

**The future of the welfare state: paths of social policy innovation
between constraints and opportunities**

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**WELFARISM AND THE MULTIDIMENSIONALITY
OF WELFARE STATE LEGITIMACY**

Evidence from The Netherlands 2006 based on Confirmatory Factor Analyses

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Abstract

This article addresses the question whether the social legitimacy of the welfare state is multi-dimensional, in that people have different positive and negative evaluations of diverse aspects of the welfare state they are living in. Based on a series of confirmatory factor analyses and using detailed data from a 2006 Dutch welfare opinion survey the conclusion is affirmative. Opinions on sets of items regarding ten separate sub-dimensions of the welfare state group together significantly in ten corresponding first-order factors, and there is variation in the structure of structural and ideological determinants of peoples' scores on the factors. There is partial evidence for the existence of a single underlying welfarism dimension, which consists basically of views regarding the range and degree of government responsibility, as well as of the idea that these government provisions do not have unfavourable repercussions in the economic or moral sphere. As for determinants, people's political stance on a left-right scale consistently affects people's scores on all dimensions in the expected direction: leftist people are more positive towards, or less critical on, all aspects of the welfare state, compared to rightist people. In case of all dimensions, political stance has a stronger effect on people's opinions, than interest related characteristics, like age, income level, educational level and work status.

1. Introduction

Is it possible that individual citizens, who well endorse a substantial role for government in providing welfare of various sorts and by various means, are at the same time critical about specific aspects of it? For instance, be critical about what it costs (too high taxes), or about how the welfare state functions in practice (too much misuse, too bureaucratic administrative practices), can they be disappointed in the outcomes of the welfare state (too much poverty, bad quality of services), and/or perceive serious negative consequences of welfare (drain on the economy, eroding self help, etc)? Likewise, can citizens who reject a large role for government in social affairs generally, at the same time be positive about specific social policies, their implementation and/or outcomes? In other words, can welfare support be multi-dimensional, in that people have different positive and negative evaluations of diverse aspects of the welfare state they are living in?

At the face of it, these seem rhetorical questions with ‘yes’ as an obvious answer. If the answer would be affirmative indeed it would imply that people’s support for the welfare state, and therefore its overall societal legitimacy at the aggregate level, cannot be captured by one single indicator. And to the degree that there are clear differences in people’s evaluations of various aspects of the welfare state, it would also mean that it is rather improbable that they stem from one single underlying attitude dimension.

As we will discuss in more detail later, the multi-dimensionality of welfare support is suggested in the literature by some authors who measure welfare legitimacy with a series of relevant indicators. However, the point is that the empirical analysis of welfare legitimacy is strongly dominated by studies that take as a single indicator people’s preference for government taking responsibility in providing benefits and services.¹ The most popular indicators concern what Roller (1995) has called the ‘range’ or ‘extensiveness’ of the role of government (concerning the question what tasks at what policy areas government should take responsibility for) and the ‘degree’ or ‘intensity’ of this role (concerning the question how much government should spend on certain social policies). This dominant practice may be understandable, given the general lack of detailed welfare attitudes data², but it is problematic. Obviously, if welfare legitimacy is multi-dimensional, single indicator studies can only give partial information. But to a degree they may also give false information. In particular, for instance, they may sketch a too rosy picture of welfare legitimacy if it is true, as it is regularly claimed in the literature, that the general public readily tends to say ‘yes’ when asked the general question whether government should take responsibility for benefits and services (see e.g. Jacoby, 2000; Pettersen, 2001).³ In the words of Svallfors (1991, p. 611), the practice of measuring support for the welfare state with one or very few general questions ‘...can give a highly schematic picture; at worst, a greatly distorted one’.

A second point is that in empirical welfare legitimacy studies an often implicit, but sometimes explicit idea (e.g. Bryson, 1997), is that some groups of citizens, notably those with a stronger personal interest in welfare provision or those who are considered to be ‘net-receivers’ of welfare, are pro-welfare generally, while other groups, who are much less in need of social benefits and services or are considered to be ‘net-payers’ of welfare, are generally anti-welfare. This idea assumes that there is one single underlying attitude dimension of ‘welfarism’⁴ which is strongly attached to people’s socio-economic position, and which explains (most of) people’s positive and negative evaluations of the welfare state. However, if welfare state legitimacy is multi-dimensional, the idea of a single welfarism

attitude dimension might run the risk of giving a too simple picture of welfare legitimacy, its underlying attitude dimensions and their individual level determinants.

In this paper, using data from a 2006 Dutch national welfare survey, we aim to contribute to the knowledge of welfare state legitimacy by analysing questions regarding the multi-dimensionality of welfare support. The questions we address are:

- 1) What dimensions of the welfare state could be distinguished and are the separate dimensions confirmed in factor analyses of people's evaluations of them? In other words, do people's evaluations of the various dimensions really differ in practice?
- 2) Is there evidence for a single welfarism factor underlying people's evaluations of the various dimensions?
- 3) What factors can explain people's evaluations of the various dimensions of the welfare state, and if applicable, what factors explain their position on a possible single welfarism dimension?

In the remainder of the paper we will first discuss previous multi-dimensional legitimacy studies in the next section. We will proceed with an explanation of our data and methods, and then continue with a discussion of our empirical findings. We round off with conclusions and some points for discussion.

2. Multiple dimensions of welfare legitimacy

Although the multi-dimensionality of welfare state support is quite often readily acknowledged (see e.g. Roller, 1995; Andress & Heien, 2003) the number of empirical studies that focus on people's opinions on more than only role of government issues is remarkable low. Some of these studies report on opinions that people have on various welfare state issues (like spending levels, benefit levels, images of target groups, abuse perceptions, bureaucracy, etc.), but they do not relate the opinions, or scales of them, to each other to assess whether and to what degree they actually cluster on different dimensions, or whether there would be a single underlying dimension of welfarism. For examples, see Ploug (1996) on welfare attitudes of the Danish population, van Oorschot (1998) on opinions of the Dutch, and Hills (2002) on British opinions. Other studies measure a number of opinions on various welfare related issues and combine them into a single additive scale, however, without any analysis of

whether this is justified going beyond an alpha reliability test of the resulting scale. For instance, Gidengil et al. (2003) add up Canadian people's responses to a brief series of separate items, that in our view reflect various welfare state dimensions, like principles ('reduce gap between rich and poor'), role of government ('should see that everyone has a decent standard of living', 'increase welfare spending'), and consequences ('welfare state makes people less willing to look after themselves'). Apart from that the additive scale has .69 alpha reliability and that women and people with lower income tend to score more in a pro-welfare direction, nothing else is explicitly said about the validity and determinants of the scale. In her longitudinal analysis of British attitudes on the welfare state Bryson (1997) explicitly starts out to construct a welfarism scale on the basis of various single items. In her view, such attitudes can be seen as lying along a continuum. At one end, she claims, are those most in favour of welfare provision, and at the other are those who are most against. Again, the items she adds up seem to reflect very different dimensions, like role of government ('should spend more money on welfare benefits'), consequences ('the welfare state makes people less willing to look after themselves', '...encourages people to stop helping each other'), implementation ('people receiving social security are made to feel like second class citizens'), and abuse ('many people who get social security don't really deserve any help', 'most people on the dole are fiddling in one way or another'). The scale has an alpha reliability of .77, but it is not analysed properly whether the items reflect various dimensions or just the assumed one of welfarism. Contrary to Gidengil et al. Bryson finds that men are more pro-welfare than women, and while she has no income variable, it shows that employed people are less pro-welfare than unemployed people and retirees.

In addition to studies that measure various opinions and do not produce and analyse possible scales, and studies that measure various opinions and turn them into a single scale, there are a few more sophisticated studies that measure different types of welfare related opinions, and then apply exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to see whether sets of items cluster in different factors. If so, scales are constructed from items that load on one and the same factor. Yet, the exploratory factor analyses are often carried out in such a way that they fail to provide a stringent test of the multi-dimensionality of welfare attitudes.

Sihvo and Uusitalo (1995), for example, distinguish between the dimensions (with sub-dimensions) of responsibility for welfare (public, private, civic), financing (public spending), use of the welfare state (overuse, underuse), outputs (sufficiency of incomes, and of services), and effects of the welfare state (inequality reduction, making people passive). Based on the finding that EFA reproduces all hypothesized (sub-)dimensions, the authors conclude that

people indeed may have different opinions on various issues. This multi-dimensionality of welfare support is further analysed by correlating the various (sub-) dimensions, or scales, to each other. The pattern of inter-correlations suggests, according to Sihvo and Uusitalo, that there are two attitude clusters, one favourable to the welfare state, and the other one critical to it. In the favourable cluster one finds relatively high inter-correlations between people's opinions on the sufficiency of incomes and services, their views on public spending and their opinions on public responsibility. The critical cluster entails people's views on private responsibility, the passivating effect of welfare, and abuse perceptions. However, given the relatively low inter-correlations within the clusters this finding does not make the authors conclude that there is a single underlying welfarism dimension. An additional reason that they bring forward is that they find substantial differences in the determinant structures of the various scales, although people's socio-economic status, age and political stance affect people's attitudes towards most of the separate (sub-)dimensions. Partly, according to Sihvo and Uusitalo, these effects reflect differences in interests that people have in the welfare state, and partly differences in ideological background.

Yet, the analysis of Sihvo and Uusitalo (1995) is problematic because instead of formulating one factor model that includes all (sub-)dimensions and items, a factor analysis is performed for each of the five dimensions separately. These separate analyses render it impossible to discover whether the proposed dimensions are reducible to a more limited number of factors. Neither can they reveal whether some of the items load on multiple factors at a time. Thus rather than performing a truly critical test of the multi-dimensionality of welfare attitudes, Sihvo and Uusitalo (1995) have shown that their items tap a number of predefined factors . This is a crucial difference indeed.

A second example is a study of Svallfors (1991) on welfare attitudes in Sweden. Without discussion it pre-defines four dimensions of welfare policy, and measures each of them with a set of items: the distributional dimension, measuring attitudes to social spending in various areas (health care, support for elderly, for families, social assistance, education, etc), the administrative, or implementation dimension, measuring attitudes to welfare institutions and procedures, the cost dimension, focusing on issues of welfare financing, and the abuse dimension, measuring attitudes to claimants groups and their alleged misuse of entitlements. Unlike Sihvo and Uusitalo (1995), Svallfors (1991) provides a test of multi-dimensionality by taking all items into account in a single EFA. A series of six separate factors are found from which it is concluded that '...welfare policy can and should be treated as a multi-dimensional

and highly complex phenomenon. In stead of basing analyses of public support for welfare policies on a single ‘for or against welfare state’, it should be recognized that attitudes to welfare policy can be fragmented or even contradictory’ (Svallfors, 1991, p. 617). Like Sihvo and Uusitalo, Svallfors finds that the effects of a series of determinants differ for each single dimension, be it that, overall, people’s work status, educational level and income level have strongest effects: it is workers, those with only primary school and people on low income who are in most cases the main proponents of welfare policies.

In his factor analysis, Svallfors (1991) chooses to rotate the factor structure orthogonally (the so-called VARIMAX rotation), which implies that the dimensional structure is constructed in such a way that the factors do not inter-correlate.⁵ Instead of testing relations between various dimensions, Svallfors (1991) a priori assumes that they are unrelated, and imposes zero-correlations in the model. This could clearly distort the results: The choice for a VARIMAX rotation necessarily lead to the conclusion that one should not analyse public welfare support on a single ‘for or against welfare state’ dimension. However, would Svallfors not have rotated the factors orthogonally, he might well have found, as Sihvo and Uusitalo did, that there are inter-correlations between (several of) the dimensions. If these would have been high, there might have been reason for further analysing the question whether and to what degree they would reflect one single underlying welfarism dimension.

The above-mentioned studies illustrate that it is indispensable to readdress the dimensionality of welfare attitudes, this time using a more adequate analytical strategy. We are of the opinion that confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), more than EFA, is the appropriate statistical tool for this purpose (Thompson, 2004). Similarly to EFA, CFA assumes that one or more underlying latent factors are responsible for the covariances between the observed items. Although CFA and EFA thus have a lot in common, the two techniques are based on a very different logic. EFA is a data driven technique that explores the underlying factor structure without imposing a preconceived model on the data, and is therefore to be preferred when the researcher has no theoretical expectations at all about the factor structure. CFA, on the other hand, is used to assess the discrepancy between the data and some *a priori* theoretical expectations on the factor structure. If one can fall back on existing theory—and we argue that this is indeed the case here: the above-cited studies offer more or less clear expectations on possible dimensional structures—CFA is a far more powerful and versatile statistical tool. CFA renders it possible to evaluate the model fit by means of various indices and, even more importantly, provides deeper insight in the sources of misfit. Other major advantages of CFA include detailed control over the model (e.g. by constraining or relaxing some parameters),

statistical tests to compare competing theoretical models and possibilities to specify more complex factor structures such as second-order factors. As we will show in the remainder of this paper, these are crucial features to address the question of the multi-dimensionality of welfare attitudes adequately.

We know of one welfare support study where CFA has been applied. Based on Eurobarometer data, Gelissen (2000) investigates support for welfare provisions and its antecedents in 11 European countries. In his study, Gelissen (2000) focuses on the two well-known welfare attitude dimensions put forward by Roller (1995), namely the preferred range of domains government should intervene in (extensiveness of welfare interventions) and the preferred degree to which government should be active in these domains (intensiveness of welfare interventions). Gelissen's (2000) CFA shows that extensiveness and intensiveness form two distinct but correlated factors, and that, perhaps even more interestingly, the correlation between the factor differs strongly from one country to another. The finding that the two dimensions have different antecedents—class indicators, for example, seem to influence the intensiveness rather than the extensiveness dimensions—strengthens the case for a multi-dimensional treatment of welfare attitudes. A crucial limitation of the study by Gelissen (2000), however, is that only two possible dimensions of welfare attitudes, both referring to goals of the welfare state rather than to means or outputs, are taken into account.

To conclude briefly, the empirical studies that apply a multi-dimensional perspective on welfare legitimacy are few in number, while even fewer analyse multi-dimensionality by means of factor analyses of sets of items. What all studies find is positive evidence of multi-dimensionality, that is, that people may combine positive evaluations of certain aspects of the welfare state, with less strong or even negative evaluations on other aspects. However, such studies, with only one exception, do not apply the more appropriate method of CFA. As for determinants, it is generally found that effects of demographic and socio-economic variables differ per dimension analysed, but it seems that overall people who can be supposed to have a stronger personal interest in social policies (like elderly people, and people with low education and low income) tend to be more pro welfare than others.

In the remainder of this paper we will present the findings of our study on the multi-dimensionality of welfare support. We contribute to the state of art by applying CFA to a series of items that are supposed to operationalise a number of different welfare state dimensions. We will pay specific attention to the inter-correlations between the various

dimensions, and thus to the question whether and to what degree they reflect a single underlying welfarism dimension.

3. Data and methods

Data

Our data are from a national representative welfare opinions survey among the Dutch population of 16 years of age or older, which was held in October-November 2006. It is uniquely detailed as regards the various aspects and dimensions of the welfare state about which people were asked their opinions and beliefs, and thus well suited to answer our research questions. The total questionnaire was divided in three parts, which were put successively to all respondents in three waves in the course of a six-week period. The sample was taken from a large, national representative panel (run by Center Data of Tilburg University, The Netherlands) and respondents filled out computer-based questionnaires on line. Of the 2682 selected respondents 1972 filled in the sub-questionnaires of all three waves, and thus completed the total questionnaire, giving a response rate of 73%. In this response group there is very slight under-representation of younger people, people with lower educational level and people with lower income. The Dutch *Stichting Instituut Gak* financed the survey.

Indicators

Dependent variables: welfare dimensions

No standard practice has yet developed as to the type and number of welfare dimensions to be included in empirical studies on welfare support. As we have seen, the multiple dimensions that are actually distinguished vary quite strongly between studies. As we explained we interpret the single items measured by Bryson (1997) and Gidengil et al. (2003) as reflecting various wider dimensions of the welfare state, like principles on which welfare is based, the role of government in the provision of welfare, implementation practices and abuse of welfare

policies, and unintended outcomes of the welfare state. There is quite strong overlap with the dimensions distinguished by Sihvo and Uusitalo (1995), regarding responsibility for welfare c.q. the role of government, use c.q. abuse of the welfare state, and effects c.q. consequences of the welfare state. Sihvo and Uusitalo in addition distinguish the aspects of financing and outputs (in terms of sufficiency of incomes, and of services). Svallfors' (1991) dimensions overlap with these regarding administration/implementation of welfare, the costs/financing of welfare, and the use/abuse dimension. Svallfors' distributional dimension seems to be particular, but it actually is operationalised in terms of people's opinions on the degree to which government should spend in various areas of social policy. This is similar to what Roller (1995) calls the 'degree' or 'intensity' aspect of the role of government dimension. The picture of the various dimensions that come to mind on the basis of this overview corresponds to a view of the welfare state as being an institution which, on the basis of certain *principles*, compels *government to take responsibility* for the provision of social welfare, for which it *implements* certain policies, which in turn have certain *intended effects*, and may have certain *unintended consequences*. In our empirical analysis we will focus on these five dimensions. The details of the items we have for the operationalization of our dimensions are mentioned in the Appendix Table App 1. Here we will discuss them briefly.

As for welfare principles our data set has items that indicate the principle of equality (PRINEQUAL), which traditionally guides welfare states' actions (Esping-Andersen, 1990). But we also have items that allow us to include the more recent principle of activation (PRINACT), which has been implemented by many of the developed welfare states to the effect that they increasingly focus on employment policies and the re-integration of unemployed people at the cost of reductions in income benefit schemes (Hvinden, 2008). It will be interesting to see how this new principle is evaluated by the public in relation to their evaluations of other welfare aspects.

Roller's 'range' aspect of the responsibility-of-government dimension (Roller, 1995) we can measure with three sets of items. One concerning whether government should take measures to protect weaker groups in society generally (ROGGEN), one whether government should take responsibilities for protecting people from traditional or so-called 'old' social risks (ROGRISK), and one concerning protection against 'new' social risks (ROGRISKN). (For these types of risk see e.g. Taylor-Gooby, 2004).

Roller's 'degree' aspect of role-of-government we can measure with two sets of items, concerning the degree to which government should spend on work-related benefits (unemployment, sickness, disability) (SPENDINGW), and on other benefits (social

assistance, pensions) (SPENDINGO) (For the deservingness of social categories see Van Oorschot, 2006).

The aspect of implementation of welfare policies we can measure with two sets of items. One concerns people's perceptions of the abuse of a number of benefits (OVERUSE), and a single item is about people's perceptions of under-use, or non take-up, of benefits (UNDERUSE).

The outcomes dimension is measured with people's perceptions of the adequacy of benefits, that is, their ideas concerning the ease or difficulty with which claimants of a number of benefits can make ends meet (OUTCOMES).

The consequences dimension is measured with three sets of items concerning the perceived economic, moral and social consequences of welfare (respectively CONSECO, CONSMOR, and CONSSOC). (As we will explain later CONSECO and CONSMOR were combined into CONSECOMOR).

Independent variables

The determinants of people's evaluations of the various welfare state dimensions are explored by means of multivariate regression models. In these models, the following socio-structural characteristics figure as dependent variables: gender, age, income level, educational level, work status, use of welfare benefits. As a leading hypothesis we take that people with a stronger personal interest in social protection have more positive welfare attitudes generally. So, we expect less critical evaluations among those who usually depend more on the welfare state, like women, older people, people with lower incomes, people with lower educational level, employees in the (semi) public sector, unemployed people and people who use social benefits. In addition, we explore the effect of people's ideological positions, indicated as political stance on a left-right scale. In many welfare support studies this variable was shown to have a significant effect, in that leftish people tend to be less critical, or more positive, about welfare generally. Operationalizations of these variables are as follows: sexe (0 = male, 1 = female); age (in years); income (net monthly income of household, subdivided into quintiles); educational level (1-6: 1 = primary school, 2 = lower vocational, 3 = middle vocational, 4 = secondary school, 5 = higher vocational, 6 = university); work status (1 = employed private sector, 2 = employed (semi) public sector, 3 = self-employed, 4 = unemployed, 5 = other (student, homemaker, pensioner, other); use of benefits (1 = respondent currently uses an unemployment benefit and/or a disability benefit and/or sick pay

and/or social assistance). Political stance is measured by respondents' self-assessment on a left-right scale ranging from 1 to 10.

Analysis

All CFA models presented below are estimated with LISREL 8.7 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993; Byrne, 1998). Because all items are measured on 3 or 5-point scales and some of the items show a high degree of skewness, the assumption of multivariate normality is violated. To deal with these violations, we apply a weighted least squares estimation procedure, in which polychoric correlations and asymptotic covariance matrices are used as input rather than regular covariance matrices (Jöreskog, 1990). Missing values on the welfare attitude items were imputed by means of the expectation-maximization algorithm implied in LISREL 8.7. This procedure replaces missing values by random draws from the distribution conditional on the known information.

4. Results

4.1 A preliminary step: separate CFA model for the six dimensions

In order to be able to deal with our numerous welfare items in an orderly way, we conduct the CFA in several steps. We start by fitting a separate factor model for each of the five dimensions that were distinguished on a theoretical basis. (Because of a lack of space the results of these preliminary tests are not discussed in detail here. Full results can be obtained from the authors.) This preliminary step not only allows to test whether the items measure the intended constructs adequately and to filter out items that do not perform as expected, but also yields several noteworthy substantive conclusions. Generally, the items fitted to their respective scale. However, some specific results need to be mentioned.

Firstly, a clear distinction between perceptions regarding government responsibility for old and new social risks was detected. While items referring to old risks nicely cluster into one dimension, the new risks items do not interrelate in a coherent manner. A possible explanation for this finding is that these new risks (such as breaking up married and

unmarried cohabitation, and becoming a single parent) are so novel, not in themselves, but in a welfare rights context, that the population does not have well-structured attitudes toward this topic yet. Secondly, attitudes towards government spending clearly fall into two separate sub-dimensions. This distinction takes place along deservingness criteria: Opinions on spending for beneficiaries with high perceived deservingness (elderly, disabled or sick persons) are clearly different from attitudes toward spending for low-deservingness groups (divorcees, single parents). This makes clear that welfare attitudes might consist of even more dimensions than anticipated, when referring to specific welfare schemes or types of beneficiaries. Finally, two clearly distinct theoretical concepts, namely perceptions of moral and of economic consequences of the welfare state, turned out to be reducible to a single dimension. Individuals that perceive the welfare state to have negative moral consequences are generally also of the opinion that the welfare state has adverse effects on the performance of the economy. This attitude structure (measured by the combined scale of CONSECOMOR) mirrors the Dutch public debate, in which negative economic and moral consequences often appear in conjunction, while positive social consequences are only mentioned rarely.

Because the survey does not contain sufficiently well-performing items to provide adequate measurements of attitudes toward government responsibility for new social risks (ROGRISKN) and towards spending for low-deservingness groups (SPENDINGO), these dimensions had to be dropped in subsequent analysis.

4.2 A CFA model for all dimensions

As a second step of the analysis, all resulting measurement scales were joined in one measurement model, providing the actual test for the multi-dimensionality of welfare attitudes. After all, only models that include all concepts make it possible to see how the various constructs interrelate.

The model with 42 items loading on 10 latent variables has a chi-square value of 4257.79 for 814 degrees of freedom.⁶ Judging by various fit indices, this model gives a reasonable description of the data: The Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is lower than the commonly accepted cut-off point 0.05, and the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) is sufficiently close to one (Hu & Bentler, 1991; Byrne, 1998). All standardized factor loadings are quite high (mostly over .70, see Table 1) and strongly significant. Together with the

absence of cross-loadings, this indicates that the items are reliable indicators of the intended concepts.

In the light of our research questions, an important question is whether the ten retrieved factors are reducible to a single dimension representing support for the welfare state in general. In order to answer this question, a second model with all 42 items loading on one latent variable is estimated. This model has a substantially worse fit. For 857 degrees of freedom, the chi-square value amounts to 14662.04. Given that 43 degrees of freedom are gained, the increase of the chi-square value (10404.26) is strongly significant, indicating deterioration in model fit. Also RMSEA (0.0904) and CFI (0.795) reflect unacceptable discrepancies between model and data. What is more, additional tests make clear that all attempts to reduce two factors to a single dimension results in significantly worse models.⁷ The finding that ten clearly distinct factors can be measured adequately supports the claim that welfare attitudes should be treated as a multi-dimensional concept.

...TABLE 1 about here....

Probably the most interesting part of our CFA model consists of the correlations between the ten welfare attitudes dimensions (see Table 2). At first sight, it becomes clear that the ten latent variables, although they represent clearly distinct dimensions, are far from independent.⁸ Attitudes toward one aspect of the welfare state thus contain information on opinions regarding other aspects.

The pattern of correlations is consistent, in the sense that factors expressing support for the welfare state (PRINEQUAL, ROGRISK, ROGGEN, SPENDING, CONSOCIAL) correlate positively. Four latent variables correlate negatively with other factors. The perception of overuse of welfare benefits (OVERUSE) and negative economic and moral consequences of the welfare state (CONSECOMOR) are indeed indicative of a more critical disposition toward the welfare state. Furthermore, it is revealing that also the principle of activation (PRINACT) correlates negatively with dimensions indicating welfare support, be it only weakly. Although activation has become a guiding principle for the architects of contemporary welfare states, the general public, although strongly in favour of the principle, tends slightly to experience it as opposed to traditional welfare fundamentals. Finally, also the OUTCOMES dimension is

inversely related to welfare support. Those who support welfare state policies usually evaluate current provisions more negatively, probably for being insufficient.

...TABLE 2 about here...

Some latent variables are more intimately connected than others. The strongest correlations are found between PRINEQUAL, ROGGEN, SPENDINGW and CONSECOMOR. Persons endorsing the principle of equality generally are supportive of government intervention to reduce inequalities and increased welfare benefits. At the same time, these individuals do not perceive the welfare state as having negative moral and economic consequences. The principle of activation (PRINACT) and the perception that welfare benefits are sometimes also underused (UNDERUSE), on the other hand, are only relatively weakly connected to the other welfare dimensions. The weak correlation of PRINACT could be explained by ceiling effects: An overwhelming majority of the population agrees with the statements measuring support for activation. In contrast to over-use, the phenomenon of benefit under-use, or non take-up, is probably too little recognized by the population to give rise to crystallized attitudes. The relatively high item non-response on the underuse question is supportive of this explanation.

4.2 A general welfarism dimension?

Our CFA has led to the conclusion that welfare attitudes is a concept containing a number of clearly distinct but correlated dimensions. It is this latter finding that raises the question whether, and to what degree, it would be possible to speak of a single, general pro vs. contra welfare dimension, that underlies the specific models discussed above and causes the observed pattern of correlations? To answer this question, a model with a second order factor—i.e. a factor that is not measured directly by the items, but on which all first order latent variables load—replaces the correlations between the latent variables. This second-order factor captures what the ten latent variables have in common, and can thus be seen as an indicator of support for welfare state policies in general. Therefore, we call this second-order factor WELFARISM.

The original second-order factor model had to be adjusted in one respect: A correlation between PRINEQUAL and ROGGEN had to be tolerated. This correlation means that these two dimensions share some content beyond WELFARISM. Both factors seem to refer to a more ideological position that government should intervene to reduce inequality. After this modification, the second-order factor model has an acceptable fit. For 848 degrees of freedom, the chi-square value equals 4987.19, leading to an RMSEA of 0.0492 and a CFI of 0.939. Indeed, the second-order factor model has a slightly worse fit than the previous model with first-order factors only. This expresses that WELFARISM is not able to explain the correlation structure between the latent variables completely. Apparently, there exist elements besides welfarism that cause specific dimensions to correlate more strongly. This is not very surprising, as some dimension refer to general welfare principles, while other deal with more concrete implementation or consequences of policies. Yet as the overall fit of the model is acceptable, we can conclude that the relations between the ten dimensions are for a relatively large part accounted for by a common element of WELFARISM.

The standardized second-order factor loadings, expressing the strength of the relation between the ten dimensions and general factor WELFARISM, are given in Table 3. The second column of Table 3 contains the shared variances, i.e. the proportion of variance that the separate dimensions have in common with the second-order factor. Judging by the strength of the factor loadings, three dimensions— ROGGEN, SPENDINGW and CONSECOMOR — are the key constituents of welfarism. Each of these three dimensions shares over three thirds of its variance with the second-order factor. A general disposition to support welfare systems consists thus in the first place of views regarding government responsibility, i.e. that government should take action to promote equality and decent living standards and should spend adequate amounts on the social protection of deserving categories. From this finding one could praise the criticized dominant practice of using role-of-government based single indicators for welfare legitimacy, in that it uses the single indicator that appears to be most close to overall welfarism. Secondly, strongly connected to positive role-of-government thinking is the idea that government provisions do not have unfavourable repercussions in the economic or moral sphere (after all, the loading for CONSECOMOR is negative).

....TABLE 3 about here...

ROGRISK, UNDERUSE and especially PRINACT are much more loosely connected to WELFARISM. They share between roughly between 5 and 25 per cent of their variance with the general pro or contra welfare dimension, meaning that they are for the largest part determined by considerations apart from welfarism. With correlations ranging in absolute value between 0.60 and 0.80, the remaining four dimensions (PRINEQUAL, OUTCOMES, CONSSOCIAL and OVERUSE) are situated in between. This means that these dimensions have about half of their variance in common with the second-order factor, while the other half is specific.

This analysis indicates that it is indeed possible to speak of a general welfarism dimension, and has provided a view on what is this dimension essentially represents. Nevertheless, it should be clear that welfare attitudes cannot be reduced entirely to this overarching disposition to support the welfare state in general. Besides the meaning they share, the separate dimensions also have, to a certain extent, content that is dimension-specific and that deserves the attention of welfare attitude researchers. Researchers that solely focus on welfarism pass in silence over a part of the story that might deepen our insight in the formation of welfare attitudes.

4.3 Differential antecedents of the welfare attitude dimensions

A study into the dimensionality of welfare attitudes cannot bypass the question whether attitudes toward various aspects of the welfare state have similar antecedents. Previous research has repeatedly shown that popular evaluations of the welfare state depend on the individual's structural position in society, reflecting interests in social protection, and ideological variables such as political stance (see e.g. Hasenfeld & Rafferty, 1989; Van Oorschot, 2002). In this section, we investigate whether these classical variables in welfare research have a differential impact on the welfare attitude dimensions.

Table 4 presents the results of multiple regression analyses that were performed with this purpose. The dependent variables in these analyses are the ten dimensions of welfare attitudes that were retrieved earlier.⁹ The scores of the dimension that load negatively on WELFARISM (these are PRINACT, OUTCOMES, CONSECOMOR and OVERUSE) were reversed. By consequence, higher scores express more positive attitudes toward the welfare

state for all dependent variables, facilitating the comparison of explanation models considerably.

We start by presenting the explanation model for the overarching welfarism-factor. Such a model can give us more insight in the common roots of the different dimensions of welfare attitudes. Welfarism turns out to be influenced in the first place by one's ideological orientation as indicated by political stance on a left vs. right scale. Judging by the size of the standardized parameter, this effect is very large: Political ideology alone explains almost a quarter of the variance in pro or contra welfare attitudes. As expected, respondents tending toward the political left are far more supportive of the welfare state. The strong impact of ideological position confirms the earlier finding that second-order factor welfarism contains an important ideological component, referring to the goals pursued by welfare policy.

The impact of the socio-demographic and interest indicators, on the other hand, is less strong. Males as well as the 45 to 65 years old are found to be more supportive for the welfare state in general. Regarding the income of the respondents, those in the highest quintile hold significantly more critical attitudes toward the welfare state, although this income-effect is quite small. We find that education has no significant direct effect on welfarism. Some evidence is found that education has an indirect rather than direct impact on welfarism, via political ideology: On average, the higher educated have a more leftist orientation (see final column in Table 4), which brings along higher levels of welfare state support. Contrary to education, work status is perceivably related to welfarism. Those employed in the (semi-) public sector, the unemployed and those not in the labour market hold more positive attitudes toward the welfare state in general. Finally, also the current use of welfare benefits—the most direct indicator of personal interest in welfare policies—is a significant predictor of welfare state support. In agreement with rational choice arguments, persons enjoying social benefits are more welfare-minded. All variables taken together, this model explains roughly one third of the total variance in welfarism.

For each of the ten dimensions of welfare attitudes that were retrieved in a previous section, a similar model was estimated. These analyses yield quite different patterns than the ones found for WELFARISM, suggesting that the antecedents of welfare attitudes are dimension-specific indeed. Significant gender differences, for example, are present for three dimensions only. Females are more critical of government intervention in order to reduce inequality

(ROGGEN), opine less often that welfare policies have positive social consequences (CONSSOCIAL) and perceive lower levels of benefit underuse (UNDERUSE). Regarding the other dimensions, attitude differences between males and females are negligible.

While age has no impact on some of the dimensions, strong age-effects are present for others. For ROGRISK, OUTCOMES, UNDERUSE and to a lesser extent also for CONSECOMOR, very similar curve-linear patterns are found. Each time, persons aged 45 to 64 years old are found to be most in favour of welfare regulations, while the most critical views are found among the youngest cohort (15-24 years of age). The model for PRINACT, however, reveals very different age-effects. Here, the strongest opposition against the principle activation—a principle that is inversely related to welfarism—among the youngest group. Very likely, this finding is due to the specific context of the items measuring support for activation: Three out of six items refer to young unemployed persons specifically. Furthermore, the group between 25 and 44 years old is most critical about increasing government spending (SPENDINGW) and perceives most benefit overuse (OVERUSE). Not surprisingly, precisely this age group contributing significantly to the welfare budget and having a long career ahead without immediate perspective on enjoying retirement benefits, has negative attitudes toward financial aspects of the welfare state.

The income individuals dispose of turns out to be relevant particularly for the more ideological attitude dimensions that refer to general principles of the welfare state. Persons in the two highest income quintiles less frequently endorse the principles of equality (PRINEQUAL) and government intervention to insure certain levels of equality (ROGGEN). The lowest support for activation policies (PRINACT) is found among people in the lowest income category.

While education did not have any direct impact on WELFARISM, the educational level does matter for some specific aspects of attitudes towards the welfare state. What is more, the sign of the education-effect is different according to the specific content of the dimension concerned. The higher-educated score lower on dimensions that refer to the general principles the welfare state, such as PRINEQUAL and ROGGEN. At the same time, those with a higher educational level are less concerned with unintended negative effects of the welfare state, such as possible moral and economic consequences (CONSECOMOR) and benefit overuse (OVERUSE).

The effects of work status are considerably more similar across welfare attitude dimension, although the significance of the effects differs. For almost all dimension, the unemployed hold more favourable views on the welfare state, a pattern that was also found in the explanation model for WELFARISM. Besides that, employees of the public or semi-public sector are more supportive of the principles of equality (PRINEQUAL) and government intervention (ROGGEN). The self-employed, on the other hand, are rather ill-disposed toward the equality principle. Another interesting finding is that those not in the labour market more frequently think of the welfare state as having positive social consequences.

The current use of welfare benefits leads to more supportive attitudes for about half of the dimensions, covering a wide variety of aspects of the welfare state (PRINEQUAL, ROGGEN, SPENDING, CONSECOMOR, OVERUSE), while significant effects are absent for the other dimensions. The dimensions on which benefit use has an impact are precisely those with the strongest loadings on second-order factor WELFARISM.

Ideological position, finally, has a significant effect on all dimensions of welfare attitudes: A more leftist orientation leads to more positive attitudes toward all surveyed aspects of the welfare state. However, for dimensions referring to the key principles of the welfare state (PRINEQUAL and ROGGEN) or to moral and economic negative consequences (CONSECOMOR), ideology offers a far better prediction than for dimensions regarding the practical organization of the welfare state, such as the level of spending (SPENDINGW), the range of risks the government should offer protection against (ROGRISK), satisfaction with benefit levels (OUTCOMES) or over- and under-use of benefits (OVERUSE, UNDERUSE).

The presented explanation models make clear that, although also some common patterns were detected, the various dimensions can have quite different antecedents. It is not the case that low socio-economic status and a more leftist political orientation uniformly lead to more positive evaluations of all aspects of the welfare state. Instead, the strength and sometimes even the sign of the effects depend on the specific content of the dimensions concerned.

5. Conclusion and discussion

We set out this paper with the question whether it is possible that individual citizens, who well endorse a substantial role for government in providing welfare of various sorts and by various means, are at the same time critical about specific aspects of it? In other words, is the social legitimacy of the welfare state multi-dimensional, or not? Based on a series of confirmatory factor analyses on peoples' opinions regarding several aspects of the welfare state we conclude in the affirmative, which is in line with the few previous empirical studies that exist. Opinions on sets of items regarding ten separate sub-dimensions group together significantly in ten corresponding first-order factors, and there is variation in the structure of structural and ideological determinants of peoples' scores on the factors. However, the first-order factors correlate to a degree, which raised the question whether and to what degree they are determined by a single second-order factor that could be seen as representing a single underlying welfarism dimension. Confirmatory factor analysis showed that this is partially the case. The welfarism dimension, reflecting a general disposition to support welfare systems, consists basically of views regarding government responsibility, i.e. that government should take action to promote equality and decent living standards and should spend adequate amounts on the social protection of deserving categories, as well as of the idea that these government provisions do not have unfavourable repercussions in the economic or moral sphere. Where we generally criticized the dominant practice of using role-of-government based single indicators for measuring welfare legitimacy, our findings regarding the welfarism factor suggest that this practice is not too bad in that it uses the single indicator (range and degree of role-of-government) that appears to be most close to overall welfarism. Other first-order factors, especially those concerning people's ideas on the principle of activation, the underuse of benefits, and government's role in the social protection of traditional risk categories (unemployed, sick, disabled), are not strongly affected by a person's welfarism score.

Notwithstanding that determinant structures differ per dimension, people's political stance on a left-right scale consistently affects people's scores on all dimensions in the expected direction: leftist people are more positive towards, or less critical on, all aspects of the welfare state, compared to rightist people. Political stance also has a strong effect on welfarism. In case of all dimensions, political stance has a stronger effect on people's opinions, than interest related characteristics, like age, income level, educational level and work status. From this, it seems that, among our set of determinants, people's political preference is the most consistent and effective single indicator of their support for the welfare

state and its various aspects. More than a matter of interest, welfare support seems to be a matter of ideology, then.

Although our analysis contributes to, and improves on the existing knowledge about welfare legitimacy in several ways, our findings need to be qualified. Firstly, they are based on data from The Netherlands. It can be expected that in other countries, with different social realities and welfare systems, not only people's opinions on the welfare state are different, but they may also be differently structured. In a global, as well as a European context, the Netherlands is a wealthy country, with a well-developed welfare system, which may make some groups of citizens more content with welfare policies (e.g. those who are need in of help), and others less (e.g. those who have to pay the necessary taxes), compared to countries where provisions are less comprehensive and generous, and therefore cost less. However, because of its comprehensiveness broad classes of citizens profit from it in some way, and actually do perceive it like that (Van Oorschot, 2002), which might explain why ideological factors structure Dutch welfare opinions more, than interest related factors. In other countries, with sharper social divisions in welfare, this does not necessarily have to be the case. Also, the correlations between opinions on various dimensions may differ in function of social realities and welfare systems. Again, where social protection is less comprehensive, and class differences in neediness are larger than in The Netherlands one could perhaps expect more negative public images about claimant groups leading to stronger intercorrelations between role of government ideas on the one hand, and perceptions of overuse and negative moral consequences on the other. A fact is that Gelissen (2000) found rather large country differences in correlations between people's ideas on the range of government responsibilities and on the degree of social spending. Secondly, it cannot be excluded that opinions and their intercorrelations change over time, as a result of changes in the welfare system (e.g. a growing emphasis on welfare to work policies) structural changes in society (e.g. an increasing prevalence of 'new' social risks), and ideological changes (e.g. swings in the ideological climate to either the political left, or right). Thirdly, the welfare items in our data set focused mostly on the income protection function of the welfare state, leaving aside its other functions as regards health, education and housing. Generally, people's opinions on what the welfare state does and should do in these different fields, can differ quite strongly (see e.g. Cnaan, 1989).

So, there is ample reason to suggest that our findings are not definite and universal, which means that new studies on the multi-dimensionality of welfare legitimacy are

necessary. Hopefully, colleagues will be inspired by the types of dimensions that we have distinguished here, as well as by our suggestion to use the methodology of confirmatory factor analysis. This could contribute to the comparability of findings over studies, which in the present situation is rather problematic.

Notes

¹ Examples of such single indicator studies are: Andress & Heien (2003), Blekesaune & Quadagno (2003), Bonoli (2000), Bowles & Gintis (2000), Brooks & Manza (2006), Deitch (2004), Feldman & Steenbergen (2001), Haller et al. (1990), Kluegel & Miyano (1995), Linos & West (2003), Papadakis & Bean (1993), Paugam (2003), Roller (1995), Svallfors (1999), Svallfors (2003), Gelissen (2000), Matheson & Wearing (1999), Meier Jaeger (2005), Edlund (2007) Blomberg (1999), Boeri et al. (2001), Edlund (2004), Edlund (2007), Feagin (1975), Feldman & Steenbergen (2001), Forma (1997), Haller et al. (1990), Hasenfeld & Rafferty (1989), Papadakis & Bean (1993), Pettersen (1995), Gelissen (2000), Rehm (2007), Veghte et al. (2007).

² This is especially the case with cross-national data sets. The ISSP survey with its modules on Role of Government is exceptional in that they pay most attention to welfare attitudes compared to e.g. World Values Survey, and European Social Survey. It is therefore the most used data set for cross-national studies of welfare legitimacy. However, the ISSP questions relevant for analysing welfare legitimacy are still limited to one asking about the role of government in taking responsibilities in a series of policy fields (Roller's 'degree' concept), and one asking about preferred government spending levels in these fields (Roller's 'range' concept). Note that in 2009 the European Social Survey will release the data of its 2008 wave which contain a detailed module on welfare attitudes.

³ In this way the dominance of role-of-government indicator studies would contribute to understanding the well known discrepancy that exists between continuing pessimistic theories about the erosion of welfare support in industrialised countries on the one hand, and on the other hand the invariantly optimistic findings of empirical studies that show high levels of popular support for the welfare state (see e.g. Van Oorschot, 2002; Brooks & Manza, 2006).

⁴ Welfarism is defined as 'the complex of policies, attitudes, and beliefs associated with the welfare state' in the Merriam-Webster's dictionary. Here we stress the attitudes and beliefs aspect of welfarism, and assume that pro-welfarists have a generally positive appreciation of the welfare state, while anti-welfarists have an overall negative appreciation.

⁵ As mentioned before, Sihvo and Uusitalo (1995) have performed a separate EFA for each of the theoretical dimensions they distinguish. Each of these models contains several factors referring to different sub-dimensions. Here, Sihvo and Uusitalo make use of the orthogonal VARIMAX rotation as well, which causes them to underestimate the relations between factors that belong to one and the same dimension.

⁶ This model has the following specifications. For reasons of model identification, the first loading of every concept was fixed to one. To make the estimation of PRINEQUAL—a concept measured by two indicators only, while three items per concept are necessary to identify the model—possible, the loadings were fixed to each other. Three error correlations were tolerated, namely between Act1 - Act4, Act2 - Act5 and Act3 - Act6. These

pairs of items have almost identical formulations, resulting in common content that is not covered by the latent factor. Correlations between the latent factors are allowed.

⁷ To illustrate this, we give the results of a model in which the two factors with the highest correlation, i.e. PRINEQUAL and ROGGEN, are joined. This model has a chi-square value of 4605.18 for 823 degrees of freedom. The chi-square difference between this restricted model with 9 factors and the full model with 10 factors is statistically strongly significant ($\Delta\text{chi}^2 = 347.39$, $\Delta\text{df}=9$, $p<.0001$), indicating that the PRINEQUAL and ROGGEN are not reducible to one single dimension.

⁸ The assumption of unrelated factors underlying the use of VARIMAX rotations as Sihvo and Uusital (1995) and Svallfors (1991) do is clearly untenable.

⁹ The factor scores on the dimensions were calculated by summing the items weighted by the factor regression scores that were obtained as output from the LISREL CFA analysis. More weight is thus given to items with higher factor loadings

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Table 1. Standardized factor loadings

	PRINACT	PRINEQUAL	ROGRISK	ROGALG	SPENDINGW	OUTCOMES	MOR	SOCIAL	OVERUSE	UNDERUSE
<i>Act1</i>	0.84									
<i>Act2</i>	0.99									
<i>Act3</i>	0.89									
<i>Act4</i>	0.94									
<i>Act5</i>	0.95									
<i>Act6</i>	0.92									
<i>Eq1</i>		0.93								
<i>Eq2</i>		0.93								
<i>Risk1</i>			0.67							
<i>Risk2</i>			0.87							
<i>Risk3</i>			0.70							
<i>Risk4</i>			0.91							
<i>Rog1</i>				0.81						
<i>Rog2</i>				0.67						
<i>Rog3</i>				0.73						
<i>Rog4</i>				0.79						
<i>Rog5</i>				0.74						
<i>Spew1</i>					0.89					
<i>Spew2</i>					0.79					
<i>Spew3</i>					0.55					
<i>Out1</i>						0.72				
<i>Out2</i>						0.74				
<i>Out3</i>						0.95				
<i>Out4</i>						0.71				
<i>Out5</i>						0.87				
<i>Eco1</i>							0.88			
<i>Eco2</i>							0.89			
<i>Eco3</i>							0.81			
<i>Eco4</i>							0.87			
<i>Mor1</i>							0.93			
<i>Mor2</i>							0.91			

<i>Mor3</i>							0.87			
<i>Mor4</i>							0.66			
<i>Soc1</i>								0.59		
<i>Soc2</i>								0.77		
<i>Soc3</i>								0.78		
<i>Soc4</i>								0.93		
<i>Soc5</i>								0.89		
<i>Over1</i>									0.85	
<i>Over2</i>									0.91	
<i>Over3</i>									0.84	
<i>Over4</i>									0.75	
<i>Under1</i>										1.00
Fit Indices: Chi ² : 4257.788 Df=814 RMSEA = 0.046 CFI = 0.95										

Table 2. Correlations between latent factors

	PRINACT	PRINEQUAL	ROGRISK	ROGGEN	SPENDINGW	OUTCOMES	CONSECOMOR	CONSSOCIAL	OVERUSE	UNDERUSE
PRINACT	1.00									
PRINEQUAL	-0.11	1.00								
ROGRISK	0.11	0.27	1.00							
ROGGEN	-0.11	0.82	0.34	1.00						
SPENDINGW	-0.21	0.62	0.35	0.68	1.00					
OUTCOMES	0.11	-0.46	-0.27	-0.49	-0.54	1.00				
CONSECOMOR	0.22	-0.53	-0.42	-0.64	-0.62	0.46	1.00			
CONSSOCIAL	-0.04	0.44	0.41	0.61	0.49	-0.37	-0.63	1.00		
OVERUSE	0.22	-0.37	-0.27	-0.48	-0.45	0.33	0.57	-0.49	1.00	
UNDERUSE	-0.13	0.33	0.11	0.32	0.31	-0.24	-0.31	0.21	-0.13	1.00

Table 3. Second-order factor loadings on WELFARISM and shared variances

	WELFARISM	Shared variance
PRINACT	-0.22	0.046
PRINEQUAL	0.71	0.502
ROGRISK	0.51	0.255
ROGGEN	0.83	0.683
SPENDINGW	0.82	0.670
OUTCOMES	-0.63	0.400
CONSECOMOR	-0.85	0.727
CONSSOCIAL	0.74	0.547
OVERUSE	-0.66	0.440
UNDERUSE	0.38	0.142

Table 4. Explanation models – standardized regression coefficients

	WELFARISM		PRINACT ^a		PRINEQUAL		ROGGEN		ROGRISK		SPENDINGW		OUT-COMES ^a		CONSECOMOR ^a		CONSSOCIAL		OVERUSE ^a		UNDERUSE		POLITICAL STANCE	
Gender																								
<i>Female</i>	-0.05	*	-0.03		0.03		-0.04	*	-0.03		0.00		-0.01		-0.04		-0.06	**	0.00		-0.07	**	-0.08	***
<i>(ref.cat. : Male)</i>																								
Age																								
<i>25-44</i>	0.00		-0.16	**	-0.08		-0.05		0.14	**	-0.12	*	0.22	***	0.05		-0.05		-0.14	**	0.18	***	0.13	*
<i>45-65</i>	0.12	**	-0.16	**	-0.03		-0.02		0.30	***	0.01		0.30	***	0.12	*	-0.02		0.00		0.23	***	0.01	
<i>65+</i>	0.07		-0.21	***	0.04		-0.02		0.20	***	-0.01		0.18	***	0.05		-0.01		-0.03		0.13	**	0.08	
<i>(ref.cat. : 15-24)</i>																								
Income																								
<i>Q2</i>	0.02		-0.10	***	0.03		0.01		0.08	**	0.03		0.02		0.00		0.01		0.01		-0.04		0.05	
<i>Q3</i>	0.02		-0.08	**	-0.01		-0.02		-0.01		0.02		0.02		0.02		0.06	*	0.01		0.00		0.04	
<i>Q4</i>	0.00		-0.10	***	-0.07	**	-0.06	**	0.06	*	-0.02		-0.01		0.02		0.05		0.05		-0.06	*	0.05	
<i>Q5</i>	-0.05	*	-0.11	***	-0.14	***	-0.10	***	0.02		-0.03		-0.01		-0.03		0.05		-0.01		-0.06	*	0.09	**
<i>(ref.cat.: Q1)</i>																								
Education																								
<i>Cat2</i>	0.01		-0.07		-0.06		-0.05		0.02		-0.01		-0.01		0.06		-0.01		0.02		0.04		-0.03	
<i>Cat3</i>	0.02		-0.06		-0.12	***	-0.07	*	0.11	**	-0.05		-0.07		0.11	**	0.01		0.09	*	0.01		-0.01	
<i>Cat4</i>	0.01		-0.05		-0.07		-0.06		0.04		-0.06		-0.05		0.08		0.02		0.03		0.01		-0.06	
<i>Cat5</i>	0.03		-0.09	*	-0.18	***	-0.10	**	0.09		-0.06		-0.08		0.15	***	0.07		0.12	**	-0.07		-0.11	*
<i>Cat6</i>	0.00		-0.05		-0.20	***	-0.12	***	0.04		-0.08	*	-0.09	*	0.13	***	0.07		0.12	***	-0.07		-0.12	**
<i>(ref.cat.: Cat1)</i>																								
Work status																								

<i>(Semi-)public</i>	0.05	*	-0.01		0.06	**	0.06	*	-0.01		0.04		0.03		0.03		0.04		0.01		-0.02		-0.12	***
<i>Self-employed</i>	-0.03		-0.03		-0.06	**	-0.01		-0.02		-0.01		0.01		-0.03		0.02		-0.01		-0.03		0.01	
<i>Unemployed</i>	0.10	***	0.06	*	0.05	*	0.09	***	0.01		0.07	**	0.06	*	0.08	***	0.04		0.07	**	0.03		0.02	
<i>Other</i>	0.08	**	0.00		0.04		0.05		0.04		0.05		0.06		0.02		0.10	**	0.04		0.04		0.00	
<i>(ref.cat.: Private)</i>																								
Use of benefits	0.08	***	0.01		0.06	*	0.07	***	-0.01		0.09	***	0.03		0.08	***	0.00		0.05	*	0.00		-0.07	**
Political stance	-0.49	***	-0.12	***	-0.37	***	-0.46	***	-0.11	***	-0.23	***	-0.26	***	-0.38	***	-0.24	***	-0.28	***	-0.18	***		
Adjusted R ²	0.300		0.041		0.234		0.263		0.051		0.106		0.094		0.192		0.077		0.127		0.060		0.05	

* p<.05 ** p<.01 *** p<.001 ^a factor scores were reversed, so that higher scores denote a more positive attitude toward the welfare state

APPENDIX

Table App1: Dimensions of welfare legitimacy: Items and scales of measurement

Dimension	Item	Freq.	N
Principles		% (strongly) agree	
Principle of equality PRINEQUAL	Eq1: "Large income inequalities are unjust"	42.5	1906
	Eq2: "Government needs to take substantial measures to reduce income inequalities"	51.4	1907
	<i>Disagree-Agree (5-point scale)</i>		
Principle of activation PRINACT	"What should a <i>long-term</i> unemployed do in order to keep his or her benefit?"		
	Act1. Search for a job	94.7	1930
	Act2. Participate in reintegration activities	92.2	1919
	Act3. Get schooling or re-training	91.1	1931
	"What should a <i>young</i> unemployed person do in order to keep his or her benefit?"		
	Act4. Search for a job	97.6	1943
	Act5. Participate in reintegration activities	95.4	1934
	Act6. Take schooling or re-training	95.6	1856
	<i>Disagree-Agree (5-point scale)</i>		
Role of government		% (strongly) agree / government	
Protection of the weak ROGGEN	"Government should..."		
	Rog1. reduce income inequalities	50.6	1886
	Rog2. offer more chances for children of poor families to go to university	68.6	1911
	Rog3. spend less on benefits for the poor	7.6	1901
	Rog4. guarantee a reasonable standard of living to unemployed people	47.0	1908
	Rog5. offer a basic minimum income to everybody	52.5	1889
	<i>Disagree-Agree (5-point scale)</i>		
Protection against 'old' social risks ROGRISK	"Should government organise statutory social benefits to provide for the financial needs that arise for people when being...or should it be left to people themselves?"		
	Risk1. unemployed	74.8	1858
	Risk2. incapacitated for work	69.3	1894
	Risk3. widow(er)	53.0	1844
	Risk4. ill	71.5	1866
	<i>People-Government (5-point scale)</i>		
Protection against 'new' social risks ROGRISKN	"Should government organise statutory social benefits to provide for the financial needs that arise for people when being...or should it be left to people themselves?"		
	Riskn1. divorced	8.2	1834
	Riskn2. a parent to children	12.1	1866
	Riskn3. single after co-habitation	7.4	1833
	<i>People-Government (5-point scale)</i>		

Spending		% (strongly) increase	
Benefit spending work-related benefits SPENDINGW	"Should government increase or decrease the level of the benefit...? Increase would result in higher contributions, decrease in lower contributions."		
	Spew1. unemployment benefit	13.6	1860
	Spew2. disability benefit	39.0	1863
	Spew3. sick pay	17.1	1866
	<i>Decrease-Stay the same-Increase (5-point scale)</i>		
benefit spending other benefits SPENDINGO	"Should government increase or decrease the level of the benefit...? Increase would result in higher contributions, decrease in lower contributions."		
	Speno1. social assistance	33.7	1893
	Speno2. state old age pension	49.6	1887
	<i>Decrease-Stay the same-Increase (5-point scale)</i>		
Implementation		% often	
Overuse OVERUSE	"How often is benefit... being misused"		
	Over1. disability benefit	32.6	1846
	Over2. unemployment benefit	42.3	1859
	Over3. social assistance	42.1	1855
	Over4. sick pay	32.5	1780
	<i>Hardly ever – Sometimes – Often (3-point scale)</i>		
Underuse UNDERUSE	Under1. "How often do you think does it occur that people do not claim or receive a benefit to which they are entitled?"		
	<i>Seldom-Often (5-point scale)</i>	37.7	1825
Outcomes		% (very) difficult	
Making ends meet OUTCOMES	"How difficult or easy is it for people with benefit...to make ends meet?"		
	Out1. unemployment benefit	25.4	1728
	Out2. disability benefit	30.7	1719
	Out3. sick pay	50.8	1785
	Out4. old age pension	34.4	1824
	Out5. minimum benefit	49.4	1790
		<i>Easy - Difficult (5-point scale)</i>	
Consequences		% (strongly) agree	
Economic CONSECO	"Because of the system of social benefits and services..."		
	Eco1. the international competitiveness of the Dutch economy decreases	26.8	1741
	Eco2. labor costs increase too much	35.1	1825
	Eco3. the economy deteriorates	9.3	1815
	Eco4. unemployment increases	18.6	1835
		<i>Disagree – Agree (5-point scale)</i>	
Moral CONSMOR	"Because of the system of social benefits and services..."		
	Mor1. people get lazy	39.4	1921
	Mor2. people lose their sense of self-responsibility for their subsistence	39.2	1910
	Mor3. people become egoistic and calculative	33.6	1878
	Mor4. people do not want to care for each other anymore	37.4	1861
	<i>Disagree – Agree (5-point scale)</i>		
Social CONS SOC	"Because of the system of social benefits and services..."		
	Soc1. societal unrest is prevented	57.8	1864

	Soc2. people divorce too easily	71.6	1893
	Soc3. the Dutch population is happier	50.8	1845
	Soc4. wealth is distributed more fairly	55.7	1897
	Soc5. everybody gets a chance to make something of life	59.9	1914
	<i>Disagree – Agree (5-point scale)</i>		