Constructing Europe and the European Union via Education
Contrasts and Congruence within and between Germany and England

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Abstract • This article is based on an analysis of the treatment of the European Union in a sample of textbooks from Germany and England. Following contextual remarks about civic education (*politische Bildung*) in Germany and citizenship education in England and a review of young people's views, we demonstrate that textbooks in Germany and in England largely mirror the prevailing political climate in each country regarding Europe. At the same time, the analysis reveals a disparity between the perspectives presented by the textbooks and young people's views. The textbooks in Germany provide more detail and take a more open approach to Europe than those in England. Finally, we argue that the textbooks may be seen as contributing to a process of socialization rather than one of education when it comes to characterizations of Europe.

Keywords • citizenship education, civic education, England, Europe, Germany, textbooks

Many aspects of Europe, including its location, nature, and purpose, are contested. This article examines the presentation of the European Union in textbooks in Germany and in England. Our aim is to engage with contemporary political debates about Europe and citizenship education in Germany and England, and to that end we provide contextual material on education and European citizenship in both countries. An examination of these two countries allows for an exploration of contexts that are socially and economically similar but very different in their official commitment to the EU. Via a presentation and discussion of young people's views on Europe and the results of analyses of German and English citizenship education textbooks, we suggest that, despite the similarity of young people's views in our chosen countries, the citizenship education textbooks in use in those countries are markedly different. While young people from both countries express attachment to Europe and suggest a similar level of commitment to the idea of Europe, the

textbooks from Germany deal with Europe in more detail and in more positive terms than those published for teachers and pupils in England. This suggests a simple and direct relationship between the educational content disseminated by a country via textbooks and that country's wider political approach. The textbooks in our sample mirror the dominant views in each country on the EU. The article brings together Alistair Ross's work on young people's attitudes toward Europe with textbook analyses conducted by other authors (Eleanor Brown and Ian Davies on the English textbooks and Beatrice Szczepek Reed and Géraldine Bengsch on the German textbooks). Combining these analyses, we speculate on the meaning of the political education currently being offered to young people in these countries. Since authors of learning resources generally pay little attention to young people's views, these materials may be seen as part of a process of socializing pupils to fit into existing official, overarching norms.

The Current Political Context and the State of Civic Education (*politische Bildung*) and Citizenship Education

Germany and the United Kingdom have very different attitudes toward the EU. While we will initially consider studies and data relating to the UK in general, we will later discuss individual nations of the UK, which have their own curricula and education policies. Bruce Stokes, Richard Wike and Dorothy Manevich suggest that 68 percent of Germans are in favor of the EU and only 11 percent would support withdrawal; in the same survey, 54 percent of UK respondents were shown to be favorable to the EU.[1] During the recent (2017) general election campaign in Germany, it was suggested that nearly one-third of Germans backed Martin Schulz's plans for a "United States of Europe" by 2025; the corresponding figure for Britain was 10 percent.[2] The figures for the UK referendum on EU membership show a divided country: 51.9 percent voted to leave; 48.1 percent voted to remain (Scotland and Northern Ireland voted to remain; England and Wales voted to leave).

Public opinion in the UK is volatile.[3] There was a range of voting patterns and rationales for voting to "leave" or to "remain." Very generally, across the popular vote, older, less well-educated, white males were more likely to vote to leave, with younger people more in favour of remaining.[4]

Germany and the UK differ in their responses to the European Union, with Germany having a majority that is positively disposed to the EU and the UK having an almost fifty-fifty split. However, there are overlaps of opinion when it comes to several aspects of contemporary society and education. In Germany, the reunification in 1990 was an indication of a groundbreaking political movement that is still relevant

today. The collapse of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Cold War, and the short-lived but profound attempts to reengineer fundamental worldviews were all significant in and of themselves and stimulated political events and social and cultural attitudes in many countries, including the UK.[5] In both countries, there is presently concern about voter turnout. In Germany, there have been attempts to promote democracy when there has been evidence of electoral turnout decline, although the year 2017 saw some partial recovery to 72.2 percent.[6] Due to the disproportionate numbers of younger and older people in the voting population, the former are less likely to have an impact; this imbalance is only exacerbated as voting rates decline among younger people.[7] As Christa Händle, Detlef Oesterreich and Luitgard Trommer have noted:

> A special challenge for civic education is to be found in the widespread refusal by young people to participate in social and political matters and their limited interest in politics. Studies of young people as well as electoral analyses clearly point out their political apathy. By contrast, young people do tend to show more willingness to become involved in the immediate community, in ecological problems and minority issues.[8]

Of course, this lack of turnout may not be due to apathy. Many young people are engaged in various kinds of small "p" politics in the form of noninstitutionalized participation.[9] Commitment to democracy is keenly felt in Germany. Social studies and civic education work is often, significantly, framed in light of the Holocaust, and surveys reveal widespread unease about the future (a recent study showed that one-third of Germany's population has little faith in the current generation's capacity to preserve democracy).[10] The impact of bringing together the two very different approaches to civic education that had existed on either side of the Wall—a statist-oriented conformity on one side and a neoliberal Western ideology on the other—is significant.[11] The combining of the systems could be described as simply assimilation to the West: the selective structures of the West German tripartite education system were imposed. Across the country as a whole, 34 percent of pupils attend elite secondary schools (*Gymnasium*); 23 percent attend intermediate-level schools (*Realschule*), and 12 percent attend lower secondary schools (*Hauptschule*) with all that might mean for attitudes toward social inclusion. Meanwhile, 16 percent attend comprehensive schools (*integrierte Gesamtschule*).[12]

There are discussions in both countries about how to teach contemporary issues. The sixteen states (*Länder*) of federal Germany have significant autonomy regarding what and how young people study, but share certain overarching influences and priorities. Regarding the pedagogical framing of required material in schools, the three principles of the Beutelsbach consensus are relevant.[13] This 1976 agreement urged

teachers to avoid indoctrination by not overwhelming the student; to present controversial matters as such; and to encourage pupils to analyze issues and ideas and seek ways to make a difference. This does not mean that teachers, during their training, are no longer exposed to debates about the most appropriate ways to promote learning. Although the scope of teacher training for political education is limited, the appropriate handling of controversial issues is debated.[14] For example, there are significant discussions about the ways in which Turkish and other groups feel they are being marginalized,[15] and there are voices in popular media that link—in our view unfairly—a diverse society with debates about radicalization.[16] There is both academic pressure (for example, a poor performance in international league tables such as PISA Schock) and economic pressure to shift the focus of political education. Alexy Buck and Brigitte Geissel have argued that "self-sufficiency, self-responsibility and independence from state provision are seen as new and necessary values: the citizen in Germany is required to be competent in order to operate in a changing world."[17]

School administrations in both Germany and England are concerned about the low status of political education.[18] Reinhold Hedtke and Mahir Gökbudak observe that approximately twenty minutes a week are allotted to cover many different topics, so that only a few seconds at most are left for discussion.[19] Yet there are also positive indications. The importance of political education may be seen in its longstanding position: the Federal Agency for Civic Education (*Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*) was established in 1952, and many nongovernmental organizations support its work, including its youth programs.[20] In addition, an overwhelming majority of the population is said to be in favor of strengthening political education.[21] Significant research has been conducted on the characterization of political education. In a study of the different approaches to knowledge, Wolfgang Sander suggests the following:

> Civic education should deal with real politics, it should be student-oriented, problem-based, multi-perspective, issue-centered, and task-based . . . Sustainable learning about elections demands a shift in teaching from facts to concepts. However, there is still a lot of work in theory and practice to develop and evaluate appropriate models, methods and material for teaching conceptual understanding.[22]

The issues affecting citizenship education in the UK are remarkably similar to those outlined above with reference to Germany. While we discuss these overarching trends here in terms of the entirety of the UK, in our textbook analysis the focus in on England, where the presentation of citizenship education in the National Curriculum was most debated. Of course, there are also significant differences between the UK and

Germany. In contrast to the German experience of reunification, the UK only narrowly avoided a step toward dissolution following the 2014 referendum on the independence of Scotland. While the immediate outcome of the referendum led to the confirmation of the union, the fate of the latter seems far from settled in the context of ongoing Brexit negotiations. Indeed, the position of Northern Ireland is complex given its land border with the EU, as is the question of what the subject of "citizenship education" should be in such a context. While electoral turnout in the UK is generally lower than in Germany, the apparently low level of youth engagement in both countries may constitute a similarity.[23] The initially reported "youthquake," or increased voter turnout among young people, may not have actually happened in the 2017 general election, although the vote in both that election and the EU referendum revealed a clear generational divide, with 71 percent of eighteen- to twenty-five-year-olds voting to remain. A more nuanced understanding of the demographics of that group and the reasons for their alienation from politics is needed: Emily Rainsford's study of young people in the UK suggests that some are less alienated than others, while yet others are alienated from political actors rather than the political system itself.[24]

The structure of schools in England, with all its implications for social and political inclusion, has changed dramatically since 2010. There has been a marked increase in the power of both the central government and individual schools. "Academies" and "free schools" with significant autonomy now compete with independent schools. These free schools are not required to follow the National Curriculum or employ qualified teachers, and consequently there has been a decline in the power of local authorities and in the significance of university education departments. While traditionally lagging behind Germany in terms of citizenship education, the UK has since the 1970s developed a variety of political literacy and adjectival education programs (peace education, antiracist education), a process which culminated in the appearance of citizenship education in the early 1990s, which initially focused on volunteering. The 1998 Crick Report emphasized a new approach, which highlighted three elements of citizenship education: community involvement, political literacy, and social and moral responsibility,[25] while the 2007 Ajegbo Report led to a greater emphasis on identity and diversity.[26] Regarding citizenship, the 2008 version of the National Curriculum focused on key concepts (democracy and justice, rights and responsibilities, identity and diversity) and processes (critical thinking, advocacy and representation, informed and responsible action) and employed a wide variety of materials. Despite the overwhelming evidence offered by the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS) of the National Foundation for Educational Research and the Ofsted reports[27] that this version had been successful, in 2014 the National Curriculum was redrawn with a focus on

civics. This new version focused on knowledge of constitutional politics and the legal and judicial systems, and on encouraging volunteering and critical thinking with an emphasis on personal money management.

Recently, efforts have also been made to promote character education. Ben Kisby's discussion of the differences between citizenship education and character education suggests the development of a moralizing and conservative approach in this domain.[28] Concerns about radicalization led to the introduction of the Prevent Strategy in 2011, which defines core British values as including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and religious tolerance.[29] While such definitions are obviously relevant to citizenship education, they are not officially part of it. A 2014 official document on "Promoting Fundamental British Values as Part of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education in Schools" and the 2018 Ofsted School Inspection Handbook are also relevant to the characterization of many of the national identity issues pertaining to European matters.[30]

In sum, both Germany and England face similar challenges as well as a common concern about levels of democratic engagement and the ways in which young people are prepared for adult life. Significant developments have taken place regarding the appropriateness of school structures and the capacity of teaching and learning to promote understanding of contemporary society and the skills needed to take part in it. However, with regard to what many consider to be the key political issue of our time, the EU, there are clear differences between the positive approach seen in Germany and the much more skeptical approach seen in England.

Constructions of Europe

In order to explain how young people are being educated about the EU, it is necessary to clarify the context and provide some background information. For centuries, academics and politicians equated the idea of "Europe" with Western Europe.[31] The present-day Council of Europe, with its forty-seven members, is of course open to any "European" state, including transcontinental states such as Turkey and Russia as well as Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan (but not Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan); Belarus and Kazakhstan are not yet members because of human rights issues. The EU has in the past included Greenland and Algeria (as part of Metropolitan France), and it currently includes a number of extra-European territories: Ceuta, Melilla, the *Plazas de Soberanía*, and the Canary Islands in the Atlantic (all Spanish); the Azores and Madeira in the Atlantic (all Portuguese); and French Guiana in South America, Guadeloupe, Saint Martin, and Martinique in the Caribbean, and Mayotte and Réunion in the Indian Ocean (all French).

Other popular institutions that profess to be "European" include the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), which includes Kazakhstan and Israel, and the Eurovision Song Contest, which has included Israel since 1975, Morocco since 1980, and Australia since 2015. "Europe" is an elastic term and can be considered a social construction.[32] Implicit in this notion is the idea that self-identity is determined through social processes, which are defined in relationship to others. Many constructions—of individual identity, of state membership, or even of Europe itself—may be considered contingent constructions. Back in 1989, John Shotter and Kenneth Gergen had already suggested that the nature of identity had shifted: while modern identities had been defined around rationalism, postmodern identities had developed around the relational self.[33] More recently, in their study of individualization from 2002, Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim noted that in late modern society "the sources of collective and group identity and of meaning which are characteristic of industrial society" had lost their mystique. We now are "constantly engaged in discarding old classifications and formulating new ones."[34] Such approaches to identity, as Karen Cerulo observes, do not accept essentialist categories as unique distinguishing properties of group membership: each group is a social artifact that is constructed and used within the hegemonic discourse.[35] The existence of these various possible characterizations of Europe is relevant to our consideration of young people's views and the development of educational programs in Europe on Europe.

Key Issues for Young People: Historic Literature

How do young Europeans—particularly in Germany and the UK, and, in some of the studies cited, specifically England—construct Europe? In 1988, Adrian Furnham and Barrie Gunter surveyed young people in the UK aged twelve to twenty-two about their social attitudes toward the European Economic Community (EEC) and concluded that their attitudes were equivocal.[36] On the one hand, the EEC was seen as economically and culturally successful, while on the other there was substantial uneasiness due to the perceived loss of national sovereignty. A 1994 survey of young people aged fourteen to fifteen in six European countries carried out by Anne Convery and colleagues found that English and German pupils felt similarly well informed about Europe (56.5 percent and 57.9 percent, respectively), while a minority felt that they were not well informed (43.4 percent and 42.1 percent, respectively).[37] Figure 1 indicates what the pupils considered to be their main sources of knowledge: the media is the principal source in both countries, followed by travel and family, whereby in all three cases the Germans appeared to have gained, in general, more knowledge than the English.

Figure 1. Sources of knowledge about Europe cited by English and German pupils (1994).
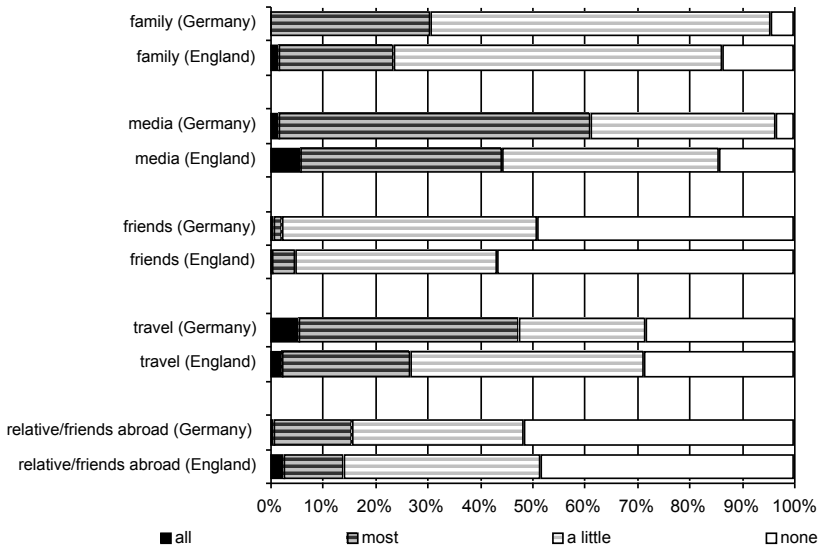
Source: Convery et al., *Pupils' Perceptions*, composited from Appendix tables B3.4, B3.5, B3.6, B3.7, and B3.8.

Respondents were also asked two questions relating to identity: "Do you think of yourself as European?" and "Do you think of yourself as British [sic] /German?" Table 1 shows that there were significant differences: the English pupils were more likely to consider themselves British and less likely to say that they were European. The same survey also gathered limited qualitative data. Convery and colleagues linked several of the pupils' explanations of their interest in Europe to citizenship: "Understanding each other better in Europe will lead to a greater overall understanding between countries" (German); "I feel we have too little information to make judgements: I would like to know more about politics and less about geography" (German); "We are getting closer and working together as a big union, and helping each other, and that's better" (English); and "It will make us more aware of our surroundings and we would feel we were more involved" (English).[38]

These answers suggest that some pupils considered European cooperation to be beneficial and desirable, and that young people generally wanted to have more information so that they might exercise greater agency in a European context. The authors of the study also quote a fragment of an interview with an English group in which the pupils respond to a question about "their personal attitude to the European Union": "I think it is better we are part of it. I think we should all get one currency, and even closer, even with Germany, Spain and Sweden;"

Table 1. German and English pupils' responses to identity questions (1994).

	Germany (%)	England (%)
Q: Do you think of yourself as European?		
Not at all	10.5	39.8
Only partly	26.3	41.6
Yes, totally	62.3	18.6
Q: Do you think of yourself as...	*German?*	*British?*
Not at all	18.7	4
Only partly	32.7	25.7
Yes, totally	48.5	70.3

Source: Convery et al, *Pupils' perceptions*, composited from Appendix tables B7.2 and B7.6.

"I agree—being an island we feel isolated, joining with other countries is better;" "I agree. We are getting closer and working together as a big Union and helping each other, and that's better;" "We might get some good ideas from there, like machinery. Instead of competing with each other we might work together;" and "Eventually we'll just be one big happy family."[39]

Since then, the EU has undergone many significant political and economic developments, including the granting of common citizenship, the signing of the Treaties of Amsterdam and Lisbon, and the launching of the euro. It has also experienced severe economic downturns, including a series of crises over sovereign debt and the near collapse of several banking systems. Germany has thoroughly revised its construction of citizenship, from a *jus sanguinis* model to a *jus soli*-oriented one. The population of the country has become more multicultural, and particularly, over the past decade, more international—a fact that is quite evident in the school-age population. In the UK, distinctions between the "home nations" of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland have become more prominent; migration has become for some an issue of discontent; and the country has initiated a process to leave the EU. The population, already multiethnic in 1994, is now even more so, and the proportions of young people of mixed origin has risen sharply since 2000. As in Germany, this is particularly apparent in the school-age population.

Key Issues among Young People: The Current Situation

Various sources of data were used to compare the situation in 1994 and the situation from 2014 to 2016. These sources date from before the 2016 Brexit referendum, which has led to a polarization that makes it particularly hard to collect stable data. The European Commission's

Eurobarometer studies of public opinion in the EU are a regular and consistently applied tool.[40] Although these studies, as quantitative studies of a selection from pre-determined responses, lack the qualitative richness of conversations, they reflect a larger and more stratified population than the above-mentioned 1994 study by Convery and colleagues, and they are more representative of individual states (in the case of the UK, they include data from other member countries besides England). Moreover, they allow access to raw data and comparisons of specific age groups for the UK and Germany. In the following analysis, a population of fifteen- to twenty-year-olds is compared to three older age groups: ages twenty-five to thirty-nine (which includes the generation of the 1994 study sample, now aged thirty-five to thirty-eight); ages forty to fifty-four; and those over fifty-five. These, with the exception of the specially constructed younger cohort, are the Eurobarometer standard analysis cohorts; data collected between May 2014 and November 2016 has been aggregated in order to produce a sufficiently large population of these fifteen- to twenty-year-olds.[41]

Looking at the level of knowledge "about European matters" indicated by the samples (Table 2), it is interesting to note that young people in both Germany and the UK profess to be substantially *less* well-informed than in the 1994 samples: in the UK, 44.3 percent claimed to be well-informed, while the corresponding number for Germany was 42.8 percent, while 55.6 and 57.2 percent claimed to be not well informed (if at all) in the UK and Germany, respectively. The phrase "very well informed" is of course highly contextual and individual, and it is indicative of some of the issues that often arise with surveys of this sort.

Table 2. QE2: To what extent do you consider yourself well informed about European matters?

Age group	Germany (%)				United Kingdom (%)			
	15–20	*25–39*	*40–54*	*55+*	*15–20*	*25–39*	*40–54*	*55+*
Very well informed	8.3	3.7	3.8	4.5	3.9	4.7	4.2	4.4
Fairly well informed	34.5	40.1	40.2	42.6	40.4	33.8	40.4	37.1
Not very well informed	45.5	49.2	51.3	45.4	45.5	48.5	45.2	46.7
Not at all informed	11.7	7.0	4.7	7.5	10.1	12.9	10.1	11.8
n	*151*			2,892	132			2,254

Sources: European Commission *Eurobarometer (81.4, 82.3, 83.3, 84.3, and 85.2)*, QE 2.

A slim majority of young Germans (51 percent) cited television as their main source of national political news (compared to 69 percent of people over fifty-five) and appeared to rely more on websites and social media than older people (30 percent compared to 2.5 percent for people

over forty). A lack of interest in national politics is more common among young Germans (7.5 percent) than among older Germans (4.1 percent for ages twenty-five to thirty-nine and 1.9 percent for those over fifty-five); it is also less common among young Germans than in the corresponding age group in the UK (10.3 percent). Young Germans are more reliant on television and less reliant on social media than the British (46 percent of whom use websites and social media as their main news source). In the UK, there are significant differences among age groups: television and radio are used by 58 percent of young people, compared to 77 percent of people over fifty-five.

There is also a significant difference between the number of young people in each country who discuss national and European politics with friends and relatives. In Germany, only 20 percent of younger people discuss political matters frequently, while 21 percent never do so; the corresponding figures for Germans over fifty-five are 31 percent and 11 percent, respectively. In the UK, by contrast, there is generally less discussion and a sharper age gradient: 10 percent of young people discuss national matters frequently and 44 percent never do, compared to 25 and 29 percent among those over fifty-five, respectively.

In both countries, European political matters are infrequently discussed, and the generational discrepancies are similar: in Germany, 14 percent of young people discuss European political matters frequently and 27 percent never do; among the older generation, the figures are 21 percent and 17 percent, respectively. In the UK, only 6 percent of young people discuss European politics frequently and 58 percent never do, compared to 21 percent and 37 percent for people over fifty-five, respectively. However, there is considerable anecdotal evidence that the situation in the UK has shifted since the referendum, with a significant increase in discussion of European as well as British politics among all age groups, particularly young people.

The Eurobarometer survey questions about national and European attachment were similar to those of the 1994 survey by Convery and colleagues (Table 1). The responses, however, appear to have shifted, as shown in Table 3: Germans appear less wholeheartedly European, the British rather more so; both show similar levels of attachment to their country.

The Eurobarometer surveys also included a more sophisticated question, the so-called "Moreno question," which was originally posed with respect to Scottish identity.[42] Subjects are asked to complete the question, "Do you see yourself as . . . ?" in one of four possible ways: "[nationality] only"; "[nationality] and European"; "European and [nationality]"; or "European only," whereby "nationality" stands for the respective adjectival form of the country name. The responses by age group are shown in Table 4.

Table 3. Responses to identity questions among various age groups (2014–2017): How attached do you feel to [your country] / to Europe?

ATTACHMENT TO: COUNTRY

		Germany (%)				United Kingdom (%)		
Age group	*15–20*	*25–39*	*40–54*	*55+*	*15–20*	*25–39*	*40–54*	*55+*
Very attached	44.7	43.6	50.1	60.6	44.6	47.6	53.2	63.8
Fairly attached	48.4	49.4	43.6	36.2	43.5	39.9	34.3	27.8
Not very attached	4.6	6.1	5.8	3.1	10.2	10.6	8.8	6.2
Not at all attached	1.8	0.8	0.8	0.2	1.6	1.7	3.0	2.1
n	217			2,892	189			2,254

ATTACHMENT TO: EUROPE

		Germany				United Kingdom		
Age Group	*15–20*	*25–39*	*40–54*	*55+*	*15–20*	*25–39*	*40–54*	*55+*
Very attached	18.2	15.8	16.2	15.4	10.5	11.2	13.6	8.5
Fairly attached	49.5	52.9	50.8	52.1	42.0	40.2	33.7	35.8
Not very attached	25.7	25.8	26.4	27.0	39.2	35.8	34.2	31.7
Not at all attached	6.5	5.5	6.5	5.5	8.3	12.8	18.5	24.0
n	217			2,892	189			2,254

Sources: European Commission Eurobarometer (81.4, 82.3, 83.3, 84.3, 85.2) QD 1a.

Table 4. Responses to the Moreno Question among various age groups (2014–2017): How do you see yourself?

		Germany (%)				United Kingdom (%)		
Age group	*15–20*	*25–39*	*40–54*	*55+*	*15–20*	*25–39*	*40–54*	*55+*
(NATIONALITY) only	33.6	31.1	30.5	33.2	55.3	55.7	58.0	64.3
(NATIONALITY) and European	48.5	52.6	56.4	58.4	35.1	38.2	33.4	29.5
European and (NATIONALITY)	16.1	12.8	9.9	6.3	6.3	3.9	6.1	3.9
European only	1.8	3.5	3.2	2.1	3.3	2.2	2.5	2.3
n	459			2,892	413			2,254

Sources: European Commission *Eurobarometer (81.4, 82.3, 83.3, 84.3, and 85.2)*, QD 3.

Other questions probed opinions and values. Two matters of opinion that show interesting convergences between the views of young Germans and young Britons concern attitudes toward migrants and refugees, which may relate to the changing nature of the school populations mentioned above.

Table 5. Attitudes toward migrants and refugees among various age groups (2014–2017): To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Immigrants contribute a lot to our country?"

Immigrants contribute a lot to (OUR COUNTRY)

| | | Germany | | | | United Kingdom | | |
Age group	15–20	25–39	40–54	55+	15–20	25–39	40–54	55+
Yes, definitely	14.1	10.2	9.7	8.5	16.6	30.8	24.6	18.2
Yes, to some extent	46.1	42.4	44.3	36.1	48.1	48.9	46.6	49.7
No, not really	28.3	35.2	28.0	37.4	24.3	13.9	17.0	23.1
No, definitely not	11.5	12.1	18.0	18.0	11.1	6.3	11.7	9.0
n	305			1,412	259			1,158

(OUR COUNTRY) should help refugees

| | | Germany | | | | United Kingdom | | |
Age Group	15–20	25–39	40–54	55+	15–20	25–39	40–54	55+
Yes, definitely	43.8	32.0	31.6	30.5	32.4	40.4	31.7	25.2
Yes, to some extent	46.8	54.6	54.6	57.1	49.7	43.4	51.7	56.1
No, not really	7.9	10.0	8.2	9.4	12.3	13.2	9.6	12.1
No, definitely not	1.5	3.3	5.6	3.1	5.6	3.0	7.0	6.6
n	213			1,412	192			1,158

Sources: European Commission Eurobarometer (81.4, 82.3, 83.3, 84.3, and 85.2), QD 9b and QD 9e.

Finally, Eurobarometer presented a set of twelve values and asked respondents to indicate the three that they considered most important. The same values were then presented again, and the respondents were asked to identify the one they thought best represented the values of the EU. Figure 2 shows the responses of those aged fifteen to twenty only, with individual values to the left and EU values to the right. The figures reveal that "human rights" and "peace" are seen as important both for individuals and the EU, appearing among the top five rights in both countries, while "Respect for Human Life" and "Individual Freedom" were seen in both countries as individual rather than EU values. Conversely, "Democracy" and "Rule of Law" were seen in both countries as EU values rather than individual values. "Equality" and "Cultural Respect" were ranked more highly by the British, while "Solidarity" and "Tolerance" were ranked more highly by the Germans.

These findings suggest a considerable degree of convergence between the attitudes, views, and values of young Germans and young Britons. Regarding qualitative analysis, Alistair Ross reports on discussion groups with some two thousand young people, aged eleven to nineteen, in twenty-nine European countries including Germany (but not the UK).[43] Nineteen conversations were held in six different locations in Germany, with an average of six people in each group. Drawing on this data, it
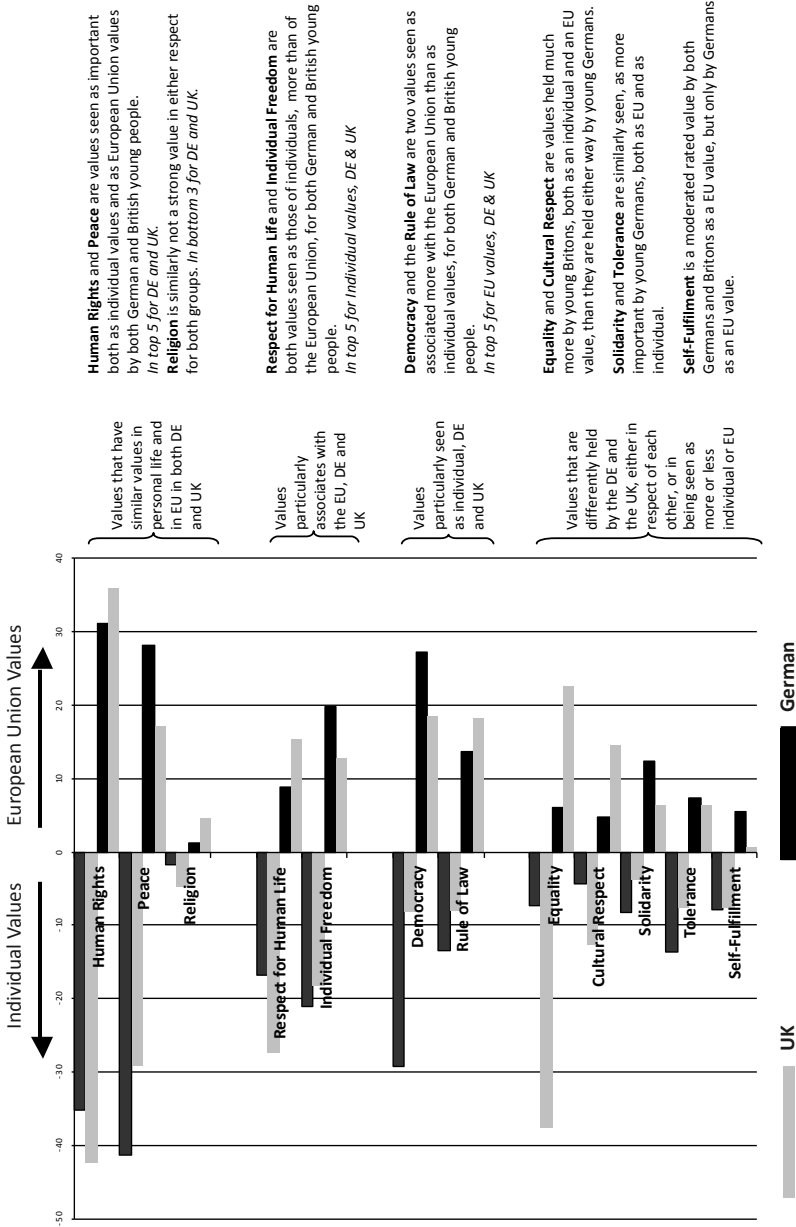
Human Rights and **Peace** are values seen as important both as individual values and as European Union values by both German and British young people. *In top 5 for DE and UK.*
Religion is similarly not a strong value in either respect for both groups. *In bottom 3 for DE and UK.*

Respect for Human Life and **Individual Freedom** are both values seen as those of individuals, more than of the European Union, for both German and British young people. *In top 5 for Individual values, DE & UK*

Democracy and the **Rule of Law** are two values seen as associated more with the European Union than as individual values, for both German and British young people. *In top 5 for EU values, DE & UK*

Equality and **Cultural Respect** are values held much more by young Britons, both as an individual and an EU value, than they are held either way by young Germans.

Solidarity and **Tolerance** are similarly seen, as more important by young Germans, both as EU and as individual.

Self-Fulfilment is a moderated rated value by both Germans and Britons as a EU value, but only by Germans as an EU value.

Values that have similar values in personal life and in EU in both DE and UK

Values particularly associates with the EU, DE and UK

Values particularly seen as individual, DE and UK

Values that are differently held by the DE and the UK, either in respect of each other, or in being seen as more or less individual or EU

Figure 2. The relationship between personal values and perceived EU values among Germans and Britons aged fifteen to twenty.

becomes clear that the sense of "being European" among young people ranges from a strong commitment to European values to a degree of uncertainty as to the meaning of the term. For example, German participants had mixed views on whether they would describe themselves as European as well as differing concepts of "being European" (all names have been changed):

Fridegunde (F, 13)	I don't think of myself as being European, because it's weird for me to think of myself as a continent . . . we belong to Europe, but don't define myself as a European.
Rupprecht (M, 13)	We live in Europe, yes, but . . . [pause] yes, otherwise I don't feel like a European.
Cäcilia (F, 13)	I would say I was European, because I've only been to another continent once, but I've always been in Europe.
Alexander (M, 13)	I would definitely say I feel European, because I've been here most of my life, except like six months.

Similarly, when asked to identify common European characteristics, responses varied from references to mutual support, trade, the euro, common values, and a common cultural heritage:

Fridegunde (F, 13)	I don't know if it's really true, but I guess that they all kind of help each other, like with Greece and the European Union, because Germany helps Greece; so I think it's more like help[ing] each other, like a family. I don't know.
Hinrich (M, 13)	First, most share the euro; and then some rights come from the European Union, rights that you need to have, and rules which they also put into their country.
Annemarie (F, 17)	All countries [in] the EU share the same values, like democracy and equality, stuff like that. In the history of Europe, people have traveled all over, and cultures are different in different places; it has kind of evolved all over Europe, and things have spread all over Europe, so they share the same culture to a certain extent. You have to be a democratic country to become part of the European Union, but of course, there are other democratic countries, so it's not just associated with the European Union.
Wilfried (M, 16)	The values the European Union shares are of course the democratic principle [*sic*], but also it's important to look at civil rights, that you have to have in order to join the European Union. Culturally, we've lived together for a long time, so maybe there are some things that we have in common. But the political systems—there's a lot of similarities and the values that we share. The culture,

art, and food—I don't think it's important if there are similarities in things like that, but in the important things there are a lot of similarities. Our political values are also shared by the United States in a way—it's a special case, because they have a government that is democratic, but it's also incredibly influenced by religion; when it comes to Europe, we don't combine religion and government like they do. There are also a lot of differences when it comes to political culture. The people there are way more nationalistic than here.

Both the quantitative and the qualitative data above show varying degrees of attachment to Europe and the EU. Interestingly, while a clear difference between the two countries seemed to exist in the 1990s, with young Germans significantly more committed to Europe than their counterparts in the UK, this difference seems to have disappeared. The most recent data shows a similar spread of attachment to Europe across age groups in the two countries. The qualitative data from interviews with young Germans show that they also grapple with the idea of Europe, and that there is by no means a blanket commitment to an idealized community of nations. Instead, young Germans appear to struggle as much as others in defining a sense of being European and in voicing strong commitment to the European idea. A further clear result emerging from the data is the strong support that Europe receives from young people in general, both in Germany and in the UK: the most recent data shows considerable attachment to Europe across all age groups in both countries. Both findings—the similarity between countries, as well as the strength of attachment—are inconsistent with the substantial differences in how German and English textbooks represent Europe.

Europe in a Sample of Textbooks in Germany and England

In addition to understanding young people's perceptions, we wished to explore the nature of the education provided to them in each country in relation to Europe. While there have been studies of citizenship education in Europe,[44] and although it is recognized that textbooks are an important aspect of learning,[45] it is evident that a textbook analysis is not necessarily an indication of what takes place in the classroom. At the same time, textbooks do provide a form of knowledge and approaches to it that are legitimized either by official acceptance or by commercial relevance.

The selection of the textbooks was a complex process. In England, in the wake of recent changes to the National Curriculum for citizenship,

the idea of Europe (which was never a strong feature to begin with) was further downplayed. Because of recent changes to GCSE tests (for sixteen-year-olds) and A-level tests (for eighteen-year-olds), some textbooks were not yet available.[46] Moreover, initially selected textbooks were found to be out of date or inappropriate, as they were designed for other parts of the UK (that is, countries other than England). The inclusion of A-level material for citizenship and politics was a consequence of the general lack of relevant material for the fourteen- to sixteen-year-old age group as well as the need to better align the English sample with the German sample. As a result, the English sample consisted of just four textbooks.

The German sample was in some ways easier to construct, given the much greater attention paid to Europe in German textbooks. The nine German textbooks selected cover a variety of issues, reflecting varied approaches to Europe and constitutional politics. Of interest were resources put out by mainstream publishers for the age group in question. It was assumed that there would be more secondary school (as opposed to primary school) material available. The study allowed for the possibility of including resources covering various aspects of Europe (including civic structures, political concepts, contemporary issues, citizenship processes, engagement, and identity). While a focus was placed on resources aligned with specific curricular approaches (for example, the National Curriculum in England or official regional initiatives in Germany), other resources likely to be of a certain profile based on the mainstream status of the publisher were also considered. Following an initial stage of research and discussion, we selected the following eight criteria for evaluating the textbooks' representations of Europe:

- **Prominence Europe:** how much space is given to Europe?
- **Accessibility:** whom is the material written for; are the books reader-friendly; are the policies inclusive; do young people see inclusivity or exclusivity in Europe?
- **Characterization:** is Europe characterized as political, economic, social, or cultural?
- **Social issues:** is Europe about rights, freedoms, equality, diversity, exclusion, dominance, or something else?
- **Identity issues:** to what degree is loyalty expected to a given locality, country, region, or nation? To the EU, Europe, or the planet? Is Europe about "us" or "them"?
- **Prominence Regions:** how much space is allotted to the different countries/states/regions of Europe?
- **Key issues** discussed with regard to Europe (migration, economy, radicalization, security, sovereignty)
- **Educational activities**, both explicit and implied (learning/teaching/assessment): what do young people expect, and what do they see?

More than one code was occasionally applied to the same item across subsections, but not within a given subsection. For example, if a book dealing with the economic reasons for migration primarily discusses migration and only briefly mentions the economy, the code will be "migration" within the "issues" section; however, this code might also be assigned to individual countries in the "prominence" section. In addition, some of the codes were further categorized as descriptive ("migration") or analytical ("inclusion"). While longer discussions of Europe in the context of UK or German politics were included as European material, brief mentions of European matters (for example, the mention of a country's name without further elaboration) were not coded. Low coding was not assumed to imply poor educational work but was regarded merely as an indication of the level of attention paid to European matters. The results of the coding appear in the appendices to this article.

In conclusion, the coding exercise suggests that the textbooks from England and Germany differ significantly in the amount and nature of their contents. A simple summary of these differences is shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Units of analysis in textbooks from England and Germany.

Unit of analysis	England	Germany
Prominence of European focus	EU	Varied across countries, EU and regions but not local
Anticipated loyalty	None	EU
Dimensions	Politics	Varied to include politics, economics, and social and cultural values
Themes	Rights	Varied (rights, equality, diversity, exclusion, inclusion, environment)
Issues	Migration	Migration, refugees, radicalization, defense, sovereignty, media, EU integration, Brexit, labor market, global economy, terrorism
Educational activities	Individual study (reading and critical thinking)	Varied (individual and group study, skills of advocacy and representation, informed and responsible action)

As the summary above shows, Europe is not only more prominent in German textbooks, but it is covered in greater detail. While both groups of textbooks emphasize the political system of the EU, the German textbooks also include economic and cultural dimensions. Several German textbooks have separate chapters or sections on the political system of the EU and on Europe as a cultural entity. In both samples, there is an emphasis on migration and the refugee crisis. Unlike the English

textbooks, some German materials suggest clear anticipated loyalties to Europe. Both samples cover Europe's regions and countries, but neither sample engages on the level of individual localities. This comparison shows that while the German materials dedicate substantially more of their content to the EU and Europe, the samples show many similarities in their overall focus and priorities.

Discussion

The results of the empirical study and the textbook analysis described above suggest three key areas relevant to our discussion: sources of information about Europe; European identity; and educational activities available to young people. Based on an examination of these areas, we wish to argue that (despite claims to the contrary advanced by academics[47] and certain policy initiatives such as the national curriculum for citizenship in England up to 2013), current educational practices in Germany and England do not support the development of informed consideration of and engagement with Europe. Rather, the approaches to European education in both countries seem to reflect broader, official national narratives and the development of political messages that reflect the current political climate. In England, this has been interpreted as a reflection of the tensions manifested in the Brexit process.[48] It would appear that schools contribute not merely to an educational process, but to a process of socialization as well.

Based on these observations, we wish to make a series of suggestions. First, we wish to emphasize the importance of evaluating the information presented to young people about Europe. Information and ideas about Europe come from a wide variety sources ranging from print and electronic (social) media to didactic learning resources. It is important to keep in mind that the notion of being "well-informed," expressed by different people at different times, is not a firm basis for comparisons between age groups. A feeling of being "poorly informed" may indicate a desire for deeper understanding of an issue recognized as significant. While the German textbook sample clearly reflects a more detailed coverage of issues than the English sample, the survey data shows, unsurprisingly, that young people feel less well-informed than in the past. While one might expect the increased use of social media to have made information about Europe more easily accessible, the survey data cited above suggests otherwise. The decline of traditional news media and the lack of attention paid to Europe in the sample of textbooks from England suggest that we are simply not explaining Europe to young people. The paucity of information about Europe in the sample of textbooks from England is a matter of concern, especially in the context of Brexit.

Second, the data indicates several issues pertaining to the nature of "European identity" among young people. Young people in Germany and England share rather similar views about Europe. There is a commitment to certain values that are seen as both universal and European, and while European identity and European loyalty are not uncritically accepted, both groups share a sense of being European (a sentiment most evident among the Germans). To a certain degree, this position reflects national debates and discussions in Germany (for example, in a televised debate leading up to the last general election, no mention was made of Brexit, and one of the main candidates, Martin Schulz, referred to the EU in very positive terms, noting that "we live in a time of upheaval. We need an EU that is strong, and a European Germany."[49] This explicit attachment to and identification with Europe is not a national narrative that is to be found in England or in the UK more generally. The textbooks in our sample again reflect the two national narratives.

Third, the nature of the educational activities available to teachers and pupils in our textbook samples also reflects these national narratives. The range of activities in the German textbooks is far wider than in the English books. Whereas the former build on a sense of European identity by providing opportunities for varied interaction, the latter comprise brief individual reading exercises in which there are opportunities to consider the pros and cons of European membership. Nothing could be more clearly aligned with the political context in England, in which the debate about Europe is less about dynamic engagement than it is about weighing the pros and cons of membership. Other, wider issues pertaining to civic education in England and Germany also appear to have been ignored by the textbook authors.

The above points do not necessarily suggest a low level of education. While the desire to be better informed about a highly complex matter, the sense of having a complex identity in relation to Europe, and the need for a nationally distinct approach to Europe-related issues are all legitimate and justifiable, they appear to reflect, broadly speaking, a position that reflects a low level of engagement in Europe. Education in both countries is principally a matter of socializing young people into an established national narrative. This may seem more easily justifiable in Germany, where there is a stronger alignment between the views of young people (as reflected by the survey data) and the content of learning resources (as reflected by the textbook analysis). But in both countries, the extent to which schools reflect society and promote established views is a subject of debate. In this context, classical debates about political socialization[50] that were criticized for failing to appreciate the role of engagement by young people in developing their own political ideas acquire renewed relevance. Decades of debate about political education and citizenship education have brought us to recognize that learning resources reflect not

the latest thinking, but a return to ensuring that teachers and pupils are presented with the issues that currently concern society. It should come as no surprise if the electorate's current sense of political estrangement from the so-called "elites," leading to a curious mix of neoliberalism and populism, is reflected in a similar estrangement on the part of young people from established educational structures that insist on transmission instead of transaction or transformation.[51] Any concern that a hotbed of radicals would take advantage of young minds (as was feared in the early years of political education development) has been shown to be unwarranted. Because the EU is one of the most contentious issues in twenty-first-century England, it is interesting to note that it is presented by educators as a reflection of the existing national narrative.

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Appendix 1: Sample from England

	Mitchell AQA for GCSE.	Johnson and Roffe OCR for GCSE.	Mitchell and White AQA AS.	Heywood. AS and A-Level.
Prominence				
Europe (whole or regional)	1.5	3.75	2	
EU	5	5	5.25	34.25
Individual countries (states and/or nations)	1.75	3.5		
Localities				
Anticipated loyalties				
Europe				
EU				
Individual countries				
Localities				
Dimensions				
Politics	2.5	4.5	5	33.75
Economics	1.5		1	1
Social and cultural	2.5	6		
Themes				
Rights	2.25	3.25	3	0.25
Equality				
Diversity	0.25			
Exclusion				
Inclusion				
Issues				
Migration	4		0.25	
Radicalization				
Defense				
Sovereignty	0.5			
Media	0.25			
Educational activities				
Individual reading for comprehension	0.25; 1.5	0.25; 1		
Individual reading for critical thinking	0.50	0.5; 0.25; 0.5		0.5
Studying with others				
Developing skills of advocacy and representation	1; 2			
Developing skills of informed and responsible action				
Other				

Appendix 2: Sample from Germany

	Politik Aktuell 9	Politik Aktuel l 10	Politik Aktuell 11/12	Demokratie heute	Anstösse 3 Politik	Politik und Wirtschaft Sek 2	Politik und Wirtschaft Sek 2: Demokratie	Politik erleben (2016)	Politik erleben Ostausgabe (2017)
Prominence									
Europe (whole or regional)	10		0.5	13	10.5	38.5	3	1.25	1.5
EU	26	0.5	37.75	40.75	40	60	55	44.75	33
Individual countries (states and/or nations)	6.75	0.5	10	12.25	11.25	7.75	2.25	3	2
Localities	1.5								
Anticipated loyalties									
Europe				1					
EU	1		9	2	3.5	3		0.5	
Individual countries				0.25			1.5		
Localities									
Dimensions									
Politics	26.25	0.75	41.75	41.75	37.75	57.5	59.75	45	33.75
Economics			2.75	5.5	7.75	31.75	0.5	1	2.25
Social and cultural; Values / religion	13.75	0.25	2.75	21.5	2.75	15.75			0.5
Themes									
Rights			1.5	0.75	0.25	1		1.5	
Equality			1.5		0.5				
Diversity					1	2.25			
Exclusion						1			
Inclusion	2.5					1.5			1
Environment / sustainability	2			1	1	1.5	2	1.25	0.25
Issues									
Migration	6.25		0.25	10.25		3			1
Refugee crisis	2		4.25	8.75	8	1		11.25	4.5
Radicalization		0.25							
Defense			1.75	1.5	5.5	3			
Sovereignty			1.5	2.25					
Media (incl. freedom of)			0.5	1.75	0.75	1		1	

	Politik Aktuell 9	Politik Aktuel l 10	Politik Aktuell 11/12	Demokratie heute	Anstösse 3 Politik	Politik und Wirtschaft Sek 2	Politik und Wirtschaft Sek 2: Demokratie	Politik erleben (2016)	Politik erleben Ostausgabe (2017)
Issues (cont.)									
Increased EU integration	11	0.25	10.25	2.25	3	5.5		1	1
Brexit								0.25	2
Work / employment / labor market	1		1.25	1	0.75	8.75		3.25	1
Globalization/ global economy			0.5	2	1				
Terrorism					1.5	0.75	0.25		1.25
Educational activities				4					
Individual reading for comprehension (# activities)	8		7	8	11	19	6	14	9
Individual reading for critical thinking	9		8	6	12	35	6	9	2
Studying with others	7		4	5	2	12	6	8	4
Developing skills of advocacy and representation	1		1	1	4	11	1	5	2
Developing skills of informed and responsible action				3		1	3	5	1
Other									
Index: individual entries for topics concerning EU/ Europe	32	1	62	23	24	40	14	11	8

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