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A Key to the Future: the attitudes and values of adolescent Europeans

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Based on original empirical data collected from adolescents in Europe (N=9003) this paper focuses the lifeworlds of young people. It analyses negative and positive patterns of attitude and combines them with further concepts: personal life perspectives, various key values and political attitudes. Technically, the attitude towards Europe acts as the dependent variable whereas the remaining concepts are used as independent variables. The empirical results show Turkish and Polish adolescents are more critical towards Europe than adolescents living in 'old' Europe. Furthermore, the data show that those who hold negative expectations about their personal futures are likely also to be Eurosceptical.

In what, by historical standards is a very short time, influential political and administrative leaders within Europe from about the mid-1980s onwards set out to create a shared economic, political and juridical area (Davies, 1996). As a result Europe is now moving towards a more uniform system of education (Bologna declaration) and creates widespread opportunities for student exchange (Erasmus, Socrates programs). At the same time, Europe is characterised by diversity, and unity and diversity clearly exist in a relationship of tension. Beyond all attempts to shape the shared human world inhabited by Europeans – what might be called its 'anthroposphere' - Europe is also integrated into the vast process of globalisation. However one of the unexpected effects of globalisation is to show that politics has reached its regulatory limits. In the discussion and analysis that follows we assume that young people's expectations are influenced by factors concerned with their security (economic, personal and political) and with their assessment of the likely material conditions of their lives. We start with a theoretical introduction (1) and a description of the design of the study (2). Subsequently, we explain the empirical results (3) and end with a discussion and reflection (4).

1 Europeanisation and globalisation

Europe is not an island cut off from the world, but is involved in a worldwide process of globalisation. On the one hand globalisation describes the breaking down of local, regional, and national boundaries, for example in economic action, in scientific discourse, in cultural patterns, and to some degree in political decisions (Weber 2001). The basic principles and perspectives of these no longer allow themselves to be limited to the framework of given national boundaries, but rather they will take their orientation from a global perspective. Certainly it is easiest for national economies to work globally (Albrow 1998; Sykes/Palier/Prior 2001; Scholte 2000). Public debate shows concern with globalization because of the direct influence on the lives of ordinary people of economic forces outside the control of national politics (Stieglitz 2003). Without a doubt, globalisation has its advantages. Today we use integrated communication technology which enables us to stay in contact around the globe all the time (Friedman, 2006). On the other hand there are genuine problems which can be seen in industrial relocation, product homogeneity and standardisation. Globalisation will not be adequately understood if it is conceptualized exclusively and simply as a broadening of perspective, one that results from cultural expansion. This is why, alongside the term globalization the term 'glocalisation' was coined, in which global and local are brought together. The internationalization of the world through the implementation of global strategies for action is not denied by the term: rather, glocalisation implies that the local or regional levels do not simply disappear (Amin/Thrift 1994).

The process of the joining together of Europe is, in some respects, perpendicular to globalization. Its political mechanisms equip Europe for functioning effectively against global competition. The political mechanisms have ensured improvements in the quality of science, education, technological

advances, cultural exchange on many levels, police networking and jurisdiction, and so on (Ducatel/Webster/Herrmann 2000). What is currently occurring in Europe is - from a global perspective - a regional collective initiative. Strategies for joining in global power play with North America or the Pacific Rim countries are helped by the integration of the European nations. However, the competence of individuals to orient themselves globally is quite unconnected from what the European Union as a whole can do. In fact, for many ordinary people within the EU, European institutions are already far away. Added to this is the fact that this Europe is not uniform. Where can the identity of Europe itself be found? And how can we express the identity of individual Europeans?

Hofstede (2001) has analysed the difference between European societies and produced some pertinent insights. In all the European nations, there are geographically distributed power gaps related to population density and wealth. The population density of an area contributes to its quality of life, cultural offerings, educational possibilities, and so on. This is because some regions have natural disadvantages (for example, in regards to transportation routes and infrastructure). At the same time variations in population density affect the distribution of wealth. Opportunities for employment and commerce are greater in cities than in the sparsely populated countryside. Consequently taxation raises larger sums of money from urban than rural areas and, in turn, more government (i.e. tax) money is ploughed back into cities, and this further enhances the disparity between different areas of a single country. On a larger scale, the same effect is to be found between one country and the next. In addition to power gaps brought about by population distribution, there are power gaps brought about by social class differences. Class differences function by influencing personal values and communication skills and have an impact on the organisation of the family, on a child's performance at school and, later, in the world of work. The way in which power gaps are handled is of vital importance to the stability of a nation and of Europe as a whole, and many European policies can be interpreted as seeking to minimise such gaps in order to create political and economic stability. There are also unequal relationships among the European nations pertaining to the relationship of the individual to his or her society. Some societies are strongly influenced by individualism, while others are (still) collectively oriented. These differences are visible in the desire for an extended versus immediate family life, in establishing identity through social networks or through oneself, and in an orientation towards harmony or self-interest. In political life we can observe an orientation towards group opinion versus individual opinion, towards a state controlled economy versus a free market and towards joint values in communal living versus self-actualisation. Even so, the developing trend points in the direction of individualization. The work of Hofstede also shows other differences between societies that can be attributed to varying degrees of masculine and feminine patterns of behaviour and values. On top of this societies practise different strategies to avoid insecurities caused by foreign influences, and some nations have strong and active strategies while others have ineffective strategies.

Identity questions arise when self-expression and self-actualisation are publicly criticised and when previously accepted lifestyles are devalued. During globalisation and Europeanisation questions of identity are vital, especially when they bring differences into the open and lead to public debate. When people are challenged with regard to identity, they cannot simply retreat into unthinking cycles of habit. They have to face pressing questions about what will be valid in future. The culture of a nation is itself affected by these processes and, when culture is weakened, it no longer creates the cement that holds a society together. Emile Durkheim (1857-1917) sees in culture a representation of unity. For him, culture can be equated with the values, norms, customs and patterns of behaviour that are accepted and understood by an overwhelming majority of the population. According to such a definition of culture, however, the individual is considered problematic. Questions like 'Who am I?' 'Where do I come from?' 'Where am I going?' are culturally predefined and must therefore be culturally answered. By contrast the classic cultural notion of Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) touches on the idea that a certain culture is encircled in the closed uniform life of a nation. This cultural notion features three distinguishing criteria: ethnic justification: the culture should be the culture of a people; social homogeneity: culture has the function of harmonizing living together; intercultural boundaries: culture regulates what is inside and what is outside. All three criteria are today empirically questionable, especially because cultural indicators are less and less tied to national borders. This also breaks the predominant idea of a culture as an enclosed sphere that has a central core.

The question of identity turns virulent once conventional securities get lost (cf. Baumann 2004, 91-123). But is there a connection between this feeling of security and the new, emerging Europe (cf. Blossfeld 2005)? The political answer is normally positive: peace has prevailed in the new Europe for more than 50 years and only limited military conflicts have occurred. In addition, Europe creates, in economic and juridical respects, conditions for peaceful cohabitation. People who share this view will talk positively about Europe. This is one side of the coin, but there is also a darker side. To give one example: people realise that the job market changes rapidly and that planning one's life is more and more affected by external factors that cannot be controlled. Furthermore it is apparent that politics are often at a loss when confronted by these changes. In France in spring 2006, young people demonstrated for months against a bill which would in their opinion damage the security of labour relations. The French government was of the opinion that the relaxation of employment law would be necessary to help face the process of globalisation. The plan to implement a new service-directive encountered resistance as people feared low-priced/low-budget workers could replace local workers. These are only a few examples for political processes which can feed the fear of the future (*Zukunftsangst*). People who let themselves be affected strongly by these considerations are likely to blame the process of Europeanisation and therefore to evaluate the entire European project negatively.

We can assume that intellectually able adolescents between the age of 16 and 18 have some sense of the political and economic changes described above. In the study reported on below we want to investigate various attitudes and values and to see how these combine with attitudes towards the process of Europeanisation, and we want to do this with an eye to differences between adolescents living in different countries.

2 Design of the study

Before we have a look at the empirical results, we want to illustrate the frame of the research project. First we describe the method and the sample and then we explain the measuring instruments we have used. After this we discuss several underlying assumptions.

Method

The empirical inquiry is based on an international research project entitled "Religion and Life Perspectives of Youth in Europe" (Ziebertz/Kay 2005; 2006). A questionnaire with about 350 items was used and translated into the several languages of the countries where it was distributed. Most of the items were scaled using the 5-point Likert type of response format. The fieldwork took place in the participating countries in 2002-2003. After being coded and checked the analysis of data was carried out in the department of Practical Theology at the University of Würzburg by using SPSS.

There is a long history of cross-national sampling using identical but suitably translated questionnaires. This history dates back at least to as far as the international mathematical comparisons made between different educational systems (Peaker, 1967) and has been used in reports of the British Social Attitudes surveys (e.g. Renwick and Tabor, 2007, see also Campbell/Tirri/Rouhotie/Walberg 2004; Van de Vijver/Leung 1997). In the current project the questionnaires were drawn up by principal investigators within each of the participating countries. The investigators contributed blocks of questions to the questionnaire that were approved or not by their colleagues in the other countries. In some cases questions were dropped because they were thought to be too sensitive or culturally inappropriate. In other cases questions were translated using conceptual equivalents. All the principal investigators in the various participating countries spoke English in addition to their own native language and English was the language that was used when the team met in Germany - as it did on several occasions - to finalise the coding of the questionnaire and to deal with the process of analysis. The two authors of this article were the editors of the books which the project has produced (the third is in press). The principal investigators interpreted their own national data and set its interpretation within the context of social and educational developments within their countries. The editors utilised these interpretations as they framed the introductions and conclusions of the books. The paper

presented here is a distillation of the face-to-face discussions and e-mail communications over the course of three years by members of the project team.

Sample

The total number of respondents within the entire project is 9852. Nine countries (Croatia, Finland, Germany, the UK, The Netherlands, Poland, Ireland, Sweden and Turkey) took part in the study. Israel participated as well, but items related to Europe were excluded in the Israeli sample and so they are not considered further in this paper. As a result the sample used for the analysis and reported on below amounts to 9003 respondents.

Three preliminary decisions were made about the sample: (1) the study should focus on a specific group of young people: school pupils with an average age of 16–18 who attended good academic secondary schools e.g. grammar schools (selective secondary schools), Gymnasium (Germany). The pupils who participated were those in their penultimate year of school who, with their exam results, would be entitled to study at university. These young people are likely in the future to have a social, intellectual and cultural influence on their peers and to occupy important public positions. This is our justification for focusing on this group. Consequently it is reasonable to ask about the orientation of these young people towards public life, both now and with regard to the future. (2) The survey was carried out in places which can be considered regional centres in the different countries where the infrastructure is comparable. Our interest in those who will be the next generation of opinion formers was tied to the informed decision that while, on the one hand, the meaning of tradition, convention and custom is less marked in regional centres, on the other hand, there are generally fewer extremes in those centres than can be found in the big cities. (3) With this focus, a homogenisation of the respondents can be taken for granted and therefore a number of stratifying variables like age, level of education, town/country can be omitted from the study of attitudes. However it would be wrong to expect entirely homogenous answer patterns within the chosen group. Although the respondent group has a number of common characteristic features (such as age, level of education, urban location), the study does concern itself with unearthing individual and collective differences.

Means of measurement

The analysis is based on several instruments that have been extensively explained in other publications (Ziebertz/Kay 2005). The questionnaire contained two parts: attitude towards life and religion. In this paper we focus on the first part which comprises about 170 items. The instruments are too lengthy to be presented here individually; however their structure can be explained briefly. To measure attitudes towards Europe, a scale is used that contains four positive and four negative statements to which students responded using the Likert format. Responses were then correlated with the following: scales of attitudes of adolescents towards life (with 7 dimensions and given, where relevant, in more detail below), value orientations (with 8 dimensions given, where relevant, in detail below), political attitudes (with 8 dimensions given, where relevant, in detail below), political action (with 3 dimensions), the trust in institutions (with 5 dimensions, and summarised below), cultural and religious plurality (with 3 dimensions), and attitude towards foreigners (xenophobia). The scales are shortened/abbreviated instruments based on extensive youth studies in Germany, which were carried out by the Shell Foundation (Deutsche Shell 2000). Only relevant and statistically significant dimensions are documented in the analysis reported here.

Assumptions

Adolescents, as well as the rest of the population, perceive positive and problematic developments in Europe. The job market in many European countries is under pressure because companies move to places where production costs are cheaper. Adolescents are confronted with the situation that even a good education does not guarantee an adequate job. For this reason adolescents' assessment of their personal future and of their societal situation is likely to be correlated with their evaluation of Europe

as a whole. Negative political and economic experiences of various kinds including worries about the future are likely to lead to a rejection of Europe. By contrast adolescents holding a positive attitude towards Europe are likely to see it as a land of possibilities, a potential source of 'the good life'. Here the country the interviewees come from plays a role. Adolescents from eastern European countries and potential accession countries like Croatia and Turkey may see the potential benefits more clearly than adolescents from 'old' Europe. However, against this, eastern European and accession countries may fear that the economic and cultural power of Europe will threaten their long-established values and way of life.

We also assume that correlations between scales provide the basis for description. Correlations could be of causal nature, but do not need to be.[1] Nonetheless causal conclusions are possible if they can be adequately justified theoretically. When in the following description of correlations causal phrasing is used, such conclusions have only hypothetical content and cannot be tested by the current data.

3 Empirical Findings

This empirical section describes the analysis of the correlations between the attitudes towards Europe and personal life perspectives as well as societal experiences.

Attitudes towards Europe

The analysis of the Europe-scale (see table 1) shows two factors. The first factor is constituted of items with positive content. Here, the opportunities which may arise throughout Europe are emphasized. The second factor comprises items in which problems that could arise in a growing Europe are forecast. Two of these items affect the first factor negatively. This means they describe a circumstance which can be seen as contrary to the content of the first factor. The first factor is about the economic consequences flowing from the process of Europeanisation, the dependency of the market and the movement of jobs. Both scales are sufficiently reliable and show a weak negative correlation ($r = -.12$; $p = .000$), in other words both contents are weakly mutually exclusive. The approval and rejection respectively differs on a 5-point Likert scale. The mean of a Euro-sceptical attitude is 2.91 (S.D. = .74) so lies slightly in the negative half. The mean of the Euro-positive attitude is 3.55 (S.D. = .70). The semantics of the scales explains why the means are not mirrored. Interviewees can weigh the negative statements so heavily that they adopt an anti-European attitude and still reject the positive statements. At the same time interviewees can be pro-Europeans and emphasise the bright side of Europe although without overlooking potential dangers – in this case they would agree with the positive statements about Europe and not reject the negative ones. As the following analyses are based on correlation values, they concern tendencies in the interactions. Tendencies are each directed towards a taper ratio, in this case towards a pro-European or a European-sceptic attitude. The previously comments need to be borne in mind when pro and contra is used to simplify description. The two European dimensions are the dependent variables in the following sections of this paper.

National differences

We assume that there will be differences among students of the various countries. As Hofstede (2001) pointed out, the degree of individualism versus tradition and collectivism will contribute to these differences. Collectivism can be the result of a strong connection between nationality and religion. This is more likely to be the case in Turkey and Poland than in other western secularised countries. The sample includes a third variant: some respondents belong to EU member states and others to aspirant states (Croatia and Turkey). For the sake of clarity in our analysis we will focus on the anti-European scale.[2]

[1] For instance: height and weight are correlated, but weight does not cause height.
[2] Moreover the mean value is close to the median of the scale making it statistically appropriate to do this.

We identify 4 groups of countries that differ significantly (see Table 2). The Germans are most clear in their rejection of the anti-European position, together with Finns, Swedes and Dutch young people. They reject a negative view on Europe and we can say they expect that Europe will offer a good environment and challenging opportunities for their future life. The United Kingdom and Ireland follow; their rejection of the anti-European position is less strong – but they reject statements that Europe could be problematic. Three countries follow in the positive half of the scale with negative statements about Europe, in other words, they share the opinion that Europe has problematic aspects. In this category are Croatia and Poland: Poland is a young EU member state and parties who stir antagonism against Europe participate in Polish politics. Croatia is an aspirant and as our results show young people in Croatia are not without doubts about the benefits they will have from Europe. Both countries are traditionally Roman-Catholic and in both countries Catholicism tries to keep a traditional conservative religious outlook. Respondents in both countries agree with negative statements about Europe. Their agreement is not strong, just slightly in the positive half of the scale, but it is an agreement. This finding can confirm that traditional religiosity and a strong consciousness of national identity can belong together with opposition to Europe. The next significant difference is made by the Turkish sample. It is surprising that young Turks are sceptical about benefits from Europe. In Turkey (more than in Poland) young people are strongly committed to religion (Islam) and this is associated with their national identity. The current discussion about Europe and Islam may be a reason for their caution in expressing a position about Europe. It could be that Euro-scepticism and traditional religiosity combined with nationalism form a single large attitudinal complex.

Societal experiences and attitudes towards Europe

In the following section we analyse attitudes towards Europe in relation to life-perspectives, values, experiences with politics, readiness for political action, pluralism and xenophobia (see Table 3).

Life perspectives

The scale of life-perspectives includes 7 dimensions (or subscales) of which 5 correlate significant with the Europe scale. A negative attitude towards Europe correlates with three of these dimensions: PESSIMISM is orientated towards the past and a negative view of the present and future. PRESENT represents an active relationship with the present. One's view of life is based in the present moment and one lives in the here and now. UNCERTAINTY centres on an open future, life can often not be planned. Everything that is decided today can prove to be wrong tomorrow. This belief can lead to less purposive action and to just letting things happen.

A positive attitude towards Europe correlated with two dimensions. PLANNING is a positive way of dealing with the future. Young people with this attitude feel well equipped for the future. They consider themselves to be capable of managing their lives well in the future by making rational decisions now. SECURING emphasises an active way of dealing with time, in which one searches for a safe psychological point which secures one's own identity based on the past.

These results show that both Euro-types have very different attitudes towards life. The Anti-Europeans are orientated towards the past and see their life threatened, the Pro-Europeans are orientated towards the future and are convinced that they are in control of their lives. At the same time, they try to secure their life. Anti-Europeans and Pro-Europeans differ most in the dimension PLANNING. The feeling of being able to address the future – both actively and constructively – or not being able to do this, is the biggest difference between the two groups.

Values

The value-scale includes 8 dimensions (or subscales) of which 7 dimensions correlate significantly with the Europe scale. A negative attitude towards Europe correlates with three dimensions, known as AUTHENTICITY, MODERNITY and ATTRACTIVENESS, which all refer to inner dispositions. MODERNITY describes an outlook which implies constant need of being proficient in the latest technology. For example, this applies to computer equipment or mobile phones. ATTRACTIVENESS covers the latest

trend in youthfulness. It applies to looking good, both now and in the future. AUTHENTICITY describes the latest trend in independence, to do and be able to do, what you want. Taken together, these three outlooks represent a value concept that can be described as 'trendy'. It concerns values that are aggressively portrayed in advertising. The target audience and main consumers are today's youth.

A positive attitude towards Europe is predicted by four dimensions. First, AUTONOMY in this study represents confidence and independence to stand up against majority opinion. The dimension called HUMANITY covers the worth of each individual and the responsibility to help others. More than this HUMANITY covers a person's ability to engage successfully in society and the ability to share material goods with others. Two other dimensions represent "civil" values. PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION describes the material-social aspect. Education and training for a future career is at the forefront here along with the desire for a good job and to be materially comfortable. FAMILY ORIENTATION describes the social-emotional aspect of integration and covers the desire to live in, and to have, a family. A home with a man/wife and children is therefore considered an aspirational value.

It is difficult to describe the results about values in a value-free way because the values of the Euro-protagonists seems to be more desirable. Whereas the values of the first group reflect a more 'trendy' orientation that is mostly relating to themselves, the values of the second group represent commitment to, and responsibility for, others. This shows in relation to public life, concern for the family as a microstructure of society and eventually for one's one life, and in the desire for a good professional future. The values of the Anti-Europeans on the other hand are fashion-orientated and purely social and not concerned with wider societal responsibility

Politics and attitudes towards Europe

The politics-scale includes 8 dimensions (or subscales) of which 7 dimensions correlate significant with the Europe scale. A negative attitude towards Europe correlates with all seven dimensions. ANOMIE revolves around perceptions of public life and how incomprehensible young people find it. Is 'public life' a problem because it is thought to be too complicated? Young people may feel they already have enough to deal with, with the result that there is no time left to be interested in events beyond their immediate horizon. And, in any case, the condition of public life, as it is experienced by young people, seems to have no affect on their personal lives. DISTANCE focuses on attitudes to politics and political parties. It expresses the notion that politics is boring, irrelevant and a long way away. ALIENATION relates to the experience of powerlessness. The metaphor of a small wheel that has little or no effect on the machinery of society is an example of this. Equally the dimension concerns young people's perception that there is corruption in politics. INDIFFERENCE concerns young people's perceptions as to whether, and to what extent, political parties play a part in the problems that affect young people. The dimension of POLARITY OF GENERATIONS concerns the failure of politicians because they are too concerned with the needs of the adult generation and as a consequence neglect the needs that young people of today will have in the future; failure to protect the environment now will damage the long-term life-chances of the younger generation. PRIVATE SPHERE underlines the need to have a safe point in life to which one can return. And CONFORMITY includes the insight that it is good to accept the principles about how society functions, but this is the weakest correlation.

A positive attitude towards Europe is predicted by only one dimension, which is CONFORMITY. Pro-Europeans neglect the other dimensions and accept that to conform oneself to society and public life is necessary in order to participate in them.

Comparing both fields of attitudes it is clear that Anti-Europeans have a distinctly negative relation to the political culture of their country. This attitude is not shared by the Pro-Europeans. They blend into society without being uncritical, as the orientations of values have shown. From the perspective of European society the Anti-Europeans are a problem – not, because they are against Europe, but because they neither show a constructive attitude towards life nor a willingness to campaign for improvements.

In the area of politics a second scale was related to readiness for political action. Five dimensions were

constructed and 2 have shown significance. A negative attitude towards Europe is correlated with two dimensions. POLITICAL ACTIVISTS are young people who express their opinion offensively and are also prepared to distribute propaganda material or to broadcast their opinions in public places. VIOLENT ACTIVISTS would be prepared to engage in acts of violence, for instance through occupying buildings or vandalism. Both dimensions correlate positively with Euro-scepticism.

A positive attitude towards Europe is correlated with one dimension that has a contradictory meaning: in general Pro-Europeans reject the notion of offensive political behaviour. Pro-Europeans do not tend to belong to the group of POLITICAL ACTIVISTS. The behavioural pattern of POLITICAL ACTIVISTS is not necessarily against the law, but the behavioural pattern of the VIOLENT ACTIVISTS is. This shows that the Anti-Europeans are potentially willing to act in politically destructive ways. The Pro-Europeans strictly oppose this behaviour.

Institutions

The scale of trust in institutions includes 5 dimensions (or subscales) of which 2 correlate significantly with the Europe scale. We begin with dimensions which include a positive perspective on Europe: first REGULATORY institutions such as the police, the judiciary and the military are relevant. Second ISSUE-RELATED agencies such as human rights groups and environmental protection groups are important. Pro-Europeans value public institutions which represent order and justice in a society but they also support groups that work for central causes such as environmentalism and human or civil rights.

A negative attitude towards Europe correlates with a rejection of issue-related institutions. Euro-sceptic young people in general do not value such groups. This is the hinge, the point of interface, between the attitudes held by young people and value-bearing agencies and institutions. In short, the acceptance or rejection of two publicly relevant kinds of institutions is a demarcation line between Pro- and Anti-Europeans.

Religious and cultural Pluralism

The scale of religious and cultural PLURALISM contains 3 dimensions with a positive, a negative and a neutral stance towards pluralism. The dimension with the positive evaluation of pluralism correlates with both attitudes towards Europe. This dimension includes five items in which the diversity of cultures, worldviews, beliefs and religions is represented.

The correlations show that pluralism is a helpful concept in visualising an important difference between the two groups. Europe-sceptics have a negative attitude towards cultural and religious pluralism while, by contrast, Pro-Europeans have their strongest correlation with the pluralism scale; this shows that the essence of Pro-Europeanism might be conceived of as the embracing of pluralism. We have already shown that Anti-Europeans have difficulties in feeling safe and that they lack a sense of certainty and a vision for their own personal future. For the Pro-Europeans we found the opposite. This explains why Anti-Europeans vote as they do. Their antipathy to pluralism is an expression of - or reason for – their uncertainty.

Xenophobia

The scale XENOPHOBIA is a one-dimensional scale. XENOPHOBIA refers to hostility toward foreigners. The items in the scale are as follows: foreigners who turn to crime in my country should be deported immediately; a lot of foreigners have it too good in this country; foreigners who do not want to conform to this country should not stay here; there are too many foreigners in this country, etc. Because it is a one-dimensional scale only one correlation can be reported. The result is clear: a xenophobic attitude correlates very positively with Anti-Europeanism. Pro-Europeans reject xenophobia. This distinction between the pro and the Anti-European is the strongest we have reported until now. Thus Pro- and Anti-Europeans have diametrically opposed attitudes to foreigners, and this more than other concepts is what differentiates them.

4 Conclusion and discussion

Our study has shown that individual, social and societal life experiences of adolescents are correlated with both positive and negative attitudes towards the process of Europeanisation. In the discussion that follows we have centred our thoughts around the two ideal types of Pro- and Anti-Europeans. In order to simplify the complex web of correlations, we have drawn together generalised profiles of these two types. This is a procedure that dates back at least as far as Max Weber and allows us to interpret the many correlations between the various scales in a way that is intuitively understandable (Weber, 2003, 71, 98; Parsons, 1964: lxv). Having presented the detail of the figures in the tables and discussed the various scales, we wish now to step back from the figures to gain a broader understanding of what they tell us. In order to do this, we have speculated on best-case and worst-case scenarios where Euroscepticism becomes predominant or where Pro-Europeanism becomes predominant. Clearly, as the Irish referendum of 2008 showed, the views held by what is perceived to be the European elite of politicians and administrators do not always chime with the grass-roots electorate. It needs to be remembered that the European project which began after 1945 was deliberately set in place in order to prevent the catastrophes of European war ever reoccurring (Heath, 1998: 201). There was, right from the beginning, a tension within Europe between nationalism and internationalism. Our analysis focuses first on Eurosceptics to see what underlying attitudinal and evaluative reasons we can find for this position. Then we turn to Pro-Europeans with the same inquiry in mind. Finally, we ask what role education might be expected to play in the future.

The profiles of the two groups are distinct. A sceptical attitude towards Europe feeds primarily from two sources. The first is the assessment that one's personal future life is threatened and therefore no proper life-planning is possible. The second source is a negative estimation of political culture. There are several aspects to this: public life is experienced as chaotic, adolescents sense a big gap between themselves and representatives of public life, they feel alienation from politics and they see themselves as losers in generational conflicts. Young people react to these perceptions by retreating into the private sphere where they want to experience the stability and order which they can not find in the public sphere. This retreat from public interests corresponds with an approval of individualistic values. In addition Euro-sceptical adolescents may be disposed to use violence for pursuing their interests. Such adolescents have a negative attitude towards pluralistic society and hold xenophobic attitudes.

The second group with a positive attitude towards Europe has directly contrary opinions. It rejects xenophobia, appreciates societal pluralism and rejects political activism. Adolescents in this group have, with regard to their personal life perspectives, the confidence that they can plan their life and future meaningfully. These adolescents also differ from the first group through their estimation of the political sphere. They do not share the negative assessment of institutions of public life (like the courts and the police) and they approve of the commitment of transnational groups like Amnesty International or Greenpeace, whose aims they share. Their personal value orientation shows responsibility for the private, social and societal areas. In comparison to the first group, these adolescents appear to be in a position to act autonomously.

If we pay attention to the four antagonistic outcomes in table 3 we see the strongest tension between both groups in the (non-)possibility of giving direction to one's own life planning, the readiness for political action, the evaluation of pluralism and the attitude towards strangers. In other words: Anti-Europeans experience Europe as risky because the growing market makes individual life planning more difficult, while Pro-Europeans perceive the transnational construct 'Europe' as offering opportunities for a good life. The latter see no necessity for political action, while the Anti-group is ready to react politically even to the extent of endorsing violence. The key problem seems to be the experience of pluralism in an ongoing process of European unification. Pluralism is especially relevant from a cultural and religious perspective, and becomes very concrete in the presence of foreigners (xenophobia). Consequently, theories which diagnose the main reason for xenophobia as lying in the social environment help explain the development of xenophobic attitudes and behaviour. Accordingly, xenophobia is not seen as something personal, but as caused by the political-societal system in which young people grow up. Theories of this type state that in the interaction of individuals

and society, the environment has a very strong influence on the formation of habits. According to Riedl (1994), xenophobic behaviour is an instrument for coping with a crowded multi-ethnic society because it offers strength, superiority and emotional security. Xenophobia is then based on the ideology of inequality which allows a totalitarian understanding of values, an exclusion of people with a certain nationality, ethnicity or religion: it places the xenophobic at the top of a natural hierarchy. The function of xenophobic thinking is that it provides a means of reducing fear and anxiety, though it also creates aggression (cf. Rydgren 2003).

If this explanation is correct, it will not be sufficient for European leaders to focus on education only. Complementary sensitivity and activity must be expected from social and political bodies in European societies. As a best-case scenario we can argue that the optimistic attitudes of opinion-leaders within the European Union will manage to steer the many countries of Europe towards harmonious prosperity in a truly multicultural and multi-ethnic population block. Humanitarian and transnational values will prevail over xenophobic or nationalistic fears and the tendency to retreat into the private sphere will be replaced by a constructive advance into the public sphere. None of this will, however, threaten personal autonomy.

Some significant differences in attitudes can be explained through the national origin of the adolescents. The variance in regard to a negative assessment of Europe is 0.6 points on the 5 point Likert scale. This difference is not large and so it can be assumed that sceptics and Pro-Europeans can be found in all countries. Nonetheless, sceptics are more numerous in Turkey, Poland and Croatia than in the other countries. Where the sceptics are more numerous Anti-European policies seem most likely.

These results are relevant to the future political engagement within Europe, especially if the current generation of Euro-sceptics continues to hold its attitudes and values unchanged. Euro-sceptics show an attitude towards the public sphere and its structures that could prevent democratic participation in the future. Such a bleak prospect comes from the alienation from politics felt by Euro-sceptics and their fear of a chaotic future. These attitudes can lead to the refusal of young people to take public responsibility. In the worst case scenario Euro-scepticism may lead to destructive politics of the kind that troubled Europe during the 20th century.

Can education bring some changes? Education is definitely not the ultimate cure as long as the economy remains flat (Suárez-Orozco/Qin-Hilliard 2004). Without a buoyant economy political promises can only be phrased using terms like ‘reform’ and ‘modernisation’ and these may deter any sense among young people that the situation can be improved. In the end unfulfilled political promises deepen scepticism. It is not the primary task of education to compensate for political failures, even though politicians may blame the education system again and again for the economy’s poor performance. Education’s task is to lead people to independence and maturity by enriching them with cultural resources. These empirical results suggest that there is a need to enable adolescents to evaluate their situation and that of society adequately, that is, to appreciate the forces of globalisation and europeanisation on the one hand and of pluralism on the other. Equally it is important for education to empower young people so they do not feel like victims of an unchangeable situation. Eventually, too, there is a need for an intercultural pedagogy that prevents the stereotyping of foreigners as the cause of all society’s problems.

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Table 1: Attitudes towards Europe (Factor analysis)

	Factor 1	Factor 2
The uniting of Europe will improve the conditions of all people in the long run.	.762	
Europe growing together will open up many doors, particularly for young people.	.722	
The introduction of the euro as a currency will help the Europeans integrate.	.681	
I think it is very important that old European enemies now unite with one another.	.680	
A united Europe will mix the cultures in such a way that none will really know where they come from anymore.		.719
The greater the economic zones in the world become, the smaller my chances of fulfilling my personal interests become.	-.143	.709
It is only a question of time before the languages get so blended into one another that my language will disappear.	.217	.663
For me it will be hard to find a good workplace in a united Europe, since competition is growing.	-.183	.556

Extractions: main-component-analysis. Rotation: Varimax (Kaiser)
Expl. Variance: 49 %; Factor Eigenvalue: 2,1 and 1,8; alpha factor 1 = .70, factor 2 = .67

Table 2: Significant differences in negative attitudes towards Europe

Country	N	1	2	3	4
Germany	1908	2.6985			
Finland	562	2.7208			
Sweden	712	2.8013	2.8013		
Netherlands	806	2.8276	2.8276		
United Kingdom	859		2.8764		
Ireland	824		2.9332		
Croatia	1043			3.0717	
Poland	796			3.1250	
Turkey	895				3.2924
Significance		.083	.068	.967	1.000

ANOVA: Scheffé-Procedure; Range of mean values: 1=negative; 3=median; 5=positive.

Table 3: Europe and life Perspectives (Correlations)

	Anti-European	**Pro-European**
Life-perspectives		
Uncertainty	.193	
Present	.165	
Pessimism	.130	
Securing		.156
Planning	*-.133*	.156
Values		
Authenticity	.220	
Modernity	.150	
Attractiveness	.135	
Autonomy		.237
Humanity		.197
Professional Orientation		.179
Family Orientation		.132
Politics		
Anomy	.302	
Distance	.273	
Alienation	.239	
Indifference	.229	
Polarity of Generations	.225	
Private Sphere	.183	
Conformity	.136	.146
Political action		
Ready for political activity	.194	*-.105*
Ready for violent activity	.188	
Institutions		
Regulation institutions		.127
Issue-related organisations	-.083	.189
Pluralism		
Pluralism is positive	*-.157*	.261
Foreigners		
Xenophobia	.318	*-.172*

N=8371. only significant correlations r ≥ .10 or ≤ –.10 are mentioned.
all correlations have p=.000.