy afflicting not just America but also many similar post-industrial societies.¹³

This wave of concern ebbed somewhat during the early-1980s, reflecting some subsidence of radical social movements and the more quiescent mass politics characteristic of the Thatcher-Reagan era. During these years, Lipset and Schneider compared a wide range of American public opinion polls towards government, business, and labor.¹⁴ The research concluded that mass support for many types of political institutions in the United States had indeed eroded over time, but Lipset and Schneider argued that most criticisms were leveled at the behavior and performance of specific power-holders, rather than expressing doubts about the underlying structure and function of American institutions. The more positive interpretation was reinforced by the *Beliefs in Government* project, a multivolume comparison examining broader trends in Western Europe from the early-1970s until the mid or late-1990s. A thorough and detailed collaborative study, the *Beliefs in Government* project dismissed talk of a 'crisis of democracy' as exaggerated. In particular, chapters in these volumes which examining institutional confidence and trust in politicians concluded that little evidence pointed to a steady secular erosion of systems support in Europe during these three decades. Instead the authors arrived at relatively sanguine conclusions which emphasized the existence of persistent cross-national differences in systems support across different European member states, and a pattern of trendless fluctuations over the years.¹⁵

The debate over the depth of any problem was far from settled, however, and during the early to mid-1990s, as already noted, a host of American scholars continued to express worries about 'disenchanted democrats', 'critical citizens', and growing civic disengagement. Similar concern about political mistrust, voter apathy, and democratic disaffection echo among commentators in many other post-industrial societies, as well.¹⁶ Russell Dalton provided the most comprehensive recent summary of the cross-national survey evidence from the 1960s until the late-1990s in a range of established democracies and post-industrial societies. Dalton concluded that during these years citizens became increasingly detached from political parties, more critical of governing elites and institutions, and less positive towards parliaments, although public support for democratic ideals has not flagged.¹⁷ Scholarly research mirrors popular commentary focused on contemporary phenomenon which appear to underline citizen anger, including the public reaction to the Westminster expenses scandal in Britain and

the simmering rage and breakdown of civility towards elected representatives expressed at town hall meetings over health care in the United States.

II: The interpretative framework: What has declined, when and where?

Before plunging into the analysis of the phenomenon of critical citizens, as a preliminary step it is important to establish a clear picture of trends in the descriptive evidence. We need to pay attention to the depth, breadth, and timing of any changes in citizens' orientations towards politics and government in the United States and Western Europe. What has declined, where and when?

In terms of *what*, bearing in mind the Eastonian framework already discussed, it needs to be established whether any erosion of support has occurred only at the most *specific* level of trust in politicians, party leaders, elected officials and public sector workers, or whether any rot has spread upwards to damage confidence in many core political institutions and state agencies, and even, at the most diffuse level, to fragment common identities within multinational communities.

In terms of *where*, we need to demonstrate whether general patterns of declining trust and confidence are evident across many comparable established democracies --suggesting general causes-- or whether any serious problem of eroding system support is confined to just a few nations. The largest research literature on this topic concerns the United States, but the American constitution was founded upon classical liberal principles, emphasizing mistrust of government. Lipset notes that American culture may prove exceptional in this regard, as in so much else.¹⁸

Lastly, in terms of *when*, close attention needs to be paid to the exact timing of any fluctuations in systems support. It is insufficient to look at net changes in different societies, since countries may all arrive at a similar end point through divergent pathways. Moreover the starting and ending date for many series of observations is often arbitrary, yet this can clearly color interpretations of the trends, for example if the series of survey measurements starts on a relatively high or low point. It is more rigorous to examine whether any changes happen simultaneously across states, or whether trends vary in their timing.

Prior attention to the 'what, where and when' helps to select the most plausible competing theoretical hypotheses which can then be analyzed further in subsequent chapters. For example, any evidence of a glacial erosion of political support for parties and parliaments which persists over successive decades in many similar Western societies would suggest looking for evidence of long-term causes, such as processes of social psychological change in cultural value occurring among individual

citizens, or the impact of societal modernization, human development, the penetration of the mass media, and globalization at macro-level. On the other hand, if patterns of trendless fluctuations and short-term volatility can be observed, with dynamic peaks and troughs which vary across relatively similar types of societies and among different branches of government, this points more clearly towards investigating specific performance and event-based explanations within each country, such as the government's success or failure in handling the economy, the outbreak of a major parliamentary scandal, the end of an unpopular war, the rise of new parties, polarization of party politics, or an election throwing the governing party out of office.

The longest continuous time-series evidence is available from the ANES, allowing us to track half a century of trends in the standard American indicators of trust in government officials. The U.S. General Social Survey (GSS) has also regularly monitored institutional confidence in public and private-sector agencies from 1972-2006. To see whether similar trends are apparent in other established democracies, we can draw upon the series of bi-annual Euro-Barometer surveys conducted since the early-1970s. The Euro-Barometer survey regularly monitors confidence in national institutions, satisfaction with the performance of democracy, and feelings of national pride and identity.

Given the immense outpouring of scholarly research and popular commentary, what is there new to say? Surprisingly, perhaps, a lot. Many studies of the empirical evidence provide a partial view by selecting only one aspect of the underlying multidimensional concept of systems support, or by focusing upon only a few countries, or a single global region. Much of the literature lacks a clear and comprehensive conceptual framework focused on support for the political system. In studies of the empirical evidence, both attitudinal and behavioral indicators are commonly mixed together. Equally importantly, even half a century after the original *Civic Culture* survey, items carried in the time-series survey evidence used for identifying trends is often of limited duration and cross-national breadth, making it impossible to determine with any accuracy whether general trends have indeed occurred. To update the analysis, we can start by monitoring developments in the United States and Western Europe, which possess the longest series of indicators and the largest body of previous research. This sets the context for the broader comparison of contemporary societies worldwide presented in the next chapter.

III: Longitudinal trends in the United States and Western Europe

Trust in public officials in the U.S. federal government

As discussed earlier, the standard American National Election Study questions about political trust ask whether the 'government in Washington', or 'people running the government' can be trusted to 'do what is right', whether they 'waste taxes', whether government is run 'for a few big interests', or whether public officials are 'crooked'. These items seek to tap public orientations towards the national government including perceptions about the ethical standards, probity, and integrity of elected officials. The questions have also been carried in other American and cross-national surveys.¹⁹ As Russell Hardin points out, however, these items are often used in empirical studies without reflecting upon whether they actually relate to the underlying notion of political *trust*.²⁰ For Hardin, trustworthiness rests on both motivations and competencies; do government officials seek to act in the public interest and, if so, do they actually have the capacity to do so? For example, people may believe that elected officials are trustworthy in their motivations for public service (for example, that the local Congressional representative from their local district is honest and hardworking, or that the president is well-meaning and likeable), and yet they may also feel that these individuals often prove generally incompetent or ineffective, for example when managing a major economic or foreign policy crisis. Or conversely citizens could logically believe that politicians are usually competent and effective but also venal, if thought to line their own pockets or those of special interests. The standard ANES battery of items mostly concern the trustworthiness of the motivations of public officials (to 'do the right thing'), but not their competencies.

Reflecting a long-standing debate, the meaning of these indicators is also open to alternative interpretations. Hence for Jack Citrin, they provide signs of *specific* support for incumbent office holders, with limited consequences. The erosion of American political trust which occurred during the 1960s can be best understood in this view as an expression of public dissatisfaction with the performance of particular incumbent political leaders and public policies, representing part of the regular cycle of normal electoral politics and real world events.²¹ From this perspective, the public popularity of members of congress and particular presidents can be expected to ebb and flow over time, without indicating that Americans are willing to support radical constitutional reforms. For Arthur Miller, however, the ANES indicators tap into diffuse support. Any erosion suggests that the roots of public dissatisfaction extend more deeply to indicate a crisis of legitimacy in American democracy, representing a loss of faith that U.S. political institutions are the most appropriate ones for American

society.²² Others suggest that because government institutions are operated by incumbents, in practice it is difficult, if not impossible, to disentangle support for agencies and actors.²³ The ambiguity and potential measurement error when operationalizing the complex concept of political trust means that relying solely upon these indicators is unwise, and it would be prudent to see whether similar trends are evident in support for institutions using alternative data.²⁴ If the dynamics of public confidence in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of American government reflects the peaks and troughs of confidence in the federal government, this would lend greater confidence to time-series trends, as well as indirectly supporting the Miller interpretation. If, however, there are marked variations in citizen's reactions towards among different institutions, then this suggests the need to search for more performance and event-driven explanations.

The first item in the ANES battery comes closest to the notion of general trust in public sector officials working within the federal government, relating to Easton's notion of specific rather than diffuse support. This item also provides the longest time-series. If we compare trends over time in the proportion of the American public reporting that they trusted the federal government to do what is right 'most of the time' or 'just about always', as shown in Figure 4.1, the evidence suggests that American trust in government leaders plummeted steadily every election year from the mid-1960s to the late-1970s, during the period of hot button politics and dissent over race relations, Vietnam, the war on poverty, and Watergate.²⁵ Yet the subsequent trend line displays considerable volatility, with dynamic peaks and troughs, rather than a simple linear or continuous fall. According to this series of observations, a sharp revival of American trust in the federal government occurred during the first Reagan administration from 1980-1984, despite the anti-government rhetoric of this administration, the deep recession in the U.S. economy during the early-1980s, and the growing polarization of party politics as the GOP moved sharply towards the right on certain moral and economic issues. Citrin and Green suggest that this happened because economic indicators for employment and inflation improved markedly after 1982, and President Reagan's leadership style exuded confidence and sunny optimism.²⁶ Trust in the federal government revived again from 1994 to 2002, a period of sustained economic growth which started under President Clinton and continued under President George W. Bush. Support peaked again after the dramatic events of 9/11, which Hetherington attributed to a 'rally around the flag' effect associated with any foreign policy crisis and the priority given to security issues.²⁷ Support then fell back again during the next three national elections. Nor is this simply a product of the ANES survey measurement as similar volatility among the American public is evident when the same question

was asked in a series of Gallup polls from 1972 to 2008.²⁸ At present it remains unclear whether any erosion has continued since November 2008, as there are signs of a sharp uptick in confidence in the executive office after the election President Obama, although this revival did not extend to Congress.²⁹ The overall volatility indicates that there are clearly periods where American trust in the federal government has revitalized, as well as periods when it has plummeted, and comprehensive explanations need to account for dynamic fluctuations over time.

[Figure 4.1 about here]

Are similar trends evident elsewhere? Some of the ANES items on trust in politicians have been asked in national election surveys conducted in some other established democracies, but as a previous review by Listhaug emphasized, comparisons of trends are limited because of considerable variations in the item wording and the lack of continuity of items over successive national surveys.³⁰ The most thorough and comprehensive recent review of trends in sixteen established democracies using these types of items, by Dalton, concluded that these indicate a net decline in confidence in politicians in recent decades: "Regardless of recent trends in the economy, in large and small nations, in presidential and parliamentary systems, in countries with few parties and many, in federal and unitary states, the direction of change is the same."³¹ The evidence that the public has become more skeptical about elected officials presented by Dalton is certainly suggestive and important but nevertheless some caution is needed when interpreting the results of the regression analysis used in his study, since out of 43 separate items, only seventeen items saw a statistically significant fall in trust over time. Moreover any erosion of support which has occurred at the most specific level of elected officials may have few important consequences; in democracies with regular multiparty elections allowing the removal of incumbents, less public trust in politicians may generate higher turnover of elected representatives, without necessarily affecting more diffuse levels of public confidence in government institutions.

Institutional confidence in the U.S.

The U.S. General Social Survey monitors trends in confidence in public sector agencies, including the three branches of the American federal government. Any sustained erosion of faith in these institutions has potentially far more serious consequences than loss of trust in particular presidents, congressional leaders, or elected representatives. In democratic states, the popularity of elected leaders and governing parties is expected to rise and fall according to citizens' evaluation of their performance. Where opinions are overwhelmingly negative, multiparty democracies with alternating parties in government provide a safety valve for dissatisfaction through periodic opportunities to 'throw the

rascals out' via the ballot box. But institutional confidence reflects more enduring and diffuse orientations than the popularity of specific leaders; any severe and persistent loss of legitimacy for the U.S. Congress, the Supreme Court, or the executive branch is not easily remedied, and it has broader ramifications. The GSS also examines attitudes towards the private sector as well, including confidence in major companies, as well as in banks and financial institutions. This helps to establish whether the American public has increasingly lost faith in many established pillars of authority, or whether this particular problem is confined mainly to the image or performance of government agencies and bureaucrats working in the public sector.

[Figures 4.2-4 about here]

The U.S. General Social Survey, conducted by NORC, has monitored confidence in institutional leaders since the early-1970s by asking: *"I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them?"* Figure 4.2 shows the trends in American confidence in the executive branch and the Supreme Court. The dotted trend line, and the R^2 coefficient, summarize the overall strength and direction of any linear trends. The trend in public confidence in both the executive branch and the Supreme Court clearly demonstrate patterns of trendless fluctuation around the mean; in particular, most strikingly, *no significant overall fall in institutional confidence occurred for either of these institutions from 1972 to 2006*. The executive branch, in particular, displays considerable volatility over time, for example with the sharp peaks registered temporarily in 1977 (temporarily restoring levels of confidence under the Carter administration to the pre-Watergate era), in 1988-92 (under the presidency of George H.W. Bush), and again in 2001, under George W. Bush, following the events of 9/11. The highs and lows are rarely sustained, however, although the White House saw lower than average confidence during Clinton's first term, before public revelations surrounding the Lewinsky affair. The trend lines for the Supreme Court and the Executive branch roughly mirror each other, although the Supreme Court retains higher public confidence and more stable evaluations.

Confidence in the US Congress, illustrated in Figure 4.3, displays some parallel periods of rising and falling public confidence which provide a fainter mirror for trends in the executive. Overall, however, there is a flatter line for Congress, suggesting less pronounced volatility for the legislature than the executive branch. Moreover, and most importantly, the overall trend line since the early-1970s to 2006 shows falling net support for Congress during these decades, as many commentators have noted.³²

It appears that in evaluations about the leadership among the core institutions of the U.S. federal government, the public has expressed the most consistent growing doubts about the legislative branch.

But does this fall in Congressional approval mean a crisis of legitimacy for American *government* – suggesting that the need to search for potential political explanations - or are similar trends apparent for other established institutions in the private sector as well? If a more generic trend affecting attitudes towards those in authority, then cultural or social reasons might provide more plausible explanations. For comparison, the bottom graph in Figure 4.4 shows parallel trends in confidence in the private sector for banks and financial institutions as well as for major companies. Most strikingly both these private sector institutions show overall trends of falling confidence from the start to the end of this era, with declines which are similar in strength to that experienced during the same era by Congress. It is also notable that banks and financial institutions show sharper peaks and troughs than confidence in major companies.

The GSS evidence concerning institutional trust in the United States therefore suggests several important points, which challenge the conventional wisdom. Firstly, the time-series evidence suggests that any trends in American public opinion are not simply directed towards loss of faith in all three branches of the U.S. federal government; instead the most consistent net loss of confidence during more than three decades focuses upon Congress. Secondly, the legislature is not alone in this regard, and the issue is broader than simply a crisis of faith in government; other major private sector institutions like American banks and companies have experienced an equivalent net loss of public confidence as well. Lastly, this data reinforces the point that any persuasive explanations need to account for the dynamics of public support in attitudes towards government institutions, with attention to the precise timing of particular short-term fluctuations, rather than assuming a net erosion of political trust and confidence. Often studies have simply focused upon net percentage point change derived from the starting and end points for any time-series data, but inevitably this approach assumes certain arbitrary benchmarks; it is unclear, for example, what confidence in these institutions was like prior to the early-1970s. It is equally important analytically to understand the dynamic variance in the trends over time.

Institutional trust in Western Europe

For comparison with other long-established democracies and affluent post-industrial societies, the EuroBarometer allows us to compare the U.S. with Western Europe. The survey monitors longitudinal trends in trust and confidence in a wide range of public and private sector institutions,

including governments, parliaments and parties, as well as satisfaction with the general performance of democracy, and the strength of national identities. The Eurobarometer now covers public opinion in all current 25 member states. For a consistent time series, however, the longest trend analysis from these surveys is limited to the countries which have been member states since 1973.

European trust in government

We can start by comparing the annual trends in institutional trust in the national government across seventeen European societies where attitudes have been monitored during the last decade. The data illustrated in Figure 4.4 and summarized in Table 4.1 shows the proportion of the public who express trust in their national government every year (allowing *comparisons* of persistent contrasts across countries, such as between Italy and Luxembourg) and the overall net change which occurred from the start to end of this decade (showing any overall *net losses or gains*). The final columns in Table 4.1 measure the strength and significance of the unstandardized OLS regression beta coefficients (which summarizes the *direction* of linear trends).

[Figure 4.5 and Table 4.1]

Trends in European trust in their national government indicate several important points. Firstly, (i) *during the last decade the net change in European confidence in government varied in direction and size by country*. For example, the UK and Portugal experienced the sharpest significant net drop in the proportion trusting government during the last decade (down by 20 percentage points or more).³³ This finding would give support to the conventional assumption of steadily eroding trust but for the fact that other European societies experienced trendless fluctuations and *no* significant linear change over time, or even, in a few cases (Finland and Belgium), a significant 19-24 point *rise* in political trust during the same period. The assumption that trust in government has eroded consistently across established European democracies receives no support from this cross-national survey evidence. Now of course the time series is relatively short, and it may be that trust in government eroded during earlier eras; we simply cannot determine this with the available EuroBarometer evidence, but nor can others. It is also important to emphasize that there are substantial persistent contrasts among EU member states which need to be explained; for example just as Almond and Verba observed half a century ago, the Italian public remains deeply skeptical in their orientation towards their government.³⁴ By comparison, citizens in Luxembourg and Finland are generally more trusting than average. The precise reasons for the

restoration of political trust in Finland and Belgium, and the simultaneous fall in Britain and Portugal, also deserve further scrutiny when we consider alternative explanations later in this volume. But the overall comparison suggests that performance-based explanations which affect specific governments appear more plausible candidates than any account proposing systematic shifts in cultural values towards politics and public affairs.

As Figure 4.5 illustrates, however, this does not mean that European trust in government was steady; instead (ii) *sharp fluctuations in trust in government can be observed in many countries*, such as the peaks and troughs occurring in Denmark, Sweden and France. Lastly, and equally importantly, (iii) *two period effects register a short-term peak in trust in government occurring simultaneously across many European countries*, notably in the survey taken in October-November 2001, shortly after the events of 9/11, when average trust jumped by 9 percentage points from the spring to fall, and another clear but smaller average peak in April-May 2007, which cannot be so easily attributed to any particular event or terrorist incident.

European trust in parliaments

As with the U.S. data, however, we also need to establish whether there are general trends in Europe across all major branches of government. As in the United States, it may be that European publics continue to support the executive branch in their national government, but that any erosion of confidence has occurred in other sectors, such as the legislature and in political parties. Dalton suggests that public support for both institutions has fallen in a wide range of advanced industrialized democracies. Evidence of confidence in parliament in his study is based on regression analysis in four waves of the World Values Survey, or else trends in Gallup, Harris and related commercial polls (although in fact only six of the 21 coefficients in the Dalton study prove statistically significant and negative). Table 4.2 and Figure 4.6 show the Eurobarometer evidence when citizens were asked directly about their trust in parliament during the last decade.

[Table 4.2 and Figure 4.6 about here]

The results largely confirm the observations already made concerning government. Again the data shows that most countries have experienced trendless fluctuations in trust of parliaments, with the UK and Portugal again showing a significant growth of cynicism towards these institutions since the late-1990s (reflecting the pattern already observed for trust in government), while Denmark, Finland and Belgium experienced a significant restoration of public trust towards their national legislature. The

overall mean trust in parties across the EU shows no significant change. Overall there are also marked and persistent contrasts between European societies, with only 16% of Italians expressing trust in their parliament in 2008, compared with three-quarters of Danes (76%). This strengthens the conclusion that specific cultural or institutional factors need to be explored in subsequent chapters to account for long-term contrasts between countries, while the dynamics of trust may plausibly relate to variations in the perceived performance or public standards of parliaments and elected representatives.

European trust in political parties

What about political parties? There is a wealth of literature showing important changes in citizen's social psychological orientations towards political parties, as well as behavioral measures such as falling party membership rolls, but the implications of these trends for systems support is not straightforward. There is indeed good evidence that party membership has declined in many established democracies.³⁵ But this may happen for multiple reasons, however, such as organizational changes in how far parties seek to recruit grassroots voluntary supporters and local activists, if parties rely increasingly upon public funding and paid professionals, as well as due to broader shifts in more general patterns of social and political activism. As argued earlier, interpreting motivational attitudes directly from behavioral measures can be highly misleading. More directly, Dalton compares attitudes towards political parties derived from trends in the strength of party identification in a range of advanced industrialized democracies. Based on this evidence, Dalton concludes: "If party attachments reflect citizen support for the system of party based representative government, then the simultaneous decline in party attachments in nearly all advanced industrial democracies offers a strong sign of the public's affective disengagement from political authorities."³⁶ Yet it is not clear whether party identification is the most appropriate measure of trust and confidence in these institutions, since this orientation could weaken for many reasons, including the growth of more educated and rational voters choosing parties based upon policies and performance, rather than habitual loyalties towards specific parties, without meaning that citizens have necessarily lost faith with the party system as a whole.

[Table 4.3 and Figure 4.6 about here]

To look more directly at the evidence, Table 4.3 and Figure 4.6 show the Eurobarometer evidence when citizens were asked directly about their trust in political parties. Contrary to the declinist thesis, party trust fell significantly during the last decade only in the UK. In most European nations there were trendless fluctuations, while in four cases (Sweden, Denmark, Belgium and Spain) party trust strengthened significantly by 10-18 points during this era. The consistent erosion of institutional trust in

government, parliament and parties observed under the Labour government in the UK, and the strengthening of institutional trust during the same decade in Belgium, are clearly cases requiring further exploration later in the book. It may be that particular incidents of party polarization, policy failure and corruption reduced faith in the government in Belgium.³⁷ In Britain, as well, there has been much concern about these developments, even prior to the 2009 parliamentary expenses scandal.³⁸ Many reasons have been offered to account for trends, generating public concern and parliamentary debate about the role of declining standards in public life.³⁹

European satisfaction with the performance of democracy

We can also compare trends in satisfaction with democracy, one of the standard indicators used in the research literature in many global regions.⁴⁰ This item has been carried in many cross-national surveys, including in the Eurobarometer since the early 1970s. As discussed earlier in chapter 2, however, there remain ongoing debates about the precise meaning of this measure.⁴¹ On the one hand, the item can be seen to tap approval of 'democracy' as a value or ideal, analogous to support for the principles of human rights or gender equality. In this study, however, we agree with Linde and Ekman that the phrasing of the question (by emphasizing how democracy is *performing*) makes it most suitable to test public evaluations of the actual workings of democratic regimes and assessments of democratic practices, rather than principles.⁴² Satisfaction with the performance of democracy can also be regarded as a more diffuse level of support than trust in institutions or authorities, and therefore evidence of any deepening dissatisfaction would be real cause for genuine concern.

[Figure 4.8 and Table 4.4 about here]

The comparison of trends in satisfaction with democracy illustrated in Figure 4.8 and Table 4.4 share certain aspects of the findings already presented concerning trust in state institutions; there remain diverse trends in democratic satisfaction in different European countries, annual volatility in public evaluations, and some persistent contrasts among societies, notably the low satisfaction registered in Italy. But the overall direction of satisfaction with the performance of democracy among most European countries is usually positive over time. Across Western Europe, Table 4.4 demonstrates that today on average two-thirds of the European public expresses satisfaction with the workings of democracy in their own country. In 11 of the 14 nations under comparison, from 1990-2007 these attitudes become more positive, not less. Satisfaction is exceptionally low in Italy – but persistently so -- and even here, satisfaction with democracy grew since the early 1990s. Regression analysis of the linear

trends, summarized in Table 4.4, summarizes the direction and significance of changes over time. Of the eleven societies registering a significant change, nine become more positive in evaluations of the performance of their democracy (with major improvements in Northern Ireland, Denmark, Spain and Italy), two become progressively more negative (with less satisfaction over time in Portugal and West Germany), while the remainder show insignificant linear trends. Far from any signs of a general crisis of European states, or even spreading disaffection or disenchantment, the overall pattern shows that the public's satisfaction with the workings of democracy has progressively strengthened during recent decades in many countries.

European national pride

Lastly, we can also compare trends in the strength of national pride, operating at the most diffuse level of systems support. Lasting bonds to the nation-state are exemplified by feelings of national pride and identity, representing a sense of community within shared common territorial boundaries. Such feelings are important for every nation-state but they are thought to have particularly significant consequences for social cohesion and state legitimacy in multicultural communities and plural societies. The European evidence is also important because the growing powers and functions of the European Union, and the process of economic and social integration across the borders of member states, might be expected to have eroded national pride and identities more strongly within this region than in other parts of the world, although previous empirical studies provide little support for this claim.⁴³

[Figure 4.9 and Table 4.5 about here]

Figure 4.9 and Table 4.5 show the proportion of the European public who express national pride in their country, and the trends over time. It is striking that most European societies display consistently high levels of national pride, with eight out of ten Europeans reporting that they are very or fairly proud of their country. The most notable exception is East and West Germany, a pattern which can perhaps best be accounted for by cultural awareness of the particular historical experience of Germany's role in World War II. Elsewhere national pride remains strong and stable even in societies such as Italy where we have observed little public faith in political institutions or satisfaction with democracy. Unlike the previous tables, no European societies saw a significant drop in national pride during these years.

Conclusions and discussion

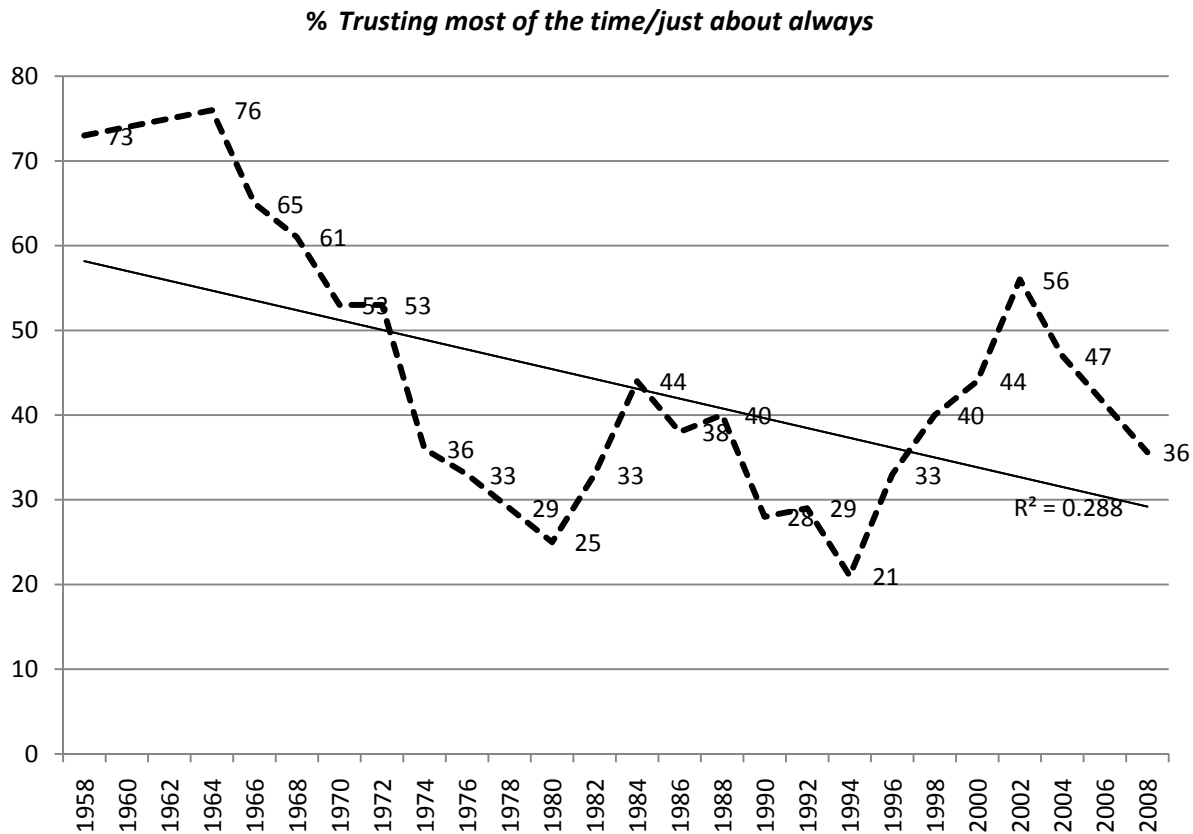
Numerous commentators assume that support for the political system has gradually weakened in many established democracies, generating widespread public and scholarly concern about the rise of public disaffection (Torcal and Montero), angry voters (Tolchin), or 'dissatisfied democrats' (Pharr and Putnam). This chapter has sought to describe some of the available time-series survey evidence about public opinion which has been collected within established democracies. Based on the data, this chapter arrives at an interpretation which challenges the over-simple views of an inevitable downward spiral of public disenchantment and steadily-growing hostility towards government actors, institutions, and feelings of attachment to the nation-state. The evidence reinforce the conclusion that it is essential to distinguish trends in public attitudes which operate at different levels, rather than treating 'political support' as though it is all of one piece. Careful attention to the precise timing and breadth of any trends is also critical for an accurate diagnosis of developments.

The most diffuse level concerns the most fundamental orientations towards the nation state, exemplified by deep-rooted feelings of national pride and national identity. Membership of the European Union might be expected to have eroded these attachments, generating more cosmopolitan attitudes as Europeans are increasingly bound together through ties of trans-border communication flows, labor force mobility, and trade.⁴⁴ Nevertheless the evidence confirms that nationalism remains strong and relatively stable, even among West European societies which are long-standing members of the EU.⁴⁵ Trust in political institutions such as national governments, parliaments and parties show systematic and persistent contrasts among established democracies in Western Europe and the U.S. Overall fluctuations over time usually prove far more common than straightforward linear or uniform downward trends. Contrasts are also evident in public attitudes towards different branches of government within each country; for example the U.S. has seen a long-term significant erosion of support for the legislature, but this has not affected public support for the Supreme Court or the Executive. Persistent differences in institutional trust can also be observed among relatively similar nations, such as between Italy and Spain, or Germany and France. A few European countries have experienced growing trust in state institutions, while a few have seen the reverse situation. Perhaps most importantly, in Europe diffuse support for the nation-state remains strong and stable, and satisfaction with the performance of democracy has usually strengthened over time, not weakened.

The conventional wisdom assumes that public support for government has eroded significantly and consistently over time in established democracies. If patterns of trendless fluctuations are evident in recent decades in these countries, however, this suggests the need to revise the standard

interpretation. The complexity observed in this chapter strongly suggests the need for interpretations which can account for the dynamics and the persistent cross-national variations in the multidimensional concept of political support. Before we can examine these explanations, however, we also need to expand the comparison to many other countries. Even though it often remains more difficult to explore time-series trends elsewhere, we can compare contemporary contrasts in systems support among rich and poor nations, as well as among democratic and autocratic regimes worldwide.

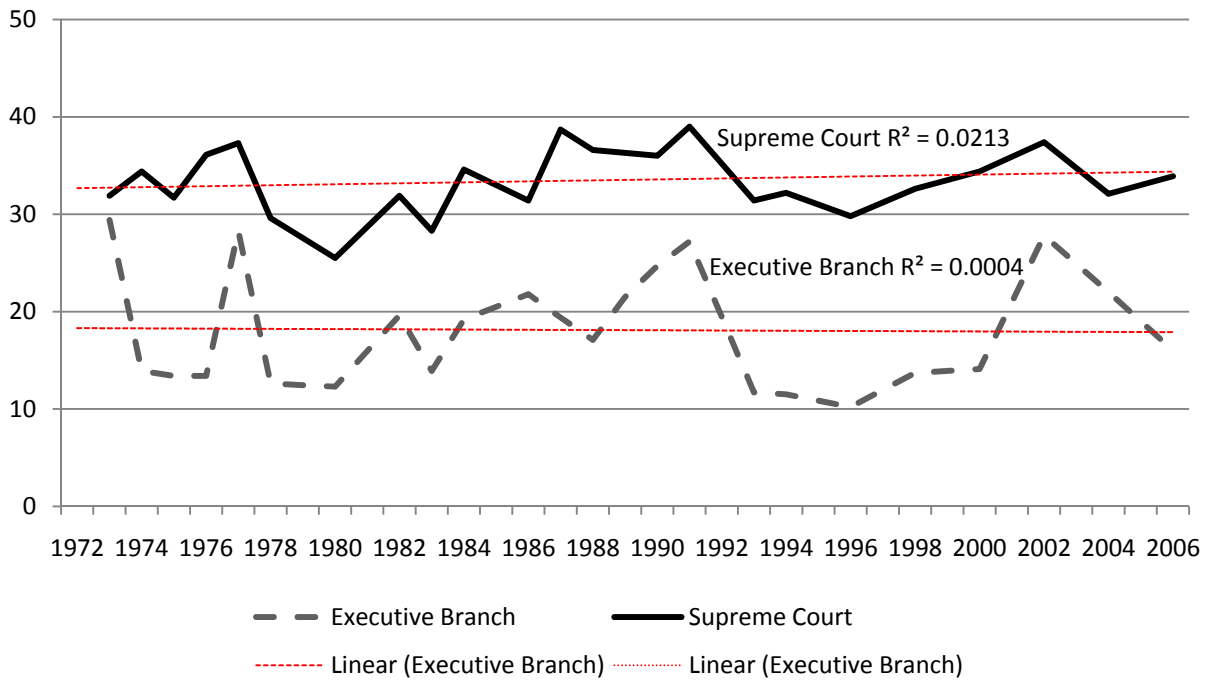
Figure 4.1: American trust in the federal government, 1958-2008



Note: The standard ANES question is: “How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right -- just about always, most of the time or only some of the time?” The unstandardized beta regression coefficient proved significant (>001).

Source: The American National Election Surveys, 1958-2008

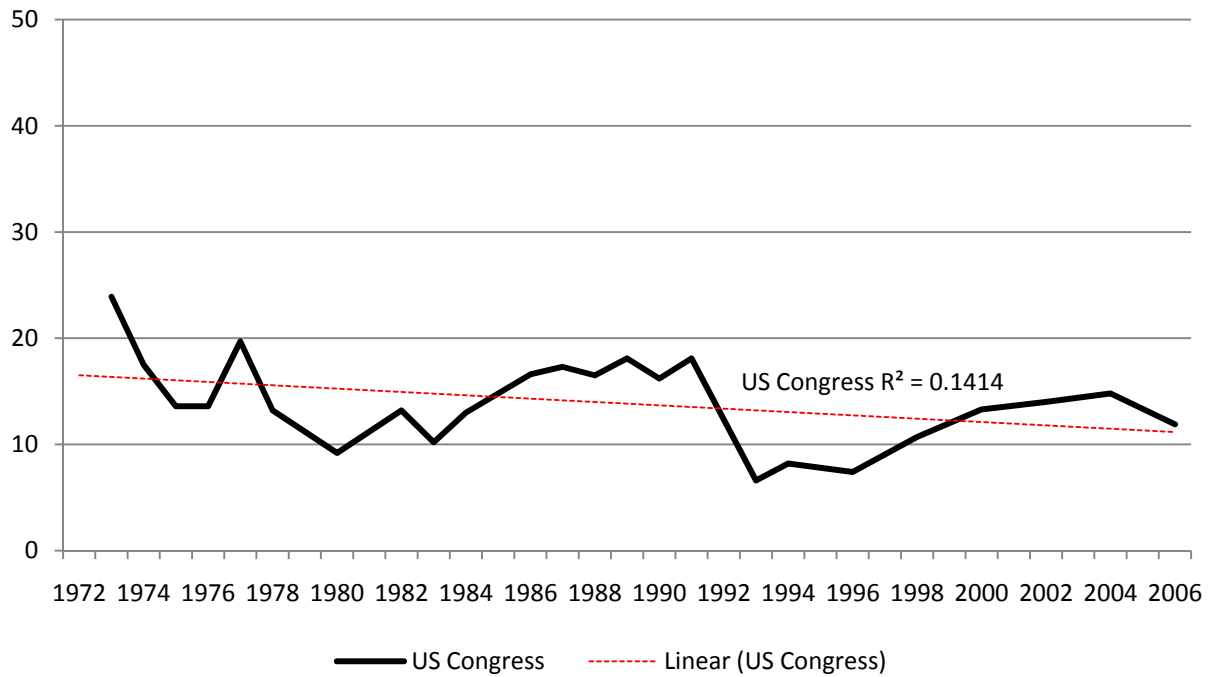
Figure 4.2: American trust in the U.S. Supreme Court and Executive, 1972-2006



Note: *“I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them?”* The proportion reporting ‘a great deal’ of confidence in each institution. The linear trends summarize each series.

Source: U.S. General Social Survey cumulative file 1972-2006 <http://publicdata.norc.org/webview/>

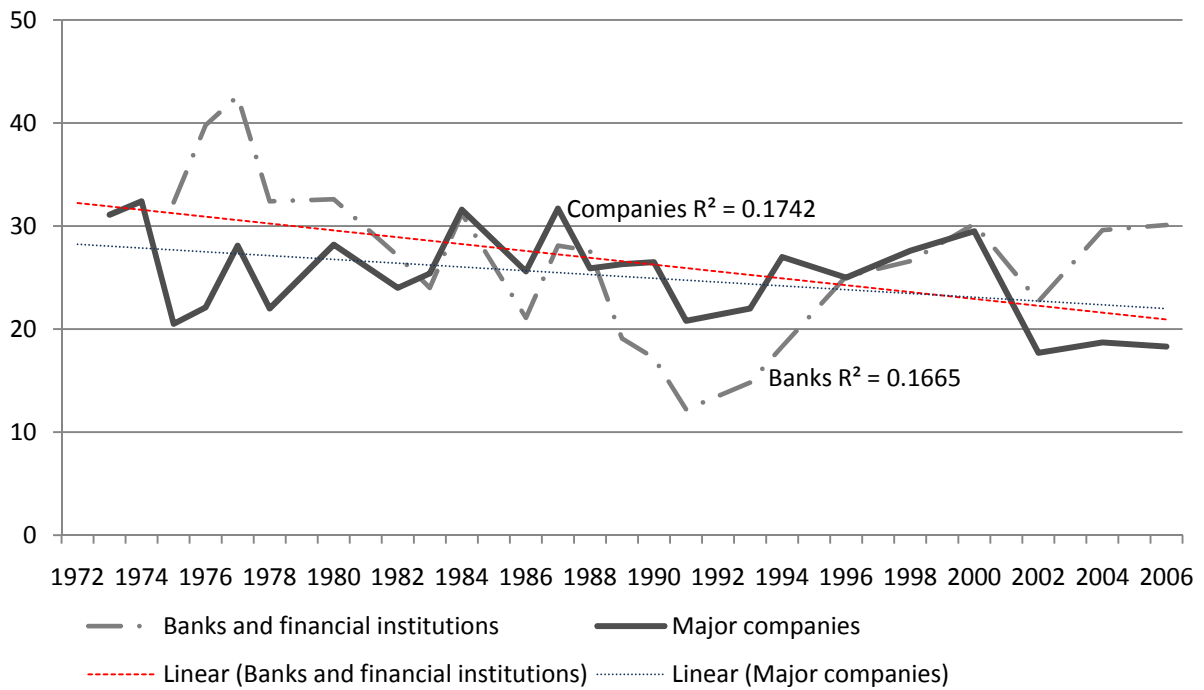
Figure 4.3: American trust in the U.S. Congress, 1972-2006



Note: *“I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them?”* The proportion reporting ‘a great deal’ of confidence in each institution. The linear trends summarize each series.

Source: U.S. General Social Survey cumulative file 1972-2006 <http://publicdata.norc.org/webview/>

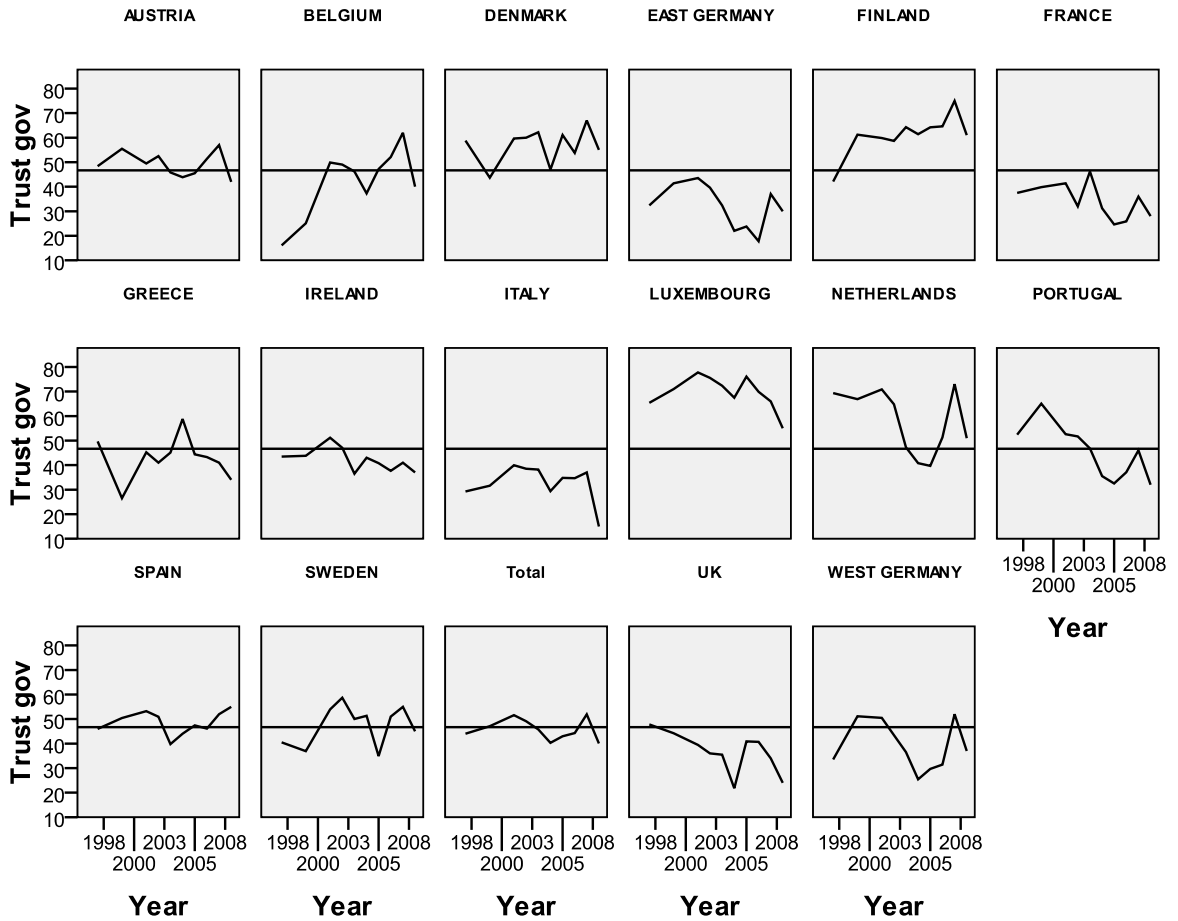
Figure 4.4: American trust in banks and major companies, 1972-2006



Note: “I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them?” The proportion reporting ‘a great deal’ of confidence in each institution. The linear trends summarize each series.

Source: U.S. General Social Survey cumulative file 1972-2006 <http://publicdata.norc.org/webview/>

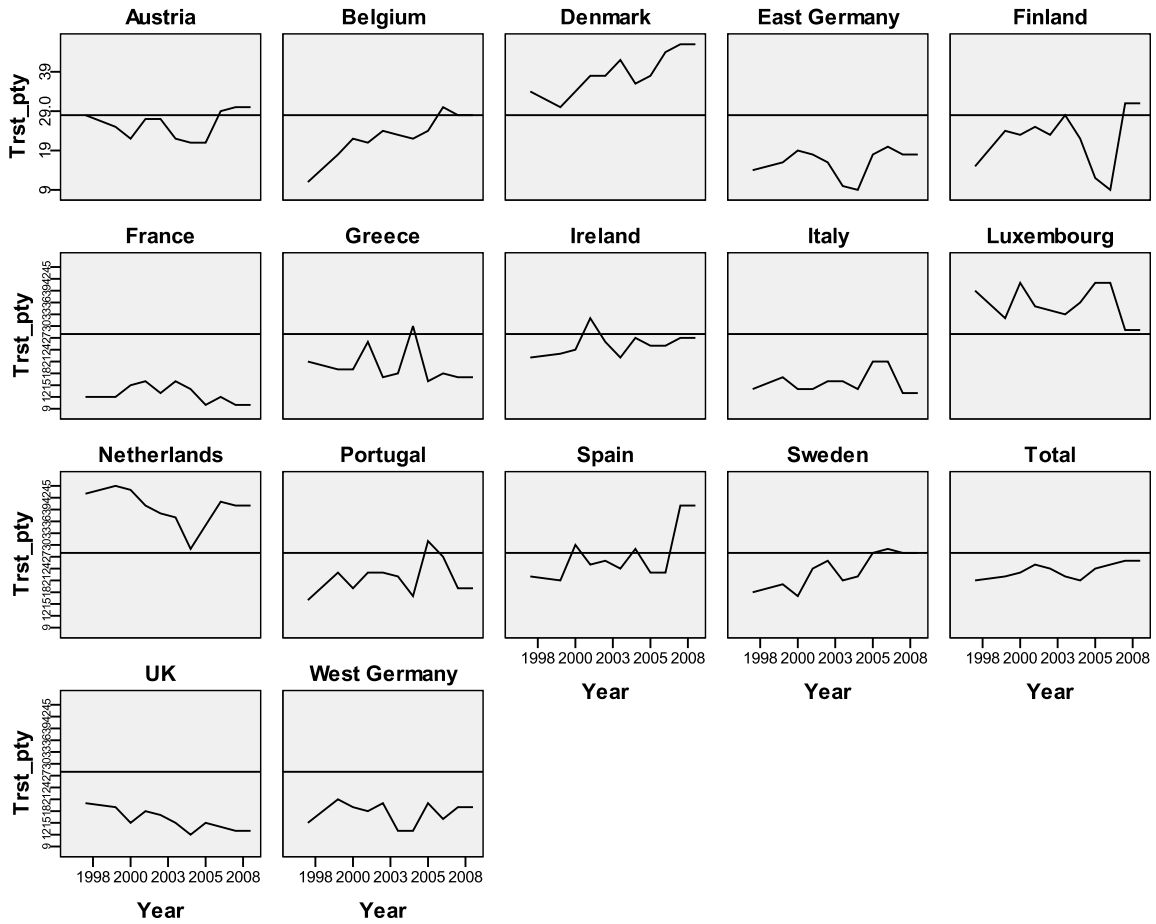
Figure 4.5: European trust in national government, 1998-2008



Note: "I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it. The national government." Proportion responding 'Tend to trust'.

Source: Eurobarometer surveys 1998-2008

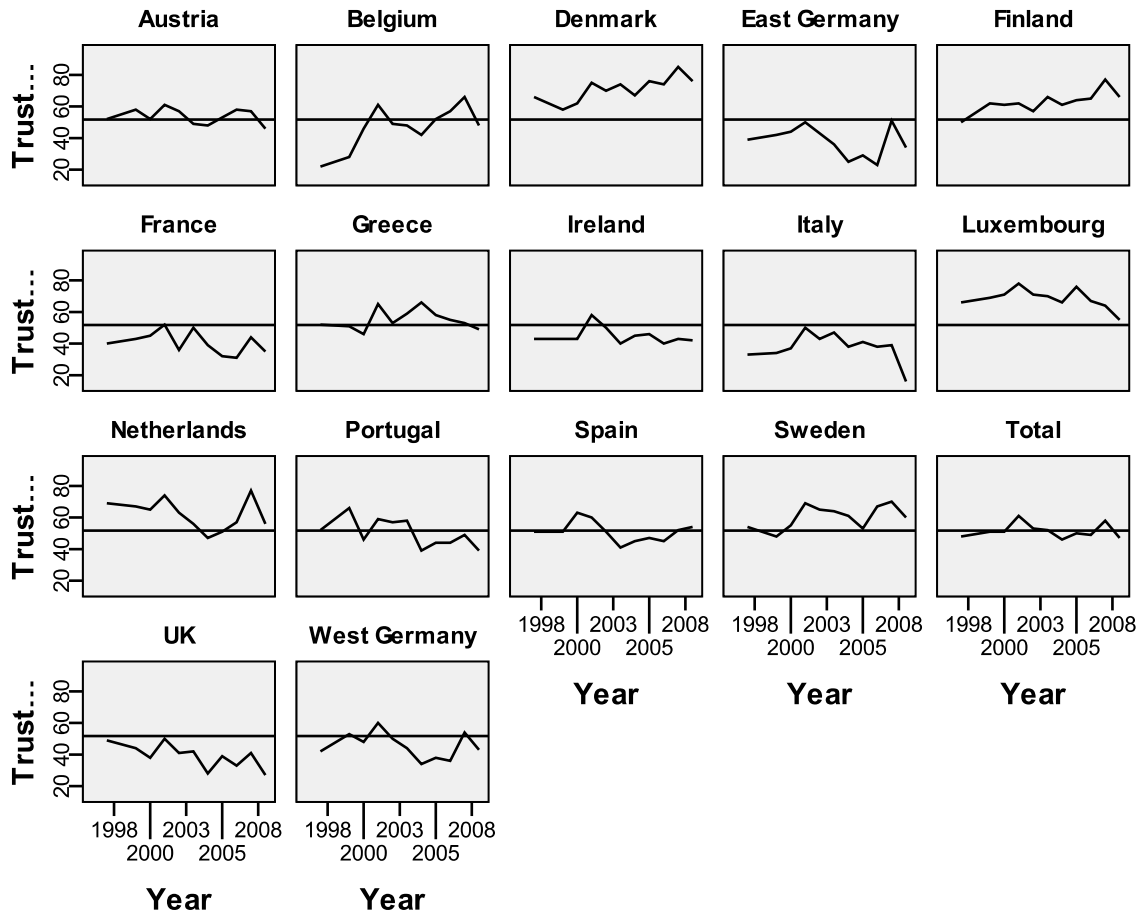
Figure 4.6: European trust in political parties, 1998-2008



Note: "I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it. Political parties." Proportion responding 'Tend to trust'.

Source: Eurobarometer surveys 1998-2008 downloaded from Gesis ZACAT.

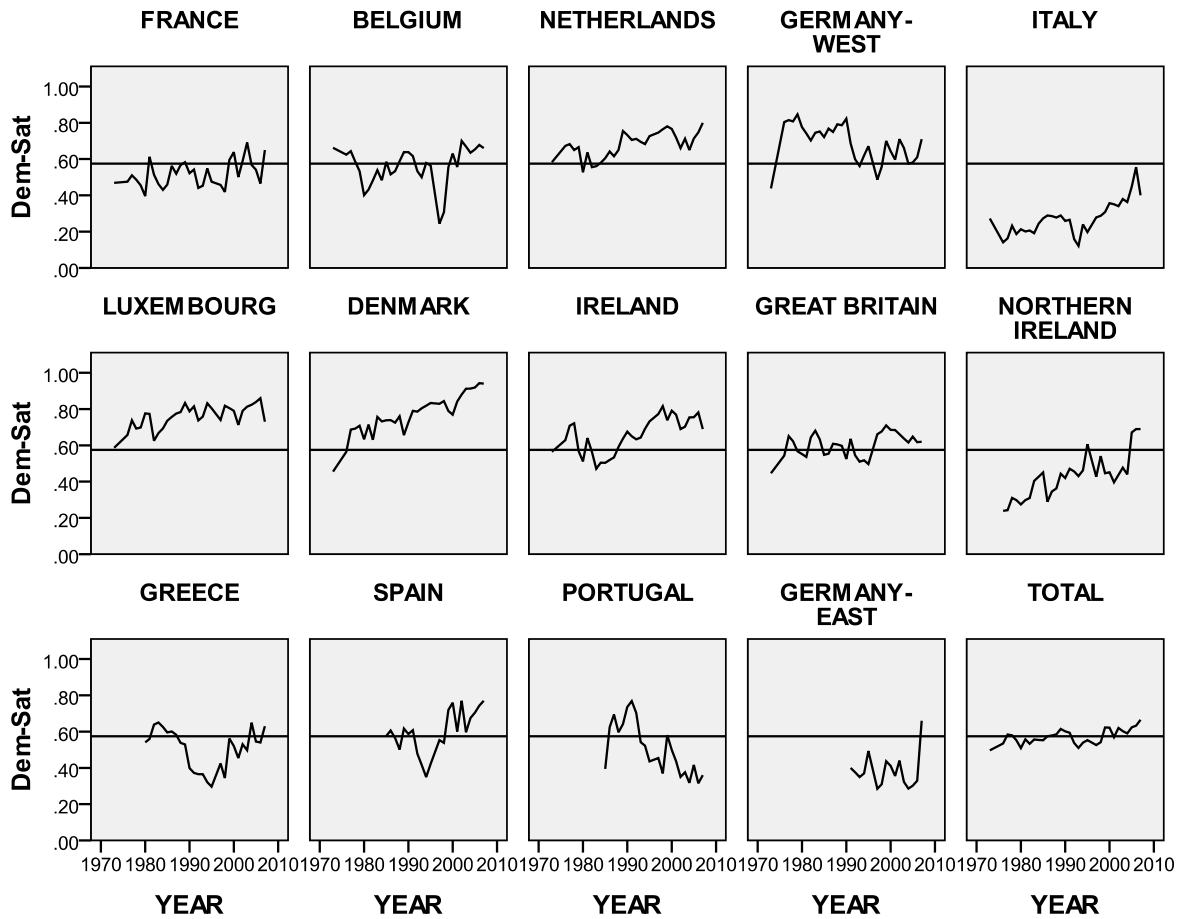
Figure 4.7: European trust in national parliaments, 1998-2008



Note: “I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it. The national parliament.” Proportion responding ‘Tend to trust’.

Source: Eurobarometer surveys 1998-2008 downloaded from Gesis ZACAT.

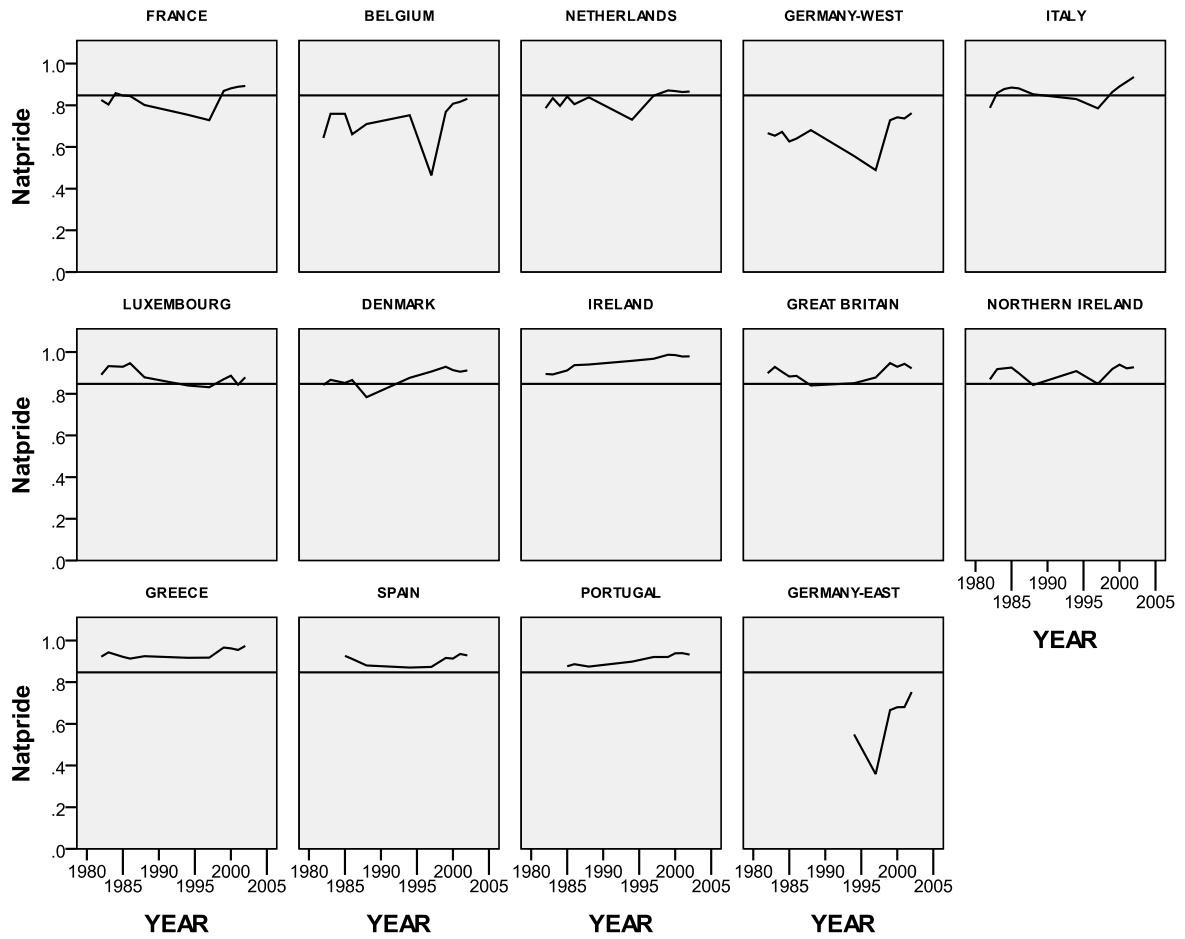
Figure 4.8: European satisfaction with democratic performance, 1973-2008



Note: “On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in your country?” Proportion who are ‘fairly’ or ‘very’ satisfied.

Source: The Mannheim Eurobarometer Trend File 1970-2002; Eurobarometer surveys 2002-2007 downloaded from Gesis ZACAT.

Figure 4.9: European national pride



Note: 'Would you say you are very proud, fairly proud, not very proud, not at all proud to be (NATIONALITY)?' Proportion who say that they are 'fairly' or 'very' proud.

Source: The Mannheim Eurobarometer Trend File 1970-2002

Table 4.1: European trust in national government, 1997-2008

	1997	1999	2001 Spr	2001 Fall	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	1997-2008 Net Change	Year	Sig
UK	48	44	35	44	36	36	22	41	41	34	24	-24	-1.51	*
Portugal	52	65	50	55	52	47	36	33	37	46	32	-20	-2.42	**
Netherlands	69	67	66	76	65	47	41	40	51	73	51	-18	-1.82	N/s
Greece	50	27	39	52	41	45	59	44	43	41	34	-16	-.127	N/s
Italy	29	32	33	47	39	38	29	35	35	37	15	-14	-.641	N/s
Luxembourg	65	71	77	78	76	72	68	76	70	66	55	-10	-.817	N/s
France	38	40	37	46	32	46	31	25	26	36	28	-10	-1.20	N/s
Ireland	44	44	48	55	47	37	43	41	38	41	37	-7	-.874	N/s
Austria	48	56	47	52	53	46	44	46	51	57	42	-6	-.309	N/s
Denmark	59	44	54	66	60	62	47	61	54	67	55	-4	.409	N/s
East Germany	32	41	40	47	40	32	22	24	18	37	30	-2	-1.31	N/s
West Germany	34	51	47	54	43	37	25	30	31	52	37	4	.467	N/s
Sweden	41	37	49	59	59	50	51	35	51	55	45	5	-.679	N/s
Spain	46	50	48	58	51	40	44	47	46	52	55	9	.162	N/s
Finland	42	61	56	64	59	64	61	64	65	75	61	19	1.66	**
Belgium	16	25	45	55	49	46	37	47	52	62	40	24	2.50	*
Total	44	47	47	56	49	46	40	43	44	52	40	-4	-.404	N/s

Note: "I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it. The national government." Proportion responding 'Tend to trust'. OLS regression analysis was used to monitor the effects of time (the survey year) on trust in the national government, generating the unstandardized beta coefficient and its significance. *>.001 ** >.01 *>.05.

Source: Eurobarometer surveys 1997-2008 downloaded from Gesis ZACAT.

Table 4.2: European trust in parliament, 1997-2008

	1997	1999	2000	2001 Spr	2001 Fall	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	1997-2008 Net Change	Year	Sig
UK	49	44	38	36	50	41	42	28	39	33	41	27	-22	-1.503	**
Italy	33	34	37	38	50	43	47	38	41	38	39	16	-17	-.663	N/s
Portugal	52	66	46	58	59	57	58	39	44	44	49	39	-13	-1.561	*
Netherlands	69	67	65	68	74	63	56	47	51	57	77	56	-13	-.976	N/s
Luxembourg	66	69	71	75	78	71	70	66	76	67	64	55	-11	-.774	N/s
Austria	52	58	52	53	61	57	49	48	53	58	57	46	-6	-.325	N/s
East Germany	39	42	44	39	50	43	36	25	29	23	51	34	-5	-.936	N/s
France	40	43	45	41	52	36	50	39	32	31	44	35	-5	-.822	N/s
Greece	52	51	46	50	65	53	59	66	58	55	53	49	-3	.183	N/s
Ireland	43	43	43	49	58	50	40	45	46	40	43	42	-1	-.341	N/s
West Germany	42	53	48	52	60	50	44	34	38	36	54	43	1	-.689	N/s
Spain	51	51	63	52	60	51	41	45	47	45	52	54	3	-.555	N/s
Sweden	54	48	55	57	69	65	64	61	53	67	70	60	7	1.030	N/s
Denmark	66	58	62	60	75	70	74	67	76	74	85	76	10	1.639	**
Finland	50	62	61	57	62	57	66	61	64	65	77	66	16	1.429	**
Belgium	22	28	46	48	61	49	48	42	52	57	66	48	26	2.607	**
Total	48	51	51	51	61	53	52	46	50	49	58	47	-2	-.071	N/s

Note: "I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it. The national parliament." Proportion responding 'Tend to trust'. OLS regression analysis was used to monitor the effects of time (the survey year) on trust in the national parliament, generating the unstandardized beta coefficient and its significance. *>.001 ** >.01 *>.05.

Source: Eurobarometer surveys 1997-2008 downloaded from Gesis ZACAT.

Table 4.3: European trust in political parties, 1997-2008

	1997	1999	2000	2001 Spr	2001 Fall	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	1997-2008 Net Change	Year	Sig
Luxembourg	39	32	41	42	35	34	33	36	41	41	29	29	-10	-.426	N/s
UK	20	19	15	18	18	17	15	12	15	14	13	13	-7	-.641	***
Greece	21	19	19	19	26	17	18	30	16	18	17	17	-4	-.324	N/s
Netherlands	43	45	44	36	40	38	37	29	35	41	40	40	-3	-.552	N/s
France	12	12	15	12	16	13	16	14	10	12	10	10	-2	-.308	N/s
Italy	14	17	14	12	14	16	16	14	21	21	13	13	-1	.114	N/s
Austria	28	25	22	26	27	27	22	21	21	29	30	30	2	.253	N/s
Portugal	16	23	19	20	23	23	22	17	31	27	19	19	3	.320	N/s
West Germany	15	21	19	21	18	20	13	13	20	16	19	19	4	.021	N/s
East Germany	14	16	19	15	18	16	10	9	18	20	18	18	4	.215	N/s
Ireland	22	23	24	28	32	26	22	27	25	25	27	27	6	.285	N/s
Sweden	18	20	17	20	24	26	21	22	28	29	28	28	10	1.056	***
Denmark	34	30	34	36	38	38	42	36	38	44	50	50	16	1.600	***
Finland	15	24	23	25	25	23	28	22	12	9	31	31	16	.381	N/s
Belgium	11	18	22	19	21	24	23	22	24	30	28	28	18	1.363	***
Spain	22	21	30	25	25	26	24	29	23	23	40	40	18	1.237	*
Total	21	22	23	23	25	24	22	21	24	25	26	26	4	.368	**

Note: "I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it. Political parties." Proportion responding 'Tend to trust'. OLS regression analysis was used to monitor the effects of time (the survey year) on trust in political parties, generating the unstandardized beta coefficient and its significance. *>.001 ** >.01 *>.05.

Source: Eurobarometer surveys 1997-2008 downloaded from Gesis ZACAT.

Table 4.4: European satisfaction with democratic performance, 1973-2007

	1973	1980	1990	2000	2007	1990-2007 Net change	Year	Sig
Portugal			74	50	36	-38	-0.015	***
Germany-West	44	78	82	64	71	-11	-0.005	**
Luxembourg	59	78	79	79	73	-6	0.004	***
Ireland	56	51	68	79	69	1	0.007	***
Belgium	66	40	64	63	66	2	0.002	N/s
Germany-East			60	41	66	6	0.002	N/s
Netherlands	58	53	73	77	80	7	0.005	***
Great Britain	45	55	53	69	62	10	0.003	*
France	47	40	52	64	65	13	0.003	**
Italy	27	21	26	36	40	14	0.007	***
Spain			59	76	77	18	0.010	**
Denmark	46	63	73	77	94	21	0.010	***
Greece		54	40	52	63	23	-0.002	N/s
Northern Ireland		27	42	45	69	27	0.011	***
Total	50	51	60	62	66	6	0.002	***

Note: "On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in your country?" Proportion responding 'fairly' or 'very' satisfied. OLS regression analysis was used to monitor the effects of time (the survey year) on trust in political parties, generating the unstandardized beta coefficient and its significance. *>.001 ** >.01 *>.05. Selected years presented. For the full annual trends, see Figure 4.6.

Source: Mannheim Eurobarometer Trend File 1970-2002; Eurobarometer surveys 2002-2007 downloaded from Gesis ZACAT.

Table 4.5: European nation pride

	1982	1994	2000	2007	1994-2007 Net change	Year	Sig.
Portugal		90	94	86	-4	0.002	N/s
Northern Ireland	87	91	94	89	-2	0.001	N/s
Spain		87	91	85	-2	0.000	N/s
Ireland	90	96	99	96	0	0.004	***
Italy	79	83	89	84	1	0.001	N/s
Denmark	84	88	91	90	2	0.004	**
Great Britain	90	85	93	89	4	0.001	N/s
Greece	92	92	96	97	5	0.002	**
Luxembourg	89	84	89	90	6	-0.002	N/s
Belgium	64	75	81	85	10	0.005	N/s
Germany-East		55	68	68	13	0.021	N/s
France	83	75	88	89	14	0.002	N/s
Netherlands	79	73	87	87	14	0.003	*
Germany-West	67	56	74	72	16	0.003	N/s
Total	82	81	88	86	6	0.002	*

Note: 'Would you say you are very proud, fairly proud, not very proud, not at all proud to be (NATIONALITY)?' Proportion who say that they are 'fairly' or 'very' proud. OLS regression analysis was used to monitor the effects of time (the survey year) on trust in political parties, generating the unstandardized beta coefficient and its significance. *>.001 ** >.01 *>.05. Selected years presented. For the full annual trends, see Figure 4.7.

Source: The Mannheim Eurobarometer Trend File 1970-2002; Eurobarometer surveys 2002-2007 downloaded from Gesis ZACAT.

¹ This concern generated an extensive American literature during the early to mid-1990s. See, for example, Ruy A. Teixeira. 1992. *The Disappearing American Voter*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution; Stephen Craig. 1993. *The Malevolent Leaders: Popular Discontent in America*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press; John R. Hibbing and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse. 1995. *Congress as Public Enemy*. New York: Cambridge University Press; John H. Aldrich. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; Susan J. Tolchin. 1996. *The Angry American: How Voter Rage Is Changing the Nation*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press; Joseph S. Nye, Philip D. Zelikow, and David C. King. Eds. 1997. *Why People Don't Trust Government*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; Robert D. Putnam. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. NY: Simon and Schuster; John R. Hibbing and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse. Eds. 2001. *What Is It About Government That Americans Dislike?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

² Colin Hay. 2007. *Why We Hate Politics*. Cambridge: Polity Press; Peter Mair and Ingrid van Biezen. 2001. 'Party membership in twenty European democracies 1980-2000.' *Party Politics* 7 (1): 5-22; Ingrid van Biezen, Peter Mair and Thomas Poguntke. 2009. 'Going, Going,.....Gone? Party Membership in the 21st Century.' Paper presented at the Joint Workshops at the European Consortium for Political Research, Lisbon; Mark N. Franklin, Thomas T. Mackie, and Henry Valen. 1991. *Electoral change: responses to evolving social and attitudinal structures in Western countries*. New York: Cambridge University Press; Russell J. Dalton and Marty P. Wattenberg. 2000. *Parties without partisans: political change in advanced industrial democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Mark N. Franklin. 2004. *Voter turnout and the dynamics of electoral competition in established democracies since 1945*. New York: Cambridge University Press; Colin Crouch. 2004. *Post-Democracy*. Cambridge: Polity Press; Jan Van Deth, Jose R. Montero, and Anders Westholm. 2007. *Citizenship and involvement in European democracies: a comparative analysis*. New York: Routledge.

³ Susan Pharr and Robert Putnam. (Eds.) 2000. *Disaffected Democracies: what's troubling the trilateral countries?* Princeton: Princeton University Press; Mariano Torcal and José R. Montero . 2006. *Political Disaffection in Contemporary Democracies: Social Capital, Institutions, and Politics*. London: Routledge; Richard I. Hofferbert and Hans-Dieter Klingemann. 2001. 'Democracy and Its Discontents in Post-Wall Germany.' *International Political Science Review* 22(4): 363-378.

⁴ The 'crisis' thesis is most clearly exemplified by Michel Crozier, Samuel P. Huntington, and Joji Watanuki. 1975. *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission*. New York: New York University Press. A recent comprehensive version of the 'disenchantment' argument is presented by Russell J. Dalton. 2004. *Democratic Challenges, Democratic Choices: The Erosion of Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. New York: Oxford University Press.

⁵ Hans-Dieter Klingemann. 1999. 'Mapping political support in the 1990s.' In Pippa Norris (ed). 1999. *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁶ See, for example, the claims in Gerry Stoker. 2006. *Why Politics Matters: Making Democracy Work*. London: Palgrave/Macmillan. Chapter 2.

⁷ See Stephen Earl Bennett. 2001. 'Were the halcyon days really golden?' In John R. Hibbing and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse. Eds. 2001. *What Is It About Government That Americans Dislike?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁸ Samuel P. Huntington. 1991. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman: The University of Oklahoma Press.

⁹ For the intellectual history of the origins of the civic culture study, see Gabriel Almond's (1996) 'The civic culture: Prehistory, retrospect, and prospect' (<http://repositories.cdlib.org/csd/96-01>) and Gerardo L. Munck and Richard Snyder. 2007. *Passion, Craft, and Method in Comparative Politics*.

¹⁰ Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. p. 314.

¹¹ Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. p.308.

¹² Samuel Barnes and Max Kaase. 1979. *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies*. Beverley Hills, CA: Sage.

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¹⁴ Seymour Martin Lipset and William C. Schneider. 1983. *The Confidence Gap: Business, Labor, and Government in the Public Mind*. New York: Free Press. P.6. See also Joseph S. Nye, Philip D. Zelikow, and David C. King. Eds. 1997. *Why People Don't Trust Government*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

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