

Tilburg University

Who should get what and why, under which conditions

Jeene, M.D.

Publication date:
2015

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication in Tilburg University Research Portal](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Jeene, M. D. (2015). *Who should get what and why, under which conditions: Descriptions and explanations of public deservingness opinions*. Ridderprint.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

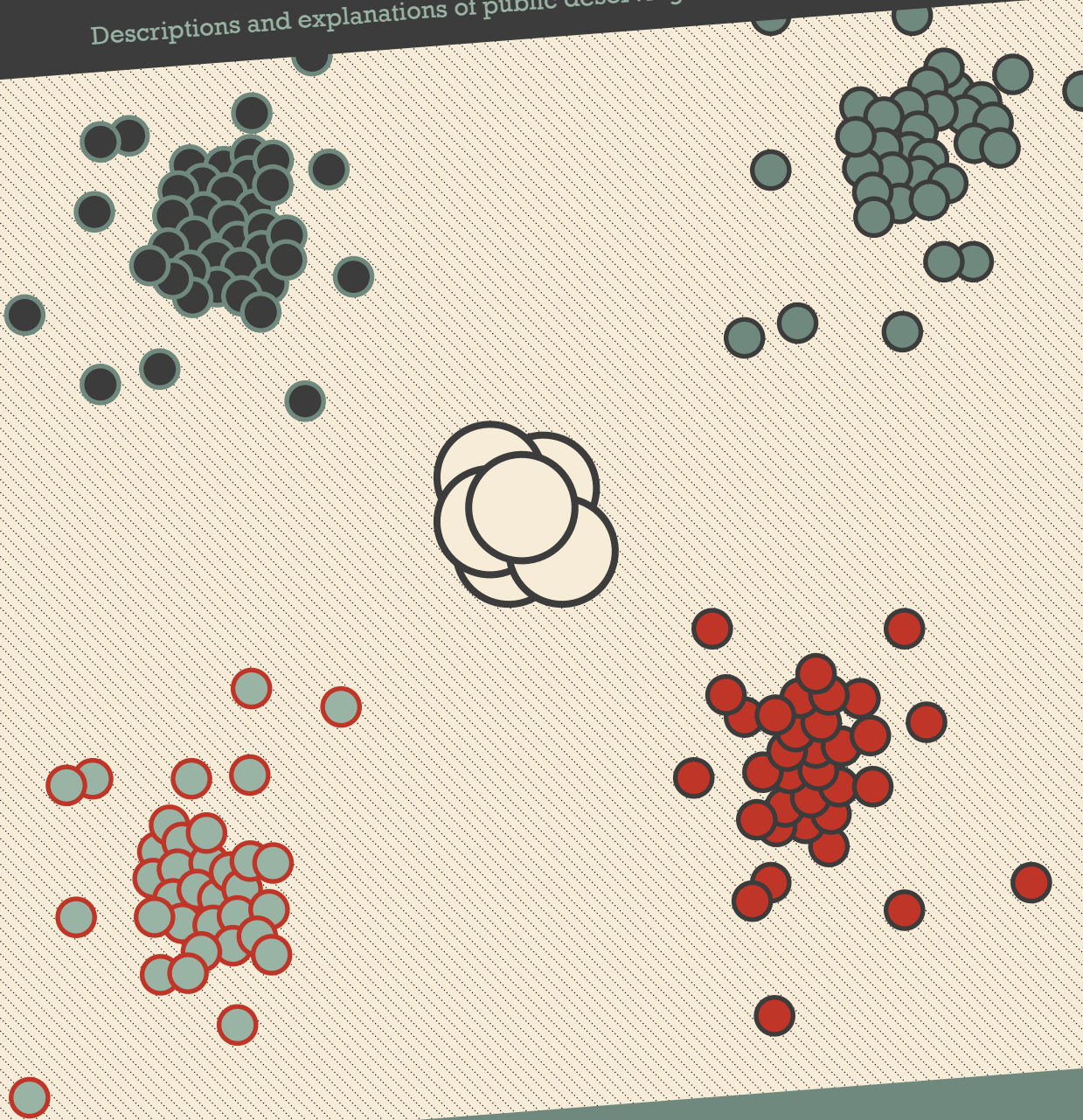
- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Who should get what and why, under which conditions

Descriptions and explanations of public deservingness opinions



Marjolein D. Jeene

Who should get what and why, under which conditions

Descriptions and explanations of public deservingness opinions

Marjolein D. Jeene

Cover design: Esther Ris, Proefschriftomslag.nl

Printed by: Ridderprint BV

Copyright ©2015 by Marjolein D. Jeene

Who should get what and why, under which conditions:
Descriptions and explanations of public deservingness opinions

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan Tilburg University
op gezag van de rector magnificus, prof.dr. E.H.L. Aarts,
in het openbaar te verdedigen ten overstaan van
een door het college voor promoties aangewezen commissie
in de aula van de Universiteit op woensdag 16 december 2015 om 10.15 uur

door

Marjolein Deliana Jeene

geboren op 19 februari 1984
te Deventer

Promotiecommissie

Promotor: Prof.dr.ing. W.J.H. van Oorschot

Copromotor: Dr. W.J.G. Uunk

Overige commissieleden: Prof.dr. P.H.J. Achterberg
Prof.dr. R.J. van der Veen
Dr. B. Meuleman

The research in this book was financed by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO grant 400-06-138).

Inhoud

Chapter 1: Introduction, overview and conclusion	9
1.1 Social legitimacy of the welfare state	11
1.2 Theory	15
1.3 Research questions	23
1.4 Data	30
1.5 Summary of main findings	33
1.6 General conclusions	37
1.7 Research limitations and directions for further research	40
Chapter 2: Popular criteria for the welfare deservingness of disability pensioners: The influence of structural and cultural factors	45
2.1 Introduction	47
2.2 Hypotheses	48
2.3 Data and operationalizations	52
2.4 Results	56
2.5 Conclusions and discussion	60
Chapter 3: The dynamics of welfare opinions in changing economic, institutional and political contexts: An empirical analysis of Dutch deservingness opinions, 1975-2006	65
3.1 Introduction	67
3.2 Previous welfare opinion trend research	69
3.3 Data and methods	73
3.4 Results	77
3.5 Conclusions and discussion	84
Chapter 4: The relative deservingness of the unemployed in the eyes of the European public	89
4.1 Introduction	91
4.2 Theory & hypotheses	92
4.3 Data & methods	96
4.4 Results	102
4.5 Conclusion & discussion	108

Chapter 5: The social legitimacy of the activating welfare state:	
Public opinion on work obligations & welfare rights of benefit claimants	113
5.1 Introduction	115
5.2 Opinions on work obligations	116
5.3 Balancing rights and obligations	118
5.4 Deservingness theory	121
5.5 Data & operationalizations	124
5.6 Results	129
5.7 Conclusion & discussion	136
References	139
Nederlandse samenvatting	153
Dankwoord	165
Curriculum Vitae	171



Chapter 1

Introduction, overview
and conclusion

1.1 Social legitimacy of the welfare state

In many countries, the welfare state provides support for needy groups who are unable to provide for themselves. Although some form of support for different types of needy groups has existed in most countries for centuries and was often based on religious foundations, this support was rapidly institutionalized in the welfare state after the second world war. The 'golden age' of welfare expansion lasted until the 1970s, when the oil crisis hit and welfare expansion was replaced with a focus on retrenchment. This refocus was the start of many challenges that the welfare state faced and still faces currently. The financial crisis, for example, challenged the financial viability of the welfare state. The financial crisis is an immediate challenge, however, in the long run, the welfare state is confronted with 'new social risks', such as an aging population and new family arrangements, that could also strain its economic viability (Hemerijck, 2013; Taylor-Gooby, 2011). Another issue is the extent to which the large burden of spending on the welfare state damages international economic competition, especially in these current times of globalization where international competition has increased (Korpi & Palme, 2003). These challenges have intensified discussions regarding the generosity, universalism and scope of the welfare state and the criteria of who deserves what and why.

The future sustainability of the welfare state is not only challenged by economic factors. Increasingly, its basic ideological foundations have also come under scrutiny. The welfare state's foundation of solidarity and having a collective responsibility to support the needy may unintentionally undermine individual autonomy and responsibility, may damage traditional social ties and may weaken private forms of solidarity and self-help (Pettersen, 2001; Taylor-Gooby, 2011; Wilensky, 1975). Many scientists believe that these unintentional negative outcomes of welfare state provisions may weaken the social legitimacy of the welfare state, which would greatly undermine the welfare state itself because its social legitimacy is assumed to be the foundation of its cultivation (see, for example, Brooks & Manza, 2006b; Goul Andersen, Pettersen, Svallfors, & Uusitalo, 1999; Pettersen, 1995; Wilensky, 1975).

Despite the negative expectations concerning the social legitimacy of the welfare state, the large amount of research on the topic over the years, which measures welfare state support in numerous ways, has found no such legitimacy crisis for Europe as a whole (see, for example, Blekesaune & Quadagno, 2003; Gelissen, 2000; Pettersen, 2001; Svallfors, 1997, 2004; Taylor-Gooby, 1999). The existing longitudinal studies in the field tend to find a remarkable stability of welfare support over time (Borre & Scarbrough, 1995; Brooks & Manza, 2007; Goul Andersen, 1993; Goul Andersen et al., 1999; Hasenfeld & Rafferty, 1989; Martinussen, 1993; Pettersen, 1995; Ringen, 1987; Sihvo & Uusitalo, 1995; Svallfors, 2011), which suggests that the welfare state remains highly popular regardless of the mentioned challenges.

However, even though there seems to be ongoing support for the welfare state, there are some critical remarks to be made with this apparent relative stability. First, although the welfare state is given ongoing support by the public in general, there are many individual variations that are found in the amount of welfare support that different people are willing to give. For example, economically vulnerable groups (i.e., low income, low education, and unemployed) and people with politically left views are more likely to be supportive of the welfare state and its benefits compared with people who identify themselves on the political right (e.g., Blekesaune, 2007; Edlund, 1999; Hasenfeld & Rafferty, 1989; Svallfors, 2007). Generally, these individual variations in welfare opinions are explained by using self-interest theory and cultural ideology theory (see, for example, Blekesaune, 2007; Kangas, 1997; Svallfors, 2007; Van Oorschot, 2000), which will be further explained below.

A second remark to the ongoing welfare support is country variation in welfare support. The people in Scandinavian countries, such as Sweden and Denmark, have been known to have higher welfare support than the people from, for example, Germany or the USA. For example, Svallfors (1997) found that over half of Swedes agreed that the government should reduce differences between high and low incomes, whereas the same opinion was found for less than 40% of the American population (see also, for example, Andress & Heien, 2001; Bean & Papadakis, 1998 for comparable findings). When studies on welfare opinions began to consider the influence of not only individual characteristics but also the country of residence (the collective), the country of residence was mostly studied through welfare regimes (Esping-Andersen, 1990). In these studies, it is expected that the institutional similarities in regime types are related to the attitudes of its residents, and residents of the Social Democratic regimes are more positive of the welfare state than residents of Liberal regimes. However, the evidence for this relation is limited (see, for example, Arts & Gelissen, 2001; Gelissen, 2000; Jæger, 2006a; Papadakis & Bean, 1993). Another approach, which has been proven to have more merit, is to include only the specific institutions that are directly related to the specific attitude (such as labor market policies for opinions on unemployment benefits) (see, for example, Gelissen, 2000; Jæger, 2006a; Pfeifer, 2009). Analogous to the distinction that is made with respect to individual characteristics, the economic and cultural differences among countries (differences in economic growth, unemployment rates or social trust) are also used to explain country variation in welfare support. Van Oorschot (2006b), for example, shows that Europeans are more critical of social rights in countries with lower unemployment rates. Because Eastern European countries are expanding their welfare states, there will be more variation in the level and type of welfare provision, which could provide more understanding regarding the effect of different contexts on welfare opinions.

Third, the studies on welfare legitimacy almost exclusively concern the support for the general principles of social rights, which tend to lead to positive answers (Dogan, 1988; Ervasti, 2012). In the surveys that are often used, people are asked concerning their preferences regarding government responsibility for providing income support and services to citizens (Blekesaune & Quadagno, 2003; Jæger, 2007), attitudes on income redistribution (cf. Jæger, 2006a; Rehm, 2007; Svallfors, 2007), and preferences for the types and degree of social spending (Gelissen, 2000). These questions are likely to generate positive responses. These studies may thus offer a too optimistic picture of welfare legitimacy (Ervasti, 2012; Roosma, Gelissen, & Van Oorschot, 2012; Van Oorschot, Reeskens, & Meuleman, 2012). Furthermore, because the welfare state is a complex phenomenon, the opinions and attitudes towards it are also likely to be complex, and its legitimacy cannot be captured by a single aspect (Andress & Heien, 2001; Sihvo & Uusitalo, 1995; Van Oorschot, 2010). This complexity is referred to as 'the multidimensionality of welfare state attitudes' (see, for example, Gelissen, 2000; Roosma et al., 2012; Sihvo & Uusitalo, 1995). It is possible that people are positive to some aspects and negative to others. This result was proven when some authors included other indicators of legitimacy in their studies, which revealed a less positive picture regarding the legitimacy of the welfare state. Europeans are more critical when asked concerning, for example, the effectiveness and efficiency of welfare systems (Roosma et al., 2012) and the consequences of welfare (Van Oorschot et al., 2012). The advantages of welfare provisions are thus widely recognized, but the public is not blind to their more negative aspects. A criticism of welfare is the (unintended) moral consequence that welfare is thought to undermine beneficiaries' will to work and that it places the responsibility to make a living outside the individual (Murray, 1984). As a result, there has been a broad and sustained trend to emphasize work (re-)insertion before income protection as the gold standard for good social policy (Carcillo & Grubb, 2006). However, there is a substantial lack of knowledge regarding the social legitimacy of this new element of activation.

A final remark regarding the supposed stability of welfare opinions is related to the argument that people may hold different attitudes to different aspects of the welfare state and that people may have different views on welfare support depending on the target group of a specific welfare arrangement. The research has shown that people's support for specific welfare services and benefits strongly depends on their beliefs involving the deservingness of the accompanying target groups. The schemes that are targeted at the elderly, sick and disabled are most supported by the public, whereas social protection for the unemployed and social assistance schemes are less supported, and social protection of immigrants is least supported (see, for example, Blekesaune & Quadagno, 2003; Coughlin, 1980; Pettersen, 1995; Reeskens & Van der Meer, 2014; Van Oorschot, 2006b). As we will explain in more detail later, various deservingness criteria

play a role here, especially identity, control and reciprocity (Van Oorschot, 2014; Van Oorschot & Meuleman, 2014). When examining the support for different welfare schemes more closely, it often seems that the variation in actual protection for each group coincides with the popular deservingness of its target group. The groups that are considered more deserving are also better protected with welfare arrangements than the groups that are considered less deserving.

With the welfare state under scrutiny, debates ensue concerning the deservingness or undeservingness of specific categories of (potential) benefit claimants, such as younger, elderly and unemployed people and migrants. The welfare state debate seems to have made a full circle, considering that the basic welfare question of ‘who should get what and why’, which dominated the debate in the early times of welfare state formation, has returned to the forefront again. Currently, this debate has an extra emphasis on the ‘group membership’ dimension, that is, who belongs to the ‘imagined community’ of fellow citizens for whom one feels responsible.

This basic question of *who should get what and why* - a question of deservingness - is the focus of this dissertation. The *who* and *what* parts comprise the third and fourth critical remarks that were made above, namely, that people may differentiate their welfare support opinions depending on the specific aspect of the welfare state under question and/or the target group. The *why* part of the question, understanding why people differentiate as they do, implies that we also focus on the criteria that determine deservingness, which we describe in further detail below. In addition to the basic questions of who should get what and why is *under what conditions?* These *conditions* imply that we address the first and second critical remarks that are made above, namely, that systematic variation exists among individuals and contexts (country and/or historical time) in welfare state support that is based on economic and cultural background characteristics. For example, how does an individual’s personal financial situation affect his or her perception of the deservingness of others? How do economic circumstances affect the popular deservingness of different target groups? This study, then, is an effort to further nuance the claim of invariant welfare opinions by using popular deservingness opinions as our main dependent variable. These opinions are the result of the scores on the deservingness criteria, which will be described below and are explained by individual and contextual economic and cultural independent factors; these factors are viewed as main explanations in welfare opinion research. In the next section, the relations that form the basis of the empirical chapters of this thesis are explained in more detail.

1.2 Theory

1.2.1 *Deservingness opinions*

As observed above, welfare legitimacy is a complex phenomenon and includes multiple aspects. To assess these different aspects and the possible ambivalent attitudes to them by the public, Roosma, Gelissen and Van Oorschot (2012) theoretically and empirically distinguished what these different aspects are. Their model includes the following seven different dimensions: (1) the welfare mix, that is, the role that is played in welfare provision by different institutions (the welfare state compared with the market, civil society and the family); (2) the goals of the state (e.g., reduction of poverty and inequality); (3) the range of welfare provision (the domains that are covered by the welfare state, e.g., income, education, housing, health, etc.); (4) the degree of welfare provision (the efforts that are employed, c.q. the amounts that are spent); (5) the redistribution design, that is, the institutionalized ways of gathering and distributing resources among various social groupings; (6) the efficiency, effectiveness, and fairness of the welfare implementation process; and (7) the (intended and unintended) outcomes of welfare provision. In this dissertation, we focus on the fifth dimension, the redistribution design. This dimension regards questions such as who pays, who benefits, how much people benefit and under what conditions? The focus of this dimension thus lies on deservingness, and the social legitimacy of this welfare state dimension depends on popular opinions regarding what can be considered the key question of social policy: ‘who should get what and why (and under what conditions)?’ Who does the public consider deserving of what public support, and how does this vary among individuals, countries, and time periods?

To answer these questions, the existing literature uses different approaches. The ‘public images of target groups’ approach explains differences in the legitimacy of redistribution design by the targeted needy group’s image. The studies that use this approach (mainly American studies) focus on groups with strongly negative images, such as the (African-American) poor, the unemployed and single mothers. The stigmatization of social groups usually produces little support for benefits that address their needs (see, for example, (see, for example, Gilens, 1996; Gordon, 2001; Katz, 1989). Another approach that is used more often in the European literature, explains the differences in the legitimacy of the redistribution design by the extent of the popular deservingness of the target group (see, for example, (Cook & Barrett, 1992; Reeskens & Van der Meer, 2014; Van Oorschot, 2000; Van Oorschot & Uunk, 2007). This approach takes a broader view than the public images approach by using multiple criteria to determine the deservingness of a target group (as we will explain, in addition to negative identity, also need, control, attitude and reciprocity are included), which may influence the legitimacy of a benefit. These approaches are interrelated: a negative image will produce a low

score on the identity criterion, and a low score on any of the deservingness criteria will contribute to a negative public image. For example, American blacks are a negatively stigmatized group and are therefore seen as less deserving. Their stigma centers on the perception of responsibility (as will be explained below, a low score on the criterion of 'control') that they are lazier than whites (Gilens, 1996) and can therefore be blamed for their neediness. In Europe, the relatively negative image of the unemployed is also connected to responsibility or control, that is, to doubts regarding whether they can be blamed for being unemployed (Furnham, 1982; Halvorsen, 2002).

However, there is not always a one to one relation between a single specific criterion and a group's public image. This complexity means that we get a deeper understanding of deservingness opinions regarding specific target groups if we depart from a perspective that focusses on (the joint operation of) various criteria. The deservingness approach thus provides a more detailed view concerning why certain groups can rely on more public support than other groups by focusing on different criteria than the public images approach. Therefore, the deservingness approach is the central perspective that is applied in this dissertation. In the next section, the criteria that determine deservingness perceptions are further explained.

1.2.2 Deserving groups and deservingness criteria

For centuries, people have distinguished between who should and who should not receive public support - i.e., who is deserving and who is undeserving. The concept of deserving and undeserving needy groups has been supported since early poor relief (Gans, 1995). The previous research that focuses on this concept discovered a recurring ranking in the popular deservingness of different needy groups. In this ranking, the old, sick and disabled are considered to be the most deserving of public support, whereas the unemployed and people on social assistance benefits are considered the least deserving (Van Oorschot, 2006b). Because this ranking has been found in many countries, Coughlin (1980) has referred to it as the 'universal dimension of support'.

Many social researchers have formulated and/or empirically examined which criteria are at the root of this target group differentiation. One researcher is De Swaan (1988), whose historical analysis of the development of five European and the United States' welfare states describes three criteria that were implicit in almost all categorizations of the poor. The first criterion of disability is 'need', and the other two criteria, proximity and docility, concern entitlement. Disability refers to the inability to earn money in exchange for the work that is delivered. The people who are unable to do so, are considered to be deserving of relief. This criterion is thought to be the most important of the three because it has been a necessary condition throughout history, although it is rarely sufficient by itself. Proximity defines a social area of accountability where the 'givers' feel responsible for the people in this area, which may refer to kinship or place

of residence. If the poor are in one of these areas, they are 'one of us' and are seen as deserving. Outside this area, they are undeserving and the responsibility of other people. The last criterion of docility refers to the extent to which the poor actively or passively attempt to get out of their situation. The deserving poor are those who are decent, embarrassed, hide their misery, ask for nothing and accept charity without begging for it. This situation can in fact be a fairly active but subtle strategy to claim assistance. The poor who demand help, rebel or commit theft are the undeserving needy.

Cook (1979) is another author who discusses why some groups should be supported by the welfare state. In her study on public support for tax-based social services, Cook discerns many different services and social welfare groups and describes the results of her survey of the Chicago population. When explaining the differences in support, she finds the following criteria: level of need, locus of responsibility, gratefulness, and pleasantness. The first two criteria are considered the most important. The level of need simply refers to the fact that people who are in greater need are considered more deserving of support. The locus of responsibility criterion refers to the extent to which a welfare group's condition is regarded to be self-caused and the extent to which this group can be held responsible for it. If the condition is seen as beyond their control, the welfare group is considered to be deserving. People are also seen to deserve support if they show gratefulness for the help received. The last criterion that is derived by Cook (1979) from experimental social-psychological research is pleasantness, where people give more help to the people who they like and find attractive and pleasant. Cook also mentions 'level of deservingness' as a separate explanation for the differences in support. To explain this term, Cook describes the concept that Stein (1971) stated: 'those who are dependent through no fault of their own' (Stein, 1971: 47). This explanation shows that the 'level of deservingness' criterion that is used by Cook largely overlaps with the aforementioned criterion of 'locus of responsibility'. Cook's results also show this overlap when she demonstrates that groups whose condition is seen as externally caused also score high in their level of deservingness.

In another study, Cook and Barrett (1992) claim that the extent to which an individual deserves to receive aid depends on five criteria, namely, the level of need, whether the individual has other resources that could provide the aid, whether the individual has him or herself to blame for the need, whether he or she wants to become independent of government support, and whether he or she uses the aid responsibly (fiscal responsibility). The first two criteria correspond to the 'level of need' criteria that Cook found in her previous study. The third and fourth criteria both involve a 'responsibility element'. Whether the person is to blame for the need refers to the responsibility of *getting in* a needy situation, and whether the person wants to become independent relates to taking responsibility to attempt to *get out* of the needy situation. The recipient deservingness scale that Cook and Barrett (1992) created based on these items (by using the LISREL

program for structural equation modelling) has a relatively strong positive effect on the support for different welfare programs (AFDC, Medicaid and Social Security). This support is either direct or indirect through a measure of the public perception of the effectiveness of the program.

Will (1993) uses the 1986 General Social Survey (GSS) with a supplement of vignettes of hypothetical families to examine the levels of public support for poor families and to assess who are the “deserving poor”, according to the public. The results show that the most important criteria that the public uses to determine if a poor family deserves public support is the degree of control the family seems to have over things such as family size, unemployment, and physical disabilities. In addition, the respondents indicated that they are more sympathetic and want to give more support to poor families who are making an honest effort to get out of their difficult situation. Groskind (1991), who conducted a similar study with the same GSS vignettes, examined which family characteristics are considered to be important to respondents who are deciding the correct level of support for single-parent and two-parent families. Current family income, an unambiguous indicator of need, was by far the strongest predictor of the net benefit that the public felt that a family should receive. Although Groskind considers ‘need’ a fundamental aspect for help, he states that the actual deservingness criterion that determines the amount of money that families get are the extent to which the adults attempted to get out of their difficult situation and make their own living without governmental support. Especially the efforts of the father are found to be important (Groskind, 1991). Again, it appears that the public differentiates between two different types of control: control over getting in, which means who is to blame for being *in* the poor situation, such as the family members themselves or other circumstances; and control over getting *out*, which refers to the effort that people make to end their hardships.

Social historian Katz (1989) gives an overview of the ideas and assumptions that shaped public poverty policy from the sixties through the eighties in the United States. He states that in the 1980s, well-off Americans viewed the poor in two different ways: if they appeared pathetic and politely asked for help, the poor were considered to be deserving, but if they were menacing and demanded help, people felt that they were undeserving. Because it was not always clear to which of these groups a poor person belonged and because overlap occurred, the poor were implicitly divided by the extent to which they were individually responsible for their situation and could be blamed for it.

Other authors explain deservingness criteria more implicitly, for example, when hypotheses are formulated on who will receive greater public support for social assistance (Sachweh, Ullrich, & Christoph, 2007). Sachweh et al. (2007) predict that less support for governmental aid will be given to the poor whose condition is self-inflicted, who do not make sufficient effort to get out of their impoverished situation, and who abuse the system by committing fraud. Their results show that the respondents support

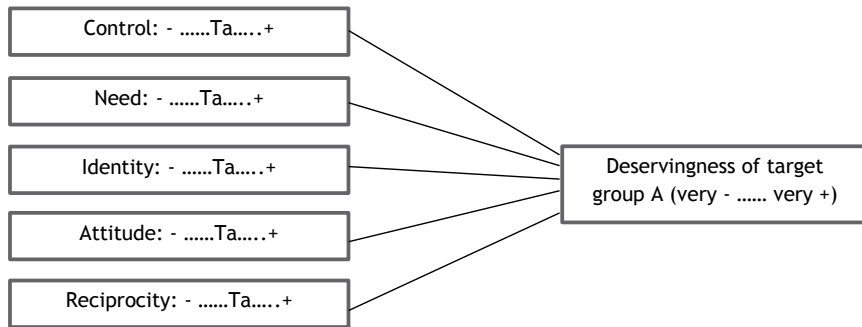
cutbacks in the instances where the receiving poor are to blame. Once more, the control criterion (in its different forms) seems to be significant when dividing public means.

Thus far, the opinions of the general public have been discussed. However, Knegt (1987) shows how the criteria are implicitly present in a Dutch public assistance office among the civil servants who implement the benefits. In determining whether to grant or deny assistance, social workers can exert some personal influence, which they refer to as the 'subjective element' in their decision making. Knegt (1987) codified these subjective elements in a moral code that appears among the social workers. This moral code indicates that social workers are more willing to grant assistance when the 'client' is sincere, gives all the correct information and cooperates with the social worker (reciprocity of duties). Clients who can be blamed for the condition that they are in are less likely to be considered deserving of assistance. Finally, social workers are often more lenient when the client has built up social credit, which is measured 'by the social value of his activities up to now' (Knegt, 1987: 122). These subjective rules can be considered the deservingness criteria that the social workers use in their decision making in granting or denying governmental assistance.

Following Van Oorschot (2000), we conclude from the foregoing the existence of the following five deservingness criteria that encompass all the other criteria:

1. *control*: poor people's control over their neediness, or their responsibility for it: the less control, the more deserving;
2. *need*: the greater the level of need, the more deserving;
3. *identity*: the identity of the poor, i.e., their proximity to the rich or their 'pleasantness'; the closer to 'us', the more deserving;
4. *attitude*: poor people's attitude towards support, or their docility or gratefulness: the more compliant, the more deserving;
5. *reciprocity*: the degree of reciprocation by the poor, or having earned support: the more reciprocation, the more deserving' (Van Oorschot, 2000: 36)

Figure 1.1 is based on the model of Van Oorschot Roosma (2015) and shows how the popular deservingness of a target group is the result of the perceived 'score' on each criterion.



Ta = position Target group A on 'negative-positive' dimension of a deservingness criterion

Figure 1.1 A model of the popular deservingness of a target group (Van Oorschot & Roosma, 2015).

Figure 1.1 suggests that the popular perceived deservingness of a specific target group can be seen as a 'score' on a dimension that ranges from 'very undeserving' to 'very deserving' as well as the results from a combination of the perceived 'scores' of the target group on the five separate criteria. These scores reflect how people perceive the characteristics of the target group members on a specific criterion. People may perceive them as more or less positive/negative, and, notably, such 'scores' on particular criteria can have a different weight (effect) in the overall deservingness outcome. As will become clear in this dissertation, a particular target group's scores and weights and, therefore, the overall outcome, can be different across individuals and that the deservingness of that target group in the general public's eye is an aggregate of these individual perceptions. At the individual and aggregate levels, the target group's scores, weights and overall outcomes can change over time as a result of changes at the individual context levels. These variations will be further addressed below.

1.2.3 Explaining variations

The basic model that is depicted in figure 1.1 is extended further in this thesis. The first two remarks in this introduction, which involves the supposed stability of the welfare opinions that were made above, concerned the individual and contextual variations in these opinions. We also apply these variations to deservingness opinions. How individuals perceive the characteristics of a target group, in particular its 'scores' on a deservingness criterion, can vary depending on the individual characteristics of the perceiving person and on the characteristics of the context that he or she is in.

The reasoning behind individual variations in welfare opinions are generally explained by using self-interest theory and cultural ideology theory (see, for example, Blekesaune, 2007; Kangas, 1997; Svallfors, 2007; Van Oorschot, 2000). Self-interest theory states that people form attitudes or opinions based on their own best interests. This framework thus assumes that the people who have a vested personal interest in the welfare state and its programs are more likely to support them (see, for example, Blekesaune, 2007; Cook, 1979; Edlund, 1999; Hasenfeld & Rafferty, 1989; Rehm, 2007; Sachweh et al., 2007; Svallfors, 1997). Kumlin (2004) conceptualized this welfare state that is related to self-interest in two ways. Objective self-interest denotes the extent to which a person actually enjoys benefits, whereas subjective self-interest refers to the perceptions of the extent to which people expect to gain from welfare state changes. Other scholars have extended the vested interest that people can have to three types (Goul Andersen, 1993; Sihvo & Uusitalo, 1995). Comparable with the objective self-interest of Kumlin (2004), the first type of interest refers to a current dependency on one or more welfare state programs. An expected future reliance, which is the second type, can also be a reason for more support. This type of self-interest relates to the subjective self-interest that was formulated by Kumlin and assumes that people who expect to rely on some form of future benefit are more supportive of welfare state cultivation and expansion. The factors that are related to people's structural position and life cycle (i.e., age, income, educational level) are thus likely to affect the perceived social risks (Svallfors, 2007). The last type of self-interest comes from theories of tax frustration. It is often assumed that the affluent are less supportive of the welfare state because they face higher tax burdens and are not likely to rely on the welfare state (Blekesaune, 2007; Pettersen, 1995; Wilensky, 1975). This last type was another reason that many people expected a legitimacy crisis because the 'middle mass' grew and could get their social insurance through individual and private organizations; thus, they did not need the welfare state (Pettersen, 2001).

In addition to self-interest, cultural ideology has been found to shape people's welfare preferences (for reviews, see, e.g., Ploug, 1996; Ullrich, 2000). Political preferences and work ethics are the most often examined cultural factors. People on the political left, who have more egalitarian views that support redistributive interventions, are more often pro-welfare than people who place themselves on the political right; these people are more meritocratic and believe in little governmental interference (see, for example, Jæger, 2008; Svallfors, 2007). People with stronger work ethics view work as a moral duty and believe that people should provide for themselves. These individuals are thus also more likely to not have a pro-welfare outlook. Religious denominations are also often considered. This consideration originates from the religious backgrounds that are at the foundation of most (if not all) welfare states (Kahl, 2005) and still affects views on helping people who are worse off. Overall, the relative stability of

welfare state support by the public in general is thus faced with considerable individual variation. In this thesis, we apply these theories to understand the individual variations in deservingness opinions.

When comparing popular deservingness opinions among countries and over time, the context effects must be considered. For example, it seems obvious that the popular deservingness of the unemployed depends on the unemployment rate or that the popular deservingness of the elderly is affected by the aging of society. As was stated above, when research on welfare attitudes began to focus on country variation, the contextual differences among these countries were included to explain the differences. The included factors are broadly classified into economic, cultural and political, and institutional factors (see, for example, Albrekt Larsen, 2006; Blekesaune, 2007; Fridberg & Ploug, 2000; Jæger, 2006b; Lepianka, 2007; Svallfors, 2007; Van Oorschot & Meuleman, 2014; Van Oorschot, Opielka, & Pfau-Effinger, 2008). It is expected that these factors also influence popular deservingness opinions. Depending on the available data and the focus of each chapter, the effects of these contextual factors will therefore be included.

The general model that follows from our discussion of individual and context level factors that influence deservingness opinions is shown in figure 1.2. As explained above, the deservingness opinion of a target group A is conceived as the result of the combination of how people perceive target group members to ‘score’ on five different criteria. Figure 1.2 suggests that a variation in the application in deservingness criteria and their outcomes can be understood by reference to a series of individual and context level factors.

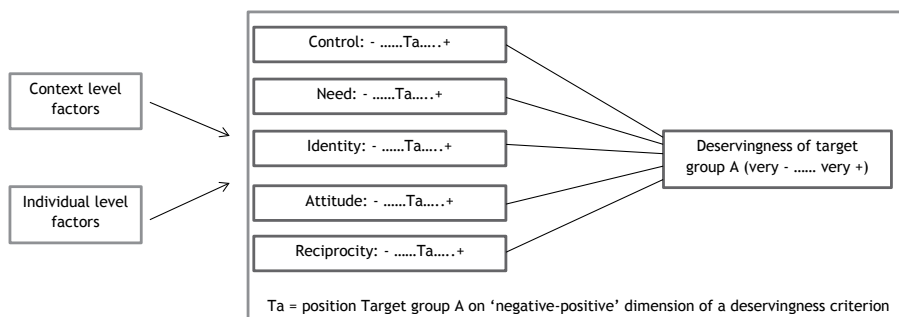


Figure 1.2 A heuristic model of the factors that affect the popular deservingness of a target group.

Figure 1.2 is a heuristic model because it shows the main concepts that, in our view, play a role in understanding deservingness opinions. Accordingly, it will be used here to frame our research questions, analyses and interpretations. The figure is not intended to be a full conceptual model of cause and (direct and mediated) effect relations that are to be tested against the data. The reason for our more limited approach is because there are simply no data sets with which a full causal model can be tested in its entirety. The most significant problem is that a full causal model requires data on people's opinions concerning the overall deservingness score of one or more target groups and on their perceptions of the scores of target group members regarding the different criteria. In the ideal case, these data would exist for various time periods and countries. With this data, and data on the relevant characteristics of the perceiving persons and the context in which they live, one could test the full model. However these data do not exist. As a heuristic model, however, figure 1.2 directed and positioned the research questions that we posed, and it guided the interpretations of our findings. We will explain this process in the next section.

1.3 Research questions

Although in the literature, the deservingness ranking of various needy groups and the criteria that explain them are increasingly understood, there are still many unknowns to examine that could improve our understanding of the redistributive part of the social legitimacy of the welfare state. In this dissertation, we hope to contribute to part of this line of research by analyzing popular deservingness opinions in various ways. Our interest involves looking beyond the often discussed rank order of more and less deserving groups and focus on the factors that affect the differences in the application of various deservingness criteria, changes in the level of the popular deservingness of various needy groups over time, and cross-national differences in the popular deservingness of unemployed people. We apply the deservingness logic to understand the differences in the degree to which people are more strict or generous, not in granting social rights to needy target groups, but in imposing job seeking obligations on them.

As we will explain in more detail below, the first study analyzes whether different Dutch people apply different deservingness criteria to the target group of disability pensioners. The first study is situated in the heuristic schema of figure 1.2 where the degree to which the Dutch people apply various criteria to the deservingness of the target group of disability pensioners is the dependent variable, which is explained by a series of individual level characteristics. In the second study, the dependent variable is the Dutch people's opinions on the deservingness of different benefit target groups, and we analyze how over time, changes in these opinions are affected by changes in a number of contextual factors

(after controlling for a series of individual level characteristics). In this study, a reference to various deservingness criteria guides the formulation of hypotheses involving these effects and the interpretation of the results. In the third study, our dependent variable is the popular deservingness of unemployed people among Europeans, and we analyze which individual and context level factors can explain its variation. Again, referring to the deservingness criteria, hypotheses are formulated, and results are interpreted. Finally, our fourth study uses as a dependent variable the Dutch people's opinions on whether different groups of beneficiaries deserve a stricter or more relaxed imposition of job seeking obligations and how people combine this with deservingness opinions regarding these groups' social rights. The deservingness criteria are discussed to understand the effects of individual level characteristics on these dependent variables.

Clearly, the social survey data that were available to us only allowed for analyzing parts of the relations that are depicted in figure 1.2. With the exception of a Dutch welfare opinion study, the existing welfare attitude surveys that were available at the time of the project especially lack detailed information on how target groups in the public eye 'score' on particular deservingness criteria and what the relative weight of each criterion is. In our concluding section below, we will discuss how, for example, vignette studies can increase this information. However, with the data available, we have contributed new insights to the welfare deservingness literature. In particular, we have contributed insights regarding how the Dutch public applies the deservingness criteria to disability pensioners, how Dutch deservingness opinions can fluctuate over time, how the opinions of Europeans differ among countries, and how the Dutch people apply a deservingness logic to job seeking obligations for various groups of welfare beneficiaries. We will now briefly present our four studies in more detail.

1.3.1 Popular criteria for the welfare deservingness of disability pensioners

The first study of this thesis concerns the possible different emphasis that is put on the various deservingness criteria by different people. Although the criteria that are used to determine deservingness are widely accepted, it remains unclear if all the criteria matter to the same extent and are the same for all needy groups and for all individuals who use the criteria. In focusing on this last question, we examine if a number of personal characteristics determine a stronger or weaker emphasis on any of the deservingness criteria. Varying emphasis on a criterion may also provide a more profound consideration of individual variation in welfare support. Chapter 2 thus attempts to answer the following research question:

RQ 1: To what extent do people differentiate in the emphasis that they put on the various deservingness criteria, and which individual characteristics explain these differences?

Using the 2006 Welfare opinions survey in the Netherlands data (N=1760) allows us to focus on the preferred emphasis on three separate deservingness criteria (need, control and reciprocity), when considering the deservingness of the target group of the disabled for work. For each criterion, we examine structural and cultural characteristics that can explain the differences in emphasis on the specific criterion.

Considering the structural characteristics, the self-interest theory assumes that people form attitudes based on their own best interests. This interest may be in the risk of having to rely on a benefit yourself, which leads to a preference for less emphasis (the group risk perspective). This situation would be the case for people with an unfavorable socio-economic status (on a pension, with a low income, unemployed, with a low level of education). However, self-interest can also refer to competition for scarce resources, which prefers more stringent criteria (resource competition perspective). The government has limited means; therefore, expenditure on one type of welfare beneficiary will likely reduce the amount that is available to other beneficiaries. Following this reasoning leads to an opposite expectation for the people in more unfavorable socio-structural positions than just described: we expect them to especially emphasize the criteria that they themselves meet - this perspective gives them a competitive advantage. Both hypotheses are considered in chapter 2.

We also examine the effects of the cultural characteristics that are commonly used in the social rights literature, such as work ethics, political stance, and religious denomination. We expect people who are on the political right, who believe in a more selective approach to the welfare state (Esping-Andersen, 1990), to emphasize the deservingness criteria more strongly than people on the political left. The meritocratic view of people with strong work ethics leads us to expect that these people also emphasize the criteria more strongly. Concerning religious denomination, the Protestant tradition differentiates more strongly among needy groups, which creates the expectation of more emphasis on the need criterion than would be the case for Catholics. The opposite is expected for the control criterion because of the belief in predestination in the Protestant religion.

1.3.2 The dynamics of welfare opinions in changing economic, institutional and political contexts

The popular deservingness opinions have thus far mostly been studied as a stable construct where certain groups are always more deserving than others (Coughlin, 1980). However, even if the ranking remains the same, this does not mean that these opinions are static. In addition, although the individual determinants of support for different benefits have been studied rather extensively (Svallfors, 2007), welfare opinions are not formed in a vacuum. The social context has changed considerably over the studied period, which has likely influenced popular deservingness opinions (e.g., Blekesaune,

2007; Erikson, MacKuen, & Stimson, 2002). For example, the institutional context changed when retrenchment policies were established after a long period of welfare state expansion. However, the context in which opinions are formed is also constantly changing economically, with fluctuating economic growth and unemployment rates, whereas political changes can be found in a more left- or right-wing political climate in society. The question thus remains if and how this changing context influences deservingness opinions. We examine both the long-term developments and short-term fluctuations in deservingness opinions and the extent to which these changes are attributed to context changes. Furthermore, by considering the opinion variation concerning five different benefit arrangements (disability pension, old age pension, unemployment benefits, social assistance benefits, and sickness benefits), we are also able to examine if the context changes have different effects depending on the arrangement's target group. In chapter 3, we examine these relations using the repeated cross-sectional Cultural Changes in the Netherlands (CCN) surveys and answer the following research question:

RQ 2: How did welfare deservingness opinions change, if at all, in the Netherlands during the period studied (1975-2006) and to what extent can these changes be attributed to changes in the economic, political, or institutional contexts?

Concerning the economic context, we expect a different effect depending on how the state of the economy was examined. For economic growth, we use the self-interest perspective and expect that people are more generous and consider needy groups to be deserving of more support when there is more economic growth. To the contrary, we expect that when using the unemployment rate as a measure of the economic state, a lower unemployment rate - i.e., a better economic situation - makes the public more critical concerning the deservingness of groups that are considered part of the working population. The reason could be self-interest (the odds of becoming unemployed are smaller), but deservingness theory can also be an explanation because changes in unemployment rates also change people's view on who is to blame for the predicament and the ability to identify with the unemployed.

As part of cultural change over time, we consider the political climate. In times when there is a more rightist political climate, popular ideologies are more focused on personal responsibility, and it is expected that needy groups are considered to be less deserving of support than in times with a more leftist ideology.

Finally, we consider institutional changes through specific policy developments. Changes in policies, especially those that make a benefit less accessible and/or less generous, make the public more aware of the hardships that its beneficiaries face, which likely (temporarily) increases the deservingness of the target group.

1.3.3 *The relative deservingness of the unemployed in the eyes of the European public*

As mentioned, researchers have found what has been called a *universal dimension of support* where the old, sick and disabled are considered to be deserving of more support than the unemployed and social assistance recipients (Coughlin, 1980; Van Oorschot, 2000). However, recently changing economic circumstances have caused increasing unemployment rates, which have increased demand on unemployment benefits. This situation raises the question if it changes the relative deservingness of the unemployed compared with groups that are considered to be highly deserving under all circumstances (e.g., the elderly, sick and disabled). More generally, how strong is the divide among these more and less deserving groups and how does this divide differ among European countries that vary, e.g., in their economic circumstances? Do Europeans differ in the extent to which they differentiate between supporting the unemployed and other needy groups? If so, can these differences be attributed to individual characteristics, or do country characteristics, such as economic wealth and unemployment rates, also influence people's opinions on the relative deservingness of the unemployed? Opinions are likely to be influenced by the context as well. Using data on 45 regions/countries from the European Values Study (EVS, 2011), chapter 4 thus focuses on answering the following research question:

RQ 3: What is the relative deservingness of the unemployed in Europe, in the eyes of the public, compared with the deservingness of groups that are known to be considered as highly deserving under all circumstances, and how can the possible differences be explained from individual and context level factors?

For the possible explanatory factors of the relative deservingness of the unemployed, we focus on both individual level and country level economic and cultural characteristics, as well as institutional differences among European countries. Concerning the socio-economic individual level characteristics, we use self-interest theory and expect that people who are unemployed or have a higher chance of becoming unemployed (i.e., those with a lower level of education or with a lower income) consider the unemployed as relatively more deserving. Pensioners and the sick and disabled, in contrast, consider the unemployed to be relatively less deserving because they have a more personal interest in competing benefits.

Following our reasoning from chapter 3 as described above, we have contrasting expectations concerning the country level economic characteristics. People in poorer countries are expected to make more distinctions between deserving and undeserving groups than in more prosperous countries. A higher unemployment rate, however, creates employment insecurity. Based on the self-interest theory, this insecurity should lead to a higher relative deservingness of the unemployed. Deservingness theory is another reason for this expectation because a higher unemployment rate decreases the odds

that the unemployed are blamed for their predicament (control criterion) and increases identification with the unemployed (identity criterion). By controlling for individual level socio-economic characteristics, we hope to discern between these two explanations.

The cultural individual characteristics that are considered are political stance (higher relative deservingness from the political left), work ethics (lower relative deservingness from people with strong work ethics) and religious denomination (compared with other denominations, Protestants consider the unemployed less deserving). We have the same expectations for the country level versions of these characteristics (political climate, national work ethics and religious heritage).

Finally, we include institutional characteristics. Institutional logic assumes that policies provide people a general frame of reference of what is 'normal' regarding the deservingness of certain groups (Edlund, 1999; Jæger, 2006a; Svallfors, 2003). We therefore expect that in countries with more policies that attempt to support the unemployed, the unemployed will be regarded as relatively more deserving.

1.3.4 The social legitimacy of the activating welfare state

Although most of the research on welfare opinions is focused on support for redistribution and social entitlements, another prime goal of welfare policies in recent decades has been the activation of welfare groups (Ivar Lodemel & Heather Trickey, 2001; Serrano Pascual & Magnusson, 2007). Additionally, although the public agrees with welfare support for needy groups (social rights), this coincides with evidence of support for perceptions that focus more on activation (Albrekt Larsen, 2008; Houtman, 1994; Pettersen, 1995). The increased emphasis on activation originates from a perspective that regards citizens as having not only social rights but also social obligations (e.g., job seeking obligations). In the social legitimacy literature, however, this aspect is not often included, whereas focusing only on rights will likely provide only part of the story of legitimacy, which would also be too optimistic. In the last empirical chapter, we examine the extent to which the public agrees with job seeking obligations for benefit recipients. We also explore the possible reasons for leniency in applying obligations, which we explain by using deservingness theory. Furthermore, we are interested not only in the support for these obligations in general but also in the preferred balance of rights and obligations to give us insights regarding the legitimacy of activation. Consistent with the previous questions, another issue of interest also involves the individual determinants of the preferred balance. We use data from the 2006 Dutch Welfare Opinions Survey (Achterberg & Van Oorschot, 2008), which contains detailed questions regarding various types and degrees of work obligations for the three different groups of the claimants of our interest, to answer the following research questions.

RQ 4a: To what degree do Dutch citizens support various types of work obligations for claimants of disability benefits, unemployment benefits and social assistance?

RQ 4b: What is the preferred balance of rights and obligations among Dutch citizens, i.e., which combinations of rights and obligations do people prefer, and which individual characteristics explain these differences?

The extent to which different needy groups meet the deservingness criteria has been used to explain differences in public support. In this chapter, we use the criteria to hypothesize concerning the reasons for leniency regarding work obligations. The benefit target groups that meet more of the deservingness criteria are expected to be granted more leniency when considering work obligations than the groups that meet the criteria to a lesser extent.

Concerning the preferred rights-obligations balance, there are four theoretical options (see figure 1.3) that are distributed among high or low rights and high or low obligations. Similar to the previous chapters, we examine both the socio-economic and cultural personal characteristics as the determining factors for the preferred balance option.

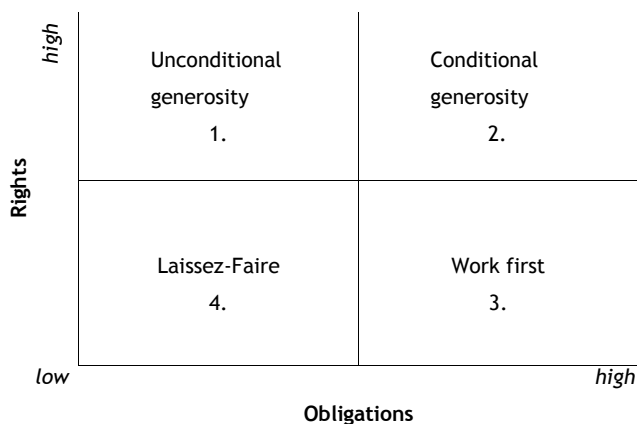


Figure 1.3. Theoretical combinations of preferred rights and obligations

We expect that for the group that are disabled for work, most people choose the unconditional generosity option because this group is generally considered most deserving, regardless of the individual characteristics. Because the public is more divided on the deservingness of unemployed and social assistance beneficiaries, we expect that the distribution among the balance options to be spread more among the options and more dependent on the individual characteristics.

1.4 Data

To answer our research questions, the following three opinion data sources are used: the 2006 Welfare opinions survey in the Netherlands; the Cultural Changes in the Netherlands Surveys (CCN); and the European Values Study. To answer research questions 2 and 3, the data that were used were supplemented with macro level data. Research question 1 was answered by using ordinary least squares regression analyses. To answer research question 2, multilevel logistic regression analysis and ordinary logistic regression analyses were used. Research question 3 was answered by using multilevel regression analyses, whereas research questions 4a and 4b were answered by using multinomial regression analyses. More detailed methodological issues will be discussed in later sections. The following sections review only the data description.

1.4.1 Welfare opinions survey in the Netherlands, 2006

Chapters 2 and 5 are based on the data of The Welfare Opinions Survey in the Netherlands, 2006 [*Arbeid, Bedrijf en Sociale Zekerheid in Nederland 2006*]. These data originate from a computer-based online questionnaire that consists of three modules, which were administered by the CentERdata research institute at Tilburg University (Achterberg & Van Oorschot, 2008). The questions focus on opinions regarding social security. In the last 7 weeks of 2006, this questionnaire was given to 2,682 selected members of a nationally representative panel. In total, 1,972 respondents (73%) between the ages of 16 and 91 years completed all three modules. Because of a slight overrepresentation of older people, people with higher incomes and people with higher levels of education, the descriptive statistics include a weighing factor. Excluding the respondents with missing values on the relevant characteristics, chapter 2 is based on 1,760 respondents, whereas chapter 5 is based on 1,807 respondents.

1.4.2 Cultural Changes in the Netherlands Surveys

Chapter 3 of this dissertation focuses on the long- and short-term trends in deservingness opinions. This chapter is based on the Cultural Changes in The Netherlands (CCN) data (Netherlands Institute of Social Research, 2010). The CCN survey is a nationally representative survey of the Dutch public aged 16 years and older and was commissioned by The Netherlands Institute for Social Research. The data are based on a questionnaire that focuses on opinions concerning society and culture and has been collected yearly since 1975 and every two years since 1999. This survey therefore presents a unique opportunity to examine the changes in opinions in the Netherlands. For our second research question, we merged 22 waves of the CCN: 1975, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1983, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, and 2006. Each wave comprises approximately 2,000 respondents, and our final

sample of analyses that were used in chapter 3 consists of between 27,002 and 38,594 respondents, depending on the specific analysis.

1.4.3 European Values Study

The European Values Study (EVS, 2011) is the basis of chapter 4. The EVS is a cross-national survey on basic values concerning life, family, religion, politics, and society. Starting in 1981, European citizens have been interviewed by using standardized questionnaires every nine years. In each wave, numerous countries were added. Chapter 4 is based on the last wave from 2008, and a representative sample of the adult citizens of all European countries with 100,000 or more inhabitants were interviewed face-to-face. The 2008 questionnaire was improved by adding a rich set of socio-demographic background variables, which enables a more in-depth analyses of the individual analyses of values. These features make the EVS a highly valuable data source for cross-national value comparisons that uses both individual- and macro-level determinants. To answer research question 4, our final sample for analysis (excluding individuals with missing values on the relevant characteristics) includes 60,388 individuals from 45 countries.

Table 1.1 presents an overview of the focus topic in each empirical chapter and the data and methods that were used.

Table 1.1 Overview of the topics and data used in the empirical chapters

<i>Chapter</i> Dependent variable	Independent variables: Individual level	Independent variables: Contextual level	Social rights/ obligations	Different benefit- target groups	Data & Methods
<i>Chapter 2</i> Emphasis on control/ need/reciprocity criteria for disabled	Individual differences - socio-economic and cultural characteristics included		Deservingness criteria as a way to determine more or less social rights	Focus on the disabled for work	The Welfare Opinions Survey in the Netherlands, 2006. OLS regression analyses
<i>Chapter 3</i> Deservingness of five different benefits	Controlled for individual socio- economic and cultural characteristics	Focus on the effect of contextual changes through the years - economic and cultural	Deservingness of more social rights	Including five different benefit groups: pensioners, unemployed, disabled for work, sick, social assistance beneficiaries	Cultural Changes in The Netherlands including waves from 22 time points. Multilevel logistic regression analysis and ordinary logistic regression analyses
<i>Chapter 4</i> Relative deservingness of the unemployed compared with vulnerable groups	Individual differences - socio-economic and cultural characteristics - included	Comparing economic and cultural differences of European countries and their effect on the relative deservingness of the unemployed	Relative deservingness of social rights	Examining opinions on the deservingness of the unemployed relative to traditionally vulnerable groups (the old, sick and disabled and poor children)	European Values Study, including data from 45 countries. Multilevel regression analyses
<i>Chapter 5</i> Preferred rights/ obligations balance for three groups of beneficiaries	Individual differences - socio-economic and cultural characteristics included		Opinions on social rights and obligations and their preferred balance	Including three different benefit groups: disabled for work, unemployed, social assistance beneficiaries	The Welfare Opinions Survey in the Netherlands, 2006. Multinomial regression analyses

1.5 Summary of main findings

In this section, we answer the research questions that are posed by presenting the main findings of each empirical chapter and the research designs that are used.

1.5.1 *Popular criteria for the welfare deservingness of disability pensioners*

The first empirical chapter focused on the differences in the emphasis that is put on various deservingness criteria and the individual characteristics that explain these differences. OLS regression analyses on the 2006 Welfare opinions survey in the Netherlands data showed that people's emphasis on specific deservingness criteria is a reflection of their socio-structural positions and their ideology. For example, the unemployed emphasize the control criterion more than the employed, and people with lower incomes emphasize the need criterion more than people with higher incomes. Moreover, the reciprocity criterion is emphasized more by people over 65 years of age, and people with views that are more on the political right prefer to emphasize all three criteria.

Although who emphasizes the deservingness criteria is different for each criterion, some general patterns hold true for all three criteria. People who are more likely to compete with the disabled for scarce resources place more emphasis on the deservingness criteria. This result is consistent with the resource competition perspective of the self-interest theory. A different type of self-interest- i.e., the group risk perspective - lies with people who have actual personal experience with receiving disability benefits, who know what it is like and are more likely to have to rely on benefits again in the future; they prefer a weaker criteria emphasis. Concerning people's cultural ideology, people who support views on the political right and have strong work ethics place a heightened emphasis on the deservingness criteria. Overall, the socio-structural position appears to matter more than ideologies in determining a person's emphasis on the control and need criteria, whereas the opposite is shown for the reciprocity criterion.

These findings implicate the importance of considering individual differences when examining deservingness opinions and the criteria on which these opinions are based because individuals differ in the extent to which they emphasize each criterion.

1.5.2 *The dynamics of welfare opinions in changing economic, institutional and political contexts*

Extending the research on deservingness opinions to a dynamic perspective while also including different types of welfare arrangements was the focus of our second research question, which we discuss in chapter 3. In this chapter, the influence of a changing economic, institutional and political society on deservingness opinions was examined by using the repeated cross-sectional Cultural Changes in the Netherlands (CCN) surveys.

The CCN surveys provided twelve waves between 1975 and 2006 of approximately 2,000 respondents, each of whom were asked concerning the deservingness of five different benefit groups. These data thus provided information on both long-term changes in deservingness opinions and short-term fluctuations.

Based on previous research, we expected modest changes in deservingness opinions in the long run. Figure 1.4 shows the percentage of the Dutch public that for each benefit feel that they are deserving of more support from 1975-2006. A close inspection of these trends shows a tipping point in the early 1980s, which brought the rather steady opinions to a higher but still a rather steady level. Multinomial regression analyses confirmed these findings.

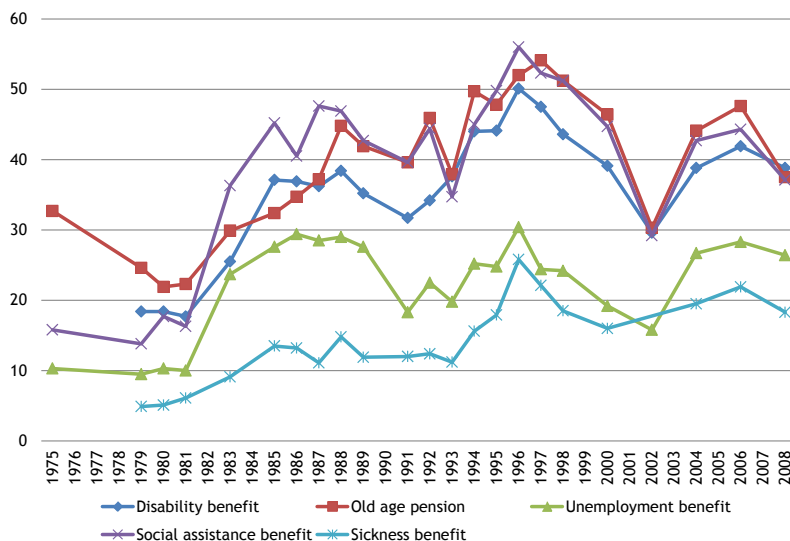


Figure 1.4. The percentage of people who believe that recipients of benefits are deserving of more, 1975-2006.

The short-term opinion fluctuations are more considerable, and the effect of contextual factors to account for the fluctuations were the main focus in this part of the thesis. To analyze the determinants of these fluctuations, we used multilevel logistic regression analyses. This technique accounts for the fact that observations in one year are not independent but correlated and also provides the opportunity to disentangle individual and context level effects (Snijders & Bosker, 1999). The results of the analyses showed that, depending on the benefit as an issue, between 6 (pension) and 12 (social assistance) percent of the variation in opinions was related to the specific year of interviewing, which we tried to explain by context factors.

Concerning the economic context, we found evidence for the expected contradictory effects of economic growth and unemployment rate. The results showed that all needy groups are considered to be deserving of more support when there is more economic growth, whereas a lower unemployment rate - i.e., a better economic situation - appeared to make the public more critical regarding the deservingness of the groups that are considered part of the working population (the unemployed and social assistance recipients). This finding can be interpreted by using deservingness theory: changes in unemployment rates also change people's views on who is to blame for the predicament and the ability to identify with the unemployed. Self-interest can also be an explanation because an increase in the unemployment rate for many people also increases the odds (and fear) of losing one's job. Unfortunately, we are unable to distinguish between the two interpretations. The expected effect of more critical deservingness opinions in a rightist political climate was also confirmed.

Finally, we considered institutional changes through specific policy developments. However, logistic regression analyses showed that these institutional effects were limited. The analyses show that there are more opinion fluctuations than can be explained by policy changes, and the policy changes that occurred only affected opinions in a little over half of the event years. Furthermore, we found cross-over effects because certain policy events affect opinions on needy groups that were not the target of the policy at issue.

Important implications that can be drawn from these findings are that deservingness opinions not only vary among individuals but also over time as a result of fluctuating contextual changes and depending on the benefits' target group.

1.5.3 The relative deservingness of the unemployed in the eyes of the European public
Chapter 4 extended the research in another direction by considering a European perspective. The objective was to examine the relative deservingness of the unemployed compared with benefit groups that are known to be considered highly deserving and to explain these differences across Europe. The European Values Survey (EVS, 2011) consists of data for 45 countries/regions, which provided us with 60,388 respondents in our final sample of analysis. The hierarchical structure of the data, which contains information on individuals that is nested in countries, is accounted for by using multilevel modeling. As stated above, this technique also provides the possibility to disentangle variance on the individual and country levels (Snijders & Bosker, 1999) concerning - in our case - the relative deservingness of the unemployed.

A first descriptive analysis showed that in all but one (FYR Macedonia) of the countries, the deservingness of the unemployed was on average considered to be relatively less than the deservingness of traditionally vulnerable groups, with considerable variation between countries in the extent of differentiation. The multilevel model showed that

almost 8.2% of the variation in the relative deservingness of the unemployed can be attributed to country level variation of which 17% is because of differences in the composition of these countries.

The results showed various support for the self-interest argument when examining the individual level characteristics. The relative deservingness of the unemployed is higher among people who are unemployed themselves, among people with a lower income and among people aged 51-64 years. The people who compete with the unemployed for benefit funds - the disabled for work and pensioners - regard the unemployed as less deserving. Considering cultural characteristics, it was found that, as expected, people with views more on the political right, people with stronger work ethics and people who identify themselves as Protestant consider the unemployed relatively less deserving.

Next, we added the country level characteristics. Of the economic measures, the finding that only the unemployment rate affects the relative deservingness of the unemployed is consistent with chapter 3. This result can also similarly be explained by deservingness theory or self-interest theory. When unemployment increases, the odds of losing your job increases for many (self-interest), and the unemployed are less likely to be blamed for their situation and easier to identify with because people are likely to know someone in that predicament (deservingness).

In addition to the individual level effect of religion, we found that the people in countries with a Protestant heritage consider the unemployed to be relatively less deserving compared with the people who live in countries with a Catholic, Orthodox or Islamic heritage. An explanation could be the Protestants' more conditional and reserved view on helping the poor (Kahl, 2005). Although we found no institutional effects, this could be because of the limited information available.

These results again show the individual variation of deservingness opinions, which this time, concerns the extent of the difference among the target groups' deservingness. Furthermore, deservingness opinions not only vary over time, as was shown in chapter 3, but also vary among countries because of the contextual differences that impact how people differentiate among needy groups.

1.5.4 The social legitimacy of the activating welfare state

After the first three empirical chapters of this dissertation focused on social rights, the final empirical chapter, chapter 5, focused on the other side: the obligations that beneficiaries get in exchange for this support. The goal was to examine if the public agrees with the obligations given, when and why they prefer to be lenient concerning obligations, and what rights/obligations balance the public prefers.

Descriptive analyses that use the 2006 Dutch Welfare Opinions Survey (Achterberg & Van Oorschot, 2008) confirmed the expectations that needy groups that meet more of the deservingness criteria are granted more leniency regarding work obligations, both

among the different claimant groups and within the nuances of each group. The disabled for work can count on more leniency regarding work obligations than the other groups, especially the people who are fully disabled. Concerning the unemployed, obligation leniency is granted to the older unemployed and the people who pay back society in some other way, whereas single parents with young children who receive social assistance benefits can also count on leniency regarding work obligations.

Regarding the preferred rights-obligations balance, four theoretical options were presented (see figure 1.3). As expected, the results of the descriptive analyses show that there is the most consensus when asked concerning the disabled for work: almost three-quarters of the respondents choose the first option (unconditional generosity) when considering this group. For the other groups, the public is more divided. However, for all groups, *laissez-faire* is the least chosen option.

A multinomial regression analysis provided insights in the determining factors for the preferred options. Generally, the ideological characteristics have the same effect on all groups: the people who are more on the political right and the people with stronger higher work ethics are more likely to choose any option other than the unconditional generosity option, and they especially prefer the work first option. Socio-economic factors that reflect self-interest display a less consistent pattern in the effects. Older working age individuals, lower income groups, people with personal experience in relying on benefits and the unemployed choose the unconditional generosity option over the other options. Counter to self-interest is the finding that lower and middle educational groups prefer the work first option (and *laissez faire*) over the unconditional generosity option.

These final results again show that individuals differ in their opinions not only regarding social rights but also concerning social obligations. Specifically, different individuals prefer a different balance of rights and obligations, which also varies depending on the benefit's target group.

1.6 General conclusions

At the beginning of this chapter, we stated that although the social legitimacy of the welfare state appears stable, there are many ways in which welfare opinions still differ. There are individual differences depending on socio-economic positions and cultural ideology, variations depending on the context in which the opinions are formed (e.g., country variation), and opinion differences depending on the specific aspect of the welfare state that is considered and on the target group of a specific welfare arrangement. The basic question and focus of this dissertation regards popular opinions on: *who gets what and why and under what conditions?* That is, which groups in society are perceived as being deserving or undeserving of welfare provisions by the welfare

state? In this section, we present our main conclusions, based on the findings in the four empirical chapters that consider these issues.

1.6.1 Individual differences in deservingness opinions

First, although the public may agree generally on deservingness perceptions, examining these perceptions more closely has shown that there are individual variations that are found in the support for different needy groups. The results from all four of our empirical chapters have shown that the variations in individual socio-economic characteristics (educational level, work status, income) and ideological characteristics (political stance, work ethics, religion) are determining factors of deservingness opinions. These opinions can partly be explained by self-interest theory and cultural ideology theory. These results corroborate findings of previous research that examines the individual determinants of other welfare attitudes. We did not find clear patterns in determining which characteristics matter more: the socio-economic or cultural characteristics. However, we do see some evidence for slightly stronger effects of cultural characteristics, especially when the question of obligations is involved.

In addition to the individual determinants of *deservingness*, we have taken a step forward by examining the individual variations that appear when determining the emphasis that people place on specific deservingness *criteria* - the criteria that determine a needy group's deservingness. The results of this thesis have shown that individual variations are also visible when considering individual characteristics in the emphasis that people put on these criteria. Each criterion that has been examined has its own set of individual determinants, where self-interest appears to matter more for some criteria (control and need), and ideological differences explain more emphasis another criterion (reciprocity). This result is consistent with the above-mentioned findings of slightly stronger effects of cultural characteristics when obligations are involved because the increased emphasis on obligations is founded on the reciprocity-aspect of deservingness: doing something in return for the support.

1.6.2 Contextual effects on deservingness opinions

The second main conclusion that can be derived from the results of the empirical studies of this thesis is the importance of the context (both time and country) in which deservingness opinions are formed. The context may influence how needy groups 'score' on each of the deservingness criteria (which together, determine their deservingness), and/or a certain context can increase or decrease the emphasis that is being put on certain criteria.

For example, examining longitudinal trends on deservingness opinions of five different groups has shown that opinions fluctuate because the societal conditions in which these opinions are formed also change. Changes in the economic context can

change the way people consider the amount of control that needy people have over their predicament and the amount of leeway that people have to be considerate to needy groups' well-being. Changes in the political context also affect people's perceptions of deservingness - with more strict perceptions of deservingness in a rightist political climate - regardless of one's own political viewpoints. There is no clear pattern found concerning which contextual factor matters more.

Comparing the relative deservingness of the unemployed in 45 European countries has also shown the importance of the societal context in forming opinions. Although the ranking of needy groups is considered to be universally the same (Coughlin, 1980) - which was again corroborated in this thesis for all but one country - there are large differences among countries in the extent to which people differentiate among the groups. Again, the importance of economic and cultural-ideological context factors are shown with similar effect sizes: in countries with a higher unemployment rate and stronger work ethics, the relative deservingness of the unemployed is higher, whereas a Protestant religious heritage decreases their relative deservingness.

1.6.3 Obligations

A third conclusion concerns the relatively new element in the social legitimacy literature: the element of activation. The results of the empirical analyses of chapter 5 show that although there is generally support for work obligations, there is also reason for leniency in certain cases. Because deservingness theory has been used to explain differences in the support of social rights for various needy groups, we used this theory to explain differences in the leniency that is granted when considering work obligations for various needy groups. Needy groups that meet more of the deservingness criteria (e.g., the disabled for work) are granted more leniency regarding work obligations.

To consider the support for social rights without including people's opinions on obligations does not show the full picture of the legitimacy of redistribution. The question of who should get what and why and under what conditions includes both rights *and* obligations. The conditions under which people are willing to grant social rights could be that these rights are accompanied by obligations. For example, almost half of our sample chose the balance of high rights and high obligations concerning the unemployed. To really assess a needy group's deservingness, both factors should be considered.

1.6.4 Multiple needy groups

The final main conclusion to be drawn from the empirical chapters of this thesis is the importance of including multiple groups when examining deservingness opinions. This thesis shows that support for the welfare state differs depending on the specific needy group that is targeted, with certain groups (e.g., the disabled for work) being

perceived as more deserving than others (e.g., the unemployed). However, not only are there differences in the deservingness of various needy groups, the determining factors of the deservingness opinions also differ depending on the needy group in question. Individual and contextual differences influence the deservingness of various groups differently. Individually, the determinants are partly explained by self-interest theory. The interest that individuals have in an arrangement depends on the comparison of one's own characteristics with the characteristics of the target group, which was shown in our study concerning the relative deservingness of the unemployed when compared with the traditionally more vulnerable needy groups. For example, people who are unemployed themselves, people with a lower income and people aged 51-64 years - people who have an interest in the unemployment benefit - consider the unemployed to be relatively more deserving. People who are disabled for work and pensioners - who may consider that unemployment provisions compete with their own benefits - regard the unemployed as less deserving.

We consider the impact of different contexts on the deservingness opinions of different needy groups. An increase in the unemployment rate, for example, increases the deservingness of groups that are considered part of the working population and that have job-seeking obligations, such as the unemployed and social assistance recipients, but not the deservingness of the elderly who are not considered part of this population.

1.7 Research limitations and directions for further research

To conclude this overview of the thesis, some limitations of the study are addressed and directions for further research are provided to advance the understanding of deservingness opinions and social legitimacy.

A first limitation of this thesis concerns the measure of deservingness. In chapters 3 and 4, the respondents were asked concerning the extent of concern for certain groups (chapter 3) and whether the benefits were considered sufficient (chapter 4). Although evidence was provided to validate these measures, a more direct way to measure deservingness opinions would have been preferred. To our knowledge, existing longitudinal and international opinion polls with better measures are not available (yet). In addition to opinion polls, another way to examine deservingness opinions more systematically is by vignette data (see, for example, Reeskens & Van der Meer, 2014; Slothuus, 2007). Using vignettes, the respondents can be presented with detailed descriptions of needy individuals and asked concerning their deservingness. By systematically varying the given description, it is possible to determine which specific characteristic of needy people increases or decreases their perceived deservingness. In this way, information is available including their 'scores' on different deservingness

criteria and the relative weight of each criteria. (The downside of this method is that the amount of descriptions that can be given depends on the number of respondents available and is therefore limited). Reeskens and Van der Meer (2014), for example, have used vignettes among Dutch respondents in their study on the importance of recipients' identity relative to other deservingness criteria. Modeling characteristics of both the 'giver' (respondent) and the 'receiver' (described needy individual) could provide further insight in the underlying mechanisms of deservingness opinions.

The second limitation concerns the use of only Dutch data in three of the four empirical chapters of this thesis. By expanding the research to more countries, the mechanisms that are used can be more specifically tested. Currently, we can really only make statements regarding the Netherlands where chapters 2, 3 and 5 are concerned. Repeating these studies in (dynamic designs for) other countries would provide insights in whether the found mechanisms can be generalized to other countries (and times).

Another limitation involves the explanatory factors that are used in this thesis. As is often used in welfare opinion research, we examined the variation in deservingness opinions that is determined by economic and cultural characteristics. However, we were unable to find clear patterns in determining which set of characteristics provide the best predictor. One's economic position (i.e., income level and level of education), as a measure of social class, used to go hand in hand with certain cultural ideas, but for many people, this is no longer the case (cf. Achterberg & Houtman, 2006). It would thus be interesting for future research to determine the extent to which legitimacy is based on social class or on cultural ideas.

Focusing on the difference in importance of economic and cultural factors as determinants of deservingness opinions could also include cross-level interactions. For example, these interactions can determine if certain contexts create stronger effects of positions or ideas, i.e., are individual economic characteristics better able to explain deservingness opinions than cultural characteristics in countries in economic crisis? Does an individual's work ethic matter less in forming opinions on deservingness when the unemployment rate increases? Questions such as these remain unanswered, but including them in future research could provide a more detailed understanding of the mechanisms that are involved.

The final limitation is the measures of policy changes (chapter 3) and institutional factors (chapter 4). In chapters 3 and 4, we included these factors as possible explanations for the differences in deservingness opinions. However, the results showed limited to no proof for these relations. One reason could be a lack of (better) measures for these factors. For example, in chapter 3, the focus was only on the occurrence of a policy change, not the extent of the change (although the extent was included in the interpretation of the results). In the international study of chapter 4, the measure that was used (the amount of money spent on labor market policies) was limited to only a

small section of the studied countries, which were mainly Western European countries. Comparable information from many Eastern European countries was thus not included. Extending the data to non-Western countries would also better test the relation between institutional factors and deservingness opinions and also expand the Anglo-Saxon bias concerning this relation. Future research could also focus on finding a better way to compare the design of benefits and services because the comprehensiveness of labor market policies is not necessarily captured by the amount of money that is spent.

Another suggestion that was made in chapter 3 was that institutional reforms only affect people's opinions temporarily, when the reforms are given considerable media attention. Studying media portrayals of (the effects of) institutional reforms and their effects on public opinion would show if our suggestion holds true. Albrekt Larsen and Dejgaard (2013) have also suggested that the effects of welfare regimes are mediated by media portrayals of the poor. Their study showed that media portrayals of the poor and benefit recipients are more negative in a liberal welfare regime (UK) than in social-democratic welfare regimes (Sweden and Denmark). In the US, there is a research tradition in which the way the poor and welfare recipients are depicted is studied. For example, Gilens (1996) analyzed newsmagazines and showed that the most sympathetic subgroups of the poor - such as the traditionally most deserving, the elderly - are underrepresented in media coverage, whereas the least sympathetic group - the unemployed - are overrepresented. To further examine the effect of the media on deservingness opinions, future research could focus on the specific sources of media that individuals read or see and how benefit recipients are depicted in them. This approach would also provide a more direct measure of the political discourse that leans left or right at different times because this is currently only measured by an aggregation of the individual measures of political stance.



Chapter 2

Popular criteria for the welfare deservingness of disability pensioners: The influence of structural and cultural factors

This chapter was co-authored with Prof. Dr. Ing. Wim van Oorschot and Dr. Wilfred Uunk and published as: Jeene, M., Van Oorschot, W., & Uunk, W. (2013). Popular Criteria for the Welfare Deservingness of Disability Pensioners: The Influence of Structural and Cultural Factors. *Social Indicators Research*, 110(3), 1103-1117. doi:10.1007/s11205-011-9974-7

ABSTRACT

Research has shown that several criteria underlie people's opinions about the welfare deservingness of benefit recipients. However, it remains unknown which factors are associated with the emphasis that people place on such criteria. Using a 2006 Dutch national survey on the welfare deservingness of disability pension recipients, we study the influence of structural and cultural factors on people's emphasis on three deservingness criteria: control, need, and reciprocity. OLS regression analyses show that people's emphasis on specific deservingness criteria is strengthened by structural factors that indicate the possibility of resource competition such as the following: age, lower levels of education, unemployment, and lower income. However, actual personal experience with receiving welfare benefits weakens criteria emphasis. Cultural factors such as the espousal of views from the political right and the possession of strong work ethics are associated with a heightened emphasis on deservingness criteria.

2.1 Introduction

For centuries, welfare institutions and the general public have distinguished between the poor who deserve relief and those who do not. As defined by Gans (1995), the deserving poor are entitled to economic, social, and political redistribution of public resources that would help them out of their hardships, while the undeserving poor have no such entitlement. This distinction between deserving and undeserving poor is also made in social research (see, for example Coughlin, 1980; Gans, 1995; Golding & Middleton, 1982; Kangas, 2002; Katz, 1989; Skocpol, 1991), and it is among the standard concepts used in studies of the principles and practices of welfare rationing. Several formulations of ‘deservingness criteria’ have been expressed (Katz, 1989; Stein, 1971), and some empirical studies on the topic have been conducted (Cook, 1979; Cook & Barrett, 1992; Groskind, 1991; Knegt, 1987; Sachweh et al., 2007; Van Oorschot, 2000; Will, 1993). These studies have resulted in knowledge about the criteria that people emphasize when confronted with questions of who should receive what and why in a welfare state context. Summarizing these (chiefly American) studies leads to the conclusion that people emphasize five types of deservingness criteria (see also Van Oorschot, 2000):

- *need*: the level of need: the greater the level of need, the more deserving;
- *control*: poor people’s control over their neediness, or their responsibility for it: the less control, the more deserving;
- *identity*: the identity of the poor: the closer to ‘us’, the more deserving;
- *attitude*: poor people’s attitude towards support, or their docility or gratefulness: the more compliant, the more deserving;
- *reciprocity*: the degree of reciprocation by the poor (what have they done in return, or what will they do in return in the future) or having earned support: the more reciprocation, the more deserving.

Although agreement exists on which criteria can be identified, there is no uniform conclusion about which criteria are most important. This may be a consequence of the varied societal settings (times and places) in which respondents were surveyed (cf. Stein, 1971). However, as we suggest here, it is also possible that there are differences in the emphasis that people place on various deservingness criteria and that previous findings concerning the relative importance of these criteria are inconsistent for this reason. Previous studies implicitly have assumed that all people place more or less the same weight on various criteria for deservingness. However, why should we expect this to be the case? Would the degree to which needy people can be blamed for their situations be as strong a deservingness criterion for a person with a personal experience of poverty compared with a person without such an experience? Would highly educated

people feel as strongly as people with less education that a needy person's contribution to society should play a role in the allocation of welfare entitlements? In the literature, such individual differences in emphasis on deservingness criteria have not been studied. Nor does knowledge exist on which personal characteristics influence differences in people's emphasis on deservingness criteria. This study fills the apparent gap in the literature. It explores individual differences in - and determinants of - the emphasis that people place on deservingness criteria. An understanding of these differences in emphasis might, in turn, explain differences in the strength of deservingness opinions.

We formulate hypotheses about structural determinants that indicate the possibility of resource competition or the risk of welfare dependency, and about cultural determinants that indicate ideational orientations. The hypotheses are tested using data from a 2006 Dutch national survey on the welfare deservingness of disability pensioners. This survey contains questions that indicate the degree to which people emphasize more or less strongly the control, need and reciprocity criteria when forming perceptions about the allocation of entitlements to Dutch disability benefits. Disability beneficiaries are an interesting group to study because this set of welfare recipients generally is considered highly deserving of public support (Van Oorschot, 2000). If we find variations in the emphasis that people place on the control, need, and reciprocity criteria when considering this welfare group, then it is likely that such differences also exist when individuals consider welfare groups viewed as less deserving of public support. Furthermore, because increased expenditure on disability benefits could come at the cost of recipients of other welfare benefits, the Dutch case of the disability pension system provides an opportunity to test whether feelings of resource competition play a role in the emphasis on deservingness criteria.

2.2 Hypotheses

Because this is the first study conducted on the subject, we take a rather exploratory approach to formulating ideas about influencing factors. We assume that, as in many cases of opinions and preferences related to welfare, two types of factors play a role: the person's socio-structural position and the person's cultural or ideational orientation.¹ With these factors, we formulate more general hypotheses for all deservingness criteria under study and sub-hypotheses for individual criteria when relevant.

¹ See for theoretical and empirical accounts of this, respectively, Elster (1990), Kangas (1997), Lindenberg (1990), Mansbridge (1990), Taylor-Gooby (1998), Therborn (1991), Blekesaune and Quadagno (2003), Goul Andersen, Pettersen, Svallfors, and Uusitalo (1999), Groskind (1994), Hasenfeld and Rafferty (1989), Pettersen (1995), and Van Oorschot (2006b).

2.2.1 Socio-structural characteristics

The socio-structural characteristics that we examine are age, level of education, income, and employment situation. We formulate two contrasting hypotheses on the effects of these characteristics. Furthermore, we hypothesize about the effect of whether a person has been a welfare recipient.

Self-interest is a commonly used framework in welfare attitude research. In this framework, it is assumed that people form attitudes based on their own best interests (Kumlin, 2004). In the context of deservingness criteria, self-interest reflects the extent to which people expect to win or lose by emphasizing or de-emphasizing various criteria. These expectations can go either way when it comes to socio-structural characteristics. On one hand, there is the *group risk perspective*, which states that a person in an unfavorable socio-structural position (on a pension, with a low income, unemployed, with a low level of education) will place less weight on *any* of the deservingness criteria than would a person in a more favorable position (*H1*). This expectation is based on considerations of self-interest; a person in an unfavorable structural position runs a greater risk of ever needing welfare support, and placing less weight on deservingness criteria would generally assure someone of easier access to welfare.

On the other hand, because welfare deservingness also involves competition with other welfare recipients for resources, self-interest may also imply that socio-structural factors increase the weight a person places on deservingness criteria. From the perspective of *resource competition* we predict that a person in a less favorable socio-structural position will place *more* emphasis on the deservingness criteria, not less (*H2*). That is, people in the lower strata of society may sense competition with one another for scarce and limited welfare support funds. In the case of the Netherlands, old age pensioners and unemployed people are particularly likely to sense welfare competition with disability pensioners. Although the country's disability pensions, national old age pensions and unemployment benefits serve separate risk categories, all three are financed mainly through payroll taxes. Because government policymakers, for economic reasons, strive to keep the payroll tax within limits, increased expenditure on one type of welfare beneficiary would likely reduce the amount available for the other categories.

Golding and Middleton (1982) offer a similar argument about resource competition to account for why British people in unfavorable positions often have the same - and, at times, even stronger - perceptions of benefit abuse than people in better positions. Maassen en De Goede (1989), interpreting Dutch public opinion about the unemployed, suggest a theory of perceived competition: people at the greatest risk of reliance on public support are those who fear most strongly that social security benefits will decrease if too many people claim benefits.

In light of this competition for scarce resources, we would expect those in unfavorable socio-structural positions to especially emphasize the criteria that they

themselves meet - a perspective that would give them a competitive advantage. We would expect the elderly to emphasize the control criterion, which they meet because no one is to blame for growing old, and the reciprocity criterion, which they meet because they have contributed to society for many years (*H2a*). We would expect the unemployed to emphasize the control criterion, assuming that in general, unemployed workers do not feel they are to blame for their situation and do not want to compete for resources with those who are to blame (*H2b*). Finally, low-income individuals know what it is like to live within limited means and would not want to lose out to people with other means of supporting themselves; for these reasons, we would expect them to put more emphasis on the need criterion (*H2c*).

We would also expect personal experience as a welfare recipient to make people more lenient in their views of who should receive welfare benefits (*H3*). The reason for this is self-interest. A history of welfare claims increases one's likelihood of future claims, and awareness of this elevated risk may make individuals more fearful. Considering their own past as a welfare recipient and possibly reduced contribution to society, people with experience receiving welfare benefits have a personal interest in placing less emphasis on the reciprocity criterion than would people who have never received welfare benefits (*H3a*). Another reason for leniency might be that former welfare recipients have a greater understanding of what it means to live on limited funds and the complexity of factors that caused the situation. We therefore would expect these individuals to place less emphasis on the need (*H3b*) and control (*H3c*) criteria as well.

2.2.2 Cultural characteristics

To explore which cultural characteristics influence the weight that people give to deservingness criteria, we borrow insights from welfare opinion research. Likely candidates as explanatory variables are cultural factors that play roles in shaping people's attitudes toward welfare (for reviews, see e.g., Ploug, 1996; Ullrich, 2000) and that can be measured from our data. These factors are political stance, work ethics, and religious denomination, which is an important consideration in the context of Dutch society. More than the socio-structural factors mentioned above, these cultural factors shape people's ideas and preferences toward welfare redistribution.

In many welfare attitude studies, people's political stance has an influence. People on the left politically are generally more pro-welfare than people with views that place them on the right (see for example, Svallfors, 2007). Generally, the person on the political left is more egalitarian, empathizing with the less fortunate in society and voicing support for redistributive interventions, while the person on the political right is more meritocratic and economically liberal, believing in a free market with little governmental interference. These ideological perspectives lead people on the left to believe in a more universal approach toward the welfare state, and people on the right

to believe in a more selective approach (Esping-Andersen, 1990). For this reason, we hypothesize that people on the political right will emphasize deservingness criteria more strongly when compared with people on the political left (*H4*). The stronger focus on personal responsibility by individuals on the right is associated with a stronger emphasis on the control criterion (*H4a*), while the wish for limited government interference is associated with only wanting to support the truly needy who do not have other means to support themselves (*H4b*). Finally, a focus on meritocracy by individuals on the political right makes them more likely to judge a person by their achievements and to emphasize reciprocity, i.e., whether a person has ‘earned’ welfare support through previous achievements (*H4c*).

We assume that there is a positive relationship between work ethics and emphasis on deservingness criteria (*H5*). People with strong work ethics generally believe that hard work is a moral duty and a virtue that strengthens one’s character. Such individuals would seem unlikely to consider poor people deserving of welfare support, unless it could be shown that they worked hard and yet failed to manage without welfare support, despite their best efforts. In other words, people with strong work ethics emphasize the control criterion (*H5a*). We also assume that generally, the stronger one’s work ethics, the more one expects people to work their own way out of neediness and the less likely one is to regard situations as manifesting ‘real need’ (*H5b*). Furthermore, we assume that those who value work so highly also live up to their own moral standards, working hard themselves, and that they therefore have a stronger meritocratic and reciprocal perspective on benefit entitlements. This perspective would manifest itself in a stronger emphasis on the reciprocity criterion (*H5c*).

Finally, we will explore whether people emphasize the deservingness criteria to differing degrees depending on their religious denomination. Religious denomination (mainly Catholic versus Protestant) may be an important factor in the Dutch context because the Netherlands was a religiously sharply divided country well into the formative period of the Dutch welfare state after World War II (Lijphart, 1968; Roebroek & Hertogh, 1998) and remains religiously heterogeneous today. To derive hypotheses on the influence of religious denomination, we rely on distinct welfare studies. We find clues in Kahl’s (2005) study of how a country’s religious heritage influences the way it organizes its social assistance system, Stjerno’s (2005) account of solidarity perspectives in European Christian-democracy, and Geremek’s (1994) historical study of poverty. These studies all find that in Catholicism, the poor are regarded as ‘children of God’; they have a positive moral value because they present a way for the better-off in society to atone for their sins, through alms giving. In the Catholic tradition, all poor people are more or less seen as living in conditions that were chosen by Jesus Christ himself. Consequently, Catholicism places a stronger emphasis on helping all needy people, regardless of category. In contrast, the Protestant tradition differentiates more strongly

between the following: a) the infirm and truly needy, and b) the able-bodied without work. The latter are met with distrust and moral disapproval. We therefore expect Catholics to emphasize the need criterion to a lesser extent than would people from Protestant denominations or people who are non-religious (*H6a*).

The Protestant belief in the divine predestination of individual fate, a strong element of the Protestant tradition (Kahl, 2005), may have particular significance for the current study. Protestants, more than Catholics, may believe that what happens in life is predetermined by God and is thus beyond the control of the individual. We would expect, then, for Protestants to emphasize the control criterion less than would Catholics or people who are not religious (*H6b*). As for the reciprocity criterion, we do not have any specific hypothesis about the impact of religious denomination. We simply test if the extent that people emphasize this criterion differs among Catholics, Protestants, and people who are not religious.

2.3. Data and operationalizations

2.3.1 Data

We analyzed data from the Welfare Opinions Survey in the Netherlands, 2006 [*Arbeid, Bedrijf en Sociale Zekerheid in Nederland 2006*]. The data were collected during the last seven weeks of 2006 from 2,682 members of a nationally representative panel run by CentERdata, a research institute at Tilburg University. The dataset consists of 1,972 respondents age 16 to 91 who completed all modules of the questionnaire. The respondents filled out the computer-based questionnaires online. For the descriptive statistics, we used a weighting factor to correct for a slight overrepresentation of older people², higher incomes and higher levels of education. The final sample consists of 1,760 respondents and excludes respondents with missing values on relevant characteristics.³

2.3.2 Dependent variables: deservingness criteria

Our data allow us to operationalize people's emphasis on three deservingness criteria: control, need and reciprocity. Items by which to measure the criteria of identity and attitude are not available in the data. The items that we draw upon all refer to the

² The overrepresentation of older people in a computer-based survey may seem surprising. It should be mentioned that the Netherlands is among the highest ranked countries for Internet coverage in the world (Statistics Netherlands, 2009a). The overrepresentation of older people may therefore have to do with cooperation factors (time availability) and the odds of contacting the respondent.

³ Extensive, unreported analyses of missing values show that these are not concentrated on any particular variable. Omission of missing cases therefore does not introduce much bias.

deservingness of disabled people⁴. The data do not contain sufficient items referring to other groups of needy people such as old-age pensioners or unemployed people.

Control criterion

Respondents were asked to rate, on a scale of 1 to 10, how strongly they feel that society should offer welfare support to two groups of people, given that welfare funds are limited. The two groups included the following: people who are disabled due to an illness or injury at work (no control over or responsibility for their situation), and people who are disabled due to their own behavior (control over or responsibility for their situation). The control criterion is measured as the difference between the scores on the two items (disabled due to work minus disabled due to own behavior). The value ranges from 0 to 9. The larger the difference, the stronger people emphasize the control criterion, i.e., the more poor people's responsibility for their neediness is emphasized when determining their deservingness.

Need criterion

Respondents were asked whether they felt disability benefits should be lower (0 = 'no', 1 = 'yes', 2 = 'don't know') for those people who have (1) supplementary income versus no supplementary income, (2) a small household versus a large household, (3) a partner with income versus a partner without income, (4) working children at home versus no working children at home, (5) a large amount of savings versus little or no savings, and (6) rich parents versus no rich parents. These items indicate whether disability beneficiaries have means of existence in their households beyond their disability benefits and thus indicate degrees of neediness. The need criterion is measured as the mean score of answers to items 1 to 6, which results in a linear variable ranging from 0 to 1. The 'don't know' answers (5.6 percent in total) were coded as missing values. The resulting scale is the average over items for which the responses were available and has a Cronbach α of 0.68. A higher score means that the respondent prefers that the disability pension benefit be lower for people who have additional means; that is, he or she more strongly emphasizes the need criterion.

Reciprocity criterion

Respondents were asked whether they felt disability benefits should be higher (0 = 'no', 1 = 'yes', 2 = 'don't know') for people who (1) are older, (2) have paid a larger

⁴ The respondents answering these questions thus are responding to the Dutch disability benefit system. This arrangement is meant for employees who, due to mental or physical impairment, suffer a loss in earnings capacity compared to someone with similar education and experience. The system does not distinguish between impairments suffered at the job and those suffered in private time.

contribution to the disability benefit system, and (3) who have worked longer before getting the benefit. In each question, the situation was compared to a reference group (people who are younger, people who have paid a lower contribution, and people who have worked fewer years, respectively). The reciprocity criterion is measured as the mean score of answers to items 1 to 3, resulting in a linear variable ranging from 0 to 1. The 'don't know' answers (7 per cent in total) were coded as missing values. The resulting scale (the average over items with available responses) has a Cronbach α of 0.68. A higher score means that the respondent prefers that people who have contributed more to society should receive higher benefits; that is, he or she stresses the reciprocity criterion more.

2.3.3 Independent variables

The socio-structural variable *educational level* is measured using two dummy variables: one for low education (primary and lower secondary) and one for middle education (higher secondary). The highest educational level attained (tertiary education) is the reference category. Although there were more educational levels represented in the sample, we identified these three because they are at stake in our self-interest and resource competition theory. This rationale also applies to coding of *income*. There are four categories of the net monthly income of the household, which we modeled with three dummy variables: low income, low middle income, and high middle income. High income is the reference category. For *work-status*, people were asked about their most important daily task. We distinguish three categories: employed (for pay), unemployed, and persons not belonging to the work force (e.g., students, pensioners and homemakers). We model this with two dummy variables (employed, out of labor force). We choose unemployed as the reference group because this group (may) receive(s) welfare benefits and may consequently differ in its relative emphasis on deservingness criteria. To evaluate *personal experience* receiving disability benefits, respondents were asked to indicate whether they are currently receiving a disability benefit or have received one in the past. We also looked at more indirect personal experiences with receiving public support by including the present *support experience of household members*.

To measure the cultural characteristic *political stance*, respondents were asked to place themselves on a scale from 1 to 11, with 1 meaning highly left-wing and 11 meaning highly right-wing. *Work ethics* are measured by a means scale (Cronbach α = 0.70) constructed from three items: (1) 'Work is a duty towards society', (2) 'You can do as you please after having done your duties', (3) 'Work has to come first always, even if it means less free time'. Each of the three items has five response categories ranging from 1 ('totally disagree') to 5 ('totally agree'). A higher scale value represents stronger work ethics. *Religious denomination* is captured through a single question and consists of four categories: no religion, Protestant, Catholic, and other (including Humanistic,

Islamic and other). Catholic is the reference category because we expect this group to be most lenient with deservingness criteria. The other three groups are included with dummy variables.

Table 2.1 provides descriptive statistics. Correlations between the independent variables are low (below 0.30). Correlations between our dependent variables do not exceed 0.20, which indicates - interestingly - that they measure different things and therefore cannot be aggregated into one summary measure of welfare deservingness.

Table 2.1 Descriptive statistics of dependent and independent variables (N=1760)

	Range	Mean	SD
Control criterion (not standardized)	0 - 9	3.54	2.16
Need criterion (not standardized)	0 - 1	0.37	0.27
Reciprocity criterion (not standardized)	0 - 1	0.45	0.39
Woman	0 - 1	0.48	
Age			
< 31 years	0 - 1	0.19	
31-45 years	0 - 1	0.30	
46-64 years	0 - 1	0.33	
> 64 years	0 - 1	0.19	
Educational level			
Low	0 - 1	0.33	
Middle	0 - 1	0.43	
High	0 - 1	0.24	
Work status			
Employed	0 - 1	0.52	
Unemployed	0 - 1	0.07	
Other	0 - 1	0.41	
Income level			
Low	0 - 1	0.15	
Low middle	0 - 1	0.26	
High middle	0 - 1	0.26	
High	0 - 1	0.33	
Personal experience disability benefit	0 - 1	0.14	
Housemates experience disability benefit	0 - 1	0.06	
Political stance (left - right)	1 - 11	5.69	2.03
Work ethics	1 - 5	3.65	0.84
Religious denomination (ref. Catholic)			
None	0 - 1	0.43	
Catholic	0 - 1	0.28	
Protestant	0 - 1	0.21	
Other	0 - 1	0.8	

Source: *Welfare opinions survey in the Netherlands 2006 (own calculations)*

2.4. Results

We apply OLS regression to test effects of structural and cultural characteristics on our three dependent variables (control, need and reciprocity). The results of our analyses of the three dependent variables are shown in table 2.2. We estimate two models for each dependent variable: the first (the ‘a’-models) estimates the effects of socio-structural background characteristics, and the second (the ‘b’-models) adds effects of cultural background characteristics. We do this to see whether the effects of structural characteristics can be interpreted as cultural effects. To compare effect sizes of independent variables across the three distinct dependent variables, we standardized the dependent variables.

The regressions in table 2.2 show three more general outcomes. First, there are substantive differences in the emphasis on deservingness criteria across groups, as indicated by the significant effects of some socio-structural and cultural characteristics. For example, older people place greater weight on the control and reciprocity criterion, people with less education place greater weight on the control criterion, and people on the political right give greater weight to the control and reciprocity criteria. In other words, different people emphasize criteria differently. Second, table 2.2 shows considerable variation in effects depending on the deservingness criterion studied. It seems that each criterion has its own set of influencing factors. For instance, work status matters for determining the emphasis one places on the control criterion, but not for determining the emphasis one places on the need criterion and the reciprocity criterion. Third, socio-structural and cultural characteristics both matter for deservingness criteria. The structural and the cultural factors add significantly to the explained variance for all three deservingness criteria (as judged by the change in the F statistics between the ‘a’- and ‘b’- models), and the introduction of the cultural factors in the ‘b’-models on the whole does not change the effects of the socio-structural factors. Below, we will discuss how these factors relate to each criterion.

2.4.1 Control

Table 2.2 shows that people who are older, less educated, and unemployed emphasize the control criterion more than their reference groups do. These people make a greater distinction between people whose welfare situation is ‘beyond their control’ and people whose situation is due to own behavior, with the first group considered more deserving of welfare. From the perspective of group risk, this is surprising. People who are older, less educated and unemployed may find themselves dependent on welfare more often than their counterparts and consequently may have an incentive to be more lenient in their views of welfare participation. The findings give support to the competing theoretical view of resource competition. Model 2b of table 2.2 shows that the emphasis on the

control criterion among older, less educated, and unemployed people is only to a small extent due to cultural factors; the corresponding effect parameters decrease in size only slightly when these cultural factors are added.

Table 2.2 OLS regression analyses of the relative emphasis on deservingness criteria (Unstandardized regression coefficients, N=1760)

	Control		Need		Reciprocity	
	Model 1a	Model 1b	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3a	Model 3b
Intercept	-.044	-.598***	-.124	-.592***	-.194	-.936***
Woman	.026	.061	.130**	.150***	.066	.108**
Age (ref = < 31 years)						
31-45 years	-.023	-.034	.009	.012	-.021	-.015
46-64 years	.109	.105	-.132**	-.139*	-.027	.027
> 64 years	.462***	.398***	.063	.021	.298***	.217**
Educational level (ref = high)						
Low	.316***	.272***	.049	.032	.059	.012
Middle	.055	.030	-.060	-.067	.046	.020
Work status (ref=unemployed)						
Employed	-.197*	-.273***	.061	.030	.171	.098
Other	-.259**	-.336***	-.007	-.046	-.030	-.104
Income level (ref=high)						
Low	-.005	.030	.199**	.220***	-.012	.010
Low middle	.050	.083	.326***	.335***	.088	.116*
High middle	.000	.009	.011	.007	-.016	-.004
Personal experience disability benefit	-.166**	-.155**	-.201***	-.191***	-.161**	-.158**
Housemates experience disability benefit	.130	.120	-.324***	-.329***	-.097	-.093
Political stance (left - right)		.055***		.009		.060***
Work ethics		.090***		.098***		.131***
Religious denomination (ref. Catholic)						
No religion		.058		.162***		.046
Protestant		-.047		.147**		-.084
Other		-.298***		-.034		-.078
R ²	.055	.081	.042	.054	.019	.048
F change	7.838***	9.674***	5.892***	4.500***	2.599***	10.585***

*** $p < .01$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .10$; ref = reference group.

Source: Welfare opinions survey in the Netherlands 2006 (own calculations)

The results support our hypothesis regarding people with personal experiences receiving welfare benefits: those who have received benefits emphasize the control criterion less than those who have not. They may believe, more so than others, that becoming disabled is a function of uncontrollable and/or complex circumstances and that, therefore, the control criterion should be emphasized less. We furthermore see, as expected, that people with stronger work ethics more strongly emphasize the control criterion, as do people on the political right. We also find that Protestants tend to emphasize the control criterion less strongly than Catholics do, but the difference is not statistically significant. The finding that people with the religious denomination 'other' emphasize the control criterion less strongly is difficult to interpret because of the generic character of this category, which includes people who are Humanistic, Islamic, or other. However, the finding might make sense if people from these - in the Dutch context - smaller religious communities experience their religions more intensely and, as a result, have a less individualistic and victim-blaming perspective on life. Other characteristics such as gender, income, and housemates' experience with disability benefits do not influence the control criterion.

2.4.2 Need

Personal experience receiving disability benefits makes people not only more lenient with respect to the control criterion, but also with respect to the need criterion, as evidenced by the significant negative effect shown in table 2.2 (model 2a and 2b). That is, people who have received disability benefits make less of a distinction between needy and less needy groups in the granting of disability benefits. Table 2.2 shows, in addition, that having housemates who have received disability benefits also reduces the respondent's emphasis on the need criterion.

In contrast to the findings for the control criterion, regression results for the need criterion do not display significant effects of education, work status, or political stance, but they do show a significant effect of income. The results show that people with lower incomes emphasize the need criterion more strongly than do people with higher incomes. Given that we have controlled for past and present disability status, this negative income effect could be interpreted as resource competition. That is, people with lower incomes might be concerned about making access to welfare benefits too easy, given that the Dutch disability benefit is wage-based and paid to people with middle to high incomes, as well. The results for the need criterion also differ from those for the control criterion in that one age group, respondents age 46 to 64, is significantly more lenient in its emphasis on the need criterion. This may be interpreted as self-interest: this age group has the highest share in disability pensions (Statistics Netherlands, 2009b). Having strong work ethics and being Protestant (or having no religion) also has a positive effect on one's emphasis on the need criterion. These effects are as expected from theory.

2.4.3 Reciprocity

The analyses of the reciprocity criterion in table 2.2 show yet another pattern of determinants. As with the control criterion and the need criterion, people who have received a disability benefit emphasize the reciprocity criterion less than do people who have not received benefits. This finding does not hold true for housemates' experience with disability benefits. The positive effect of age - respondents 65 and older place more emphasis on the reciprocity criterion - could be interpreted as a manifestation of resource competition, as was the case with the control criterion. As a group, older respondents may feel that they have made their contribution to society and that the contributions of others should now be carefully considered as well. Moreover, older people tend to have a stronger work ethics (Cherrington, 1980; Furnham, 1990), which could also explain their elevated emphasis on deservingness criteria. This last interpretation is tested with the introduction of the cultural factors in model 3b. We find that people with stronger work ethics stress the reciprocity principle more strongly than others. The effect of work ethics also indeed mediates part of the mentioned effect of age, both for the reciprocity criterion as well as for the control criterion. We find that the effect of old age decreases when cultural factors are included and that this decrease is due mostly to the inclusion of the work ethics variable (additional analyses not shown). The effect of the other cultural factor is also positive: people from the political right put more emphasis on the reciprocity criterion than others do.

We did not have expectations regarding the effect of religious denomination on the reciprocity criterion, and the effects do not appear to be statistically significant. It is worth noting that we find cultural factors have a larger effect than socio-structural factors in determining a person's emphasis on the reciprocity criterion, based on the beta coefficients (coefficients not shown) and change in F statistics. Regression results for the control criterion and the need criterion showed the opposite pattern.

We offer one final remark about the results in table 2.2 concerning the effect of gender. Although the effect of gender on the control criterion is insignificant, we find that women tend to place greater emphasis than men do on the need and reciprocity criteria for deservingness. We included gender as a control variable without prior expectations. The reason we would observe heightened welfare selectivity among women is not self-evident, but the observation might be explained by resource competition: women (and children who depend on them) are more often in economically precarious situations than men are (OECD, 2008).

2.5 Conclusions and discussion

Earlier research has clearly shown that people generally emphasize a variety of criteria when distinguishing between people who are deserving and undeserving of welfare support: control, need, reciprocity, identity and attitude. In this article, we addressed a new question in the field, asking whether people differ in the emphasis that they place on individual deservingness criteria and whether such variations are associated with differences in personal characteristics. We analyzed people's emphasis on the deservingness criteria of control, need and reciprocity in forming opinions about the allocation of entitlements from the Dutch disability pension system. In addition, we investigated the influence of cultural factors and socio-structural characteristics - social-economic position and past experience as a welfare beneficiary - based on a 2006 national survey conducted in the Netherlands.

Our analyses have shown differences among groups of people in the emphasis they place on various criteria for deservingness. Some people's support for welfare is contingent on whether beneficiaries are people with no control over their situations or people disabled due to their own behavior; others make no such distinction. Some people would prefer a lower disability pension benefit for people who have additional means; others do not. Some people believe that people who have contributed more to society should receive higher benefits; for others, reciprocity makes no difference. Discovering the existence of such individual differences in emphasis on deservingness criteria adds to our knowledge of welfare deservingness. In addition, our results may offer an explanation for the inconsistency in findings from welfare studies concerning the relative importance of individual deservingness criteria. It is possible that earlier studies rendered divergent results because they studied different groups of people.

Our analysis has shown furthermore that individual differences in emphasis on deservingness criteria are connected to socio-structural and cultural factors, indicating that opinions about deservingness are reflections both of people's socio-structural positions and of their ideas. Yet the effects of socio-structural and cultural factors are not consistent across all deservingness criteria. The emphasis that a person places on the control criterion is influenced by (among other factors) one's education, work status, and political stance, yet these factors do not appear to affect the emphasis that one places on, for example, the need criterion. Apparently, how people come to emphasize one criterion can be quite different from how they come to emphasize another criterion. The diversity of effects also implies that it is overly simplistic - for the group of disability claimants studied - to distinguish between selectivists (those who emphasize all deservingness criteria more strongly than other people) and universalists (those who place less emphasis on all criteria than others do).

Although the determinants of people's views differed for each criterion of deservingness, some general findings hold true across all criteria studied. First, it appears that groups with a higher chance of being in need of welfare support generally (the elderly, people with less education, the unemployed, people with lower incomes, women) tend to place greater weight on deservingness criteria. We interpreted this as a manifestation of resource competition, whereby stronger distributive selectivity is a strategy to avoid resource scarcity in times when one would need support oneself. However, this is not always the case. For example, the second-oldest group of respondents was less concerned with the need criterion than other groups. This situation may indicate self-interest in the sense that members of this group are aware they are at greater risk of becoming dependent on disability benefits, as opposed to self-interest in the sense of resource competition. Second, it appears that people who have received welfare benefits placed a lower emphasis on all three deservingness criteria. Our interpretation was that this tendency to support broader welfare participation stems from self-interest and from a higher level of empathy for welfare beneficiaries. Third, we find that cultural factors - in addition socio-structural positions that determine one's self interest - influence a person's perspective on deservingness. Being from the political right has a positive effect on two out of three criteria, while having strong work ethics has a positive effect on all three criteria for welfare deservingness. In the Dutch context, religious denomination is also important. Protestants and non-religious individuals appear to place greater emphasis on the need criterion than Catholics. The weaker emphasis on need by Catholics may be explained by the fact that traditional Catholic social thinking places a stronger emphasis on helping all categories of people in need. The Protestant tradition, by contrast, traditionally differentiates more strongly between truly needy and the infirm on one hand, and the able bodied who are out of work on the other. People from (in a Dutch context) smaller, more orthodox religious denominations, meanwhile, place less emphasis on the control criterion.

Because this study is the first to analyze factors that influence perceptions of deservingness criteria among the general public, future research will need to determine how far our findings can be generalized. In our analysis, we did not measure variations in attitudes across categories of welfare benefits. We focused instead on how people emphasize various deservingness criteria when forming opinions about recipients of disability benefits. This group of beneficiaries is generally considered to be highly deserving of public support. Because we find significant variations in how people perceive the granting of benefits to this 'high-deserving' group, it is likely that there are differences in how the deservingness criteria influence people's opinions about groups that are considered less deserving.

The determining factors may be more consistent when applied to less-deserving groups than when applied to the group we studied, implying a stronger divide between

people with selective and universalistic approaches to the rationing of welfare. Analyses conducted on other groups of welfare recipients may reveal other determinants to be important as well. Additionally, data restrictions limited us to analyzing three of the five common criteria for welfare deservingness. The identity and attitude criteria, which we did not examine, might not be the most important determinant of perceptions about recipients of disability benefits, but these criteria could be important influences on people's opinions of other groups of welfare recipients. For instance, the 'identity' criteria could matter more in perceptions about the welfare deservingness of immigrants because the cultural legitimization for collective welfare arrangements is based mainly on national group identity (Offe, 1988).

Future research should extend our analysis of the determinants of deservingness criteria to other times and places. For instance, analyses for countries with less comprehensive welfare systems or other benefits structures (in terms of financing, entitlement levels, etc.) might reveal even sharper resource competition among social groups. Such a finding would imply that people's institutional settings also shape their emphasis on deservingness criteria and its determinants.



Chapter 3

The dynamics of welfare opinions in changing economic, institutional and political contexts: An empirical analysis of Dutch deservingness opinions, 1975-2006

This chapter was co-authored with Prof. Dr. Ing. Wim van Oorschot and Dr. Wilfred Uunk and published as: Jeene, M., Van Oorschot, W., & Uunk, W. (2014). The Dynamics of Welfare Opinions in Changing Economic, Institutional and Political Contexts: An Empirical Analysis of Dutch Deservingness Opinions, 1975-2006. *Social Indicators Research*, 115(2), 731-749. doi: 10.1007/s11205-012-0230-6

ABSTRACT

Long-term trends in deservingness opinions and how these fluctuate in relation to changes in the economic, institutional and political contexts have not often been examined. In this paper, we address these trend questions by analyzing twenty-two waves of the repeated cross-sectional Cultural Change in the Netherlands (CCN, 1975-2006) survey. Our analyses show fairly stable public deservingness opinions regarding five different needy groups over the long term. Over the short term, opinions fluctuate more. Explanatory analyses show that economic and political factors, but not institutional factors, influence fluctuations in opinions. When real GDP grows, the Dutch public is more likely to consider the disabled, the elderly and social assistance beneficiaries deserving of more welfare support. In addition, when unemployment rises, the unemployed and social assistance beneficiaries are more likely to be seen as deserving of more support. Finally, when the national political climate is more leftist, most needy groups are considered to be deserving of more welfare support.

3.1 Introduction

In the eyes of the general public, some needy groups deserve more generosity than others, i.e., they are considered to be more deserving of welfare support. Existing research on popular deservingness opinions has identified the needy groups that are considered more and less deserving, the underlying criteria in welfare granting, as well as the individual-level determinants of such opinions (see for example Coughlin, 1980; Van Oorschot, 2000).

Despite the progress made, most of the empirical studies in the field have a static perspective, analyzing cross-sectional data for single years in time. There is hardly any research on longer-term trends in deservingness opinions and how these may be influenced by changes in contextual factors (but see Becker, 2005; Soede, Vrooman, & Wildeboer Schut, 2009). The lack of a dynamic perspective and analysis is unfortunate because welfare opinions generally, and deservingness opinions among them, most likely react to changing socio-economic, political and institutional developments in society (e.g. Blekesaune, 2007; Erikson et al., 2002). Knowledge about such influences is essential for understanding the social context and processes of welfare opinion formation in a field in which the individual determinants of such opinions are increasingly known (Svallfors, 2007). Importantly, at present we do not know how public opinion reacted to the ‘politics of austerity’ (Pierson, 2001) that followed the end of the ‘golden age’ of welfare state expansion after the oil crises in the 1970s.

This leads us to two general research questions. The first is descriptive: How did welfare deservingness opinions change, if at all, in The Netherlands - our country case - during the period studied (1975-2006)? This general research question involves several sub-questions: Did popular welfare opinions coincide with general welfare retrenchment policies, becoming less supportive of granting welfare rights to needy groups? Or did welfare solidarity remain stable or - as a reaction to welfare retrenchment - even increase? How do these opinions fluctuate in the shorter term? Do possible long-term development or short-term changes in deservingness opinions hold for all needy groups, or are there differences in deservingness trends for different needy groups? Our second general research question is explanatory: To what extent can possible long-term developments and short-term fluctuations in deservingness opinions be attributed to changes in the economic, political, or institutional contexts? The contextual changes we investigate are economic changes in GDP and unemployment rate; changes in the political climate; and changes in specific welfare policies for target groups.

We investigate these trend questions with data from twenty-two repeated cross-sectional Dutch surveys, collected between 1975 and 2006. In addition to data availability, the Netherlands is an interesting country to study. During the studied period, a series of welfare reform measures were taken that focused strongly on stricter entitlement

criteria for benefits to reduce the number of recipients and to emphasize people's individual responsibility (Van Oorschot, 2006a; Yerkes & Van der Veen, 2011). During the same period, the Netherlands was hit with two economic recessions, the first in the early 1980s, when the Netherlands experienced extraordinarily high unemployment in 1983-84, and the second in the early 1990s, with periods of strong recovery in between. These developments make questions on trends in deservingness opinion and the influence of contextual-level factors relevant.

Our analyses focus on deservingness opinions regarding the target groups for five different benefits: the disability pension, old age pension, unemployment benefits, social assistance benefits and sickness benefits. Of the target groups, the old, the disabled and the sick are considered highly deserving, the unemployed less deserving, and people on social assistance least deserving (see for example Van Oorschot, 2000). The different benefits offer different entitlements. For a proper understanding of our findings, some basic information on the character of the benefits is necessary. The Dutch old age pension is a universal, flat rate benefit at subsistence level, paid to all citizens 65 years of age and older, often topped by additional occupational pension and/or rent income. The social assistance scheme offers at most the same basic benefit amount as the old age pension scheme, but with the important difference that social assistance is means-tested and aimed at the poorest households, which do not qualify for any other benefit scheme. Unemployment, sickness and disability benefits are collectively organized workers' insurance schemes. Unemployment insurance pays out non-means-tested, earnings-related benefits at 70% of the previous wage. For those with short work records and for those whose earnings-related benefit duration has expired, the benefit is at a non-means tested flat rate subsistence level. The same is true for the disability pension, with age categories specifying the level of benefits received instead of work record. The sickness benefit has a statutory benefit level of 70% of the wage, but in nearly all collective labor agreements this is topped up to 100%, implying that being on sick leave has little or no negative income consequences for the sick employee. Sick pay can last up to two years, after which it is replaced by disability benefits if the employee is still unable to work. When claimants reach age 65, all other benefits expire and are replaced with the old age pension. Job seeking obligations apply to all persons who claim either unemployment benefit or social assistance.

We investigate opinions on these five benefits separately because contextual effects may depend on the aforementioned differences. For example, a higher unemployment rate may have a different effect on opinions towards needy groups that have a job-seeking obligation than other needy groups. Similarly, actual levels of deservingness may differ in relation to differences in the replacement rate. Yet, there may also be crossover effects: for example, policies affecting a specific benefit group may affect opinions towards other welfare benefits as well. Such crossover effects could indicate

that the public views single policies in a broader social context. In brief, in this study we describe trends in Dutch deservingness opinions and relate fluctuations to changes in contextual factors.

3.2 Previous welfare opinion trend research

3.2.1 Long-term trends

The literature on welfare opinion trends is scarce and mostly concerns Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, Great Britain, and the US. For the Scandinavian countries, researchers have put forth contrasting expectations about the long-term development of welfare opinions in the past few decades. Some expect them to go downwards, with the traditional high welfare support withering away due to the increase in individualistic values in society (Pettersen, 1995; Wilensky, 1975), while others expect welfare support to remain stable, because large groups in the Scandinavian countries have a vested interest in the comprehensive welfare state (Goul Andersen et al., 1999). Empirical studies in these countries have asked people about their support for government regulated income redistribution and whether the welfare state and specific benefits should be expanded, reduced, or maintained as they are. Findings support the expectation of stability: data from Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Finland from the 1960s or 1970s to the mid-1990s, show a fairly stable or even slightly increasing long-term trend in support of welfare (Goul Andersen, 1993; Goul Andersen et al., 1999; Martinussen, 1993; Pettersen, 1995; Sihvo & Uusitalo, 1995). In addition to long-term trends, this literature focuses on explaining the short-term fluctuations in opinions, an issue that we will address later on.

For the Dutch case, Becker (2005) analyzes the same longitudinal data that we use in this article, but he only analyzes the long-term trend, ignoring the numerous, substantive year-to-year fluctuations that we will focus upon. Becker finds that people increasingly feel that a number of benefits is insufficient. He interprets this finding as an increasing feeling of solidarity with the needy. As in Scandinavian countries, support for the welfare state and its benefits did not erode in a period of overall welfare retrenchment.

The situation seems to be different in Great Britain. Data from the British Social Attitudes survey show stability in the proportion of Brits who prefer welfare expansion between 1974 and 1987 (Pettersen, 1995). However, for the subsequent period between 1987 and 2000, Hills (2002) analyzes the same survey and finds that the balance of people who agree that ‘Government should spend more on welfare benefits for the poor’ steadily dwindled. Hills also finds a drop in the percentage of people who support income redistribution, and argues that these opinion changes are in line with so-called ‘redistribution by stealth’, i.e., the implementation of policy measures that favor lower

incomes but avoid the term 'redistribution'. Furthermore, Hills argues that the British public's increasing feeling that welfare suffers from fraud and creates disincentive to work is in line with the stricter activation policies that were put in place.

In the US, one of the most stable elements of public opinion is the unpopularity of welfare. Based upon published public opinion polls, MacLeod et al. (1999) and Weaver et al. (1995) show that between 1938 and 1995, a majority of the American public believed that the government spent too much on welfare. On the other hand, in this same time period, a steadily increasing percentage of Americans felt that it was the responsibility of the government to provide for the truly needy, although this number eroded slightly after 1987. However, a growing percentage of the American public also felt that welfare recipients were to blame for their poverty and, therefore, were not deserving of governmental support (MacLeod et al., 1999; Weaver et al., 1995).

To sum up, there is little information on longer-term trends in welfare opinions and even less information on opinions of the deservingness of specific target groups; however, information available shows that trends differ between countries or types of welfare state. The latter implies that our findings from the Netherlands need to be put into perspective. We return to this point in the discussion section.

3.2.2 Short-term opinion fluctuations and contextual factors

While changes in welfare opinions are at most modest in the long run, in the short run, changes seem to be much stronger. The public may feel quite supportive of needy groups one year, but this support may have changed substantially the next. In public debates and empirical research, short-term fluctuations are usually related to contextual factors that also fluctuate over the years. The contextual factors cited include economic, institutional, and political factors. In this section, we will explain these relationships further and formulate hypotheses.

Starting with the relationship between economic context and welfare opinions, there is a debate in the literature regarding the direction of this relationship. Some authors who focus on general welfare state opinions suggest that economic downturn is associated with decreasing support (Becker, 2005; Goul Andersen, 1993). The proposed reason is people's self-interest: when economic problems arise, people lose their sense of security, causing them to focus on themselves and to give less weight to the concerns of the disadvantaged (Durr, 1993). Or, as Alt (1979) states, when people's own economic situation is likely to decline, they become less altruistic, because 'people are as generous as they can afford to be' (Alt, 1979, p. 184).

However, other authors hypothesize that the public is less confident about individual responsibility and more in favor of governmental support during economic down times (see for example Blekesaune, 2007). Additionally, during economically difficult times, which affect many, the general need for support becomes more obvious to all (Sihvo &

Uusitalo, 1995), and people would be less likely to blame benefits claimants for their situation (Bryson, 1997; Fridberg & Ploug, 2000; Hills, 2002), which leads to increasing welfare state support (Shaw & Shapiro, 2002; Soede et al., 2009). We note that this line of reasoning is especially evident in studies examining opinions on the deservingness of the unemployed, using the unemployment rate as a measure of the economic situation.

To us, the debate suggests not only that there is no full consensus about the direction of a possible economic effect on welfare and deservingness opinions at present, but also that findings may be affected by the type of economic measure used. A similar remark is made by Erikson et al (2002) who states that people's opinion are affected by a 'mix of potential economic maladies' (p. 231), which can have opposite results. Therefore, for our analyses of the effects of the economic situation on Dutch deservingness opinions, we include two measures of the economic situation, namely economic growth and the unemployment rate, and formulate separate hypotheses for each.

With regards to the more general measure of the state of the economy, economic growth, we hypothesize that the self-interest perspective is correct: during economic downturns, people are faced with higher income risks and job risks and therefore focus more on their own self-interest and deservingness than on the deservingness of specific needy groups. We assume that people favor more attention being paid to economic recovery than to the particular needs of groups. In contrast, when the economy is strong, people's own situation and their perception of it is likely to be better as well, allowing generosity towards others (Alt, 1979; Durr, 1993), which implies that economic growth makes people more likely to consider needy groups to be deserving of support (see also Becker, 2005).

Our expectation regarding the effect of the unemployment rate on opinions is that when the unemployment rate rises - all else being equal - needy groups that are dependent on the labor market are more likely to be considered to be deserving of more. This may also be understood from a self-interest perspective. In times of high unemployment, the odds of people becoming unemployed themselves increases, making it in their own interest to consider needy groups deserving of more, especially (or exclusively) those who are unemployed (Fraile & Ferrer, 2005). An alternative explanation from deservingness theory points in the same direction. This theory states that needy groups are considered more deserving when target groups are seen as less in control of their neediness (Van Oorschot, 2000). With increasing unemployment, people may be less likely to blame the unemployed for being out of work and, therefore, may be more sympathetic towards their troubles (Bryson, 1997). In addition, as Maassen and De Goede (1989) point out, when unemployment is high, people are more likely to have family members and friends that are out of work, making it easier to identify with jobless individuals and to understand their need. We assume that a rise in the unemployment rate increases opinions about the deservingness of groups that are regarded as part of the working population and that have a job-seeking obligation in particular. In the Dutch

case, these groups include the unemployed and the social assistance beneficiaries (e.g., Soede et al., 2009). As old age pensioners and the (fully) disabled are not expected to find work and those on sickness benefit are still employed, we assume that their deservingness is less or not at all related to the unemployment rate.

The general political climate is another factor that researchers have suggested explains fluctuations in welfare attitudes (Pettersen, 1995; Weaver et al., 1995). The argument is that in times when liberal ideas and right wing parties are stronger, popular ideologies are more liberal and thus put more emphasis on personal responsibility. Deservingness theory, in turn, suggests that, when needy people are seen to a greater extent to be responsible for their situation, their popular deservingness is lower. Empirically, researchers find that general dissatisfaction with welfare spending increases when the strength of right wing political parties increases. This relationship has been found in studies using American (Wlezien, 2004), British, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish data (Goul Andersen et al., 1999; Pettersen, 1995). However, the specific effect on deservingness opinions has not been studied yet. Our hypothesis is that needy groups are more likely to be considered to be deserving of support when there is a more leftist political climate in the country, while a more rightist political climate is related to needy groups being considered to be less deserving of support.⁵

Finally, we take into account institutional factors, by which we mean specific policy developments. We have already seen that long-term trends in welfare opinions differ by country in the decades after the golden age of the welfare state. We describe the specific Dutch trend later in the results section. For now we concentrate on the effect that specific policy changes may have on the popular deservingness of specific target groups. That is, we relate opinion fluctuations to particular policy events. Although the literature generally assumes that policy events affect people's opinions on related benefits and target groups (Hills, 2002), empirical analysis is very scarce.⁶

Soede et al. (2009) analyze how Dutch public opinion about unemployment and social assistance benefits reacted to restricting reforms targeting these benefits. They found that the tightening of benefit levels in 1985 was especially associated with higher numbers of people considering the benefits to be insufficient, but other reforms were

⁵ Political orientation could be seen as having an endogenous character, because it is partly based on redistribution issues. However, there are also other issues that make up one's political orientation (e.g. ethnic tolerance). In addition, political orientations are formed during family socialization in early childhood long before any attitudes on welfare redistribution are formed (Kumlin, 2004). Empirical evidence from explicit studies on this particular issue supports our use of the left-right orientation as an exogenous variable (Jæger, 2006a, 2008).

⁶ The causal direction of the relationship between policy and public opinion is the subject of ongoing debate in the literature. There are examples of policies influencing opinions and examples of the reverse. The conditions that affect the direction of the relationship are still not known in detail (see e.g. Brooks & Manza, 2006a; Burstein, 1998; Mettler & Soss, 2004; Pierson, 1993; Raven, Achterberg, Van Der Veen, & Yerkes, 2011).

only modestly or not at all associated with opinions. In a Danish study, Goul Andersen (1993) found that the freezing of benefits in the 1980s was associated with more positive attitudes towards the unemployed and social assistance beneficiaries. Therefore, the research suggests that reforms reducing the rights of beneficiaries are associated with increasing popular opinions about the deservingness of the related target groups.

We take this as our general hypothesis, stating that when there is a downward reform - i.e., a specific policy reform that makes a benefit less accessible and/or less generous - there is an upswing in popular opinion regarding the deservingness of related needy groups. This can be understood from deservingness theory: welfare retrenchment makes the public more aware of the needs of the welfare beneficiaries and the hardships they face (possibly due to increased media attention given to the events and the consequences thereof for the beneficiaries (Zaller, 1992)), which increases the public's perception of welfare deservingness. We do not expect an effect on deservingness opinions when a reform does not involve a clear change in the accessibility or generosity of benefits.

3.3 Data and methods

3.3.1 Data

To answer our research questions, we use twenty-two waves of the Cultural Changes in the Netherlands (CCN) data (Netherlands Institute of Social Research, 2010), collected between 1975 and 2006. The CCN survey is a national representative survey of the Dutch public aged 16 and over, commissioned by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research. Each wave consists of approximately 2000 respondents; our pooled sample of analysis consists of between 27,002 and 38,594 respondents, depending on the analysis.

3.3.2 Deservingness opinions

Our main variable of interest is whether specific needy groups are considered to be deserving of more as measured by the following question: 'I will give you a list of social benefits. Could you tell me for each of these if you think they are sufficient or insufficient?' The listed social benefits are the Dutch disability benefit for workers, universal old age pension, the unemployment benefit, the social assistance benefit and the sickness benefit (or: sick pay for workers). Respondents were given the option 'sufficient' and 'insufficient' as answer categories. We consider the 'insufficient' answer as indicating that the relevant target group is seen as 'deserving of more'.⁷ The response

⁷ The feeling that a certain needy group is deserving of more support could partly be a reflection of the actual level of benefits. However, for the short-term opinion fluctuations that we analyze this is not the case because benefit levels are related to worker's previous wages or to the minimum wage level, both of which do not show drastic fluctuations in time that we do see in these opinions.

code ‘too good’ was offered when the respondent refused to choose between the sufficient and insufficient category. Because only few respondents choose this response code and because it indicates low rather than high welfare solidarity, we included this code in the ‘sufficient’ category.⁸

3.3.3 Contextual factors

The OECD *Stat Extracts* (OECD, 2010) provides data on real gross domestic product (GDP) growth (i.e., the annual growth at constant prices in percentage) to measure economic growth, and unemployment rates (i.e., the number of people unemployed as percentage of the entire labor force, both employed and unemployed) for all survey years. For real GDP growth we used the growth at $t=0$. Although information on real GDP growth for a certain year only becomes available when that specific year has ended, we expect the public to have a feel of the economic situation due to media coverage and prognoses. For the unemployment rate, we used the rates at $t-1$ because we expect there to be a short delay before people are aware of the labor market situation and because the consequences are also often not immediately visible. To check our assumptions, we also carried out analyses with the $t=0$, $t-1$ and $t-2$ scores on these two variables. These additional analyses did not change our main findings. We note that the correlation between real GDP growth ($t=0$) and the unemployment rate ($t-1$) is moderate ($r = .433$, $p < .001$), meaning that these economic measures measure two different things.

To measure political climate, we aggregated an individual level variable from the data asking respondents to indicate whether they see themselves as politically left or right on a scale of 1 (very leftist) to 5 (very rightist).⁹ Because this question was not asked in 1979 and 1981, we imputed the average political climate for those years, and added a dummy variable to the analyses (1 = missing information; coefficients not shown in the tables). The correlation between (right-wing) political climate and the economic measures is moderate (with real GDP growth, the $r = -.269$, $p < .001$; with unemployment rate, $r = 0.331$, $p < .001$).

We measure institutional factors, i.e., policy events, using a series of dummies indicating whether a specific policy reform took place in a specific year or not. Table 3.1 gives an overview of all reforms in the time period examined and the effect on the entitlements of beneficiaries (positive, negative or neutral).

⁸ Some of the respondents had missing values on these items, indicating ‘don’t know’ as a response. Adding these responses to the ‘sufficient’ category does not change results (results available upon request).

⁹ Previous literature examined the effect of politics using the strength of right wing parties. This is difficult to do with Dutch data, due to the multi-party system present in the Netherlands (Pettersen, 1995). We did attempt to measure the effects of politics using political party strength but this proved to be unpractical.

Table 3.1 Policy events 1975-2006

Year	Policy event	Change in entitlements for beneficiaries ^a
	Disability pension for workers	
1985	From 80% of last earned wage to 70%	-
1987	Partial pension for partially disabled	-
	First re-assessment of disabled workers	-
1992	TAV (new law): Bonus-malus for employers	0
1993	TBA (new law): Stronger assessment criteria	-
	Duration age related	-
	Second re-assessment	-
1998	PEMBA: Premium differentiation (employers pay higher premium when many of their employees get disabled/sick)	0
2002	Gatekeeper Act	0
2004	Abolition disability pension self-employed	-
	Third re-assessment	-
	Extensions sick pay from 1 to 2 years	+
2006	Income & Work Law (WIA) successor of Disability pension for workers (WAO)	-
	Old age pension	
1985	Individualisation	0
	Married partners: entitlement for married women	+
	Singles: 70%	+
1987	Equal treatment for married and unmarried couples	+
1988	Means-tested in case of partner < 65: 70% + 30%	-
1994	From 70%-30% to 50%-50%	-
	Unemployment benefit	
1985	From 80% of last earned wage to 70%	-
1987	Limited wage related period	-
	Stronger work record requirements	-
1995	Stronger work record requirements	-
	Social assistance	
1996	100% of minimum wage for singles, 50% + 20% for couples	0
2004	Work & Social Assistance law (WWB) successor of general social assistance scheme (ABW)	-
	Sickness benefit	
1996	Privatization	0

Source: Van Oorschot (2006a)

^a - = reform has negative effect on entitlements; + = reform has positive effect; 0= reform is neutral as regards entitlements

3.3.4 Micro characteristics

In addition to contextual-level factors, individual-level factors are included in our analyses to control for composition effects. We include those factors that are likely to affect people's deservingness opinions (age, sex, education, income, work status, left-right orientation). Such factors are commonly understood to relate to people's structural position and life cycle, indicating the personal interest they have in welfare benefits and provisions (Svallfors 2007). However, the results of the individual-level factors are not reported (results are available upon request) because the focus of this research is on the context factors and no hypotheses concerning the individual characteristics are formulated. The descriptive statistics for the independent variables for the pooled sample can be found in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Descriptive statistics of dependent and independent variables

	N	Range	Mean	Standard deviation
<i>Dependent variables</i>				
Disability benefit	42018	0 - 1	.36	
Elderly pension	44048	0 - 1	.40	
Unemployment benefit	43917	0 - 1	.23	
Social assistance benefit	44018	0 - 1	.39	
Sickness benefit	39887	0 - 1	.14	
<i>Independent variables</i>				
Age	45121	16 - 99	43.39	17.04
Woman	45101	0 - 1	.53	
Educational level	44815	1 - 7	3.67	1.90
Income (log)	45121	3.91 - 15.69	9.54	.62
Work status				
Employed	44543	0 - 1	.44	
Unemployed	44543	0 - 1	.03	
Pensioner	44543	0 - 1	.11	
Disabled for work	44543	0 - 1	.05	
Other	44543	0 - 1	.38	
Left-right orientation	45121	1 - 5	3.00	.88
Real GDP growth	45121	-.43 - 4.42	2.45	1.31
Unemployment rate	45121	2.20 - 8.90	5.78	1.70
Political climate (left-right)	45121	2.93 - 3.10	3.00	.09

Source: *Cultural changes in the Netherlands, 1975-2006* (own calculations)

3.3.5 Methods

After a descriptive analysis of the long-term trends in deservingness opinions for five different benefits and related target groups, we examine the effect of contextual factors on short-term opinion fluctuations by carrying out two explanatory analyses for each benefit. First, we use multilevel logistic regression analyses to examine the relation

between different contextual factors and the deservingness of needy groups. The two levels that are distinguished in this model are individuals and survey years. In the second analyses we examine to what extent policy events are related to deservingness opinions. We use logistic regression analyses and include a dummy variable for each policy event year (cf. Soede et al., 2009), while controlling for the individual and economic contextual variables. We include this dummy variable (event year = 1, other years = 0) in the analysis for the specific benefit for which there was a policy event but also in the analyses for benefits that did not have a policy event that year. That way, we can test whether the event year of one benefit only affects the corresponding opinion, or whether there is crossover effect of the policy event, i.e., whether a reform also affects opinions on other benefits. The analyses of institutional effects are restricted to the period 1985, when the reforms started, until 2006.

3.4 Results

3.4.1 Long-term trends

Figure 3.1 shows the percentage of the Dutch public that feels that recipients of disability pensions, old age pensions, unemployment benefits, social assistance benefits and sickness benefits are deserving of more support than they receive for the time period between 1975 and 2006.

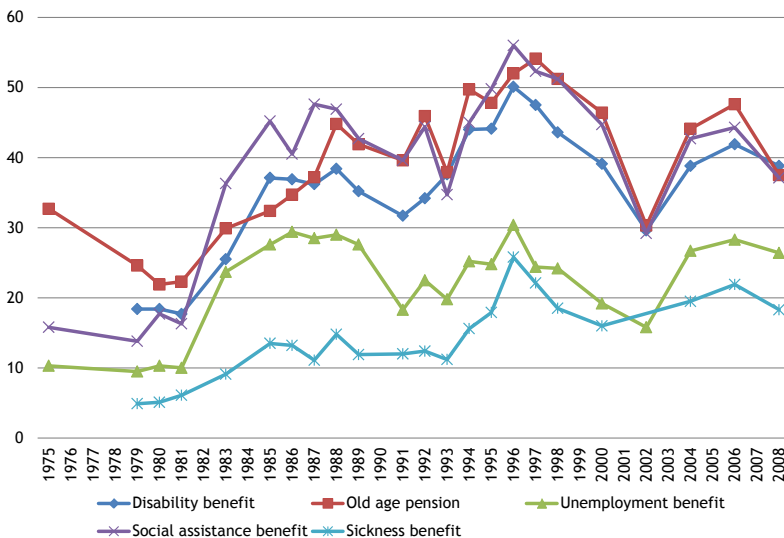


Figure 3.1 The percentage of people who believe that recipients of benefits are deserving of more, 1975-2006.

When looking at the entire time period, figure 3.1 shows increasing popular deservingness as a long-term trend. Whereas during the late 1970s and early 1980s of the past century between 5 (sickness benefit) to 35 percent (old age pension) of the Dutch population thought needy groups deserved of more support, during the mid-1990s, these numbers were, respectively 25 (sickness benefit) and 65 percent (social assistance). This suggests a strong overall increase in welfare deservingness opinions.

However, closer inspection of the trend lines reveals that the increase was not steady but sudden. Notably, a tipping point seems to exist in the early 1980s. Before this time, deservingness opinions were rather steady (and even decreasing in case of old age pensions), but in the early 1980s, at the height of the (oil-price-shock induced) recession in the Netherlands, a change took place, lifting the opinions to a new and overall higher level. The opinions then more or less stabilized on that higher level from the mid-1980s until the end of our time line in 2006. Therefore, we conclude that welfare deservingness opinions remained rather stable during the period investigated, with the exception of an upward 'shock' in the early 1980s making opinions more generous.

We analyzed the long-term trend using multinomial regression analysis, including a linear independent variable measuring the year of the survey and controlling for individual characteristics (results not shown). For the entire period, we find a significant positive year effect for all benefits ($b = 0.039$ to $b = 0.064$ depending on the benefit). However, when we exclude the years before 1985, there is a small positive effect left for the disability benefit ($b=.015$), the elderly benefit ($b=.019$), and the sickness benefit ($b=.046$), indicating only a slightly increasing long term trend, and insignificant effects in the case of the unemployment benefit ($b=-.002$) and a very small negative effect for the social assistance benefit ($b=-.005$).

Furthermore, figure 3.1 shows that deservingness is especially high for the high deserving target groups of pensioners and disabled workers, as well as for social assistance claimants. The latter seems to reflect that the Dutch population is aware of the means-tested minimal character of these benefits, whereas the other benefits are non-means-tested (being either flat rate, in the case of pensions, or wage-related in the other cases). Sickness benefits are least likely to be seen as insufficient, which may be related to the fact that in most cases the statutory benefits of 70 percent of the wage is topped up to 100 percent by collective labor agreements.

3.4.2 Short-term opinion fluctuations and contextual factors

In addition to the (shock wise) long-term trend, figure 3.1 displays considerable short-term fluctuations in the deservingness opinions between 1975 and 2006. Before we attempt to explain these fluctuations, we first assess which proportion of variance is accounted for by

the survey years (the group level) using intraclass correlation (Snijders & Bosker, 1999).¹⁰

The results (see Table 3.3) show that between 6 and approximately 12 percent of the variation in opinions (depending on the benefit at issue) is related to the specific year of interviewing, and thus possibly to context factors. We also see that the variation in pension deservingness is least dependent on year-related context factors (6.0%), while social assistance deservingness is most affected by it (11.7%). We now turn to the analysis of context effects¹¹.

Economic changes

How can economic, political, and institutional change in the Netherlands account for fluctuations in deservingness opinions? Table 3.3 reports the results of multilevel analyses, in which contextual effects are estimated controlling for individual-level determinants.¹² When examining our first economic indicator, economic growth, the results in Table 3.3 (model 1 and, net of the unemployment rate, model 3) show that higher economic growth increases the odds of finding the related needy groups deserving of more support for all five benefits. This confirms our hypothesis, which suggests that, when the economy is prospering, people are more generous towards the less well-off, while in times of economic downfall people seem to be more worried about themselves and restrict the deservingness of specific target groups. This relationship is also clearly visible in figure 3.2, where the real GDP growth is added to the previous graph showing the percentage of the Dutch public that is of the opinion that the various needy groups are deserving of more support.

¹⁰ Considering our binary dependent variable, the intraclass correlation (ICC) is calculated using the following formula:

$$\rho = \frac{\tau_0^2}{\tau_0^2 + \pi^2/3}$$

where τ_0^2 measures the group level variance (survey year) and $\pi^2/3$ the individual level variance. The individual level variance is set because it cannot be estimated for a binary dependent variable (Snijders & Bosker, 1999).

¹¹ We chose not to include the survey year variable in the analyses of table 3.2 because we found a very strong correlation between political climate and the survey year variable ($r = -.728$). This means that we are not able to test both their effects properly when including them in one model. We therefore chose to include only the political climate variable because it is more substantive and theoretically interpretable.

¹² The odds of finding higher deservingness levels are higher for women, those with less education, and those with a lower income. Additionally, the unemployed and those disabled for work, that is, actual consumers of benefits, have higher odds of finding groups deserving.

Table 3.3 Multilevel logistic regression analyses, deserving of more versus sufficiently deserving: effects of context factors, 1975-2006

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Disability					
Real GDP growth	.305**		.321**		.137*
Unemployment rate		.040	-.038		.058
Political climate (right)				-.4.300**	-4.998**
<i>ICC = 0.070</i>					
Pension					
Real GDP growth	.269**		.312**		.226**
Unemployment rate		.019	-.080-		-.054
Political climate (right)				-3.443*	-1.349
<i>ICC = 0.060</i>					
Unemployment					
Real GDP growth	.321**		.289**		.107
Unemployment rate		.150*	.059		.123*
Political climate (right)				-2.824**	-3.489*
<i>ICC = 0.077</i>					
Social assistance					
Real GDP growth	.380**		.355*		.169*
Unemployment rate		.158*	.046		.123*
Political climate (right)				-4.027*	-4.277*
<i>ICC = 0.117</i>					
Sickness					
Real GDP growth	.367**		.377**		.135
Unemployment rate		-.028	-.064		-.000
Political climate (right)				-6.254	-5.432**
<i>ICC = 0.082</i>					

Source: *Cultural changes in the Netherlands, 1975-2006* (own calculations)

** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; ~ $p < .10$, ref cat: sufficiently deserving

Controlled for individual characteristics: age, sex, educational level, income level, work status and individual left-right orientation

Number of observations Disability: $N_{individuals} = 33545$; $N_{year} = 21$ / Pension: $N_{individuals} = 38594$; $N_{year} = 22$ / Unemployment: $N_{individuals} = 35479$; $N_{year} = 22$ / Social assistance: $N_{individuals} = 34030$; $N_{year} = 22$ / Sickness: $N_{individuals} = 33382$; $N_{year} = 20$.

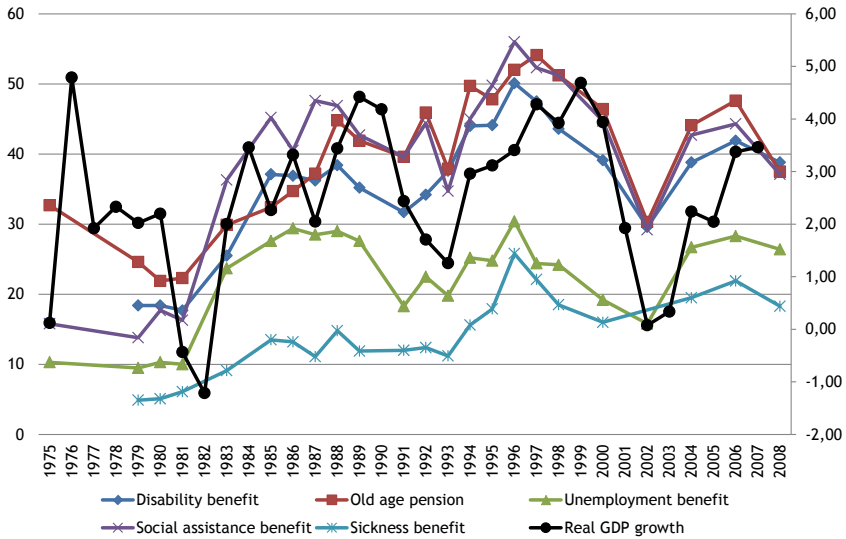


Figure 3.2 The percentage of people who believe that recipients of benefits are deserving of more, 1975-2006 (left axis), and the real GDP growth (right axis)

However, the effects of economic growth are diminished when taking into account the political (right) climate in model 5 of table 3.3 (note that the correlation between both context variables is $-.269$), and, in the case of unemployment and sickness benefits, causing it to lose significance. This indicates that the effect of economic growth is partly 'political'.

Our second economic indicator, the unemployment rate, shows effects that run counter to GDP growth rates. When unemployment is higher, the popular deservingness of unemployed people and social assistance beneficiaries is higher, as indicated by the positive unemployment rate effects in Table 3.3 (model 2). In model 3, the effect of the unemployment rate is hidden by economic growth, but it is again visible when political climate is taken into account in model 5. Both the unemployment benefit and social assistance benefit are work-related benefits to which job seeking obligations are attached. An explanation of the finding could be that in times of higher unemployment the public at large is more aware of the fact that unemployed and social assistance claimants have more difficulty in finding jobs, and therefore are less to blame for their inability to escape their neediness. In addition, the public may also be more aware of the level of need that they face, because, for example, family or friends may experience unemployment. This interpretation is strengthened by the lack of effects of the unemployment rate on the deservingness opinion regarding disability, pension and sickness benefits. But that would also be the case when the finding is explained using

self-interest, because a higher unemployment rate might increase the odds (and fear) of job loss for many, increasing deservingness of people already in that predicament.

Political climate

The second contextual factor that may affect welfare deservingness opinions is the political climate. We expect needy groups to be considered less deserving when the political climate is more right wing. To control for a possible composition effect, we also include individual political left-right orientation. Table 3.3 reports that for four out of five benefits, the political climate significantly affects the likelihood of considering needy groups to be deserving of more. This means that in a more right-wing political climate, both left-oriented and right-oriented people are less likely to be generous about the needs of these groups, indicating they are less deserving of more support. This is true for all but the old age pension, for which no significant effect was found. Apparently, the level of the Dutch old age pension and the related deservingness of pensioners are beyond ideological divide. This may be due to its universal nature, covering all Dutch citizens regardless of income and status, in contrast to the other benefits, which cover mainly the working population and poor sections of the population. The finding also corresponds with the earlier mentioned consistent high ranking of old aged people as highly deserving needy group.

Policy events

To see if the opinion fluctuations seen in figure 3.1 are a reflection of social policy reform measures, we look at the specific reforms that were put in place for the different benefits. Table 3.1 presents an overview of all reforms over the years (see Van Oorschot (2006a) for a detailed discussion of each of the changes and the socio-economic contexts in which they were implemented). As the table shows, most changes in entitlements for Dutch social security benefits have been retrenchments. However, not all retrenchment reforms have been equally substantial. Reforms of the disability pension and unemployment benefit have significantly curtailed the level and duration of these benefits, and as such, these reforms have been very visible in the public debate. Reforms of old age pension and social assistance have had less drastic effects on entitlements, but they have had a high public visibility. In the case of old age pension, this is related to the fact that pensioners are seen as a highly deserving group, which ensures that any change to their benefits receives significant media attention. In the case of social assistance, attention in the public debate is often large because the benefit is regarded as a subsistence minimum, where any curtailment may have important effects on poverty rates.

Table 3.4 Logistic regression analyses on deservingness opinions: coefficients event years, 1985-2006, deserving of more vs. sufficiently deserving

	Disability	Pension	Unemployment	Social assistance	Sickness
1985	-.069	-.371**	-.133*	.003	.130
1987	.054	.017	.174**	.257**	-.206*
1988	-.130*	.086	.049	-.052	-.092
1992	-.172**	.359**	-.107~	.202**	-.216**
1993	.138*	.024	-.170*	-.289**	-.302**
1994	.152**	.213**	-.041	-.091~	-.084
1995	.211**	.189**	-.066	.097*	.175**
1996	.526**	.292**	.254**	.407**	.704**
1998	.177**	.105*	.021	.285**	-.010***
2002	.001	-.367**	.081	-.163*	^a
2004	.067	-.025	.380**	.181**	.377**
2006	.099~	.001	.304**	-.077	.341**
N	27469	30117	27456	27002	26888

Source: *Cultural changes in the Netherlands, 1975-2006* (own calculations)

** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; ~ $p < .10$, ref cat: sufficiently deserving

Controlled for: age, sex, educational level, income level, work status, real GDP growth and unemployment rate.

We ran separate models for each survey year, b-coefficients indicate if a year significantly differs from the average; coefficients of years in which an event took place are in bold.

The same analyses were done without controlling for the economic factors. The results of those analyses show stronger, and more often significant effects than the ones presented here ((part of) the year effects are explained by the economic context) but the main conclusions remain the same.

^a This item was not part of the 2002 questionnaire.

Comparing Table 3.1 with figure 3.1 makes it clear that there are more opinion fluctuations than policy events, which, as a first observation, implies that opinions can fluctuate in the absence of specific policy reforms. However, some reforms may have had an effect. To statistically test this, we analyze the effects of policy reform events on opinions about the relevant benefit as well as their possible effect on the opinions regarding the other benefits (crossover effects). The results, presented in Table 3.4, show whether public opinion is different from the average of the other years in a policy event-year (as represented by the bold coefficients), which may indicate a policy effect. Two general observations can be made as to the patterns seen in Table 3.4. First, only half of the event years have a significant effect on the opinions when one was expected. For instance, for the disability benefit, there were eight years in which

a policy event took place (in bold). For two of these event-years (1993 and 2006), the results are as expected: There was a downward reform (see Table 3.1), and the target group are considered to be deserving of more than the average in the entire time period examined here (although the effect was only marginal in 2006, see Table 3.4). In 2002 (non-directional reform) and 2004 (both upward and downward reforms), we did not expect an effect, and none was found. In the remaining event years for the disability benefit, an effect was either found but not expected, or vice versus. Similar descriptions can be given for the other benefits and event-years: At most half of the policy reforms have the predicted effect. Yet, when effects are found, they are mostly in the expected direction (downward reform and an upswing in deservingness).

Second, policy events seem to have crossover effects. That is, a policy event directed at a specific target group may affect opinions towards target groups that were not the focus of the specific policy event. For instance, stronger work record requirements were put in place for the unemployed in 1987. It seems that the public opinion responded to this policy event, and people were more likely to feel that the unemployed were deserving of more. However, in the same year there was also an increase in the deservingness of social assistance and sickness benefit claimants even though there was no policy change for these groups in 1987. The event-year 1996 provides another example. That year, there was a policy event for only the social assistance (simplified rates) and the sickness benefits (privatization), but significant relations are found for all five benefits. The existence of these crossover effects, together with the finding that almost half of the policy events do not affect opinions on specific target groups despite expectations to the contrary, lead us to conclude that policy effects are mostly modest and if present often complex.

3.5 Conclusions and discussion

Our analyses of the dynamics of welfare deservingness opinions in the Netherlands have shown some interesting findings. First, when looking at the long-term development of deservingness opinions in the period 1975-2006 (regardless of the short term fluctuations), we find a rather stable long-term trend. This long-term stability is remarkable given the welfare retrenchment that occurred in the Netherlands. Similar to the findings in the Scandinavian countries, a downward trend in public policy is not clearly reflected in distinct increasing or decreasing deservingness opinions. The exception to this long-term stability is the shift towards more generous attitudes in the early 1980s. It is tempting to attribute this shift to the economic recession that was at its height in the Netherlands in that period, yet other changes during this period - political and institutional - may also have been responsible for the sudden shift in opinions. In addition, it is unclear whether

it was the state of the economy - as measured by GDP - or the level of unemployment that affected this shift.

Second, despite the long-term stability, we find considerable year-to-year fluctuation in deservingness opinions. The public could be quite lenient in one year and radically change their opinions the next. These year-to-year fluctuations in deservingness opinions provided us with the opportunity to test effects of changes in the economic and political climate on deservingness opinions, as well as the effect of policy reforms. Our third general finding arises from these explanatory analyses. We find the predicted economic and political effects on deservingness opinions, but policy effects are limited and often occur in an unpredicted way. With regards to the economic climate, we find that economic growth makes opinions more generous, increasing the perceived deservingness of the disabled, the elderly, and social assistance beneficiaries. This can be understood from a self-interest perspective: During economic downfall, people are faced with higher income and job risks and therefore may focus more on their own self-interest and their own deservingness instead of on the deservingness of specific needy groups, whereas, during economic good times, people's own situation and their perception of it is likely to be better as well, allowing more generosity towards others (Alt, 1979; see also Becker, 2005; Durr, 1993). However, a higher unemployment rate increases the perception of needy groups as deserving. This holds only for the needy groups that are most dependent on a good labor market: the unemployed and social assistance beneficiaries. This finding can be explained using deservingness theory: with an increasing unemployment rate, the extent to which the jobless are seen as responsible for their needy situation decreases, and the public can more easily identify with these individuals and the needs they face, leading to more generous deservingness opinions. But it can also be interpreted using self-interest theory, because times of higher unemployment increases the odds of unemployment (and subsequently social assistance) for many. Unfortunately, we are unable to disentangle the two interpretations. Concerning the political climate, we find that when the political climate is more right-wing, people are less likely to consider needy groups as deserving of more support. Because we controlled for individual political orientations, this contextual effect means that both left- and right-wingers shift to less generous deservingness opinions in more right-wing times.

Focusing on the policy events, we found only limited indications that these events were responsible for fluctuations in deservingness opinions. There are more fluctuations in the opinions than could be explained by these events alone, and statistical analyses of the effect of policy events showed that deservingness opinions differed from other years in only a little over half of the event years. In addition, when a policy effect was found, it often effected not only opinions about the needy groups directly concerned by the policy event but also opinions about other needy groups. That is, specific policy events had crossover effects, affecting opinions on needy groups that were not the target of the policy.

The limited indications we found of direct relations between specific policy events and specific opinions may be explained by people's lack of knowledge about policy changes. Alternatively, policy events may affect deservingness opinions in a different year from the year in which it occurs; perhaps effects instead appear the year before or after a policy event. However, additional analyses with different time specifications (event change in year $t-1$, $t-2$, $t+1$) did not change findings. This underlines that the effects of policy reforms on welfare opinions are limited - just as the stable long-term trend in these opinions taught us - and that its effect must not be overrated. Additional evidence for this conclusion is found in the crossover effects of policy. The existence of these effects implies that future welfare opinions research should not only focus on policy directly affecting the welfare group investigated but also policy reforms affecting other groups. Additionally, future studies could measure opinion changes over shorter time spans than we are able to here. For instance, it might be the case that opinions change temporarily in the month of the reform(decision), when it is given a lot of media attention, but return to the status quo soon thereafter.



Chapter 4

The relative deservingness of the unemployed in the eyes of the European public

This chapter was co-authored with Prof. Dr. Ing. Wim van Oorschot and published as:
Jeene, M., & Van Oorschot, W. (2013). The Relative Deservingness of the Unemployed in
the Eyes of the European Public. In L. Halman & W. Arts (Eds.), *Value Contrasts and Consensus
in Present-Day Europe: Painting Europe's Moral Landscapes* (pp. 95-116). The Hague: Brill.

ABSTRACT

It is often found that, when considering which needy groups the general public feels should get social support, the unemployed are considered to deserve less than for instance the old, the sick, and families and children. It is less known, however, to what extent people actually differentiate between these more and less deserving groups. In present day Europe, where unemployment rates are increasing due to the financial crisis and welfare demands from other groups are not declining, it is important to know which factors affect the popular deservingness of the unemployed compared to the deservingness of other needy groups. This chapter focuses on this issue, and analyzes which individual and country characteristics can explain the extent to which people consider the unemployed relatively more or less deserving. We use data from the EVS wave 4, including 45 countries, and study economic, institutional and cultural-ideological characteristics as possible determining factors. Results show that individuals, whose socio-economic characteristics give them an interest in supporting the unemployed, consider this group to be relatively more deserving. Individual cultural ideologies matter as well: those on the political right and people with higher work ethics regard unemployed as relatively less deserving. It also matters in which country people live: People living in countries with a lower unemployment rate, and a protestant heritage, regard the unemployed as less deserving.

4.1 Introduction

As European countries are facing a financial and economic crisis, rising unemployment rates ask for more means to be redistributed to the unemployed. But the economic crisis also puts a fiscal strain on public means, and therefore on welfare state resources. This increasing scarcity urges to reexamine the basic welfare question of who should get what part of the public means and why. Public opinion research has shown that the general public answers this question in relation to the differences in deservingness they perceive between different welfare target groups. These perceptions in turn are found to be based on a number of deservingness criteria that people apply: the level of need; poor people's control over, or responsibility for their neediness; the identity of the poor; poor people's attitude towards support, and the extent of reciprocation by the poor. The degree to which different poor groups meet these criteria, determines their deservingness. Thus, groups with higher deservingness in public opinion are groups with higher levels of need, that cannot be blamed for their neediness, that are members of the in-group of national citizens, that show gratefulness for the support received, and groups that have contributed to the country in the past (Van Oorschot, 2000). In national and international studies the unemployed as a group are found to be considered as less deserving, because they do not meet these criteria to the same extent as the traditionally vulnerable groups do, such as the old, the sick and disabled, and poor families with children (Coughlin, 1980; Jæger, 2007; Van Oorschot, 2006b).¹³

The current economic circumstances are leading to increasing unemployment rates, and therefore to increasing demands for unemployment benefits. At the same time, however, the welfare demands of the most vulnerable needy groups like the elderly and the sick and disabled are not declining or are even increasing (e.g., due to the ageing of European populations). Considering these circumstances, an interesting question is what the popular deservingness of the unemployed actually is in Europe, compared with the deservingness of groups that are known to be considered highly deserving under all circumstances (in this research the old, the sick and disabled and children in poor families¹⁴)?

This chapter seeks to answer this general question and therefore elaborates theoretically and empirically on the following sub-questions: 1) How do populations of European countries differ in their attitudes about the relative deservingness of unemployed people? 2) To what extent can these differences be explained by country characteristics on the one hand and by differences in population compositions of these

¹³ Anticipating our findings, we also found that the traditionally vulnerable groups (the old, the sick and disabled and poor children), are considered highly deserving, and the unemployed less deserving.

¹⁴ In the remainder of this chapter, we will use the term 'vulnerable groups' to refer to these groups.

countries on the other hand? 3) To what extent do individual Europeans differ in their opinion on the relative deservingness of unemployed people? At the country level we take into account the possible influence of economic, institutional, and cultural factors. At the individual level we take into account people's structural position in society which may indicate the degree of personal interest they have in welfare for the unemployed, as well as some welfare related cultural positions and ideas. We formulate a number of hypotheses and test these for all 45 European countries using data from the European Values Study 2008. Multilevel techniques estimate the effects of country-level characteristics on a person's attitude towards the relative deservingness of the unemployed, while taking into account possible composition effects by controlling for individual level characteristics.

4.2 Theory & hypotheses

4.2.1 Individual characteristics

Based on previous studies of attitudes towards welfare redistribution, we assume that individual differences concerning opinions on the relative deservingness of the unemployed can be explained by self-interest theory and cultural ideology theory (see for instance Kangas, 1997; Svallfors, 2007; Van Oorschot, 2000). The self-interest approach states that those individuals with more personal interest in the welfare state will be more likely to support its cultivation and expansion. Personal interest in the welfare state comes in three different types (Goul Andersen, 1993; Sihvo & Uusitalo, 1995). The first type is related to (perceived) social risks, that is, those who are most prone to have to rely on some form of benefit would be most supportive. The second interest is related to people being consumers of welfare-state services, with those who consume (more) being most supportive. The third interest is related to being tax payers. Here, theories of tax frustration indicate that the well-to-do would be most resistant towards the welfare state, because they tend to pay in more than they receive (Blekesaune, 2007; Pettersen, 1995). Self-interest theory thus suggests that when in competition for scarce resources, people would want to divide these resources to their own advantage, to further their own interest. We therefore formulate a self-interest hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Those who are unemployed or have higher chances of becoming unemployed (i.e. those with a lower level of education or with a lower income) consider the unemployed as relatively more deserving. Pensioners and the sick and disabled, on the other hand, consider unemployed to be relatively less deserving, because they have more personal interest in competing benefits.

Political stance, work ethics and religious denomination are cultural or ideational factors that have shown to play a role in shaping people's attitudes toward welfare redistribution (Svallfors, 2007). Traditionally, people on the political right are less supportive of redistributive interventions than people on the political left, and they put more emphasis on personal responsibility. More importantly, people on the political right have also been found to believe in a more conditional approach toward the redistribution of welfare, in which a stronger distinction is made between deserving and undeserving poor (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Jeene, Van Oorschot, & Uunk, 2013). We thus formulate a political stance hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: The relative deservingness of the unemployed is lower among those who identify themselves as politically right.

People with stronger work ethics (i.e. who more strongly feel that people have a moral obligation to work) (Stam, Verbakel, & De Graaf, 2011), have been found to prefer a larger distinction between deserving and undeserving groups (Jeene et al., 2013). They expect those who can to work their own way out of a needy situation, and they have stronger meritocratic perspectives on social support. Our individual work ethics hypothesis thus reads:

Hypothesis 3: People with stronger work ethics consider the unemployed as relatively less deserving.

With regard to religious denomination, historical accounts of the way Protestants and Catholics view poverty show Protestant valise to be more conditional. In other words, they distinguish more between the truly needy, the infirm who cannot work, and the able-bodied who 'have a duty to support themselves'. The reason is that in Protestantism the poor are no longer seen as 'Children of God' who have a natural place in the divine order, as was common in the early Christian belief system, but as people who fail to contribute to God's creation (Kahl, 2005). Neither the Catholic, nor the Orthodox church adopted this perspective. They have therefore remained more traditional in not making a strong distinction between able-bodied and infirm poor, both out of compassion and because of the sacralization of poverty, as alms giving to any category of poor was used by the better-off to pay for their sins (Geremek, 1994; Kahl, 2005). Dean and Khan (1997) examine the Islamic perspective on poverty. They emphasize that one of the pillars of Islam is *zakat*, the religious duty to give to the poor. The right to receive from the *zakat* fund is reserved for anyone who cannot meet their basic needs, with no additional conditions to be met (Dean & Khan, 1997). Our expectations regarding the influence of religious denomination is thus as follows:

Hypothesis 4: Protestants regard unemployed as less deserving than Catholics, Muslims and Orthodox do.

4.2.2 National context characteristics

On the country level, three types of factors have been found to explain variation in welfare attitudes: economic, cultural and institutional (Albrekt Larsen, 2006; Blekesaune, 2007; Svallfors, 2007; Van Oorschot et al., 2008).

First, economic prosperity is an important aspect of the national socio-economic context. We assume that people from richer countries are somewhat less concerned with the redistributive question of who should actually get what, and therefore will consider the unemployed as relatively more deserving. With more money to spend, people are more generous, and supporting groups that might not meet all deservingness criteria (i.e. the unemployed) is less of an issue. In less prosperous countries, funds are more limited. As a result, people may make sharper distinctions between deserving and undeserving groups, implying that they regard unemployed people as less deserving compared to the other needy groups. So, our economic prosperity hypothesis reads as follows:

Hypothesis 5: Populations of richer countries will regard the unemployed as more deserving, while populations of poorer countries view the unemployed as less so.

When it comes to the views on the relative deservingness of unemployed people, the unemployment rate is of course another important part in a country's socio-economic context. A higher unemployment rate creates employment insecurity among those who are currently employed, increasing the likelihood of a larger section of the population having to rely on unemployment benefits. From the perspective of self-interest this would increase the relative popular deservingness of the unemployed (Blekesaune, 2007). Such an effect may also be expected from another perspective. With a higher unemployment rate, the unemployed are less likely to be blamed for their predicament. This is because the public might view unemployment as not caused by laziness and lack of discipline on the part of the unemployed, but more as a result of external factors (Albrekt Larsen, 2006; Fridberg & Ploug, 2000; Lepianka, 2007). Such external attribution increases perceptions of deservingness, since it refers to the deservingness criterion of control. In addition, when there are more unemployed in a country, the group is likely to be more visible to others, and a much wider segment of the population will know someone in this situation (Fridberg & Ploug, 2000). This could increase the extent to which people can identify with the unemployed, and the hardships they face, making them more deserving. Our unemployment rate hypothesis thus reads:

Hypothesis 6: In countries with higher unemployment the unemployed are considered as more deserving.

As for cultural factors, at the individual level we expect that political stance, work ethics and religious denomination play a role. However, because cultural factors also have a collective component, and it may be assumed that people are influenced by the ideological or cultural climate in their countries (Coughlin & Lockhart, 1998), we also include these factors as context characteristics. An important part of a country's cultural climate regards the national political atmosphere. This refers to whether the dominant social discourse leans more towards the political right or to the left. When this discourse tends more towards the political right, even people who personally consider themselves to be more left-leaning may be affected, and incline towards a more rightist mindset. Because at the individual level we expected a rightist mindset to be negatively related to the relative deservingness of the unemployed, our political climate hypothesis is as follows:

Hypothesis 7: The more rightist the political climate in a country, the lower the relative deservingness of the unemployed.

Regarding work ethics, Furnham, et al. (1993) and Stam et al. (2011) have shown that an emphasis on the importance attached to work is culturally based, and varies significantly between countries. Lepianka (2007) showed that individuals living in societies with strong work ethics are more likely to view the poor as responsible for their destitution, while people from societies where work is less valued are not as likely to view them as responsible for their predicament. According to deservingness theory, such larger accountability implies lower deservingness, which leads to the national work ethics hypothesis:

Hypothesis 8: The stronger the national level of work ethics, the lower the relative deservingness of the unemployed.

Finally, the religious heritage is part of the cultural climate factors considered here. Opinions on deservingness could be partly shaped by the religious heritage of a country, regardless of one's own religious denomination and whether that denomination is similar to or different from the religion traditionally most common in the country of residence. Comparative analysis of the history and development of European welfare states has shown that religious denominations have their particular perspectives on welfare (Kahl, 2005; Manow, 2002; Van Kersbergen, 1995). One may assume that also in present-day welfare states the dominance of a certain heritage may influence particular welfare

ideas and opinions among the population (Verbakel & Jaspers, 2010). Based on the different views of the different denominations as discussed earlier, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 9: People from countries with a Protestant heritage consider the unemployed to be less deserving, than people from countries with a Catholic, Islamic or Orthodox heritage.

Attitudes within welfare states are also assumed to be shaped by the way in which welfare institutions (benefits and services) are designed. It has been rather common to relate welfare opinions to a certain type of welfare regime (in Esping-Anderson's (1990) form, or in adjusted forms). However, the overall outcome of this kind of work is that often such relations are not found, or findings are contradictory. The main interpretation of this is that regime type is too abstract a concept to be related to specific welfare attitudes; one instead needs to focus on the relationship between specific welfare programs and related attitudes (Cnaan, Hasenfeld, Cnaan, & Rafferty, 1993; Jæger, 2005). In our case, we therefore are interested in the possible effect of labor market policies, which are targeted to the unemployed. According to institutional logic, such policies provide people with a general frame of reference of what is 'normal' with regard to the range and character of welfare services and which groups deserve to be their beneficiaries (Edlund, 1999; Jæger, 2006a; Svallfors, 2003). Social policies thus tend to reproduce their legitimacy, as the status quo becomes accepted (Jæger, 2006a). Following this line of reasoning, we expect the following:

Hypothesis 10: In countries with more comprehensive labor market policies (i.e. policies that are aimed at supporting the unemployed), the public regards the unemployed as relatively more deserving.

4.3 Data & methods

4.3.1 Data

The data used for analyses is the 4th wave of the European Values Study (EVS, 2011). This data set covers all countries of Europe with 100.000 or more inhabitants, a total of 45 countries/regions. In each country, a random sample of about 1500 persons were interviewed face-to-face. The countries are: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Great-Britain, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia Republic, Malta, Republic of Moldova,

Republic of Montenegro, Netherlands, Northern Cyprus, Northern Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and Ukraine. Our final sample for analysis includes 45 countries with 60,388 individuals.

4.3.2 The dependent variable

The relative deservingness of the unemployed was constructed using the following question in the EVS: ‘To what extent do you feel concerned with the living conditions of [needy group] in your country?’ The [needy group] is then substituted one by one, by ‘elderly people’, ‘unemployed people’, ‘sick and disabled people’ and ‘children in poor families’.¹⁵ The answer categories range from 1 ‘not at all’ to 5 ‘very much’. The relative deservingness of the unemployed is defined as the difference between a respondent’s score for the unemployed group and the average of scores for the other three groups. A higher value on the measure indicates that the unemployed are considered to be more deserving, relative to the other three groups.¹⁶

4.3.3 Individual level variables

The socio-economic individual level variables included are as follows: *gender* (female = 1); *age* in five categories (18-30 years (reference category), 31-40, 41-50, 51-64, and 65 and older); *educational level* (three categories with 1 primary education (reference category), 2 secondary education, and 3 tertiary education), *monthly household income* (in thousands of euro’s per month, corrected for purchasing power parity (PPP); and *employment status* (four dummy variables for pensioner, unemployed, disabled, and other daily activities, with employed being the reference category).

The cultural individual level variable *political left-right orientation* was measured by asking respondents to indicate their stance on a political left-to-right scale (1-10). *Work ethics* is based on an aggregated 5-point scale, constructed with the mean score of five work ethics items (‘to fully develop your talents, you need to have a job’, ‘it is humiliating to receive money without having to work for it’, ‘people who don’t work turn lazy’, ‘work is a duty towards society’, and ‘work should always come first, even if

¹⁵ Except in Slovakia, where the question was not asked for the elderly.

¹⁶ Our assumption is that respondent’s expressed concern for these groups reflects their feelings of deservingness towards them. Another interpretation is that this felt concern reflects the extent to which people perceive the living conditions of these groups as problematic. This problem awareness could then be related to the actual or perceived protection of these groups by the welfare state. If this was the case, people would give a higher score to those needy groups that are least protected. However, previous studies have shown that highest scores (i.e. more deservingness in our interpretation) are actually given to needy groups that are most protected by European welfare states, namely the elderly and the sick and disabled, compared to the unemployed, who are less protected (Van Oorschot, Arts, & Halman, 2005; Van Oorschot & Uunk, 2007).

it means less spare time'). Personal denominations are 'none', 'Protestant' (reference category), 'Catholic', 'Orthodox', 'Islamic', and 'other' (e.g. Jew, Buddhist).

For non-linear variables, missing values were limited (less than 1%) and were excluded from the analyses. For linear variables, missing values were given the country average and an additional dummy variable was included indicating whether the respondent had a missing value on that variable (1) or not (0) (effects are not shown in the tables).

4.3.4 Country level variables

We include two variables measuring the socio-economic context: four-year average *gross domestic product (GDP) per capita*, in US dollars, corrected for PPP, and the average five-year *unemployment rate*, both retrieved from the statistical database of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE, 2010) ($r = -.437$). As for the ideological climate, *political climate* was measured by the aggregated individual level variable *political stance*, and *work ethics* by the aggregated name-sake variable. *Religious tradition* is based on a classification provided by Inglehart (1990: p. 440), and extended by Verbakel & Jaspers (2010) and Stam et al (2011) to include all the countries in our sample. The *religious heritage* denominations are Protestant (reference category), Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Islamic. The institutional factor *labor market policies* is measured by adding the average national expenditure on active and passive labor market policies. These expenditures are included as percentage of GDP between 2004 and 2007, divided by the unemployment rate of the respective country, as retrieved by Chung and Van Oorschot (2011) from the EUROSTAT Labour Market Policy Database. Due to data limitations in this database, we have this information only for half of the countries in the EVS.

The descriptive statistics of both the individual level factors and the country level factors can be found in table 4.1, while table 4.2 shows the country characteristics for each country.¹⁷

¹⁷ Additional analysis of the correlations between the country level variables showed that there is no problem of multicollinearity (results not reported).

Table 4.1 Descriptive statistics; individual & context level variables

	Range	Mean	SD
Dependent variable			
Relative deservingness of the unemployed	-4 - 4	-.3788	.82
Individual level variables			
Female	0 - 1	.56	
Age			
18-30 (ref cat)	0 - 1	.23	
31-40	0 - 1	.18	
41-50	0 - 1	.19	
51-64	0 - 1	.23	
65+	0 - 1	.17	
Educational level			
Primary education	0 - 1	.12	
Secondary education	0 - 1	.64	
Tertiary education	0 - 1	.24	
Income			
Work status			
Working (ref cat)	0 - 1	.53	
Unemployed	0 - 1	.10	
Pensioner	0 - 1	.21	
Disabled for work	0 - 1	.02	
Other	0 - 1	.16	
<i>Cultural</i>			
Left-right stance	1 - 10	5.45	1.93
Work ethics	1 - 5	3.64	.76
Denomination			
Not religious	0 - 1	.25	
Protestant	0 - 1	.11	
Catholic	0 - 1	.29	
Orthodox	0 - 1	.24	
Islamic	0 - 1	.08	
Other	0 - 1	.02	
Country factors level factors			
<i>Economic</i>			
GDP per capita (x1000)	2.66 - 78.16	22.76	14.74
Unemployment rate	1.28 - 35.84	9.27	6.56
<i>Cultural</i>			
Political climate	4.63 - 6.28	5.45	.39
Work ethics	2.82 - 4.23	3.6	.25
Religious heritage			
Protestant (ref cat)	0 - 1	.24	
Roman catholic	0 - 1	.37	
Orthodox	0 - 1	.30	
Islamic	0 - 1	.09	
<i>Institutional</i>			
LMP ^a	.02 - .74	.1991	.19

Source: European Values Study, wave 2008; listwise deletion of missing values; N=60,989

^a available for 23 countries, N=30,145

Table 4.2 Country characteristics, countries sorted by the relative deservingness of the unemployed

Country	Valid N	Relative deservingness unemployed ^a	GDP per capita ^b	Unemployment rate ^c	LMP ^d	Political climate ^e	Work ethic ^f	Religious heritage ^g
Northern Ireland	433	-1.08	34,347	5.2		5.74	3.27	Protestant
Great Britain	1,345	-0.82	34,347	5.2	0.04	5.26	3.31	Protestant
Latvia	1,424	-0.76	15,457	7.9	0.06	5.99	3.46	Protestant
Slovak Republic	1,416	-0.68	19,133	13.7	0.03	4.87	3.81	Catholic
Belgium	1,459	-0.63	33,865	7.9	0.39	5.05	3.31	Catholic
Netherlands	1,412	-0.63	38,235	3.8	0.63	5.42	3.13	Protestant
Cyprus	937	-0.62	26,879	4.4	0.14	5.50	4.02	Orthodox
Czech Republic	1,677	-0.61	22,705	6.6	0.05	5.53	3.60	Catholic
Germany	1,963	-0.59	33,597	9.2	0.28	4.81	3.72	Protestant
Ireland	913	-0.58	41,376	4.9		5.82	3.47	Catholic
Norway	1,080	-0.56	52,908	3.4	0.32	5.59	3.58	Protestant
Denmark	1,419	-0.53	35,378	4.3	0.74	5.42	3.52	Protestant
Russian Federation	1,419	-0.51	13,979	6.9		5.60	3.56	Orthodox
Austria	1,458	-0.51	35,854	4.6		5.20	3.72	Catholic
France	1,402	-0.50	31,513	8.8	0.24	4.92	3.45	Catholic
Sweden	1,083	-0.50	35,641	6.9	0.28	5.49	3.27	Protestant
Estonia	1,454	-0.48	19,065	6.7	0.02	5.64	3.55	Protestant
Switzerland	1,179	-0.48	39,918	4.0		5.15	3.43	Protestant
Luxembourg	1,536	-0.44	78,156	4.7		5.24	3.64	Catholic
Belarus	1,461	-0.43	10,396	1.3		5.77	3.60	Orthodox
Iceland	767	-0.43	35,877	2.8		5.39	2.82	Protestant
Ukraine	1,451	-0.43	6,539	7.1		5.55	3.70	Orthodox

Moldova	1,494	-0.40	2,659	6.4		6.25	3.85	Orthodox
Romania	1,389	-0.40	11,908	7.0	0.06	5.80	3.85	Orthodox
Bulgaria	1,403	-0.39	10,888	8.7	0.06	5.30	4.07	Orthodox
Finland	1,090	-0.39	33,536	7.6	0.31	5.96	3.23	Protestant
Malta	1,423	-0.39	22,206	6.8		5.36	3.52	Catholic
Lithuania	1,441	-0.39	16,650	7.1		5.64	3.52	Catholic
Portugal	1,441	-0.32	22,777	7.6	0.22	4.92	3.89	Catholic
Poland	1,434	-0.30	15,527	13.5	0.07	5.97	3.48	Catholic
Hungary	1,475	-0.27	18,342	7.2	0.08	5.47	3.84	Catholic
Slovenia	1,295	-0.26	25,688	5.6	0.09	4.99	3.66	Catholic
Spain	1,385	-0.23	29,985	9.6	0.22	4.63	3.54	Catholic
Albania	1,472	-0.22	6,913	13.8		5.06	3.90	Islamic
Armenia	1,431	-0.19	4,865	7.4		5.74	3.87	orthodox
Northern Cyprus	486	-0.18	12,824	9.1		5.55	3.84	Islamic
Montenegro	1,458	-0.17	10,677	24.8		5.09	3.68	Orthodox
Italy	1,363	-0.15	29,968	7.1		5.27	3.70	Catholic
Croatia	1,424	-0.14	17,149	11.1		5.20	3.39	Catholic
Georgia	1,447	-0.13	4,306	14.0		6.28	3.93	Orthodox
Greece	1,434	-0.06	26,922	9.1	0.05	5.43	3.78	Orthodox
Serbia	1,426	-0.03	9,682	18.4		5.56	3.66	Orthodox
Turkey	2,221	-0.01	12,824	9.1		5.88	4.23	Islamic
Bosnia								
Herzegovina	1,436	0.00	6,531	27.8		5.26	3.56	Islamic
Macedonia	1,433	0.08	9,018	35.8		6.17	3.83	Orthodox

a: Measured on a scale from -4 - 4; higher scores imply that the deserving are relatively more deserving (less conditional deservingness opinion)

b: Four year average, 2005-2008, corrected for PPP in US dollars

c: Five year average, 2004-2008

d: Labor Market Policy (active and passive), divided by the GDP and unemployment rate (Chung & Van Oorschot, 2011)

e: aggregated political stance, scale 1-10, higher scores imply a climate more to the political right

f: aggregated work ethics, scale 1-5, higher scores imply stronger work ethics

g: Historical dominant denomination (Inglehart, 1990: 440; Stam, et al., 2011; Verbakel & Jaspers, 2010)

4.3.5 Methods

To test our hypotheses, we make use of multilevel modeling, which takes into account the hierarchical structure of the EVS data, containing information on individuals that are nested within countries. A number of models are examined. First, the empty model is examined to determine the amount of variance in the relative deservingness opinions that can be attributed to the individual and country level. We present the intraclass correlation (ICC) to show which part of the variation can be accounted for by the country level. Second, we add the socio-economic and cultural individual level variables to account for part of the within-country variance, and to examine whether there are differences between countries that can be attributed to population composition (Diez Roux, 2004). Finally, in the third step we add the contextual factors. This enables us to test our hypotheses concerning the explanations of country level variance, after the composition is taken into account. Although the number of countries used in this study is relatively large, we are still bound to the number of context factors we can include simultaneously. We therefore first include all context factors separately (but each time including the individual level variables to control for composition effects), and then include groups of similar or significant context factors simultaneously, depending on the results of the bivariate analyses.

4.4 Results

As shown in figure 4.1, the mean relative deservingness of the unemployed is negative for almost all countries (the variable ranges from -4 to 4). This indicates that in almost all of the 45 countries, the unemployed are on average considered to be relatively less deserving than the other needy groups, as found in previous research as well (see, e.g. Van Oorschot, 2006b). People in Northern Ireland on average distinguish most sharply between the unemployed and other needy groups, with a value of -1.06, while those in the FYR Macedonia actually consider this group to be relatively more deserving than vulnerable groups, with a value of .081.

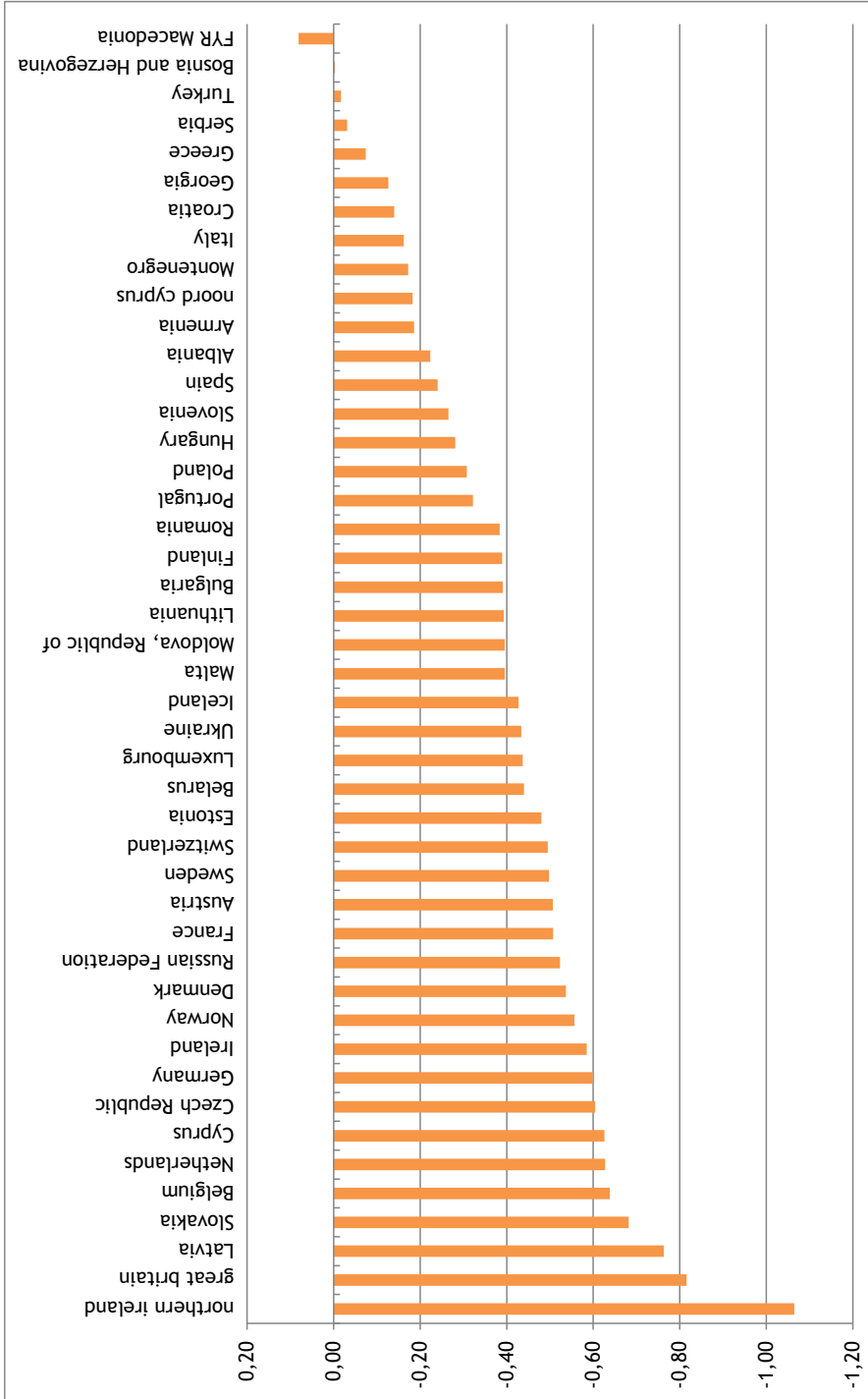


Figure 4.1. Average relative deservingness of the unemployed in European countries

Table 4.3 and 4.4 show the results of the multilevel regression analyses. The empty-model of the multilevel analysis (table 4.3, model 0), including all 45 EVS countries, shows that almost 8.2% of the variation in the relative deservingness of the unemployed can be attributed to the country level, a sufficient percentage in welfare opinion research. The second model includes the individual level variables to determine whether there are composition effects. The table shows that this indeed is the case, and that a minor proportion of 17% of the country-based variation is due to differences in composition.

Before presenting and discussing the effects of country level variables in Table 4.4, we first elaborate further on the findings in table 4.3. At the individual level, we find various support for the self-interest hypothesis. Those aged between 51 and 64 would have a difficult time finding re-employment when faced with a lay-off, so it is in their best interest to consider the unemployed to be relatively more deserving, as the results confirm they do. The interests of those over 65, and of the disabled lie with provision of their own benefits, which they may see as competing with provisions for the unemployed, and hence they regard the unemployed as less deserving. The effects of the education dummy variables are not in line with our expectations, as we would expect the lowest educated, who generally have highest employment insecurity, to regard unemployed as more deserving. But the results show that this is not the case. It is actually those with a secondary educational level who consider unemployed as more deserving. It could be that the effect of having a primary education is suppressed in the model by other variables (e.g., income and work status). The negative effect of income is in line with our expectation and can be interpreted as a result of the higher unemployment risk for people with lower income, and the possibly greater need that would arise when unemployment would occur. On the other hand, the effect could stem mainly from the higher income groups, who might regard unemployed as less deserving because lower provisions for the unemployed would reflect their interest as tax payers who probably would not be receiving unemployment benefits themselves. Also clearly in line with the self-interest hypothesis is the finding that respondents who are actually unemployed regard 'the unemployed' as relatively more deserving, and that the disabled for work regard the unemployed as less deserving.

The effects of political stance and work ethics also confirm our hypotheses. More rightist individuals and people with stronger work ethics find the unemployed to be relatively less deserving than the vulnerable groups.

Table 4.3 Effects of individual variables on the relative deservingness of the unemployed: multilevel regression analysis

	Model 0		Model 1	
	b	se	b	se
Intercept	-.395**	.035	-.274**	.042
Female			-.038**	.007
Age (ref cat = 18-30)				
31-40			.002	.010
41-50			.017	.010
51-64			.042**	.010
65+			-.037**	.015
Educational level (ref cat = primary education)				
Secondary education			.026*	.012
Tertiary education			.021	.013
Household income			-.015**	.003
Work status (ref cat = working)				
Unemployed			.202**	.012
Pensioner			-.012	.012
Disabled for work			-.057*	.026
Other			.022*	.010
Left-right stance			-.014**	.002
Work ethics			-.029**	.005
Personal denomination				
None			.050**	.014
Catholic			.041**	.016
Orthodox			.071**	.018
Islamic			.127**	.023
Other			.006	.024
Individual level variance	.622		.615	
Country level variance	.055		.046	
R ² _{individual level} (%)			1.02%	
R ² _{country level} (%)			17.37%	

Source: European Values Study, wave 2008 (own calculations)

** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; b-coefficients given, standard errors between parentheses

$N_{individuals} = 60,388$; $N_{countries} = 45$

The subsequent models, shown in table 4.4, present the effects of the context factors. Model 2 includes all context variables separately, which means that the analyses are ‘bivariate’ at the context level. Note, however, that in all of these separate analyses the individual level variables are included in order to control for composition effects. In model 2, contrary to our expectations, we found a negative association between a country’s GDP per capita and the relative deservingness of the unemployed. However, when the socio-economic context factors are included simultaneously in model 3, the effect of GDP per capita is suppressed by that of the unemployment rate (note that the correlation between both variables is $-.437$). The effect of the unemployment rate is significant and in the expected direction, meaning that in countries with higher unemployment, the unemployed are considered to be relatively more deserving. This can be interpreted as self-interest, because an increase in the unemployment rate increases the perceived employment insecurity. But it could also be explained with the deservingness theory; that is, when the unemployment rate increases, people view the unemployed less personal responsible for their needy situation, and are also more aware of the hardships they face, because people around them are faced with this predicament. The effect of the unemployment rate adds almost 20% to the explained country-level variance, compared to the model with only individual level characteristics.

We also find confirmation for the hypothesis on religious heritage. As expected, people in countries with a protestant heritage consider the unemployed to be relatively less deserving than people in countries with another religious heritage. Values related to the religious heritage of a country thus still influence the attitudes of people today, regardless of their personal denomination.¹⁸

We did not find an effect of political climate, that is, whether a country’s population as a whole is more left or right leaning, but there is an association found with national work ethics. Interestingly, this association is positive, which is the opposite of what we expected. People who live in countries with stronger national work ethics consider the unemployed relatively *more* deserving, not less. At the individual level we found the opposite: people with a stronger work ethics regard unemployed as less deserving. However, when we include national work ethics simultaneously with religious heritage in model 4, the impact of the national work ethics is suppressed. This can be understood from a study by Stam, et al. (2011) who found religious denomination to be a strong predictor of national work ethics. Countries with an Islamic heritage were found to have

¹⁸ Not all of the denominations exist in different country samples (e.g. there almost only Muslims in Turkey, a country with an Islamic heritage). The individual denominations may therefore also partly reflect the religious heritage (country effect), underestimating the effect of this heritage. Additional analysis excluding the individual level denomination indeed shows an increased effect of religious heritage. While taking up the individual denomination is a way to control for the composition effect, in this case it may also partly reflect the religious heritage.

the strongest national work ethics, followed by countries with an Orthodox and Catholic heritage, while protestant countries had the weakest work ethics. We find this same order here for the relative deservingness of the unemployed. Inhabitants of countries with an Islamic heritage consider the unemployed to be relatively most deserving, compared to those in a country with a protestant heritage, followed by inhabitants of countries with an Orthodox and Catholic heritage. The association of national work ethics on the relative deservingness of the unemployed thus appears to be spurious, and the association of religious heritage could stem from different views on helping the poor, not the way they value work. The effect of religious heritage adds even more to the explained country-level variance than the unemployment rate, over 21%.

Table 4.4 Effects of context variables on the relative deservingness of the unemployed: multilevel regression analysis

	Model 2 ^a		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se
Country factors								
<i>Economic</i>								
GDP per capita (x1000)	-.006**	.002	-.002	.002				
Unemployment rate	.017**	.004	.015**	.005			.012*	.004
<i>Institutional</i>								
LMP ^b	-.119	.219						
<i>Cultural</i>								
Political climate	.031	.085						
Work ethics	.315**	.115			.001	.148		
Religious heritage								
Protestant (ref cat)								
Roman catholic	.187**	.071			.185*	.080	.159*	.067
Orthodox	.262**	.075			.260*	.100	.191*	.075
Islamic	.395**	.108			.391**	.133	.283*	.109
<hr/>								
Individual level variance				.615		.615		.615
Country level variance				.035		.034		.029
R ² _{country level} (%)				37.05%		38.51%		47.65%

Source: European Values Study, wave 2008 (own calculations); ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

b-coefficients given, standard errors between parentheses, controlled for individual level factors
^aall country level factors are included separately

$N_{individuals} = 60,388$; $N_{countries} = 45$, except when LMP is included, than ${}^bN_{individuals} = 30,145$; $N_{countries} = 23$

No significant effect is found of the expenditure on active and passive labor market policies. However, it should be noted that we could test this effect for only 23 countries. There is a need for better welfare expenditure measures for all countries to gain a full grasp of whether and how expenditure on labor market policies affect opinions on deservingness. That would also allow us to obtain a clearer view on the relationship between institutions, national work ethics and religious heritage.¹⁹ Welfare states are often more developed in richer, traditionally Protestant (and Catholic) countries, and have been criticized too as eroding work ethics (Lindbeck, 1995).

The final model (Model 5) adds the remaining significant relations simultaneously. It shows that a country's rate of unemployment and its religious heritage, together with composition effects, explain almost half (47.65%) of the country level variance in the relative deservingness of the unemployed. To round off our analyses, we checked whether any of the individual level variable effects from model 1 in Table 4.3 had changed in model 5, in which the context variables are included. This proved not to be the case in any imperative sense, neither regarding effect sizes or direction of effects.

4.5 Conclusion & discussion

The unemployed are often stigmatized as being irresponsible, lazy, dishonest, and they are readily blamed for their predicament (Furaker & Blomsterberg, 2003; Maassen & De Goede, 1989). In ranking needy groups, they are often seen as relatively undeserving, compared to more traditionally vulnerable groups like the old, the sick and disabled, and children in poor families. In this chapter, we examined the relative deservingness of unemployed people, as considered by citizens of 45 European countries, and the characteristics of citizens and of the countries they live in that may affect opinions on deservingness.

¹⁹ Additional analyses were done using other institutional measures (for instance total welfare spending and the percentage of the total welfare spending allocated to the unemployment benefits). Similar to the labor market policy (LMP) measure we present here, these measures showed not to be significantly related to the relative deservingness of the unemployed. However, even though the results were mixed, in most cases, when also including national work ethics or protestant religious heritage, these latter factors remained only marginally significant ($p < 0.1$) or became insignificant, depending on the exact measure and/or country selection of the institution measure. The same can be found when taking into account the current LMP measure, although for the country selection needed there, even without including the LMP measure, national work ethics never reaches significance. It is possible that these factors are related in such a way that they cancel each other out. To fully examine this, we need institutional information for a broader country selection, as the current selection of 23 countries excludes mostly poorer countries, with higher work ethics and Orthodox or Islamic heritage.

A first finding was that in all but one of the 45 European countries unemployed people are seen as less deserving than the old, the sick and disabled and children in poor families. This is fully in line with findings of other studies, and implies that even in the European model of social protection, welfare provision for the unemployed is not self-evident. But individual people and countries do differ in the degree to which unemployed are seen as deserving, relative to the other groups.

Such differences can be partly described to individual characteristics. We found various support for the self-interest hypothesis, which stated that those individuals with more personal interest in unemployment provision are more likely to consider unemployed people as deserving. The relative deservingness of the unemployed is indeed higher among people who are unemployed themselves, among people with a lower income and among those in the 51-64 age category. Those who are disabled for work and pensioners - who may see unemployment provision as competing with their own benefits - regard the unemployed as less deserving. In addition, an individual's cultural ideas also explain their relative deservingness opinions. Those who espouse views from the political right, who have stronger work ethics, and who uphold a Protestant denomination regard unemployed as less deserving. At the country level, we found that in countries with higher unemployment, redistribution towards the unemployed is more legitimized, as this group is seen as relatively more deserving. This finding may indicate self-interest in the sense that a rising unemployment rate increases people's perceived unemployed insecurity. But it can also be interpreted using deservingness theory. That reading would assume that when the group of unemployed grows, the unemployed are less likely to be blamed for their predicament, and it might also be easier to identify with their problems because more people are likely to be acquainted with someone who is unemployed. Unfortunately, we are unable to distinguish between the two interpretations. We found no evidence of institutional effects; that is, no relation was found between the degree of provision of unemployment benefits in a country and the relative deservingness of the unemployed. However, we only had institutional information for part of the sample. If institutional information for all countries were available, a clearer answer could have been given to the question of whether and how certain institutions affect the relative deservingness of the unemployed. We suggest that future research should differentiate more between various types of unemployment-related social policies, such as income benefit schemes, re-integration programs and active labor market policies. Moreover, a distinction could be made between countries that predominantly deploy social insurance based versus social assistance based support schemes.

Particular aspects of the cultural-ideological climate of countries did prove to be of importance. Surprisingly, it was found bivariately that in countries with stronger national work ethics people tend to consider the unemployed relatively more deserving, not less so as was expected. This country level effect appeared spurious, however, when the

religious heritage was taken into account. Religious heritage has a clear influence on the relative deservingness of the unemployed. People living in a country that is traditionally Protestant consider the unemployed to be relatively less deserving, compared to those living in countries with a Catholic, Orthodox or Islamic religious heritage. Referring to Kahl's (2005) study on the relationship between religious heritage and perspectives on the poor and poor relief, we interpreted this association as derived from Protestants' more conditional and reserved view on helping the poor. An alternative interpretation is found in Stam et al (2011). They interpret the finding that national work ethics are weakest in countries with a Protestant heritage as due to the fact that Protestant countries are often also more modern and individualized, implying that work is seen less a moral duty and more as an individual choice. Unfortunately, we have no measures to test if this modernization or individualization could also be an explanation for our findings. We suggest this as a matter for future research.



Chapter 5

The social legitimacy of the activating welfare state: Public opinion on work obligations & welfare rights of benefit claimant

This chapter was co-authored with Prof. Dr. Wim van Oorschot.

ABSTRACT

Studies on the social legitimacy of the welfare state tend to miss an important aspect of the welfare state that regards the increased emphasis on activation as a prime goal of welfare policies. In this chapter, we first describe and analyze Dutch people's opinions concerning the work obligations of three benefit groups, namely the unemployed, the disabled for work, and social assistance beneficiaries. Second, we relate opinions on work obligations to opinions on social rights and analyze the preferred balance for each of the welfare groups. Results show clear nuances in the preferred obligations in and among groups. The nuances can be explained using deservingness theory: those who meet more of the deservingness criteria, are granted more leniency concerning required work obligations. With regard to the preferred rights-obligations balance, four theoretical options were presented. As expected, there is most consensus when asked about the disabled for work: almost three quarters of the respondents prefer unconditional generosity when considering this group. For the other groups, the public is more divided. However, for all groups, the laissez-faire option is least chosen. Finally, we examined determining factors in choosing a certain balance opinion, including both socio-economic and cultural characteristics.

5.1 Introduction

Empirical studies of the social legitimacy of the welfare state use various indicators as measures. These measures include people's preferences for income redistribution (cf. Jæger, 2006a; Rehm, 2007; Svallfors, 1997), attitudes concerning government responsibility to provide income support and services to citizens (Blekesaune & Quadagno, 2003; Jæger, 2007), and preferences for types and degrees of social spending (Gelissen, 2000). Many of the welfare legitimacy studies share a perspective that emphasizes the distribution of welfare and related entitlements of (needy or low income) citizens as the core business of the welfare state. A stronger or weaker legitimacy of a particular welfare state is deduced if one finds greater or lesser parts of its citizenry supporting income redistribution, government responsibility for people's welfare or social spending. However, because of this focus on redistribution and social entitlements, present studies of welfare legitimacy tend to miss an important new aspect of the welfare state that regards the increased emphasis on activation as a prime goal of welfare policies (I. Lodemel & H. Trickey, 2001; Serrano Pascual & Magnusson, 2007). Activation policies may take various forms, but they share a perspective where citizens are no longer primarily considered subjects with social rights but subjects with social rights *and* social obligations regarding, e.g., active job seeking, participating in training programs, subsidized work, experience jobs, etc. Notwithstanding that for approximately the past two decades, an activation trend characterizes most welfare states, there is a substantial lack of knowledge regarding the social legitimacy of this new element.

The goal of this chapter is to contribute to filling this gap in two ways. First, this paper describes and analyzes in detail Dutch people's opinions concerning the work obligations of benefit recipients. One unique feature of these data involves the comprehensiveness of the questions regarding various types and degrees of work obligations. These questions are also differentiated for the following three different groups of benefit claimants: disabled workers, unemployed workers and social assistance beneficiaries. Both the comprehensiveness and differentiation allow a nuanced picture of the legitimacy of various types of work obligations. Our results show that people have varied opinions.

Second, this chapter relates opinions on work obligations to opinions on social rights. Because there is academic and public debate concerning the correct balance between obligations and rights (Hvinden, 2008; I. Lodemel & H. Trickey, 2001; OECD, 1998) (and whether this balance should be different for different groups of citizens), we will analyze the preferred balance for each of the welfare groups. This analysis will provide insights to the legitimacy of activation and show how knowledge regarding opinions on work obligations complement the study of the social legitimacy of current welfare states.

The data allow us to analyze opinions on work obligations for the following three different groups of claimants: disabled workers, unemployed workers and social assistance beneficiaries. The social rights-based welfare legitimacy literature, especially the literature on deservingness theory (Van Oorschot, 2006b), shows that public opinion differs regarding welfare entitlements for these groups. In this paper, we examine to what extent this dissimilarity is also present concerning opinions on work obligations, and if so, whether differences in obligation opinions can be understood by deservingness theory similar to social rights differences. How obligation opinions are nuanced is measured by the preferred leniency for certain groups concerning these work obligations.

Using data from the 2006 Dutch *Welfare Opinions Survey* (Achterberg & Van Oorschot, 2008), we thus address two main questions:

1. To what degree do Dutch citizens support various types of work obligations for claimants of disability benefits, unemployment benefits and social assistance? Our interest concerns whether a ranking can be found in preferred obligation(s) (leniency) in and among the welfare groups.
2. What is the preferred balance of rights and obligations among Dutch citizens, i.e., what combinations of rights and obligations do people prefer, and what individual characteristics explain these differences?

We will thus examine the distribution of the Dutch public among different rights and obligation combinations. We will also consider differences in this distribution for the three examined welfare groups and test what individual characteristics are important in determining the chosen balance. Because these questions are relatively new in the field of social welfare research, the analysis will have an explorative character.

5.2 Opinions on work obligations

Although there is a wide range of studies on public opinion regarding social rights, studies that examine public opinion on work obligations are few. The available studies that explore these opinions show similar results, namely, that the public generally supports obligations being put upon welfare recipients. However, these opinions are differentiated, i.e., the public is more lenient on some groups and stricter on others regarding work obligations.

Houtman (1997), for example, examined opinions on rights and obligations of the unemployed in the Netherlands. Houtman found that it is widely accepted among the Dutch public that an unemployed individual refusing a job offer can face sanctions (e.g., benefit cuts). However, if this individual is older, this is an important factor for leniency because of the longer work record an older person usually has. Another reason

for leniency is the presence of young children in the household of the unemployed. This result is interpreted as the public not wanting to punish innocent third parties who would also be affected if the claimant receives benefit cuts, for example (Houtman, 1994, 1997).

These findings are similar to those found by Dwyer (2002). In this study, opinions on the British welfare reform were examined, which emphasized individual and mutual responsibilities through workfare-type schemes. British welfare users were asked concerning their thoughts on the principles and values central to this welfare reform. The results showed that linking the right to unemployment benefits to specific responsibilities was approved by more than half of the respondents. Compulsory work or training was thought to enhance the chances of the unemployed in the labor market and could be used to give back to the community. However, the extent to which the respondents accepted obligations (and sanctions when not meeting these obligations) depended strongly on the personal characteristics of the beneficiary. Similar to the findings of Houtman (1997), British welfare users gave more leniency to older claimants and claimants engaging in informal care work.

The importance of personal characteristics in work obligation leniency was again found in research conducted by Albrekt Larsen (2006). Using Australian data, Albrekt Larsen related the shift from passive to active labor market policies in different countries to the public perception of the target groups. Albrekt Larsen examined the public's opinion on work requirements for the young and older unemployed using Australian data and found that the public is more inclined to impose requirements on the young than the older unemployed (other studies using the same data came to the same conclusions (Eardley, Saunders, & Evans, 2000; Saunders, 2002)). Albrekt Larsen interprets this result as 'the moral logic of deservingness criteria', which we will discuss later in this chapter. The findings hold when controlling for people's socio-economic self-interest characteristics and political stance. The moral logic thus overrules individual preferences based on structural and cultural characteristics.

Two main conclusions can be drawn from these studies. The first conclusion is that the public holds nuanced opinions regarding obligations that depend on the specific group of unemployed. This first conclusion directly leads to the second conclusion: in the literature to date, only the obligations of the unemployed are examined. In our analysis, we will determine whether Dutch public opinion on work obligations is similarly nuanced. We also compare the opinions on obligations for the unemployed with obligations for disability benefit claimants and social assistance recipients. This analysis allows us to differentiate in and among welfare groups.

5.3 Balancing rights and obligations

The second research question concerns combining rights and obligations. It is conceivable that people combine any position on the rights dimension with any position on the obligations dimension. Dividing both dimensions in two parts, the following four possible combinations of rights and obligations are theoretically possible: 1) many rights, few obligations; 2) many rights, many obligations; 3) few rights, many obligations; and 4) few rights, few obligations.

How these different options are chosen by the public is an empirical question, which we will examine later in this chapter. First, we want to investigate more closely the meaningful content of these options. These options are meaningful because the welfare state types, as first described by Esping-Andersen (1990), can be recognized in three of these combinations.

The fourth option, which involves few rights and few obligations, resembles how social support was arranged in the *laissez faire* 'welfare state' that was popular in the 19th century. Poor relief was a task for churches and private charities, not the state. Starting from what we will now call the '*laissez faire*' option, poor relief, and later, general social support became increasingly embedded in collective, national, and compulsory arrangements (De Swaan, 1988). With different arrangements, three main welfare state types evolved. The typology by Esping-Andersen (1990) examines decommodification and, thus, mainly social rights (and social stratification). However, expanding this examination with knowledge concerning obligations in the countries that are often used as examples for his typology, Esping-Andersen's welfare state types are recognizable in the three remaining rights-obligations combinations.

In Anglo-Saxon countries (examples of the "Liberal welfare state" in the typology of Esping-Andersen), the development of social rights never really began, so this arrangement appears close to the classical liberalism or *laissez faire* welfare state. However, contrary to the *laissez faire* welfare state, these countries have state interference, namely, for the poorest individuals who truly cannot work. Other disadvantaged individuals can obtain some form of benefit, but traditionally, it has been emphasized that if you want a benefit, you should provide something in return. This type of rights - on the condition of work requirements - resembles our third rights-obligations combination, which we will call the 'work first' option.

The option farthest removed from the *laissez-faire* option is the first option and involves an emphasis on granting rights without (m)any obligations. This 'unconditional generosity' option is recognized in the continental welfare states of the 1970s, which were created after the Second World War. This traditional welfare state 'was intended as a safety net for those who were in danger of losing their economic autonomy' (Adriaansens, 1994, p. 67). The focus was on rights and the responsibility of society (or,

at least, the government) to protect individuals in need of support, not the individual's responsibility to escape his or her predicament. However, the economic crisis of the 1980s put financial pressure on this perspective because of a growing number of beneficiaries. In addition to the financial aspect, there was ideological criticism claiming that the right to social support was overemphasized, and the obligation to work was neglected (Houtman, 1997). The welfare state 'became identified with an all-powerful state that stultifies the individual citizen, taking away the freedom for personal initiative' (Adriaansens, 1994, p. 66).

The heated political and societal debates regarding these issues resulted in a more Scandinavian approach to the rights-obligations balance. Without losing the safety net function, this approach emphasizes work obligations. However, contrary to the 'work first' approach, obligations are used to create employment, which is considered an important social project of the welfare state. The many rights-many obligations option of the quadrant (top right of figure 5.1) can thus be typified as the Scandinavian option: generous but with an emphasis on work obligations (we will call this option the *conditional generosity* option).

Figure 5.1 shows the theoretical options discussed. In the empirical section of this chapter, we will explore what the Dutch public prefers.

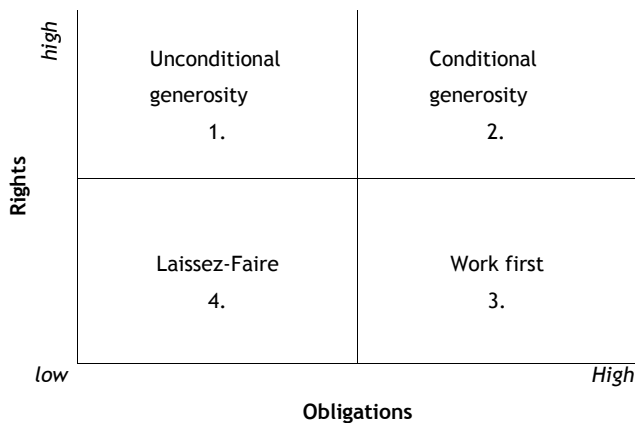


Figure 5.1. Theoretical combinations of preferred rights and obligations

Once we establish the existence of these rights-obligations options, next, we determine how the public is divided among these options. Furthermore, we examine exactly who chooses what quadrant. Are there patterns between certain characteristics and choosing a particular quadrant? To our knowledge, no literature to date has examined the preferred balance of rights and obligations. Therefore, we use insights from the extensive welfare rights literature (e.g. Blekesaune, 2007; Goul Andersen, 1993; Jeene &

Van Oorschot, 2013; Pettersen, 1995; Van Oorschot, 2000) and the few studies on welfare obligations (Albrekt Larsen, 2006; Eardley et al., 2000; Houtman, 1997; Saunders, 2002). In this literature, many characteristics determine welfare preferences. Considering the importance of these characteristics in the rights and obligations literature, they are also likely to be important in determining the preferred rights-obligations balance; therefore, we will include these characteristics in our analyses. These characteristics can be grouped in self-interest and cultural or ideological characteristics.

The reasoning behind the self-interest characteristics (measured by socio-economic characteristics) in determining welfare preferences is that individuals who have more personal interest in the welfare state and its rules and regulations will be more likely to support it. In this case, it is expected that people with more self-interest in the welfare state support not only more social rights but also more obligations leniency. Therefore, we expect individuals with the highest self-interest to choose the unconditional generosity option (figure 5.2, option 1). The literature describes the following ways a person can have a personal interest in the welfare state (Goul Andersen, 1993; Sihvo & Uusitalo, 1995): (1) as a current consumer (individuals who consume (more) welfare benefits or services are likely to have more favorable attitudes of the welfare state) or as a likely future consumer (people have more favorable attitudes to the extent that they perceive themselves as likely to be a consumer in the future); and (2) as a taxpayer (paying more taxes can lead to frustration and a more critical view (Blekesaune, 2007; Pettersen, 1995)).

The main ideological factor used in welfare opinion literature is political stance. Often, people in agreement with the left-wing ideology have more favorable welfare attitudes than people supporting a right-wing ideology (see, for example, Svallfors, 2007). The other ideological factor used in social rights literature is work ethic. People with stronger work ethics have stronger meritocratic perspectives on support and differentiate more between those who deserve support and those who do not (Jeene & Van Oorschot, 2013; Jeene et al., 2013).

When we consider these characteristics, who would we expect to choose what quadrant? The new and explorative character of examining the preferred combination of rights and obligations makes it difficult to formulate specific hypotheses. However, we can formulate two general hypotheses concerning the unconditional generosity option, based on the existing literature concerning rights and obligations.

(1) The unconditional generosity option is more likely to be chosen by people who generally have stronger support for the welfare state.

(2) The conditional generosity, work first and laissez faire options are more likely to be chosen by people who generally have weaker support for the welfare state.

People who generally have a stronger preference for the welfare state have a weaker socio-economic position (and have more self-interest in this rights-obligations combination), ideologically, a politically left stance, and weaker work ethics. We expect people are more supportive of the welfare state because of its first objective, that is, to be a safety net for people who cannot economically support themselves (either temporarily or permanently). The stronger focus on rights than obligations will lead these individuals to choose the unconditional generosity option. Consistent with this reasoning, we expect individuals with the opposite characteristics to choose the other three rights-obligations combinations. The analyses will allow us to explore what typical (differentiated) patterns are found for the conditional generosity, work first and laissez faire options because we have no clear expectations for these preferences at this point.

5.4 Deservingness theory

Thus far, our focus has been mainly on welfare groups in general. However, the data available for our questions include three different welfare target groups, namely, those disabled for work, the unemployed and social assistance recipients. Therefore, the next question concerns opinions on work obligations and how the preferred rights-obligations balance differs in and among these three welfare groups.

Our review of the scarce available literature showed that people differentiate among the groups of unemployed when they decide how strictly they ascribe work obligations. Albrekt Larsen (2006) explains these differentiations using the deservingness theory that is often used in the social rights literature (see for instance Jæger, 2007; Jeene & Van Oorschot, 2013; Raven, 2012; Van Oorschot, 2000). We will use the same theory to hypothesize concerning the different preferences in the groups of unemployed. We will extend this hypothesis to explore how this theory could also be used to study differentiating preferences regarding obligations for the group of those disabled for work and social assistance recipients.

In the social rights literature, a number of deservingness criteria are used to explain differences in social rights given to various needy groups. These groups are considered more deserving if they can reciprocate the support they get (or have contributed to society more in the past) (reciprocity criterion), cannot be blamed for their predicament (control criterion), are more needy (need criterion), are more grateful for the support they receive (gratefulness criterion), and in cases where they have an identity that is closer to that of the general public (identity criterion) (Van Oorschot, 2000). These deservingness criteria have been used to explain a repeatedly found ranking of needy groups in most and least deserving (Coughlin, 1980; Jæger, 2007; Pettersen, 1995): the more favorable groups meet the criteria the more they are considered to be

deserving of social support. Albrekt Larson (2006) has used public images related to these deservingness criteria to explain obligation differences between the older and younger unemployed. Where the deservingness criteria were originally used to explain differences in opinions on social rights, they are used here to explain differences in opinions on obligation leniency. Meeting the criteria more favorably means that a group is granted more leniency regarding its obligations.

5.4.1 Preferred obligations hypothesized

Following Albrekt Larsen (2006), we use the deservingness criteria to hypothesize regarding the differences in opinions on the strictness of work obligations.

The criterion of reciprocity concerns giving back for the support a needy person obtains. Studies by Houtman (1994, 1997) and Dwyer (2002) found that the individual claiming support can reciprocate receiving these social rights by fulfilling a work obligation. Or the individual can give back to the community in other ways, for example, by fulfilling care responsibilities. If the claimant already meets the reciprocity criterion by care responsibilities, work obligations can be (partly) exempted. A person's age can also be a measure of reciprocity. Older people (often) have a longer work record and can be regarded as having fulfilled their work obligations in the past, granting them leniency in the present. In any of our welfare groups, if a person is in some way reimbursing the current support, leniency with work obligations are expected to be granted.

Although care responsibilities can be a reason for leniency on the basis of reciprocity, the need criterion could also be an influence, especially when the care responsibilities involve raising children. An American study by Groskind (1991) suggested that the public focuses more on the characteristics of need when assessing mother-only families. When there is a father present, this focus shifts more to work obligations. Almost all single parents receiving social assistance benefits in the Netherlands are single mothers (CBS, 2013). Giving these recipients a free pass for skipping work obligations could be a way to protect the 'innocent third party' and is viewed as a legitimate reason for inactivity (Houtman, 1994).

The control or responsibility criterion can also help predict obligation leniency. A stronger focus on personal responsibility is part of the increased emphasis on activation measures and work obligations that has characterized most welfare states in the last two decades. For rights, control mainly concerns a responsibility for getting *in* a needy situation (is that person to blame for the predicament s/he faces?). Concerning obligations, control involves the individual responsibility to get *out* of that situation. In the group disabled for work, the fully disabled are unable to get out of a needy situation, not because of unwillingness to work, but because of an *inability* to work, which could result in leniency concerning work obligations. A little less leniency is expected for those partly disabled. The so-called able-bodied unemployed as a whole do not have a reason

for leniency regarding this criterion. However, in the group of the unemployed, the older unemployed could be granted leniency on the basis of the control criterion because it is much more difficult for this group to find re-employment than it is for the younger unemployed. The assumed lack of control over getting out of their needy situation is the second reason to expect work obligation leniency in each welfare group.

The identity criterion refers to (the lack of) a shared identity with certain welfare claimants. The activation rhetoric, which has been a part of the welfare state for some time, implicitly includes teaching claimants a shared societal work ethics norm. Only some claimants are assumed to have acquired this norm in the past (Albrekt Larsen, 2006). A stronger shared identity could contribute to more leniency regarding work obligations. This criteria could help predict leniency for the older unemployed, which was previously found by Albrekt Larsen (2006). The public may assume that, for example, the younger unemployed do not yet have these shared ethics and are merely unwilling to work. The identity criterion could also be a reason for leniency given to those fully (or, to a lesser extent, partially) disabled for work, who are assumed to share the societal work ethics norm but are *unable* to achieve it. Thus, we expect that individuals who are assumed to share a societal work ethics norm are granted more leniency.

Finally, there is the attitude criterion, which concerns how grateful or compliant a person is concerning social support. Fulfilling obligations can be a way of showing gratitude and is more likely to be asked of younger welfare claimants who are viewed as ungrateful youth (Albrekt Larsen, 2006). Thus, leniency is more likely to be given to older than younger claimants.

We expect leniency on work obligations to be given to the groups who meet the same criteria more favorable are used to explain differences in opinions on social rights. Therefore, we expect that in each welfare group, older claimants (unemployed), claimants with care responsibilities (unemployed or social assistance recipients), and fully disabled claimants to be granted more leniency (*deservingness in groups hypothesis*).

Thus far, we examined the possible nuances in each of the three welfare groups based on the deservingness criteria, and these differences were shown in the known obligations literature. However, in the social rights literature, these criteria are mostly used to explain differences *among* these groups. After discussing the differences *in* groups, we next examine likely differences in the preferred (leniency in) obligations among groups. Using the deservingness theory, we formulate one main hypothesis. Because individuals disabled for work meet most of the criteria more favorably, they are expected to also be granted more leniency (*deservingness among groups hypothesis*). We have no clear expectations beforehand regarding the difference (if any) between the social assistance and unemployed welfare groups.

5.4.2 Balances

The last part of this research concerns the preferences in the rights-obligations balance. Considering the four balance options described in section 3, we can formulate general hypotheses based on the deservingness theory regarding the expected division of the Dutch public on these options. We expect that for the group disabled for work, most people choose the unconditional generosity option. This group is generally considered to be the most deserving both in granted rights and (expected to be) in granted leniency concerning obligations. Previous studies have found that there is a moral logic of deservingness, meaning that when a welfare group undebatable meets the deservingness criteria more favorably, individual characteristics (both socio-economic and ideological) are overruled, and consensus is reached. We therefore expect that for the welfare group with a large consensus concerning its deservingness (the disabled for work), the public is not very divided in its opinion regarding the preferred balance. Individual characteristics will not be able to explain people's choice of an option because (almost) all people choose the unconditional generosity option. Because the public is more divided on the deservingness of the unemployed and social assistance beneficiaries, we expect the distribution among the balance options to be more spread among the options and more dependent on individual characteristics.

5.5 Data & operationalizations

5.5.1 Data

To answer our research questions, we analyzed data from the 2006 Welfare opinions survey in the Netherlands [*Arbeid, Bedrijf en Sociale Zekerheid in Nederland 2006*]. These data were collected by the CentERdata research institute at Tilburg University in late 2006 among a nationally representative panel of 2,682 individuals. In total, 1,972 respondents from the ages of 16 to 91 years completed all modules of the computer-based questionnaire online. Because of a small overrepresentation of older people, higher incomes, and higher educational levels, a weighing factor is used for the descriptive tables. The final sample for analysis comprises 1,807 respondents.

5.5.2 Dependent variables

The rights variables are measured with the following question: Could you indicate, on a scale from 1 (absolutely no right) to 10 (absolutely a right), to what extent you feel the following groups are entitled to public financial support, given that the welfare

state has limited funds? 1) the unemployed²⁰ 2) people who are disabled for work 3) people receiving social assistance benefits. For the descriptive analysis (table 5.2), the averages are also shown for people who are disabled for work because of their work circumstances, people who are disabled for work because of their own behavior, social assistance beneficiaries, and mothers on social assistance benefits.

The three obligation variables used for the explanatory analysis are measured by the answers to three statements as follows. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements: “The long-term unemployed²¹ / People who are disabled for work / People on social assistance / should be required to work in exchange for their benefits to repay society.” Answers were given on a scale of 1 (fully disagree) to 5 (fully agree). For the descriptive analysis, this question also includes single beneficiaries with children aged below 5 years / 6-12 years / 18 years and over. The percentages of people who (fully) agree with these statements (scores of 4 or 5) are presented in table 5.2.

For the research questions regarding rights-obligations combinations, the above variables are combined. For every welfare group (disabled for work, the unemployed and social assistance beneficiaries), we constructed a new variable with four categories, combining high and low values of the rights questions with high and low values of the obligation questions. For the rights questions ranging from 1-10, we chose the value 5 as the cut-off point. For the obligation questions ranging from 1-5, we chose the value 3 as the cut-off point. In this way, only respondents who indicate that they agree or fully agree with obligations are placed in the ‘high obligations’ category.

The descriptive analysis also includes two other measures of work obligations. The first measure concerns the application of work obligations. Respondents were asked to indicate which of the following groups should (partly) be exempted from job seeking obligations: the young unemployed (below 25 years old), older unemployed (55 years old and over), the long-term unemployed, the unemployed who are active volunteers, the unemployed who are caretakers of sick family members, people who are fully disabled for work and people who are partially disabled for work. The response categories were the following: 1) Fully exempt, 2) flexible obligations; and 3) strict obligations. Table 5.2 presents the percentages of respondents who chose each option.

²⁰ Although the item used the term ‘people without a job’ and not ‘unemployed people’, we feel confident to interpret this item as unemployed people, considering the framing in the questionnaire. The question is posed among the same questions for other benefit groups and follows the same question asking about ‘people with a job’.

²¹ Unfortunately, the item asked about the ‘long-term unemployed’, not the unemployed in general. Respondents are likely to be stricter concerning obligations for the long-term unemployed than they would be if the statement referred to the unemployed in general (Albrekt Larsen, 2008; Eardley et al., 2000; Saunders, 2002).

Finally, respondents were given a list of tasks and asked to what extent the young unemployed (below 25 years old), older unemployed (55 years old and over), and long-term unemployed should perform these tasks to keep their benefit (1 totally disagree - 5 totally agree). The given tasks were the following: look for employment, participate in vocational rehabilitation, go to training or retraining, accept any job offered, accept an over two-hour commute for a new job, and move to another city or town to find employment. For each beneficiary group, the average opinion among the tasks was calculated. A higher score indicates that the public feels more strongly that tasks should be completed to keep benefits. Percentages presented in table 5.2 represent scores of 4 or higher on this average opinion.

5.5.3 Independent variables

We include a number of individual characteristics in our analysis of the preferred rights-obligations balance. These characteristics are classified as socio-economic characteristics (measuring self-interest) and ideological characteristics. People can have an interest in the welfare state because they are currently a consumer or likely to be a future consumer and a taxpayer. Personal experience was measured by asking respondents to indicate whether they currently receive the benefit (unemployment, disability, social assistance) or have received the benefit in the past. To measure more indirect experience with receiving benefits, we also included the present support of household members with the respective benefit. (This variable was not included for social assistance because this benefit is means tested on a household level; if a household member relies on social assistance, so does the respondent automatically.) We use two dummy variables for work status, namely, the unemployed and out of the labor force (e.g., students, pensioners, homemakers). The employed are used as the reference category. People with lower educational and income levels are expected to be more likely to rely on the welfare state at some point. Educational level is measured using two dummy variables: one for primary and lower secondary education (referred to as 'low education') and one for higher secondary education (referred to as 'middle education'). Tertiary education, the highest educational level attained, is used as the reference category. There are four categories of the net household income. With the highest category (individuals who have the most interest in the welfare state as taxpayers) as the reference category, we included the following three dummy variables to measure income: low income, low middle income, and high middle income.

We also include ideological variables. For the left-right political orientation, respondents were asked to place themselves on a scale from 1 (highly left-wing) to 11 (highly right-wing). Respondents' work ethics are based on a five-point scale, constructed from the means score of the following items: (1) 'Work is a duty towards society'; (2) 'You can do as you please after having done your duties'; and (3) 'Work has to come

first always, even if it means less free time' (Cronbach $\alpha = 0.70$). A higher value on this scale represents stronger work ethics. Finally, we included respondents' sex (woman = 1) and age (three dummy variables: ages 31-45, 46-64 and 65 and over. People younger than 31 are the reference category). The descriptive statistics of the dependent and independent variables can be found in table 5.1.

5.5.4 Methods

To answer our research questions, we use different methods. First, we use descriptive statistics on the average opinions of the Dutch public concerning rights and obligations for various needy groups. We have many items that measure obligations that we will present together to observe any visible patterns in the preferred rights and obligations. Second, we use the combined variables of rights and obligations for each welfare group to indicate how the Dutch public is divided among the four combinations. Finally, we run multinomial regression analysis on the rights-obligations combination variables involving the individual determinants. This analysis will allow us to observe patterns in the preferences for a specific right-obligation option, depending on individual characteristics.

Table 5.1 Descriptive statistics of dependent and independent variables (N=1807)

	Range	Mean	SD
Disabled for work			
Rights	1 - 10	7.37	1.65
Obligations	1 - 5	2.55	1.06
Unemployed			
Rights	1 - 10	6.03	1.81
Obligations	1 - 5	3.86	.97
Social assistance beneficiaries			
Rights	1 - 10	6.28	1.89
Obligations	1 - 5	3.68	1.01
Woman	0 - 1	.48	
Age			
< 31 years	0 - 1	.19	
31-45 years	0 - 1	.29	
46-64 years	0 - 1	.33	
> 64 years	0 - 1	.19	
Educational level			
Low	0 - 1	.34	
Middle	0 - 1	.43	
High	0 - 1	.24	
Work status			
Employed	0 - 1	.52	
Unemployed	0 - 1	.07	
Other	0 - 1	.41	
Income level			
Low	0 - 1	.15	
Low middle	0 - 1	.26	
High middle	0 - 1	.26	
High	0 - 1	.33	
Personal experience disability benefit			
Disability benefit	0 - 1	.13	
Unemployment benefit	0 - 1	.29	
Social assistance benefit	0 - 1	.02	
Housemates experience disability benefit			
Disability benefit	0 - 1	.06	
Unemployment benefit	0 - 1	.03	
Political stance (left - right)	1 - 11	5.69	2.05
Work ethics	1 - 5	3.64	.84

Source: *Welfare opinions survey in the Netherlands 2006* (own calculations)

5.6 Results

5.6.1 Obligations

The first question of interest concerns the support of various types of work obligations. Table 5.2 shows the opinions of the Dutch public on social rights and work obligations for many needy groups. In general, the opinions on work obligations are consistent with the deservingness theory and our hypothesis. The group who is regarded as meeting the deservingness criteria most favorably - the disabled for work - is granted the most social rights and most leniency concerning obligations (table 5.2, 1st and 3rd column). This group is followed by individuals on social assistance and the unemployed. The unemployed meet the deservingness criteria less favorably, are considered less deserving of social rights and are granted less leniency concerning obligations.

However, examining more closely each claimant group separately, clear differences are visible in these welfare groups. Concerning the unemployed, public opinion is comparable with the findings in the literature described in section 2. People are supportive of obligations but more lenient with some groups of the unemployed. For example, 93% of the Dutch public believes that the unemployed under 25 years old should face strict work obligations, whereas almost 70% feels that these obligations should be flexible for the unemployed who are 55 years old or over (table 5.2, 3rd column). This result is also clear from the last column of table 5.2: the younger unemployed are expected to perform more tasks to maintain their benefit than the older unemployed, whereas the long-term unemployed occupy a middle position. Caring for sick family members and engaging in volunteer work are also reasons for leniency for most groups, although volunteer work can expect less leniency than caring for sick family members (table 5.2, 3rd column). These findings are consistent with our expectations.

In addition to opinions on work obligations for various groups of the unemployed, we can also examine these opinions on individuals disabled for work and social assistance beneficiaries. Compared with the unemployed, the public is much less supportive of putting work obligations on individuals disabled for work, whereas this support takes a middle position for social assistance recipients (but closer to the opinion on the unemployed).

As expected, the most leniency is granted to individuals fully disabled for work. However, individuals partially disabled for work can also expect leniency because 82.5% of the public agrees that work obligations should be applied flexibly to this group (table 5.2, 2nd column).

The amount of leniency for social assistance recipients depends on the age of the children in the household. In general, a large majority feels that this group should not be exempted from work obligations, but these obligations can be applied more flexibly when the child is younger, thus, protecting the innocent third party (table 5.2, 2nd column).

Table 5.2 Average opinions on rights and obligations

	1 Rights ^a (1-10, average)	2 Work obligations ^b (% (fully) agree)	3 Apply work obligations ^c (% exempt/ flexible/ strict)			4 Tasks to keep benefit ^d (% (fully) agree)
Unemployed	6.02					
<25			2.8	4.2	93.0	48.1
55+			25.4	69.7	4.9	5.0
Long-term		73.8	5.1	27.5	67.4	21.0
Unemployed & active volunteers			8.0	59.6	32.4	
Unemployed caretakers of sick family member			19.8	72.1	8.1	
Disabled for work	7.31	18.1				
Fully			81.8	14.7	3.5	
Partially			4.4	82.5	13.0	
Disabled because of work	8.22					
Disabled because of own behavior	4.86					
Social assistance beneficiaries	6.25	63.0				
Mother	6.72					
Single beneficiaries with children aged:						
< 5 y/o			33.8	56.0	10.3	
6-12 y/o			11.4	62.6	26.1	
18+			5.3	17.0	77.7	

^a Could you indicate, on a scale from 1 to 10, to what extent you feel the following groups are entitled to public financial support given that the welfare state has limited funds? (1 absolutely no right - 10 absolutely a right, average presented)

^b The three obligation variables are measured by the answers to three statements: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements?: The long-term unemployed / People who are disabled for work / People on social assistance / should be required to work in exchange for their benefits to repay society. Answers were given on a scale of 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree). Percentages that (fully) agree are presented.

^c Job seeking obligations of welfare beneficiaries can be exempt for medical or social reasons. Which of the following needy groups do you feel should be (partly) exempted from job seeking obligations? (1 Fully exempt, 2 flexible obligations 3 strict obligations). Percentages of the chosen options are presented.

^d To what extent do you agree that the following tasks should be performed by the older unemployed (>55 y/o)/ long-term unemployed/ young unemployed (<25 y/o) to keep their benefit: (1 totally agree - 5 totally disagree, average): seek employment, participate in vocational rehabilitation, go to training or retraining, accept any job offered, accept an over two-hour commute for a new job, move to another city or town to find employment. Mean scores are computed and the percentages that (fully) agree are presented.

5.6.2 Balances

The second research question concerned the preferred balance between rights and obligations²². Figure 5.2 presents the percentages of the Dutch public that chose each rights-obligations combination, separate for each welfare group. When asked regarding the disabled for work, as expected, almost three-quarters of the public chose the first combination, the unconditional generosity option. This group has often been found to be highly deserving of rights and, as just described, can also expect leniency regarding obligations. The second chosen option is the conditional generosity option, indicating the importance of social rights for the disabled.

There is less consensus for the preferred balance for the other groups. For both the unemployed (44.2%) and social assistance recipients (37.7%), most people choose conditional generosity. Obligations seem to matter most for the unemployed because almost 30% of the people choose the work first combination, whereas only 1/5 prefer unconditional generosity. The opinions are most evenly divided for the social assistance recipients, with approximately the same percentage choosing unconditional generosity (29.6%) and the work first option (25.3%), two completely opposite perspectives. The *laissez faire* option is chosen by only a small percentage for all groups, although, surprisingly, the highest percentage chooses this combination for the disabled for work (8.8%).

However, how exactly are people divided among these options? What personal characteristics are important in determining the chosen balance combination of rights and obligations? To find out, we conducted a multinomial regression analysis on the individual characteristics of interest. The results of the analysis are shown in table 5.3. In describing the results, we take two points of departure. First, because the increased emphasis on activation as a prime goal of welfare policies is best reflected in the high obligation options (option 2, conditional generosity and option 3, work first), the first option, unconditional generosity, is the chosen reference category. We will not discuss in detail the results of the least chosen option (*laissez faire*) for reasons of space. Thus, we begin with discussing conditional generosity and work first in reference to unconditional generosity. Second, we begin with a group that is most eligible for activation and that most welfare research focuses on: the unemployed. The first focus is thus on the first three columns of table 5.3.

²² A factor analysis showed that rights and obligations indeed separate dimensions, not opposite parts of the same component (results available on request).

Rights	high	Dw: 73.2% Ue: 19.6% Sa: 29.6%	Dw: 14.4% Ue: 44.2% Sa: 37.7%
	low	Dw: 8.8% Ue: 6.6% Sa: 7.4%	Dw: 4.6% Ue: 29.6% Sa: 25.3%
		low	high
		Obligations	

Figure 5.2 Percentage of the Dutch public choosing a specific rights-obligations combination
(Dw= disabled for work; Ue = unemployed; Sa = social assistance beneficiaries)

Considering socio-economic characteristics, there are clear groups that do not favor work obligations but have an interest in unconditional generous arrangements for the unemployed. This generosity includes individuals aged 46-64 years who may find it, or expect to find it, difficult to find another job if they lost their current employment. These respondents could be more skeptical than young adults (the reference group) to have social rights be conditional on work obligations. The same result is true for people who have experienced being unemployed in the past or are currently in this predicament and who know what it is like to be in this situation; they base their preference on this past experience. Low income jobs often provide less security, which could explain why people with low income have a preference for unconditional generosity. Although they are often more likely to rely on unemployment, people with a lower or middle educational level are found to prefer the work first option over unconditional generosity more than the higher educated. One explanation could be that these groups feel they must stress the social distance between themselves and welfare recipients, as suggested by Golding and Middleton (1982). The finding that pensioners actually prefer the work first option could also be self-interest because they do not want to share scarce resources with individuals who can work and should at least actively attempt to find re-employment.

The ideological characteristics present a clear picture. People more on the political right prefer any option more than the unconditional generosity, and the effect is strongest for the work first option. Not surprisingly, also people with high work ethics prefer this option over the unconditional generosity option, or they feel that rights should be met with obligations (conditional generosity).

These ideological patterns are very similar when examining the other welfare groups in this chapter (columns 4-6 and 7-9). The unconditional generosity option is not popular for respondents with more right-leaning political views and higher work ethics. The most striking finding for these characteristics is that people with higher work ethics prefer the unconditional generosity option more than the *laissez-faire* option for individuals disabled for work. Apparently, having worked in the past but no longer being able to is a sufficient reason to not completely leave this group to support themselves. Where the unemployed and social assistance recipients often have a stigma of not wanting to work, the nature of being disabled prevents that stigma, which is clearly understood by individuals with high work ethics.

The socio-economic characteristics show a different determinant structure for the other welfare groups, although we do see some similarities, mainly between the preferences for the unemployed and social assistance recipients. This result is not surprising because these groups are more alike in terms of deservingness than the disabled for work. The divide among the options was also more similar for these groups than for the disabled for work (see figure 5.2). We thus shift focus to the middle columns of table 5.3. As was found for the unemployed, income level and personal experience are important determinants for social assistance beneficiaries. Consistent with self-interest, the lower income groups and groups that have experience with receiving one of the benefits would prefer the unconditional generosity option over other options that stress obligations. However, for social assistance beneficiaries, this effect extends beyond the lowest income group. The high income groups possibly set themselves apart here more because they strongly believe it is not very likely they will have to rely on these benefits; they also mainly feel the tax burden. More than the high middle income groups, the highest income groups are more likely to choose the work first option rather than the unconditional generosity option. Age is also important in the preferred balance for social assistance recipients. Respondents of working age (between 31-64 years old) more often choose unconditional generosity than conditional generosity, possibly because the younger group has less idea what it is like to be in this situation. However, for the unemployed, there is also an effect found for the work first option; this is not true for the unemployed. This result could be because the social assistance beneficiaries have a different image and are considered to meet the criterion of need more favorably, thus, emphasizing the rights component more than would be the case for the unemployed.

Table 5.3 Multinomial regression analysis on individual characteristics. Reference category: unconditional generosity (high rights, low obligations)

	Unemployed		Social assistance		Disabled for work				
	condit gen ^a	work first	laissez-faire	condit gen	work first	laissez-faire			
Intercept	-1.257***	-3.693***	-2.250***	-1.863***	-3.894***	-2.420***	-2.716***	-4.463***	-2.492***
Woman	-.029	.077	.103	-.231*	-.078	-.316	-.481***	-.099	-.311*
Age (ref = < 31 years)									
31-45 years	-.344	.012	-.429	-.349*	-.112	-.429	-.403*	.165	-.518*
46-64 years	-.646***	-.477**	-.544*	-.339*	-.258	-.678**	-.357*	-.177	-.461*
> 64 years	-.202	.594**	-.394	-.197	.316	-.030	-.766***	-.001	-.018
Educational level (ref = high)									
Low	.151	.473**	.447	.237	.712***	1.008***	-.105	.479	1.439***
Middle	-.029	.434**	.612**	.006	.493***	1.089***	-.014	.509	1.004***
Work status (ref=employed)									
Unemployed	-.694***	-.699**	-.675	-.304	-1.016***	-.564	-.230	.745*	-1.357**
Other non-employed	-.136	-.544***	.159	-.004	-.583***	-.606**	.045	.066	-.142
Income level (ref=high)									
Low	-.486**	-.630**	.491	-.644***	-.649***	-.718**	-.664**	-1.278***	.190
Low middle	.000	-.019	-.024	-.178	-.147	-.268	-.104	-.710**	-.325
High middle	-.017	-.114	.134	-.217	-.421**	-.086	-.461**	-.531*	-.412*
Personal experience	-.369**	-.545***	-.076	-1.594***	-2.087**	-	-.636**	-.921*	-.408
Housemates' experience	-.242	-.384	-.288				-.321	-	-2.424**
Political stance (left - right)	.243***	.373***	.203***	.145***	.388**	.104**	.101***	.113*	.155***
Work ethics	.443***	.639***	-.036	.524***	.558***	.168	.360***	.304*	-.207*

*** $p < .01$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .10$; a conditional generosity = high rights, high obligations; work first = low rights, high obligations; laissez-faire = low rights, low obligations obligations

Other similarities between determinants for the unemployed and social assistance are found in the level of education and work status of the public. The work status of the public is consistent with self-interest because individuals outside the work force choose unconditional generosity more often than the work first option compared with individuals currently employed. The finding of educational level is counter to self-interest because the lower and middle educated actually prefer the work first option more often, possibly to prove their social distance. The effects are stronger for the social assistance beneficiaries, likely because the stigma attached to social assistance is also stronger.

Next, we shift our focus to the results for the disabled for work, which is found in the last three columns of table 5.3. The age effect is more prominent for the disabled than for the other welfare groups. These individuals below age 31 years more often prefer generosity to be conditional on work obligations than other age groups, which prefer unconditional obligations. The stricter view of the younger public could be caused by them not being in the labor market for long and not having a clear idea of what it means to be disabled for work. The effect of personal experience for the disabled for work is similar to the other welfare groups: individuals who have experienced relying on this benefit are more likely to prefer unconditional generosity over conditional generosity or work first. Having housemates who have experienced this situation only makes the focus on many rights for this group clearer, and these respondents strongly prefer unconditional generosity over *laissez-faire*. Another distinct finding is for income level. Consistent with self-interest, the highest income groups prefer many obligations (in the form of conditional generosity or work first) over unconditional generosity. The high income groups' interest as taxpayers could explain this, but they could also not see themselves as likely beneficiaries of this benefit because often people consider only physical injuries causing disability, which are more likely for lower paid, manual labor jobs.

Finally, two surprising results are worth mentioning. First, the unemployed, compared with the employed, actually are more likely to prefer the work first option over the unconditional generosity option. Because the unemployed are also less likely to prefer the *laissez faire* option, we assume this result concerns the work obligations that are already often mandatory for the unemployed, not for the disabled for work, which the unemployed may consider unfair. Second, people with stronger work ethics prefer the unconditional generosity option over the *laissez faire* option for the disabled for work. One explanation could be an assumed similar work ethic from this welfare group; they must rely on a benefit after having been employed, but they are no longer *able* to work (the reason for their jobless-ness is thus not laziness, which is sometimes assumed of the unemployed). Therefore, a 'hands-off' approach does not seem appropriate for this group.

We did not discuss the *laissez faire* option because of the small percentage of the public choosing this option. For the unemployed, who also had the lowest percentage choosing this rights-obligations combination, the determinants are minimal. For the other welfare groups, especially the disabled for work, the results are more evident. For example, compared with the higher educated, the lower and middle educated more often prefer the *laissez faire* option over unconditional generosity for both social assistance and disability benefits. Additionally, for all welfare groups, younger groups (below 31 years old) more often prefer *laissez faire* over unconditional generosity than individuals 46-64 years old (and even individuals 31-45 years old for the disabled for work). This result could be self-interest for the 46-64 years old and/or a lack of understanding of being in a welfare situation for the younger group.

5.7 Conclusion & Discussion

In the last two decades, activation has become a primary goal of welfare policies. However, activation has not been reflected in studies on the social legitimacy of these policies. To fill this gap, we examined the Dutch public's support for various types of work obligations. By including not only the unemployed but also claimants of disability benefits and social assistance, we extended the limited research on work obligations. Furthermore, we could differentiate in each welfare group to determine whether certain characteristics in each welfare group provides reasons for nuances in preferred obligations.

Our findings show that although, in general, the Dutch support work obligations, there is also reason for leniency in certain cases. Deservingness theory is often used to describe differences in support for social rights, and as we have shown, this theory can be extended to explain nuances in opinions on work obligations. Groups that more favorably meet the deservingness criteria are granted more leniency regarding work obligations. For the unemployed, more obligation leniency is given to the older unemployed and those who reimburse society in some other way. For the social assistance beneficiaries, leniency is given to single parents with young children. Finally, individuals fully disabled for work are given more leniency regarding obligations than claimants who are only partially disabled.

Next, we examined the preferred balance of rights and obligations, i.e., the possible combinations of rights and obligations. We presented four theoretical options, where different welfare types are recognized. We labeled these options unconditional generosity, conditional generosity, work first and *laissez-faire*. An initial view of how the public is divided among the options showed that this division differs for the various welfare groups. For the disabled for work, a large majority prefers to be unconditionally generous, which

can be understood from their general high deservingness both in rights and in obligation leniency. The preferred option for the other welfare groups appeared more distributed among the options. For all groups, the *laissez faire* option was chosen least.

To discover what personal characteristics are important in determining the chosen balance option, a multinomial regression analysis was conducted on socio-economic and ideological characteristics. The main findings are consistent with our hypothesis. Generally, the ideological characteristics have the same effect on all groups: people more on the political right and those with stronger higher work ethics are more likely to choose any option other than the unconditional generosity option and especially prefer the work first option. Some specific results for the socio-economic factors that measure different forms of interest in the welfare state are less similar. However, there are some clear similarities in the findings that show that self-interest seems to be important for all welfare groups. For example, individuals aged 46-64 years old more often than young age groups (below 31 years old) and lower income levels more often than the highest income levels, choose the unconditional generosity option over other options. The same choice is true for people who have personally experienced relying on these benefits. Additionally, the unemployed prefer the unconditional generosity option over the work first option for unemployment and social assistance. Counter to self-interest is the finding that lower and middle educational groups prefer the work first option (and *laissez faire*) over the unconditional generosity option. Although these groups are more likely to rely on a benefit than those with higher educational attainments, wanting to set themselves apart from welfare beneficiaries could explain this preference (Golding & Middleton, 1982).

In this research, people's opinions on rights and obligations are polled in separate questions and then combined statistically. Future research could combine the two in one question and obtain an even more precise insight in the preferred balance and support for activation measures. Furthermore, it would be interesting to include more than three welfare groups and differences in these groups because specific characteristics in each welfare group matter in how the public views obligation(s) (leniency).



References

- Achterberg, P., & Houtman, D. (2006). Why do so many people vote 'unnaturally'? A cultural explanation for voting behaviour. *European Journal of Political Research*, 45(1), 75-92.
- Achterberg, P., & Van Oorschot, W. (2008). *Arbeid, Bedrijf en Sociale Zekerheid in Nederland 2006*. Rotterdam/Tilburg: Centerdata.
- Adriaansens, H. (1994). Citizenship, work, and welfare. In B. Van Steenberg (Ed.), *The Condition of Citizenship* (pp. 66-75). London: Sage.
- Albrekt Larsen, C. (2006). *The Institutional Logic of Welfare Attitudes: How Welfare Regimes Influence Public Support*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Albrekt Larsen, C. (2008). The political logic of labour market reforms and popular images of target groups. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 18(1), 50-64.
- Albrekt Larsen, C., & Dejgaard, T. E. (2013). The institutional logic of images of the poor and welfare recipients. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 23(3), 287-299. doi: 10.1177/0958928713480068
- Alt, J. E. (1979). *The politics of economic decline: economic management and political behaviour in Britain since 1964*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Andress, H.-J., & Heien, T. (2001). Four worlds of welfare state attitudes? A comparison of Germany, Norway and the United States. *European Sociological Review*, 17(4), 337-356.
- Arts, W., & Gelissen, J. (2001). Welfare States, Solidarity and Justice Principles: Does the Type Really Matter? *Acta Sociologica*, 44(4), 283-300.
- Bean, C., & Papadakis, E. (1998). A Comparison of Attitudes Towards the Welfare States in Different Institutional Regimes, 1985-1990. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 10(3), 211-236.
- Becker, J. (2005). *De steun voor de verzorgingsstaat in de publieke opinie, 1970-2002: een analyse van trends in meningen*. Den Haag: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.
- Blekesaune, M. (2007). Economic conditions and public attitudes to welfare policies. *European Sociological Review*, 23(3), 393-403.
- Blekesaune, M., & Quadagno, J. (2003). Public Attitudes toward Welfare State Policies: A Comparative Analysis of 24 Nations. *European Sociological Review*, 19(5), 415-428.
- Borre, O., & Scarbrough, E. (Eds.). (1995). *The Scope of Government*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brooks, C., & Manza, J. (2006a). Social policy responsiveness in developed democracies. *American Sociological Review*, 71(3), 474-494.
- Brooks, C., & Manza, J. (2006b). Why Do Welfare States Persist? *The journal of politics*, 68(4), 816-827.
- Brooks, C., & Manza, J. (2007). *Why welfare states persist*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

References

- Bryson, C. (1997). Benefit Claimants: villains or victims? In J. Jowell, J. Curtice & A. Parket (Eds.), *British Social Attitudes, the 14th report* (pp. 73-88). Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Burstein, P. (1998). Bringing the Public Back In: Should Sociologists Consider the Impact of Public opinion on Public? *Social Forces*, 77(1), 27-62.
- Carcillo, S., & Grubb, D. (2006). *From Inactivity to Work: The Role of Active Labour Market Policies*. Geneva: OECD.
- Cherrington, D. J. (1980). *The work ethic: working values and values that work*. New York: AMACOM.
- Chung, H., & Van Oorschot, W. (2011). Institutions or market powers? Explaining employment insecurity of European individuals in (the beginning of) the financial crisis. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 21(4), 287-302.
- Cnaan, R. A., Hasenfeld, Y., Cnaan, A., & Rafferty, J. (1993). Cross-cultural comparison of attitudes toward welfare-state programs: Path analysis with log-linear models. *Social Indicators Research*, 29, 123-152., 29(2), 123-152.
- Cook, F. L. (1979). *Who should be helped? Public support for social services*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Cook, F. L., & Barrett, E. J. (1992). *Support for the American Welfare State: The Views of Congress and the Public*. New York: Colombia University Press.
- Coughlin, R. (1980). *Ideology, public opinion and welfare policy; attitudes towards taxes and spending in industrial societies*. Berkely: Institute of International Studies, University of California.
- Coughlin, R., & Lockhart, C. (1998). Grid-group theory and political ideology: a consideration of their relative strengths and weaknesses for explaining the structure of mass belief systems. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 10(1), 33-58.
- De Swaan, A. (1988). *In Care of The State: Healthcare, Education and Welfare in Europe and the USA in the Modern Era*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Dean, H., & Khan, Z. (1997). Muslim perspectives on welfare. *Journal of Social Policy*, 26(2), 193-209.
- Diez Roux, A. V. (2004). The study of group-level factors in Epidemiology: Rethinking variables, study designs, and analytical approaches. *Epidemiologic Reviews*, 26, 104-111.
- Dogan, M. (1988). *Comparing Pluralist Democracies*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Durr, R. H. (1993). What Moves Policy Sentiment? *American Political Science Review*, 87(1), 158-158.
- Dwyer, P. (2002). Making sense of social citizenship: some user views on welfare rights and responsibility. *Critical social policy*, 22(2), 273-299.
- Eardley, T., Saunders, P., & Evans, C. (2000). Community attitudes towards unemployment, activity testing and mutual obligation. *Australian Bulletin of Labour*, 26(3), 211-235.

- Edlund, J. (1999). Trust in government and welfare regimes: Attitudes to redistribution and financial cheating in the USA and Norway. *European Journal of Political Research*, 35(3), 341-370.
- Elster, J. (1990). Selfishness and altruism. In J. Mansbridge (Ed.), *Beyond self-interest*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Erikson, R. S., MacKuen, M. B., & Stimson, J. A. (2002). *The Macro Polity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ervasti, H. (2012). Who hates the welfare state? Criticism of the welfare state in Europe. In H. Ervasti, J. Goul Andersen, T. Friberg & K. Ringdal (Eds.), *The Future of the Welfare State: Social Policy Attitudes and Social Capital in Europe*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Esping-Andersen, G. (1990). *The three worlds of welfare capitalism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- EVS. (2011). *European Values Study 2008: Integrated Dataset (EVS 2008)*. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA4800 Data file Version 3.0.0, doi: 10.4232/1.11004.
- Fraile, M., & Ferrer, M. (2005). Explaining the Determinants of Public Support for Cuts in Unemployment Benefits Spending across OECD Countries. *International Sociology*, 20(4), 459-481.
- Fridberg, T., & Ploug, N. (2000). Public attitudes to unemployment in different European Welfare Regimes. In D. Gallie & S. Paugam (Eds.), *Welfare regimes and the experience of unemployment in Europe* (pp. 334-350). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Furaker, B., & Blomsterberg, M. (2003). Attitudes towards the Unemployed. An Analysis of Swedish Survey Data. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 12(3), 193-203.
- Furnham, A. (1982). The Protestant Work Ethic and Attitudes Toward Unemployment. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 55(4), 277-p. 277.
- Furnham, A. (1990). *The Protestant Work Ethic: the psychology of work-related beliefs and behaviours*. London: Routledge.
- Furnham, A., Bond, M., Heaven, P., Hilton, D., & al., e. (1993). A comparison of protestant work ethic beliefs in thirteen nations. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 133(2), 185-197.
- Gans, H. J. (1995). *The war against the poor*. New York: BasicBooks.
- Gelissen, J. (2000). Popular Support for Institutionalised Solidarity: A Comparison between European Welfare States. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 9(4), 285-300.
- Geremek, B. (1994). *Poverty: a history*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Gilens, M. (1996). Race and poverty in America: public misperceptions and the American news media. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 60(4), 515-541.
- Golding, P., & Middleton, S. (1982). *Images of welfare: press and public attitudes to poverty*. Oxford: Robertson.

- Gordon, L. (2001). Who deserves help? Who must provide? . *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 577, 12-25.
- Goul Andersen, J. (1993). Sources of Welfare-State Support in Denmark: Self-interest or Way of Life? In E. J. Hansen, S. Ringen, H. Uusitalo & R. Erikson (Eds.), *Welfare trends in de Scandinavian countries* (pp. 25-48). Armonk, N.Y.: Sharpe.
- Goul Andersen, J., Pettersen, P. A., Svallfors, S., & Uusitalo, H. (1999). The Legitimacy of the Nordic Welfare States. In M. Kautto, M. Heikkila, B. Hvinden, S. Marklund & N. Ploug (Eds.), *Nordic Social Policy: Changing Welfare States* (pp. 235-261). London: Routledge.
- Groskind, F. (1991). Public reactions to poor families: characteristics that influence attitudes toward assistance. *Social work*, 36(5), 446-453.
- Groskind, F. (1994). Ideological influences on public support for assistance to poor families. *Social work*, 39(1), 81-89.
- Halvorsen, K. (2002). *Solidarity and the legitimacy of the welfare state: Attitudes to abuse of welfare benefits in Scandinavian countries*. Paper presented at the COST13 Working Group II meeting, Florence.
- Hasenfeld, Y., & Rafferty, J. A. (1989). The determinants of public attitudes toward the welfare state. *Social Forces*, 67(4), 1027-1048.
- Hemerijck, A. (2013). *Changing welfare states*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hills, J. (2002). Following or leading public opinion? Social security policy and public attitudes since 1997. *Fiscal Studies*, 23(4), 539-558.
- Houtman, D. (1994). *Werkloosheid en sociale rechtvaardigheid: oordelen over de rechten en plichten van werklozen*. Amsterdam: Boom.
- Houtman, D. (1997). Welfare State, Unemployment, and Social Justice: Judgments on the Rights and Obligations of the Unemployed. *Social Justice Research*, 10(3), 267-288.
- Hvinden, B. (2008). Cultures of activation: The shifting relationship between income maintenance and employment promotion in the Nordic context. In W. Van Oorschot, B. Pfau-Effinger & M. Opielka (Eds.), *Culture and welfare state: Values and social policy in comparative perspective* (pp. 205-224). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Inglehart, R. (1990). *Culture shift in advanced industrial society*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Jæger, M. M. (2005). Welfare state regimes and attitudes towards redistribution in 15 Western European countries: Is it really true that institutional regimes do not matter? *Working Paper 04:2005*. Copenhagen: Working Paper 04:2005, The Danish Institute of Social Research SFI.
- Jæger, M. M. (2006a). Welfare Regimes and Attitudes Towards Redistribution: The Regime Hypothesis Revisited. *European Sociological Review*, 22(2), 157-170.

- Jæger, M. M. (2006b). What makes people support public responsibility for welfare provision: self-interest of political ideology. *Acta Sociologica*, 49(3), 321-338.
- Jæger, M. M. (2007). Are the 'deserving needy' really deserving everywhere? Cross-cultural heterogeneity and popular support for the old and the sick in eight Western countries. In S. Mau & B. Veghte (Eds.), *Social justice, legitimacy and the welfare state* (pp. 73-93). Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Jæger, M. M. (2008). Does left-right orientation have a causal effect on support for redistribution? Causal analysis with cross-sectional data using instrumental variables. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 20(3), 363-374.
- Jeene, M., & Van Oorschot, W. (2013). The Relative Deservingness of the Unemployed in the Eyes of the European Public. In L. Halman & W. Arts (Eds.), *Value Contrasts and Consensus in Present-Day Europe: Painting Europe's Moral Landscapes* (pp. 95-116). The Hague: Brill.
- Jeene, M., Van Oorschot, W., & Uunk, W. (2013). Popular Criteria for the Welfare Deservingness of Disability Pensioners: The Influence of Structural and Cultural Factors. *Social Indicators Research*, 110(3), 1103-1117. doi: 10.1007/s11205-011-9974-7
- Kahl, S. (2005). The Religious Roots of Modern Poverty Policy: Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed Protestant Traditions Compared. *European Journal of Sociology*, 46(1), 91-126.
- Kangas, O. (1997). Self-interest and the common good: the impact of norms, selfishness and context in social policy opinions. *Journal of Socio-Economics*, 26(5), 475-494.
- Kangas, O. (2002). The grasshopper and the ants: popular opinions of just distribution in Australia and Finland. *The Journal of Structuralism*, 31, 721-743.
- Katz, M. (1989). *The undeserving poor: From the war on poverty to the war on welfare*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books.
- Knegt, R. (1987). Rule application and substantive justice: observation at a Public Assistance Bureau. *The Netherlands' Journal of Sociology*, 23(2), 116-125.
- Korpi, W., & Palme, J. (2003). New Politics and Class Politics in the Context of Austerity and Globalization: Welfare State Regress in 18 Countries, 1975-95. *American Political Science Review*, 97(3), 425-446. doi: doi:10.1017.S0003055403000789
- Kumlin, S. (2004). *The personal and the political: how personal welfare state experiences affect political trust and ideology*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Lepianka, D. (2007). *Are the poor to be blamed or pitied? A comparative study of popular poverty attributions in Europe*. Tilburg: Tilburg University.
- Lijphart, A. (1968). *The politics of accommodation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lindbeck, A. (1995). Welfare state disincentives with endogenous habits and norms. *Scandinavian Journal of Economics*, 97(4), 477-494.

- Lindenberg, S. (1990). Homo structuralus: The emergence of a general model of man in the social sciences. *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics*, 146, 727-748.
- Lodemel, I., & Trickey, H. (2001). *'An offer you can't refuse': Workfare in international perspective*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Lodemel, I., & Trickey, H. (Eds.). (2001). *An offer you can't refuse: workfare in international perspective*. Bristol, UK: The Policy Press.
- Maassen, G., & De Goede, M. (1989). Public Opinion about Unemployed People in the Period 1975-1985; The Case of the Netherlands. *The Netherlands' Journal of Social Sciences*, 25(2), 97-113.
- MacLeod, L., Montero, D., & Speer, A. (1999). America's Changing Attitudes toward Welfare and Welfare Recipients, 1938-1995. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 26(2), 175-186.
- Manow, P. (2002). The good, the bad, and the ugly: Esping-Andersen's Sozialstaats-Typologie und die konfessionellen Wurzeln des westlichen Wohlfahrtsstaats. *Koelner Zeitschrift fuer Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, 54(2), 203-225.
- Mansbridge, J. (1990). *Beyond self-interest*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Martinussen, W. (1993). Welfare-State Support in Achievement-Oriented Hearts: The Case of Norway. In E. J. Hansen, S. Ringen, H. Uusitalo & R. Erikson (Eds.), *Welfare trends in the Scandinavian countries* (pp. 49-60). Armonk, N.Y.: Sharpe.
- Mettler, S., & Soss, J. (2004). The Consequences of Public Policy for Democratic Citizenship: Bridging Policy Studies and Mass Politics. *Perspectives on politics*, 2(1), 55-73.
- Murray, C. (1984). *Losing Ground: American Social Policy 1950-1980*. New York: Basic Books.
- Netherlands Institute of Social Research. (2010). Cultural Changes in the Netherlands. Retrieved February, 2010, from <http://www.scp.nl/content.jsp?objectId=default:18453>
- OECD. (1998). Benefit systems and work incentives: OECD.
- OECD. (2008). *Growing unequal? Income distribution and poverty in OECD countries*. Geneva: OECD.
- OECD. (2010). OECD. *StatExtracts*. Retrieved March, 2010, from <http://stats.oecd.org/>
- Offe, C. (1988). Democracy against the welfare state. In J. Moon (Ed.), *Responsibility, rights, and welfare*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Papadakis, E., & Bean, C. (1993). Popular Support for the Welfare State: A Comparison between Institutional Regimes. *Journal of Public Policy*, 13(3), 227-254.
- Pettersen, P. A. (1995). The welfare state: the security dimension. In O. Borre & E. Scarbrough (Eds.), *The scope of government* (pp. 198-233). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Pettersen, P. A. (2001). Welfare state legitimacy: Ranking, Rating, Paying. The popularity and support for Norwegian Welfare Programmes in the mid 1990s. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 24(1), 27-49.
- Pfeifer, M. (2009). Public Opinion on State Responsibility for Minimum Income Protection: A Comparison of 14 European Countries. *Acta Sociologica*, 52(2), 117-134.
- Pierson, P. (1993). When Effect Becomes Cause: Policy Feedback and Political Change. *World Politics*, 45(4), 595-628. doi: doi:10.2307/2950710
- Pierson, P. (2001). *The new politics of the welfare state*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ploug, N. (1996). *The welfare state: consistent attitudes in a changing world*. Paper presented at the ISA RC 19th Annual Meeting, Canberra, Australia.
- Raven, J. (2012). *Popular support for welfare state reforms: On welfare state preferences and welfare state reforms in the Netherlands*. Rotterdam: Erasmus University Rotterdam.
- Raven, J., Achterberg, P., Van Der Veen, R., & Yerkes, M. (2011). An Institutional Embeddedness of Welfare Opinions? The Link between Public Opinion and Social Policy in the Netherlands (1970-2004). *Journal of Social Policy*, 40(2), 369-386.
- Reeskens, T., & Van der Meer, T. (2014). *The color of benefits: A Large-Scale Survey Experiment on the Importance of Ethnicity as Deservingness Heuristic*. Tilburg School of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Tilburg.
- Rehm, P. (2007). Who Supports the Welfare State? Determinants of Preference Concerning Redistribution. In S. Mau & B. Veghte (Eds.), *Social justice, legitimacy and the welfare state* (pp. 47-72). Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Ringen, S. (1987). *The possibility of politics. A study in the political economy of the welfare state*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Roebroek, J. M., & Hertogh, M. (1998). *'De beschavende invloed des tijds': twee eeuwen sociale politiek, verzorgingsstaat en sociale zekerheid in Nederland*. Den Haag: VUGA.
- Roosma, F., Gelissen, J., & Van Oorschot, W. (2012). The Multidimensionality of Welfare State Attitudes: A European Cross-National Study. *Social Indicators Research*. doi: 10.1007/s11205-012-0099-4
- Sachweh, P., Ullrich, C. G., & Christoph, B. (Eds.). (2007). *The moral economy of poverty: on the conditionality of public support for social assistance schemes*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Saunders. (2002). Mutual obligation, participation and popularity: Social security reform in Australia. *Journal of Social Policy*, 31(1), 21-38.
- Serrano Pascual, A., & Magnusson, L. (Eds.). (2007). *Reshaping Welfare States and Activation Regimes in Europe*. Oxford: Peter Lang International Academic Publishers.

- Shaw, G. M., & Shapiro, R. Y. (2002). The Polls - Trends: Poverty and Public Assistance. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 66(1), 105-128.
- Sihvo, T., & Uusitalo, H. (1995). Economic Crises and Support for the Welfare State in Finland 1975-93. *Acta Sociologica*, 38(3), 251-262.
- Skocpol, T. (1991). Targeting within universalism: Politically viable politics to combat poverty in the United States. In C. Jencks & P. Peterson (Eds.), *The Urban Underclass* (pp. 411-436). Washington: The Brookings Institution.
- Slothuus, R. (2007). Framing deservingness to win support for welfare state retrenchment. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 30(3), 323-344.
- Snijders, T. A. B., & Bosker, R. J. (1999). *Multilevel analysis: an introduction to basic and advanced multilevel modeling*. London: SAGE.
- Soede, A., Vrooman, C., & Wildeboer Schut, J. M. (2009). De inkomenspositie van werklozen. In C. Vrooman (Ed.), *Werkloos in crisistijd: Baanverliezers, inkomensveranderingen en sociale gevolgen; een verkenning* (pp. 30-67). Den Haag: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.
- Stam, K., Verbakel, E., & De Graaf, P. (2011). *Explaining variation in work ethic in Europe: Another case of modernization or do institutions matter too?* Paper presented at the Fourth EVS Workshop, Vilnius, Lithuania.
- Statistics Netherlands. (2009a). Investment climate; broadband subscribers international comparison. Retrieved 25 September, 2009, from <http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?DM=SLEN&PA=71158eng&D1=0&D2=a&D3=10-11&LA=EN&HDR=T,G2&STB=G1&VW=T>
- Statistics Netherlands. (2009b). Number of benefits WAO, Wajong and WAZ by month. Retrieved 25 September, 2009, from <http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?DM=SLEN&PA=37638eng&D1=0&D2=0&D3=a&D4=1-5&D5=96-107&LA=EN&HDR=T,G1&STB=G2,G3,G4&VW=T>
- Stein, B. (1971). *On relief: the economics of poverty and public welfare*. New York: Basic Books.
- Stjerno, S. (2005). *Solidarity in Europe: the history of an idea*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Svallfors, S. (1997). Worlds of welfare and attitudes to redistribution: a comparison of eight Western Nations. *European Sociological Review*, 13(3), 283-304.
- Svallfors, S. (2003). Welfare Regimes and Welfare Opinions: a Comparison of Eight Western Countries. *Social Indicators Research*, 64(3), 495-520.
- Svallfors, S. (2004). Class, Attitudes and the Welfare State: Sweden in Comparative Perspective. *Social policy & administration*, 38(2), 119-119-138.
- Svallfors, S. (2011). A Bedrock of Support? Trends in Welfare State Attitudes in Sweden, 1981-2010. *Social policy & administration*, 45(7), 806-825.

- Svallfors, S. (Ed.). (2007). *The political sociology of the welfare state*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Taylor-Gooby, P. (1998). *Markets and motives: Implications for welfare*. Canterbury: CCWS working paper, Darwin College, University of Kent.
- Taylor-Gooby, P. (1999). "Hollowing out" versus the new interventionism: Public attitudes and welfare futures. In S. Svallfors & P. Taylor-Gooby (Eds.), *The end of the welfare state? Responses to state retrenchment*. London: Routledge.
- Taylor-Gooby, P. (2011). Security, equality and opportunity: attitudes and the sustainability of social protection. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 21(2), 150-163. doi: doi: 10.1177/0958928710385735
- Therborn, G. (1991). Cultural belonging, structural location and human action: Explanation in sociology and in social science. *Acta Sociologica*, 34(3), 177-191.
- Ullrich, C. (2000). Die soziale Akzeptanz des Wohlfahrtsstaates: Ergebnisse, Kritik und Perspektiven einer Forschungsrichtung. *Sociale Welt*, 51, 131-152.
- UNECE. (2010). Statistical database of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. Retrieved June, 2010, from <http://w3.unece.org/pxweb/>
- Van Kersbergen, K. (1995). *Social capitalism: A study of Christian democracy and the welfare state*. London: Routledge.
- Van Oorschot, W. (2000). Who should get what, and why? On deservingness criteria and the conditionality of solidarity among the public. *Policy and Politics*, 28(1), 33-49.
- Van Oorschot, W. (2006a). The Dutch welfare state: recent trends and challenges in historical perspective. *European Journal of Social Security*, 8(1), 57-76.
- Van Oorschot, W. (2006b). Making the difference in Social Europe: Deservingness perceptions among citizens of European welfare states. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 16(1), 23-42.
- Van Oorschot, W. (2010). Public perceptions of the economic, moral, social and migration consequences of the welfare state: an empirical analysis of welfare state legitimacy. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 20(1), 19-31. doi: 10.1177/0958928709352538
- Van Oorschot, W. (2014). Solidarity. In A. C. Michalos (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research* (pp. 6216-6218). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.
- Van Oorschot, W., Arts, W., & Halman, L. (2005). Welfare state effects on social capital and informal solidarity in the European Union: Evidence from the 1999-2000 European Values Study. *Policy and Politics*, 33(1), 33-54.
- Van Oorschot, W., & Meuleman, B. (2014). Popular Deservingness of the Unemployed in the Context of Welfare State Policies, Economic Conditions and Cultural Climate. In S. Kumlin & I. Stadelmann-Steffen (Eds.), *How Welfare States Shape The Democratic Public: Policy Feedback, Participation, Voting, and Attitudes* (pp. 244-268). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

References

- Van Oorschot, W., Opielka, M., & Pfau-Effinger, B. (2008). The culture of the welfare state: Historical and theoretical arguments. In W. Van Oorschot, M. Opielka & B. Pfau-Effinger (Eds.), *Culture and welfare state* (pp. 1-26). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Van Oorschot, W., Reeskens, T., & Meuleman, B. (2012). Popular Perceptions of Welfare State Consequences. A Multi-Level, Cross-National Analysis of 25 European Countries. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 22(2), 181-197.
- Van Oorschot, W., & Roosma, F. (2015). *The social legitimacy of differently targeted benefits*. ImPRove Working Paper No. 15/11. Herman Deleeck Centre for Social Policy, University of Antwerp. Antwerp.
- Van Oorschot, W., & Uunk, W. (2007). Welfare Spending and the Public's Concern for Immigrants: Multilevel Evidence for Eighteen European Countries. *Journal of Comparative Politics*, 40(1), 63-82.
- Verbakel, E., & Jaspers, E. (2010). A Comparative Study on Permissiveness Toward Euthanasia: Religiosity, Slippery Slope, Autonomy, and Death with Dignity. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 74(1), 109-139.
- Weaver, R. K., Shapiro, R. Y., & Jacobs, L. R. (1995). The Polls - Trends: Welfare. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 59(4), 606-627.
- Wilensky, H. L. (1975). *The welfare state and equality: structural and ideological roots of public expenditures*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Will, J. A. (1993). The Dimensions of poverty: Public Perceptions of the Deserving Poor. *Social Science Research*, 22(3), 312-332.
- Wlezien, C. (2004). Patterns of Representation: Dynamics of Public Preferences and Policy. *Journal of Politics*, 66(1), 1-24.
- Yerkes, M., & Van der Veen, R. (2011). Crisis and Welfare State Change in the Netherlands. *Social policy & administration*, 45(4), 430-445.
- Zaller, J. R. (1992). *The nature and origins of mass opinion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



Nederlandse samenvatting

Inleiding

In veel landen zorgt de verzorgingsstaat voor behoeftige groepen die niet in staat zijn zelf in hun levensonderhoud te voorzien. Echter staat de verzorgingsstaat al decennia onder druk. In eerste instantie vanwege de betaalbaarheid van het systeem (Hemerijck, 2013; Taylor-Gooby, 2011), maar in toenemende mate worden ook de ideologische fundamenten onder de loep genomen. Deze fundamenten van solidariteit en de collectieve verantwoordelijkheid om behoeftigen in de samenleving te ondersteunen zouden onbedoeld individuele autonomie en verantwoordelijkheid ondermijnen, sociale banden beschadigen en private vormen van solidariteit verzwakken (Pettersen, 2001; Taylor-Gooby, 2011; Wilensky, 1975). Veel wetenschappers veronderstellen dat deze onbedoelde negatieve uitkomsten van de verzorgingsstaat de maatschappelijke legitimiteit van de verzorgingsstaat ondermijnt en daarmee de basis van de verzorgingsstaat zelf (zie bijvoorbeeld Brooks & Manza, 2006; Goul Andersen et al, 1999; Wilensky, 1975).

Ondanks deze negatieve verwachtingen met betrekking tot de maatschappelijke legitimiteit van de verzorgingsstaat, heeft veelvuldig onderzoek hiernaar geen dergelijke legitimiteitscrisis aangetoond (zie bijvoorbeeld Blekesaune & Quadagno, 2003; Gelissen, 2000; Svallfors, 1997, 2004). De verzorgingsstaat blijft zeer populair, ongeacht de genoemde uitdagingen.

Maar ook al lijkt er voortdurende steun te zijn voor de verzorgingsstaat, er zijn enkele kritische opmerkingen ten aanzien van deze schijnbare relatieve stabiliteit te plaatsen. Ten eerste is deze gevonden voortdurende steun van het publiek in het algemeen en zijn er daarbinnen vele individuele variaties op de hoeveelheid steun die verschillende mensen bereid zijn te geven. Deze individuele variaties worden veelal verklaard door eigen belang (mensen die vanwege hun eigen sociaal-economische positie meer belang hebben bij goede sociale voorzieningen steunen deze regelingen ook meer) en culturele ideologie (zie bijvoorbeeld Blekesaune, 2007, Kangas, 1997; Svallfors, 2007; Van Oorschot, 2000). En behalve individuele variatie, is er ook verschil tussen landen onderling in de hoeveelheid verzorgingsstaat-steun die men aan de bevolking wil geven. Naast economische en culturele verschillen, kunnen ook institutionele verschillen deze variatie verklaren.

Daarnaast richten studies over steun voor de verzorgingsstaat zich vrijwel uitsluitend op steun voor sociale rechten, waarop het publiek geneigd is positief te antwoorden. De verzorgingsstaat - en haar legitimiteit - behelst echter meerdere aspecten (zie bijvoorbeeld Roosma et al, 2012). De voordelen van de sociale voorzieningen van de verzorgingsstaat zijn algemeen erkend, maar het publiek is niet blind voor de negatievere aspecten (Roosma et al, 2012, Van Oorschot et al, 2012). Eén van de kritieken op de verzorgingsstaat is dat het als (onbedoelde) morele consequentie heeft dat het de wil tot werken ondermijnt en de verantwoordelijkheid om in het levensonderhoud te voorzien

buiten het individu legt (Murray, 1984). Als gevolg hiervan is het benadrukken van (re) integratie op de arbeidsmarkt de standaard van goed sociaal beleid geworden (Carcillo & Grubb, 2006). Er is echter een aanzienlijk gebrek aan kennis over de maatschappelijke legitimiteit van dit nieuwe element van activatie.

Tot slot kan de opvatting die mensen hebben ten aanzien van steun voor de verzorgingsstaat verschillen afhankelijk van de specifieke doelgroep waar deze steun zich op richt. De regelingen die zijn gericht op de ouderen, zieken en gehandicapten worden het meest ondersteund door het publiek, terwijl de sociale bescherming van de werklozen en bijstandsgerechtigden minder worden ondersteund, en de sociale bescherming van de immigranten minimaal wordt ondersteund (zie bijvoorbeeld, Blekesaune & Quadagno, 2003; Coughlin, 1980; Pettersen, 1995; Reeskens & Van der Meer, 2014; Van Oorschot, 2006b).

Nu de verzorgingsstaat meer onder druk staat, komt de klassieke vraag ‘wie zou wat moeten krijgen en waarom’, de vraag die centraal stond bij de opbouw van de verzorgingsstaat, weer terug in het debat. Deze fundamentele vraag - die betrekking heeft op de ‘hulpwaardigheid’ of ‘*deservingness*’ van verschillende groepen - is de focus van dit proefschrift. Het ‘wie’ en ‘wat’ uit deze vraag heeft betrekking op bovenstaande opmerkingen dat de mening over steun voor de verzorgingsstaat kan verschillen afhankelijk van de specifieke aspecten van de verzorgingsstaat en/of de doelgroep die het betreft. Het ‘waarom’ mensen differentiëren heeft betrekking op de zogenoemde *deservingness* criteria. Op basis van verschillende studies naar de criteria die mensen gebruiken om te bepalen wie meer of minder hulp waard is (meer of minder *deserving* is²³) heeft Van Oorschot (2000) de volgende criteria uiteen gezet:

- Controle; de mate waarin behoeftigen controle hebben over hun situatie, of hun eigen verantwoordelijkheid voor deze situatie: hoe minder verantwoordelijkheid, hoe meer *deserving* ze zijn;
- Behoeftigheid: de mate van behoeftigheid: hoe meer behoeftig, hoe meer *deserving*;
- Identiteit: de identiteit van de behoeftigen, dat wil zeggen, de nabijheid van de behoeftigen tot ‘het publiek’: hoe dichter bij ‘ons’, hoe meer *deserving*;
- Attitude: de houding van de behoeftigen ten aanzien van steun, oftewel hun volgzzaamheid of dankbaarheid: hoe meegaander, hoe meer *deserving*;
- Reciprociteit: de mate waarin behoeftigen bewezen gunsten beantwoorden, of hebben beantwoord: hoe meer reciprociteit, hoe meer *deserving* (Van Oorschot, 2000).

²³ De meest passende Nederlandse vertaling van ‘*deservingness*’ is ‘hulpwaardigheid’. Ik zal hier echter de Engelse term *deservingness* gebruiken omdat dit beter de lading dekt.

De uiteindelijke *deservingness* van een doelgroep is dan het gevolg van de vermeende 'score' op elk criterium en kan dus variëren van 'zeer *undeserving*' tot 'zeer *deserving*'. Deze scores weerspiegelen hoe mensen de kenmerken van de leden van de doelgroep waarnemen ten aanzien van specifieke criteria.

Op basis van bovenstaande kritische opmerkingen ten aanzien van de schijnbaar stabiele steun voor de verzorgingsstaat wordt aan de vraag 'wie zou wat moeten krijgen en waarom' toegevoegd: 'onder welke voorwaarden?' Deze toevoeging is nodig in verband met de genoemde systematische variatie tussen individuen en contexten (land en/of historische tijd) in de steun voor de verzorgingsstaat die gebaseerd is op economische en culturele achtergrond kenmerken. De eerder genoemde 'score' op de verschillende *deservingness* criteria kunnen verschillen onder invloed van bepaalde individuele en contextuele factoren. Dit proefschrift is een poging om de verschillen in verzorgingsstaat opinies verder uit te diepen met behulp van *deservingness* opinies.

Dit proefschrift bestaat uit vier empirische studies waarin steeds een deel van de vraag 'wie zou wat moeten krijgen en waarom, onder welke voorwaarden?' wordt behandeld. In het volgende deel van deze samenvatting ga ik in op deze afzonderlijke studies, de onderzochte onderzoeksvragen en de belangrijkste resultaten. De samenvatting wordt afgesloten met een algemene conclusie.

Studie 1: Deservingness criteria voor de deservingness van arbeidsongeschikten

De eerste studie van dit proefschrift betreft het mogelijke verschil in nadruk dat verschillende mensen op de verschillende criteria leggen. Het is namelijk onduidelijk of alle criteria in dezelfde mate worden gebruikt door iedereen. De onderzoeksvraag die centraal staat in hoofdstuk 2 luidt: 'In hoeverre differentiëren mensen in de nadruk die zij leggen op de verschillende *deservingness* criteria, en welke individuele kenmerken verklaren deze verschillen.' Ik gebruik de Arbeid, Bedrijf en Sociale Zekerheid in Nederland 2006 data (Achterberg & Van Oorschot, 2008) waarmee de nadruk op drie *deservingness* criteria onderzocht kan worden, namelijk controle, behoeftigheid en reciprociteit, met betrekking tot de *deservingness* van arbeidsongeschikten. Er wordt steeds nagegaan welke structurele en culturele kenmerken van mensen verklaren dat zij verschillen in de mate waarin ze de genoemde criteria benadrukken.

Hoewel de mate waarin verschillende mensen een criterium benadrukken verschilt naar gelang het criterium, zijn er wel algemene patronen gevonden die voor alle drie criteria gelden. Mensen die moeten kunnen concurreren met arbeidsongeschikten om schaarse middelen zijn meer geneigd de *deservingness* criteria te benadrukken. Dit resultaat is consistent met het concurrentie perspectief van de eigenbelang theorie. Door meer nadruk te leggen op de criteria zullen minder arbeidsongeschikten gezien worden als meer *deserving*, waardoor er - in theorie - meer middelen overblijven voor overige groepen waar deze mensen zelf toe behoren. Een andere vorm van eigenbelang,

het groepsrisico perspectief, is ook gevonden. Dit perspectief stelt dat mensen die zelf ervaring hebben met de arbeidsongeschiktheidsuitkering, en dus weten hoe dat is en meer kans hebben in de toekomst te moeten terugvallen op een uitkering, minder nadruk leggen op de criteria.

Met betrekking tot eenieders culturele ideologie is gebleken dat mensen met rechtser politieke overtuigingen en mensen met een sterk arbeidsethos meer nadruk leggen op de deservingness criteria. Ook blijkt dat de sociaal-structurele positie meer bepalend is voor het meer of minder benadrukken van het controle en behoefteigheid criterium, terwijl voor het reciprociteit criterium de ideologie juist meer bepalend is.

Deze bevindingen impliceren dat het bij onderzoek naar deservingness opinies en de bijbehorende criteria van belang is om rekening te houden met individuele verschillen, aangezien mensen verschillen in de mate waarin zij elk criterium benadrukken.

Studie 2: De dynamiek van verzorgingsstaat opinies in een veranderende economische, institutionele en politieke context

In de tweede studie wordt een dynamisch perspectief gekozen, waarbij tevens rekening wordt gehouden met verschillende typen sociale voorzieningen. Met behulp van de Culturele Veranderingen in Nederland (CV) data van het Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau (Netherlands Institute for Social Research, 2010) wordt gekeken naar de invloed van de veranderende economische, institutionele en politieke context op deservingness opinies. Er waren 12 waves van deze data beschikbaar, verzameld tussen 1975 en 2006, waarin steeds ongeveer 2000 respondenten gevraagd zijn naar de deservingness van vijf verschillende doelgroepen. Daarmee kon ingegaan worden op zowel korte- als langetermijn veranderingen in opinies.

Gekeken naar deservingness opinies op de lange termijn blijkt dat deze vrij stabiel waren tot begin jaren '80, waarna er een omslagpunt kwam. Dit omslagpunt bracht de vrij stabiele opinies naar een hoger, maar nog steeds vrij stabiel niveau; een hoger percentage respondenten vond dat de verschillende groepen meer steun waard waren dan voor het omslagpunt.

Op korte termijn zijn er aanzienlijk meer schommelingen en het effect van de contextuele veranderingen op deze fluctuaties, geanalyseerd door middel van multilevel logistische regressie analyses, waren dan ook de focus van deze studie.

De economische context zorgde, zoals verwacht, voor tegenstrijdige effecten. Alle behoeftige groepen worden beschouwd als *deserving of* meer steun in tijden van meer economische groei. Maar een lagere werkloosheid - dat wil zeggen een betere economische situatie - zorgt ervoor dat het publiek kritischer is ten aanzien van groepen die beschouwd worden als onderdeel van de beroepsbevolking (werklozen en bijstandsgerechtigden). Deze bevinding kan worden geïnterpreteerd door middel van de deservingness theorie: veranderingen in werkloosheidscijfers veranderen ook de

standpunten van de mensen over wiens schuld het is dat men geen werk heeft en de mogelijkheid zich te identificeren met de werklozen. Eigenbelang kan daarentegen ook een verklaring zijn. Een stijging van de werkloosheid vergroot voor veel mensen de kans (en angst) om zijn/haar baan te verliezen. Helaas zijn we niet in staat om onderscheid te maken tussen deze twee interpretaties. Het verwachte effect van meer kritische deservingness meningen tijdens een rechtser politiek klimaat werd ook bevestigd.

Tot slot werd er gekeken naar institutionele veranderingen door middel van specifieke beleidsontwikkelingen. Logistische regressie analyse toonde aan dat deze institutionele effecten beperkt waren. De analyses laten zien dat er meer schommelingen in opinies zijn dan kunnen worden verklaard door veranderingen in het beleid. Ook hebben de beleidsveranderingen die er wel waren in slechts iets meer dan de helft van de gevallen een effect op de deservingness opinies. Bovendien was er sprake van cross-over effecten: bepaalde beleidsveranderingen bleken invloed te hebben op deservingness opinies over hulpbehoevende groepen die niet het doel van dat beleid waren.

Deze studie toont aan dat deservingness opinies niet alleen fluctueren tussen individuen, maar ook door de tijd als gevolg van veranderende contextuele veranderingen en afhankelijk van de betrokken doelgroep.

Studie 3: De relatieve deservingness van werklozen in de ogen van Europese burgers

In het vierde hoofdstuk wordt een Europees perspectief opgenomen. Het doel was om te onderzoeken wat de relatieve deservingness van werklozen is ten opzichte van groepen die in het algemeen erg deserving worden bevonden, deze relatieve deservingness te vergelijken tussen Europese landen en de verschillen te verklaren door middel van individuele en contextuele verschillen. Hiervoor is gebruik gemaakt van de European Values Study (EVS, 2011), een rijke data set met data uit 45 Europese landen/regionen en 60.388 respondenten in de uiteindelijke gebruikte sample. Vanwege de hiërarchische structuur van de data, waarbij individuen zijn genest in landen, wordt gewerkt met multilevel analyses zodat de variantie op individueel en landenniveau te ontrafelen is.

Een eerste beschrijvende analyse toonde aan dat, met uitzondering van VJR Macedonië, in alle onderzochte landen de deservingness van de werklozen gemiddeld genomen relatief minder is dan de deservingness van traditioneel kwetsbare groepen (ouderen, zieken en gehandicapten en arme kinderen), met aanzienlijke verschillen tussen landen in de mate van differentiatie. Het multilevel-model toonde aan dat bijna 8,2% van de variatie in de relatieve deservingness van de werklozen kan worden toegeschreven aan het landniveau, waarvan 17% het gevolg is van verschillen in de populatie-samenstelling van deze landen.

Gekeken naar de variatie op het niveau van het individu steunen de resultaten op verschillende plekken het eigenbelang argument. De relatieve deservingness van de werklozen is hoger onder mensen die zelf werkloos zijn, onder mensen met een lager

inkomen en onder mensen in de leeftijdscategorie 51-64 jaar. De mensen die concurreren met de werklozen om beperkte middelen - arbeidsongeschikten en gepensioneerden - beschouwen de werklozen als relatief minder deserving. Wat betreft de culturele kenmerken werd geconstateerd dat, zoals verwacht, mensen met rechtser politieke overtuigingen, mensen met een sterker arbeidsethos en mensen die zich identificeren als protestant de werklozen relatief minder deserving beschouwen.

Op het landniveau is de bevinding dat alleen de werkloosheid van invloed is op de relatieve deservingness van de werklozen in overeenstemming met hoofdstuk 3. Dit resultaat kan ook op dezelfde manier worden verklaard door de deservingness theorie of de theorie van eigenbelang. Wanneer de werkloosheid toeneemt, neemt voor velen de kans op baanverlies toe (eigenbelang) en worden werklozen minder verantwoordelijk gehouden voor hun situatie en kan men zich gemakkelijker met hen identificeren, omdat mensen eerder iemand kennen in eenzelfde situatie (deservingness).

In aanvulling op het individuele niveau effect van religie, werd gevonden dat mensen in landen met een protestants erfgoed werklozen als relatief minder deserving beschouwen in vergelijking met mensen die in landen met een katholiek, orthodox of islamitisch erfgoed wonen. Een verklaring hiervoor zou kunnen zijn dat protestanten een meer conditionele en gereserveerde zienswijze hebben ten aanzien van het helpen van armen (Kahl, 2005). Hoewel er geen institutioneel effecten zijn gevonden, is dit mogelijkkerwijs vanwege de beperkte beschikbare institutionele data.

Wederom laten deze resultaten de individuele variatie zien in deservingness opinies, ditmaal met betrekking tot verschillen tussen doelgroepen. Bovendien zijn contextuele verschillen dus ook van invloed op deservingness opinies op landniveau.

Studie 4: De sociale legitimiteit van de activerende verzorgingsstaat

Nadat de focus in de eerste drie empirische hoofdstukken lag op sociale rechten, is de focus in het laatste hoofdstuk juist gericht op de (werk)plichten die vaak als voorwaarde worden gesteld van rechten (bijvoorbeeld actief solliciteren naar werk, trainingen volgen, gesubsidieerd werk verrichten of werkervaringsplaatsen accepteren). In dit hoofdstuk wordt inzicht verschaft in de mate waarin de publieke opinie het eens is met deze plichten, wanneer en waarom zij soms soepel om wensen te gaan met deze verplichtingen en wat het gewenste evenwicht tussen rechten en plichten is.

Net als in de eerste studie wordt ook hier gebruik gemaakt van de Arbeid, Bedrijf en Sociale Zekerheid in Nederland 2006 data (Achterberg & Van Oorschot, 2008). Beschrijvende analyses bevestigen de verwachting dat behoeftige groepen die beter voldoen aan de deservingness criteria meer clementie worden verleend met betrekking tot de werkverplichting. Arbeidsongeschikten kunnen rekenen op meer clementie met betrekking tot werkverplichtingen dan de andere groepen (werklozen en bijstandsgerechtigden), in het bijzonder volledig arbeidsongeschikten zijn. Met

betrekking tot de werklozen is men soepeler ten aanzien van de werkverplichting voor oudere werklozen en werklozen die de maatschappij op een andere manier terugbetalen (zorgtaken of vrijwilligerswerk). Daarnaast kunnen alleenstaande ouders met jonge kinderen die een bijstandsuitkering ontvangen ook rekenen op clementie met betrekking tot werkverplichtingen.

Met betrekking tot het gewenste evenwicht tussen rechten en plichten werden vier theoretische mogelijkheden gepresenteerd: veel rechten, weinig plichten (onvoorwaardelijke vrijgevigheid); veel rechten, veel plichten (voorwaardelijke vrijgevigheid); weinig rechten, veel plichten ('eerst werk') en weinig rechten, weinig plichten (laissez-faire). Over arbeidsongeschikten bestaat het meest consensus: bijna driekwart van de respondenten kiest voor de onvoorwaardelijke vrijgevigheid optie bij de behandeling van deze groep. Voor de andere groepen is het publiek meer verdeeld, maar voor alle groepen is de laissez-faire optie de minst gekozen optie.

Een multinomiale regressieanalyse verschaft inzicht in de sociaal-economische en ideologische kenmerken van het publiek die van invloed zijn op de gewenste optie. Over het algemeen hebben de ideologische kenmerken hetzelfde effect op alle behoeftige groepen: de mensen die zichzelf als politiek rechtser identificeren en mensen met een sterker arbeidsethos kiezen vaker voor een andere optie dan de onvoorwaardelijke vrijgevigheid optie, en geven vooral de voorkeur aan de 'eerst werk' optie. De sociaal-economische kenmerken - kenmerken die eigenbelang weerspiegelen - vertonen een minder consistent patroon in de effecten. Mensen in de leeftijd 46-64, lagere inkomensgroepen, mensen met persoonlijke ervaring als uitkeringsontvanger en de werklozen kiezen vaker de onvoorwaardelijke vrijgevigheid optie dan de andere opties. Strijdig met eigenbelang is de bevinding dat lager en middelbaar geschoolden de voorkeur geven aan de 'eerst werk' optie (en laissez faire) boven de onvoorwaardelijke vrijgevigheid optie.

Deze laatste resultaten laten wederom zien dat er duidelijke verschillen zijn in de opinies van verschillende individuen, niet alleen ten aanzien van de sociale rechten, maar ook met betrekking tot sociale verplichtingen. Verschillende individuen hebben een verschillende mening over wat het gewenste evenwicht tussen rechten en plichten is, wat ook weer varieert afhankelijk van de doelgroep van een uitkering.

Conclusie

In dit proefschrift is meer inzicht verkregen in de verschillen in deservingness opinies als onderdeel van verzorgingsstaat opinies. Ten aanzien van de individuele verschillen kan geconcludeerd worden dat zowel sociaal-economische als ideologische kenmerken bepalende factoren zijn voor deservingness opinies en de criteria die deze opinies bepalen.

De invloed van de context waarin deservingness opinies worden gevormd, resulteert in twee conclusies. De eerste conclusie is dat deservingness opinies fluctueren wanneer de maatschappelijke condities ook veranderen. Veranderingen in de economische context beïnvloeden de manier waarop mensen rekening houden met de mate van controle die behoeftige mensen hebben over hun situatie en de hoeveelheid (financiële) ruimte die men heeft om rekening te houden met het welzijn van behoeftigen. Een rechtser politiek klimaat zorgt voor meer strikte percepties van deservingness. De tweede conclusie is dat de relatieve deservingness - dat wil zeggen, hoeveel verschil er gemaakt wordt tussen behoeftige groepen - onder invloed van contextverschillen varieert tussen Europese landen. Ook hier spelen economische (werkloosheidscijfer) en cultureel-ideologische context factoren (arbeidsethos en religieuze achtergrond) een rol, los van individuele invloeden.

Wat betreft de andere kant van de deservingness medaille - de (arbeid)plichten kan geconcludeerd worden dat er steun is voor deze verplichtingen, maar ook reden voor clementie in bepaalde gevallen. Behoeftige groepen die aan meer van de deservingness criteria voldoen, krijgen meer clementie met betrekking tot de arbeidsverplichtingen. In sommige gevallen is het feit dat er plichten aan verbonden zijn een belangrijke voorwaarde waaronder mensen bereid zijn om sociale rechten te verlenen. Om echt de deservingness van een behoeftige groep te beoordelen, moeten beide factoren worden overwogen.

De laatste belangrijke conclusie die kan worden getrokken, is het belang van het opnemen van meerdere groepen bij het onderzoek deservingness opinies. Dit proefschrift toont aan dat de steun voor de verzorgingsstaat verschilt afhankelijk van de specifieke behoeftige groep waarnaar wordt gevraagd en bovendien zijn ook de bepalende factoren van de deservingness opinies afhankelijk van de behoeftige groep in kwestie. Individuele en contextuele verschillen beïnvloeden de opinie over de deservingness van verschillende groepen verschillend. Individueel zijn deze determinanten deels te verklaren door eigenbelang theorie. Het belang dat individuen hebben in een regeling is afhankelijk van de vergelijking van de eigen kenmerken met de kenmerken van de doelgroep. Ook op contextniveau is de specifieke doelgroep van belang. Zo is de hoogte van de werkloosheid alleen van belang voor de deservingness van groepen die onderdeel zijn van de beroepsbevolking, maar niet voor die van bijvoorbeeld ouderen, die niet beschouwd worden als onderdeel van deze populatie.



Dankwoord

This is it. De allerlaatste loodjes. Het was een lange weg, maar ik hoefde het gelukkig niet zonder hulp te doen. Graag maak ik van deze gelegenheid gebruik om een aantal mensen te bedanken voor de rol die ze hebben gehad in dit traject.

Allereerst mijn promotoren: Wim van Oorschot en Wilfred Uunk. Wim, zonder jouw begeleiding had dit proefschrift er zeker niet gelegen. Naast een on-uitputtende bron van informatie en interessante boeken en artikelen heb ik vooral erg veel gehad aan onze overlegmomenten, of dat nou ‘live’ was of via skype. Je nuchterheid en je gave om ingewikkelde concepten terug te brengen naar ‘gewone mensen taal’ is enorm waardevol voor me geweest. Wilfred, behalve je behulpzame kritische blik op mijn onderzoek, waar ik veel van heb geleerd, hebben we ook veelvuldig prettig samengewerkt in het onderwijs. Je hebt mij daarbij ook de kans gegeven om na mijn contractuele aio-tijd verder te werken in het sociologie onderwijs.

Ik heb ook veel gehad aan mijn collega’s op de universiteit. Jullie waren er om mee te sparren, het geven van tips en waardevolle feedback en voor gezellige lunches, boswandelingen, en departementsuitjes. Dank jullie wel! Qua aio collega’s bestaat mijn aio tijd voor mij uit twee delen. Uit beide delen wil ik een aantal collega’s in het bijzonder bedanken. Uit het eerste deel Marlous, Evelien en Suzanne. Marlous, mijn Bavelse achterbuurvrouw! Met je space-syntax werkte je op een heel ander vakgebied dan ik, maar daardoor was je feedback soms juist extra waardevol. Ook kon ik altijd op je rekenen als ik een vraag had over een Engelse vertaling of voor een gezellige thee-date. Eef, ook jij was er altijd voor een luisterend oor (in deze laatste fase vooral over onze gedeelde smart om een onderwijsbaan te combineren met het afronden van een proefschrift), een gezellige start van de dag of een goed gesprek of koffie/thee-date. Ik kijk er naar uit ook voor jou in de zaal te zitten!

Lieve Suus, het is oneerlijk en niet te bevatten dat jij er niet meer bent. Van studiegenoten werden we collega’s waarin we elkaar opzochten voor gezellige en dit-hadden-we-al-moeten-weten-momenten en vrijdag-half-3 -thee-dates. *Altijd voor jezelf opkomen en af is af*. Ik hoor ze vaak ik mijn hoofd en geef ze door aan anderen. Dank je wel. Voor de wijze lessen, voor je humor, de gezelligheid en de mooie herinneringen.

Het tweede deel van mijn aio tijd deelde ik met Levi, Ioana, Femke, Pascale en Kirsten (a.k.a Levi en de meiden). De deur stond bij jullie altijd open voor hulp en tips, over zowel onderzoek als onderwijs als gezellige afleidingen. Fijn dat we ook buiten de UvT contact zijn blijven houden en wat bijzonder dat we nu allemaal binnen een half jaar promoveren. Dat moet gevierd worden! Ik wil nog een extra woord richten tot mijn paranimfen-top-team, Pascale en Femke, en mijn kamergenoot Kirsten. Pascale, ESN medementor, studiegenoot, collega, partner-in-crime op zaterdag en ervaringsdeskundige. Zonder jou zou dit proefschrift misschien nu nog niet af zijn.

Dank voor je steun (en strengheid!) op onze proefschrift-zaterdag en je praktische tips en hulp tot het eind. Laten we ons nu dan eens lekker samen vervelen! Femke, omdat onze onderwerpen zo in elkaars verlengde liggen was en ben je mijn vraagbaak voor inhoudelijk vragen en verhelderingen. Onze gesprekken hierover zorgden er altijd voor dat ik weer vol nieuwe energie en hernieuwde interesse in het onderwerp verder kon. Dat blijkt wederom nu we samen aan een deservingness hoofdstuk werken. Kirsten, je was lange tijd mijn kamergenoot, en in die kamer (en daarbuiten) deelden we veel niet-werkgerelateerde zaken en belangrijke persoonlijke mijlpalen. Maar je was er ook voor onderzoek- en onderwijsvragen, en het delen van successen en frustraties.

Naast deze aio-collega's wil ik nog twee andere UvT collega's apart bedanken: Inge Sieben en Josja Rokven. Inge, hoewel we nooit direct hebben samengewerkt heb ik veel gehad aan je geduldige en duidelijke manier van uitleggen als ik een statistische vraag stelde. Ook je open en attente houding bij persoonlijke gebeurtenissen heb ik altijd erg gewaardeerd. Josja, dank voor je verfrissende ontwapenende houding en je humor!

Ook mijn huidige collega's bij Fontys HRM in Tilburg en Eindhoven wil ik bedanken: dank voor de interesse, de morele steun, het vertrouwen en de fijne samenwerking (Bel, je bent een top recruiter!).

Dankzij een tip van Sanne kwam ik in contact met Esther Ris. Esther, dank voor je prettige samenwerking in deze laatste drukke fase, bij het tot stand komen van dit boek. Je zorgde voor de nodige orde in de chaos, nam me stressvol werk uit handen en ik vertrouwde je de zorg voor het binnenwerk, de omslag en het drukwerk dan ook graag toe. Dit mooie boek is de bevestiging dat dat vertrouwen zeker terecht was.

Buiten mijn werk wilde ik zelden praten over mijn onderzoek, en waren mijn vrienden er juist voor de nodige afleiding daarvan. ESN-ers, Chicks, sociologen meiden, NSG meiden, domo's: dank voor de gezellige etentjes, weekendjes, vakanties en feestjes! Speciale dank aan Mojo en Murt, die ik als enige soms nog wel een inkijkje gaf in mijn proefschrift-strubbelingen en altijd een fijn luisterend oor en hart onder de riem boden.

Mijn familie geeft me een sterke basis waar ik blind op terug kan vallen. Ik besef mij steeds meer hoe waardevol dat is. Aan mijn schoonfamilie - Bert & Nelly, Chris & Vero, Lisette & Robert - dank voor het meeleven met mijn strubbelingen en weekendwerkdagen. Mijn ouderlijk gezin: Paul, Inge, Jasper en Floor, Erik en Nina, Koen en Liza. Ons grote gezin wordt steeds groter en het is altijd gezellig (en chaotisch) samen. Dank voor het niet vragen naar de status, maar de gevoelde steun en interesse vanaf de zijlijn (en soms het wel vragen, maar dan verstandig via Bas). Papa en mama, dank voor jullie praktische steun (bijvoorbeeld door op te passen tijdens mijn bevallingsverlof), liefde en onbegrensde vertrouwen in mijn kunnen.

Last but not least: mijn man, mijn beste vriend, mijn steun en toeverlaat, mijn grote liefde. Bas, jij hebt het meest afgezien van dit lange traject. Maar nu is het dan echt

zo ver. Dankjewel voor je vertrouwen, voor je steun als ik onze weekenden samen moest opofferen om aan mijn proefschrift te werken, maar vooral voor je liefde. In de tijd dat ik aan mijn proefschrift werkte zijn we gaan samenwonen, zijn we getrouwd en hebben we onze geweldige zoon gekregen. Ruben, ons vrolijke zonnetje, ik ben onbeschrijfelijk blij met jou. Jij bent de beste relativering in drukke tijden en bij werkstrubbelingen. Ik kan niet wachten op de rest van ons leven samen met jullie, en onze proefschriftloze weekenden en vakanties!

Marjolein

Bavel, oktober 2015



Curriculum Vitae

CV

Marjolein Jeene was born in Deventer, The Netherlands, on February 19, 1984. After finishing high school in Nijmegen, the Netherlands in 2002, she attended the College of Wooster in Wooster Ohio, US, for a one year abroad program. Back in the Netherlands, she completed her Bachelor's degree in Sociology and graduated with honors from the Master's program in Sociology at Tilburg University in 2007. After finishing extra courses of the Master Human Resource Studies, she started as a PhD candidate at the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences of Tilburg University in 2008, focusing on deservingness opinions. Since 2013, she works as a lecturer of Human Resource Management at Fontys University of Applied Sciences, school of HRM and Psychology.

