ORIENTATIONS OF YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN TO
CITIZENSHIP AND EUROPEAN IDENTITY

(Youth and European Identity)

Workpackage I

’State of the Art Report’

Research about Youth and European Identity in Germany

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Youth research in Germany

Historical investigations have shown that ‘youth’ could have only been differentiated as a general social category slowly during the process of industrialization and its social, political and cultural concomitants. By now, there is hardly any publication within the German youth research that does not adequately recognize the independence and importance of youth as a period of life within the human life span. Correspondingly, in his introduction book Hurrelmann (1999) points to a number of developments that distinguish youth from childhood and the adult phase. Especially personality psychological and developmental psychological approaches emphasize the new quality of challenges young men and women have to face with the beginning of their sexual maturity (‘puberty’). Beside the independent coping with the various tasks of personal development (Havighurst 1972) the detachment of youths from their most closely related persons stands in the focus of interest (see picture 1). However, from a sociological point of view priority is mainly set up on the social prescribed possibilities to act and status configurations. Here, the differentiation of the period of youth is primarily made by the variety of new social positions and the corresponding demands of behavior young people are confronted with (see picture 1).

Within the social scientific literature this coexistence of different and partly contradictory expectations of behavior is regarded as basic characteristic of the youth phase. In this period young persons must develop the individual ability to compensate the appearing tensions between the various developmental tasks and social roles. The transition from youth to adult is executed if the constitutive developmental tasks are solved and a large degree of independence is reached within the central social positions. But for modern industrial societies it is typical that on the one hand the transitions from child to youth and from youth to adult could be divided into more and more partial areas and that on the other hand the period of youth is more and more extending.

Undisputed, youth is a period in which the dimension of creative and independent forming, of productive and active dealing with the inner and outer conditions of life is of an enormous importance. According to Erikson (1981), during this period it comes for the first time to a conscious development of a picture of the own self, an I-perception respectively an identity. This identity as the perception and experience of continuity – independent from situation and biography – provides the basis for independent and autonomous actions. Beside the development of abilities of self-perception, self-evaluation and self-reflection an individual coordination of the various motives, needs and interests represents a decisive condition for building an own identity. However, the development of identity does not only affect the ′inner reality′ of body and psyche, but also the ′outer reality′ of socially given circumstances. With this, the offered world view of the adult environment is going to be requested while contradictions and deficits are often the trigger for crises in orientation and self-esteem, for protest, and for refusal. Thus, the search for an own identity is a specific characteristic of the period of youth which in this way typically occurs only during this part of life. The process of developing an identity will not be finished within this period but there is at least a temporary conclusion which forms the basis for further developments and transformations.

In the German scientific literature various theoretical approaches concerning youth research could be found. These approaches differ according to their origin disciplines, their basic models of human beings, their presumptions, and their methodical proceedings. Psychoanalysis, developmental psychology and ecological theory belong to the most promising approaches of psychology, whereas for primarily sociological considerations the theory of structural functionalism, the interaction- and action theory and the system theory are to name. However, among the youth researchers an increasing consent about the importance of an interdisciplinary approach is to notice. Therefore, only a resolut pursuit of an integrative strategy enables a differentiated and extensive analysis of the life period of youth.
One particularly promising possibility of connecting single approaches provides the *socialization theory* as propagated by Hurrelmann (2001) and others. Here, socialization is understood as a process of developing the personality through dealing with the inner reality (body and psyche) and the outer reality (social and ecological environment). Following ecological-system theoretical and reflexive-action theoretical approaches the crossing of personal individuation and social integration forms the essence of socialization theory. While individuation means the process of developing an individual personality structure with unmistakable cognitive, motivational, linguistic, moral and social characteristics respectively competences, integration marks the process of becoming part of the society respectively of adapting to social values, behavior standards and demands. From the individual coping with tensions between individuation and integration for youths arises the chance to develop an own I-identity for the first time in their life. This I-identity comprises the subjective feeling of unmistakability and uniqueness of the own person (‘personal identity’) as well as the feeling of acceptance and recognition by the social environment (‘social identity’). For a successful process of socialization both components have to be related to each other and connected (see picture 2). With this, the development of personality in the period of youth is put into a social context which influences the individual and – at the same time – is influenced, changed and formed by the acting individual. In this sense, socialization theory understands the human being as a creative interpreter as well as an active engineer of its own development and its social environment.

One central aspect of the latest youth research covers all theoretical approaches. The process of *individualization* (Elias 1985, Beck 1986) with its key-ideas of ‘social differentiation’ and the ‘progressing detachment of humans from their traditional spheres of life’ relates to social structural changes of modern industrial societies. But on the other hand, by considering the individual strategies of dealing with the social demands and the biographical processes of self-defining this theorem meets the subjective side of modernization processes too. So young people can not longer rely on prescribed ways of life, but have to become creators of their own individual biographies – including all inherent risks and chances. As Heitmeyer and Olk (1990) worked out, with this the processes of individualization stand on the join of psychological and sociological traditions of exploring personality development.

With reference to this debate about consequences of social change a second controversially dominates the theoretical discussion within the youth research: *gender differentiation*. Against the background of the increasing questioning of traditional understandings of gender roles, gender identity and the pluralization of forms of living together the requirement for a stronger integration of the long time neglected aspects of gender specifics into youth research is raised by more and more authors.

If you are looking at the German theoretical discussion concerning youth research in comparison to the amount of empirical studies, the dominance of the latter must be remarked. A multitude of empirical investigations is based on public requests without any explicit connections to theoretical approaches. However, during the last years some topics have been crystallized out which keep the theoretical as well as the empirical youth research busy.

Here, in the first place are works to mention which investigate the differences and mutualities of youths from the eastern and western part of Germany. With it, a special attention is paid to the perception and assessment of particular circumstances of life and the relations of young people to politics. The vast majority of comparative studies comes to the conclusion that differences between East and West regarding value orientations, forming of life, use of media and behavior in schools are slighter than expected; but greater differences exist with reference to attitudes towards the reunification of Germany, the acceptance of violence and nationalistic respectively racist ways of thinking. Since the beginning of the nineties the specific topics of right-wing extremism, xenophobia, antisemitism and violence dominate the spectrum of general youth studies, additionally intensified by a number of youth infringements of foreigners. Here, the connection between delinquent behavior and gender-specific
socialization has proved to be of great interest. But beside it, other problems are coming more and more into the focus of empirical research projects; for example the question of collective identity and the relation of young Germans to Europe.

One example is the latest Shell-study 'Youth 2000' which contains the answers of 4,546 youths from East and West Germany to questions about their picture of Germany and their opinions to Europe. The most interesting finding in this connection is the great distance and scepticism by which the European unification is seen. Only 54 % of the young people say yes to the question about personal interest for the public discussion concerning Europe. And only 39 % of them think that anything in the personal life of citizens will be changed through the processes of European unification. But 24 % expect no changes of any sort and more than one third answers with 'I do not know'. For the majority of youths the rhetoric of Europe and European unification means above all a facade, behind them completely other influences and interests are important. Largely ascertained is an Europe of big money, more than an Europe of ordinary people. Merely youths with better personal, social and material ressources percep Europe as a chance. So the pretty disillusioned conclusion by the authors of this study reads as follows: Europe does not do anything for the young people. Concerning the youth picture of Germany the data show a mainly positive perception of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), but without nationalistic arrogance. However, greater differences arise here in dependence on the concrete conditions of life: Young persons living under comparatively adverse conditions – above all females and youths from East Germany – asses Germany far worser than their peers.

In this connection, a further large-scaled project concerning the relation between youth and politics is shortly to emphasize – the studies of the Deutsches Jugendinstitut (DJI). Here you could find extensive data about the development of political interest of youths in East and West Germany, their ideologies, their attitudes towards democracy and certain institutions, their political engagement, their opinions towards immigrants and their general value preferences and gender-role orientations.

Research about European identity in Germany

Besides the mentioned Shell-study ‘Youth 2000’ up to now in Germany only a few empirical research projects exist, which deal more or less explicitely with the subject 'Youth and European identity'. Here the analyses of the research group 'Youth and Europe' around Werner Weidenfeld and Melanie Piepenschneider are to emphasize. In 1987 they realized a representative survey with 1,536 young West Germans about their attitudes, wishes and perspectives regarding Europe. Another investigation with identity relevant questions is the 'Youth-Euro-Survey' by the Centrum für Politikwissenschaft at Munich. In the beginning of the nineties more than 1,200 youths at the age of 14 to 27 years were asked to their associations to Europe. A smaller scope forms the basis for the fieldstudies concerning the 'theory of social identity' (Tajfel 1981) carried out by Dollase et al. among pupils from Bielefeld. Three further empirical investigations are primarily focussed to the international comparison of European and national orientations among young people: Engerer compares 135 German and 679 French pupils of grammar schools, Böcker works with altogether 788 students from England, France and Germany, and the analyses of Forsthofer, Martini and Wakenhut bases on the statements of German and Italian students. At the same German-Italian research context (FIMO) the larger-scaled youth studies about ethnic identity and interethnical relations are placed.

Here the data of 1.092 persons at the age of 16 to 25 years from the Italian region Suedtirol are composing the starting point for empirical tests of hypotheses derived from the 'theory of social identity'. From an international comparing view two further youth studies seem worth to be mentioned: Haubrich and Schiller questioned more than 5,000 students from 21 countries about their perceptions of Europe, in the second study data from more than 31.000 youths at the age of 15 from altogether 27 countries were
collected. Here, the European research project 'Youth and History' is meant which among others includes some questions about attitudes towards the own nation and Europe. However, the vast majority of empirical findings concerning Europe results from analyses of the 'Eurobarometer-Survey'. This huge dataset forms the basis of many population-representative evaluations, but a special treatment of youth is hardly to find. Moreover, most of the analyses are limited to pure descriptive representations of moment shootings and developmental trends. Occasionally, a calculation of simple correlations between European attitudes and sociodemographic characteristics could be found. Here, the corresponding findings show that persons with a higher education, a higher income, a higher job status and postmaterialistic / self-enhancing value preferences report a greater agreement with the European Union. Detailed tests of theoretical derived hypotheses based on the Eurobarometer-data still exist only in a small number.

Of course there are a lot more data collections with regard to the topic 'European identity' in the FRG existing. These data either come from periodical surveys of opinion research or from research enterprises with corresponding priorities. One example represents the work of Waldemar Lilli and his colleagues who try to explore the foundations of social identity orientations in different European regions by a lot of empirical studies. Another example is the project 'National Identity of the Germans', in which 602 persons from East and West Germany were interviewed about their collective identifications for at least three times between 1993 and 1996. However, such extensive panel designs represent exceptions. Just as rare are qualitatively orientated approaches for analysing identity relevant problems.

If you are asking for safety findings from the whole of these studies, the great heterogeneity of empirical results becomes apparent. Not least, this fact can be traced back to the partially different main topics of the studies and their different methodical approaches. Despite these difficulties, two findings are coming up very regular: On the one hand the impression of a very ambivalent attitude of youths concerning Europe, where negative and positive connoted ideas occur likewise. On the other hand stands the finding that not only for young people national and regional identifications dominate clearly in comparison to European concerns.

Regarding the extensive and extremely heterogeneous literature about European identity a reverse relation between the amount of empirical studies and theoretical papers in comparison to youth research is apparent. Parallel to the continuing process of integration there is an intensive discussion within the different scientific disciplines about what Europe actually means, where its borders are and how the always increasing effects on everyday life of its citizens could be legitimized. Against the background of weak participation in European elections and the decreasing agreement with the European unification public and scientific opinion shows a large degree of consent that the problem of European identity is of decisive importance for the future of Europe. Opponents to the idea of an European identity hardly exist; the advocates can be divided in those who see an almost developed European identity and those who are in doubt of the existence of such an identity.

A wide space in the scientific dealing takes up the search for appropriate foundations of European identity. However, far-reaching consent only exists about the fact that social-
geographic demarcations, references to the occidental idea of an European cultural heritage and of Europe as the cradle of occidental rationalism are not sufficient. An alternative approach could be found in political sciences by equating Europe with the European Union and by analysing the interactions between national politics arenas on the one hand and the supranational power system of the European Union on the other hand. Another possibility is the – mostly normative motivated – attempt to construct an European identity intentionally on the basis of common experiences, decisions, aims and challenges. A third approach could be seen in the predominantly sociological effort to establish the foundations of European identity on institutional and cultural mutualities of the European societies.

Beside this discussion, a further controversy takes place in which the term of identity respectively an adequate and completely definition stands in the centre of interest. Not only in Germany the subject of identity has gained attention and relevance in the course of the scientific debates concerning processes of modernization and globalization. However, these led – among other things – to a considerably vagueness of the term of identity. Meanwhile, the term is used in most different ways and connected to most different meanings. Despite all efforts for a specification of the diffuse and complex term different connotations and suggestions for an operationalization of identity according to the respective disciplines and theory traditions continue to exist. Nevertheless, these various approaches commonly stress the basic difference between personal and collective or social identity (see picture 2). Personal identity is widely accepted as “the ability of human subjects to stay identical with themselves also in deep changes of personality structure, which are necessary responses to contradictory situations” (Habermas 1974: 27; translated by D. F.). Collective identity comprises all social identifications or self-descriptions which are derived from memberships or solidarities to social groups. With this, collective identity is equivalent to a multitude of natural an free chosen partial identities. In principle, all human characteristics are able to constitute the basis for collective identifications: sex, color of skin, age, relationship, occupation, party membership, nationality, territory, possession, education, ideology, religion or culture. According to Walkenhorst (1999: 29) three general dimensions of collective identity could be distinguished:

1. the historical term of identity comprises the relation to the three components of time: past, present and future;
2. the genetical term of identity includes the mutualities seen as relevant as well as the we-feeling and the differentiation from others;
3. the psychological term of identity describes the emotional tie of the single individual to the respective group.

The transitions between collective and personal identity are usually described as fluid, however, a theoretical precision about the respective weight of both aspects of identity and their relations to each other is not yet achieved sufficiently. Beside the emphasis of the reciprocal and interactive relations of exchange between group and individual, you often could find a note about the permanent conflict between collective identity and the need for group membership on the one hand and personal identity and the need for development of individuality on the other hand.

A third topic in the discussion about Europe and identity is the connection of Germans to their national identity as well as the relation of this national identity to ethnic, regional and European identity. Since 1989, with the unification of both German states and the resulting problems of ‘growing together’ the question about national identity has achieved an absolutely new dynamics in Germany. Previous answers to the collective self-perception of Germany mostly have proved as no longer valid. What for other Western European nations is a matter of course for a long time, still represents a controversial discussed problem for the Germans: How do they see themselves as a nation and which role for Europe can be derived from this understanding? However, the debates do not only concern the clarification and
representation of the content of German self-image, the relations to other ethnic groups are affected too.

In the struggle about German national identity some persons complain the missing of a solid national identity. Against the background of the new situation they plead for a revitalization of national patriotism.36 Their argument reads as follows: Without an adequate national consciousness the internal and external tasks for Germany are not solvable. Now it is time to overcome the reduced self-perception of the last decades and to find a new matter of course in dealing with themselves as nation. Another argument for a resuscitation of German national consciousness refers to the point that this discussion about nation and its symbols must not be left to nationalistic and right-wing extremist groups. A typical example for this new ‘matter of course’ can be seen in the provoking public use of a slogan of right-wing extremists – ‘I am proud to be a German’ – by established politicians.37

On the other hand there are a lot of persons who see the current renaissance of nation more critical. Because of the ambivalence of this term and the inherent risks – often in the context of multicultural ideas – they reject nation as a forward-looking reference point for collective identity.38 Connected with the historical burden of two world wars, above all the enormous potential of exclusion of German national identity is pointed out. In general, the term of nation always implies two different aspects; a political-civic aspect of identity (defined by membership to a state) and an ethnic aspect of identity (defined by membership to a peoples, to a certain community of origin, language and culture). And especially the German nation gained its identity – in difference for example to France or the United States of America – not on the basis of a community of a common political will and denomination, but on the foundation of a community of destiny determined by ethnic characteristics. From a historical point of view, the national identity of Germans is traditionally more ethnic-cultural than political-civic formed.39 In this connection, the demand for a recontemplation of national identity is recognized by some authors as a – conscious or unconscious – plea for an ethnic homogeneous German state. One example for this might be the contested thesis of a ‘German leading culture’ to which immigrated foreigners have to adapt. This demand by one of the party leader of the Christian-Democratic Union (CDU) implies the imagination of a cultural homogenous nation, the culture of which has to be separated and protected against foreign infiltration by other ethnic influences.40

Moreover, the German citizen right is of a considerably importance for the relation between ethnic and national identity.41 Like all other European states, various ethnic groups life side by side in the FRG. However, the German discussion about ethnicity is less focussed on regional ethnic groups, but mainly on immigrated foreigners. Migration research distinguishes here between three general categories: refugees and persons seeking asylum, German resettlers from Eastern and Middle Europe (‘ethnic Germans’), and former foreign workers together with their families.42 The last mentioned group represents the far greatest proportion of immigrants. But independent from their duration of stay in Germany, they do not enjoy rights of political participation. In contrast, resettlers award the status of citizens in a political sense comparatively fast and without difficulties. Responsible for these differences ist the German right of nationality which is primarily based on the ius-sanguinis principle. Therefore, not territory is regarded as the central criterion of membership, but the ethnic group. So the origin of German ancestors (‘consanguinity’) is decisive for the award of German citizenship. But political participation is just one important aspect of integration into a state, following the mainly British and American discussion about citizenship there are further civil rights.43 Concerning this for Germany arises a divided picture: Here longstanding residented and employed foreigners are allowed to participate in certain civil rights (for example social contributions like children’s allowance etc.), while other civil rights remain denied for them (for example political participation). With that, a civic equalization is kept excluded for immigrants.44
From a non-normative perspective, the controversy about nation and national identity is criticized mainly because of its lacking consideration of subjectivistic criteria. In this view, a conception of national identity exclusively by formal membership to nation, culture or state is for some reasons not sufficient or even misleading. Psychological-motivational criteria like an intersubjective divided consciousness about common traditions or aims, the will of belonging to a group, common sense etc. have to be included more than up to now. By doing this, empirical phenomena like for instance German citizens without or even with a negative national consciousness or foreigners who identify themselves with Germany despite the absence of German nationality are better understandable and explainable. An interesting alternative which stresses the reciprocal relation between individual and society more than objectivistic and subjectivistic orientated approaches is the attempt to define nation as a collective actor (Coleman 1990). Starting point of these considerations is the provision of collective goods by the nation for an individually use of its members. On the other hand the nation depends on individually supporting behavior in form of a deliberately transfer of acting rights in order to be able to produce these goods. By this, an important role comes up to national identity. Coherently, national identity is understood as the result of a deliberately identification behavior and in principle to be distinguished from formal nation membership, national consciousness in the sense of pure knowledge about the group characteristics, and a merely feeling of belonging. Including ideas form research about authoritarianism, the social psychological theory of social identity and theories of alienation at the same time this conception offers an opportunity to derive a general explanation model of collective identity within the scope of the theory of action.

Another subject in the public and scientific discussion about national identity has proved to be extremely relevant in Germany: hostility to foreigners or xenophobia and right-wing extremism. During the last year altogether 15,951 offences with right-wing extremist background were officially counted, including 998 violence crimes with 3 killings and 15 attempted killing acts. The vast majority of right-wing extremist and xenophobic violence is carried out by male youth. Moreover, Eastern Germany represents a clear regional centre of this problematic. But not only the degree of right-wing motivated violence is increasing, the readiness for violence and the dissemination of right-wing ideologies – especially among younger people – show an alarming high level. Beside a whole string of other theoretical approaches, of course ideas of identity theories play a central role in the scientific search for reasons. So the influential socialization theoretical approach by Heitmeyer identifies the reasons for violence and juvenile right-wing extremism above all in the shady sides of processes of social change and individualization. In this view, the disappearance of definite norms and the various new demands result in an increasing lack of orientation, uncertainty and status fears among youths ('desintegration thesis'). In the context of these potential identity crises the grab at right-wing extremist offers establihes an opportunity to deal with the individual threats. Because of the differences between males and females concerning xenophobia and right-wing extremism the gender-specifics come up to an outstanding importance in analysing processes of socialization. As well as in the approach of Heitmeyer proceedings of social change and connected perceptions of crisis and insecurity form a central part of explanation in the thesis of the 'authoritarian reaction'. According to this understanding by Oesterreich human beings react in an authoritarian way to uncertain situations by fleeing to the protection of allegedly security offering authorities and by submitting to them. From the perspective of the 'theory of social identity' the perception of threats to the own identity plays a decisive role too. Therefore xenophobia is founded on the national respectively ethnic categorization of in- and outgroup. Does the positive national identity of the ingroup 'Germans' become threatened, a positive distinction of the ingroup could easily be re-established by a depreciation and discrimination of the outgroup 'foreigners'. Actually, a preference for national identity as German correlates – directly or mediated by nationalistic pride – significantly with xenophobic and antisemitic attitudes. On
the other hand, the connection between a preference for European identity and xenophobia shows a negative sign.\footnote{55}

Against this background the questions arise, how far at all the acceptance of nation as reference point for collective identity is developed within the German population, and in which way regional and European identity represents realistic alternatives. If you take a look at the corresponding studies, you could see a comparatively uniform finding: Both nation and region enjoy a much higher rating in the subjective importance and identification than Europe. In fact, there are persons feeling themselves as Europeans in the first place, but these persons remain an absolutely minority.

According to the results of Eurobarometer-surveys the national state not only in the FRG radiates a far greater commitment power than Europe. It is true that the national sole organization of economy and politics is abolished to a great extent by the various international interlockings in the course of globalization. But instead of a more universalistic identity consciousness this loss of importance led to a stronger solidarity with the nation respectively the home region. The maintenance of pursuit of national interests to the debit of other nations as well as the persisting dominance of national policies, institutions and symbols in the perception of citizens are the mainly mentioned reasons for the continuous success of the national state principle. In addition, the fear of foreign determination by a widespread part of population represents a further factor which promotes the mental retreat into the familiarity of national state.\footnote{56}

In Germany, an almost stronger attraction for collective identity comes from the local spheres of the single individual, but without replacing the national state as identification reference. Here, the geographic-political categories of relevance reach from the concrete place of origin to the home region and the federal state. The great attraction of these categories is primarily explained by their subjective manageable size. This nearness comes more towards the building of an emotionally determined relation than the increasingly abstract, strange and unclear experienced institutions of the state and especially of Europe. According to optimistic interpretations, the new regional consciousness at the same time offers a chance for the end of nationalistic exclusion effects. In this view, a more integrative and universalistic identity consciousness follows more or less automatically from the identification with local entities.\footnote{57} Though the requirement of a social structure has to be met in which the population shows a high degree of ethnic and national heterogeneity. In part, this assumption is valid for the former West Germany, but definitely not for the five new Laender. Besides, it must not be neglected that regional identifications also in Germany include a potential for exclusion.\footnote{58}

Altogether, it remains to notice that in Germany the subject 'nation' has not at all finished anywhere between Europe and the regions like many people hoped. Also in a medium-termed perspective a removal of national identity by an European consciousness is not expected. Accordingly, in hardly an analysis the reference to the multitude of factors is missing which stand in the way of developing an European community spirit. The mentioned characteristics reach from cultural features and political traditions of the christian-european history (language variety etc.) to peculiarities of the global situation (retrait to the regions etc.) and the internal structures of the European system (missing of a political reference frame according to the existing indifferences about the territorial reference space, the target direction of integration processes etc.).\footnote{59} The predominantly stated attitude of the German population towards Europe as 'uninterested positive' is neither astonishing against this background nor represents it an exception. However, many authors point out that the basic assumption of a replacement could not be maintained, neither theoretical nor even empirical. Rather than this, it is to assume that an European identity is able to develop – if at all – only in addition to national and regional identities. The identities within the national states – which in fact were already multidimensional – will merely be extended by the new reference point Europe. Therefore, regional and national and European identity could not be demarcated from each other, but have to be understood as integrative aspects of a collective total identity.\footnote{60}
In principle, the *politics of the European Union* for promoting an European we-feeling reflects this opinion. The legal defined respect for and recognition of national identities represents as well as the attempted integration of the regional level into the processes of European unification (‘Europe of Regions’) the efforts to overcome the emotional distance and the insufficient agreement of citizens to the European project under inclusion of the already existing identifications. To what extent these steps are suitable for solving the problem of European identity and for eliminating the deficit of legitimacy is controversial. Anyway, up to now a stable and durable feeling of community by the citizens of Europe could not be read from the findings of survey research.

**Education and European identity**

Undoubtedly, collective consciousness is decisively formed by school. At an age in which the development of political identity for the first time becomes relevant school represents a central reference point for youths. So, an enormous importance in imparting knowledges about Europe, in overcoming of acceptance problems and in developing an European identity comes up to educational institutions.\(^6^1\)

On a political level far-reaching agreement prevails that an European dimension is especially necessary within the education of children, youths and teachers. Already in 1978, an ‘European consciousness’ was demanded as educational task by the federal ministers of education. In the current version of this resolution it is written: “It has to be the aim of educational work to awake a consciousness of an European identity among young people. To this belongs the preparation of young people for a responsible fulfilment of their duties as citizens of the European Community” (Europa im Unterricht 1991: 58; translated by D. F.).

On the other hand, there is no special subject which considers Europe as main topic. Rather than a string of classic subjects exist which embodies various affinities to European fields (ethics, history, geography, foreign languages etc.).\(^6^2\) In this connection, an intersubjectal approach is often propagated but mostly dominates a subject specific access. A continuous and integrated treatment of Europe from primary to grammar school still represents more wishful thinking than reality. Moreover, in the FRG an uniform regulation concerning the explicit contents of subjects does not exist. This fact is to be attributed to the sovereignty of the federal states in formulating the syllabuses. Beside the partially very different interpretation of the general frame syllabus these sovereignty means a different forming of types of school with different subject configurations as well. Because of this, it is quite difficult to come to a general statement about the concrete realization of an European dimension in school.

At long last, it remains to point out a dilemma which characterizes the relation between European identity and school. Of course there are processes of internationalization but the educational systems of all European countries are fundamentally national or even regional constituted. First of all, these national systems of education impart the national state principle and consequently national identity references. Admittedly, the European Union has already started various measures for an Europaenization of these national systems (see for example the ‘Green Paper on the European Dimension of Education’) and for encouraging an European identity (for example by sponsoring programmes of youth exchange, international pupil’s competitions etc.), but additional regulations usually fail because of the national and regional claims of sovereignty.\(^6^3\) The original dilemma remains existing: “The educational system, once created by the national states for reproducing the national consciousness are only reformable if the necessary consciousness to it is developed. However, for this the educational system again is essential” (Walkenhorst 1999: 127; translated by D. F.).
A largely accepted suggestion for the internal structure of youth as life period represents the classification in a phase of 13 (puberty) to 18 years as youth in a closer sense, a phase of 18 to 21 years as adolescence and a phase of 21 to ca. 25 years as post-adolescence (see Hurrelmann 1999: 49ff).

Since 1953 the steeped in tradition and popular Shell-studies are carried out approximately every five years as a representative cross-section of the youth population with various main topics. The first Shell-study, including East and West German youths (1992) was primarily dedicated to the life situations, general orientations and developmental perspectives of young people in the reunified Germany. The following study (1997) was mainly focussed on the future perspectives, the social engagement and the political orientations of youths. Also the latest study 'Youth 2000' contains many questions to the relation of youths to politics, especially to the subject 'Europe' and 'perception of Germany' (see Jugendwerk der Deutschen Shell 1992, 1997, Deutscher Shell 2000).

In 1992 and 1997 the German Youth Institute (DJI) questioned 7.000 youth and young adults from East and West Germany in a replicative panel study to their political attitudes and the subjectively percepted changes within the German-German relations (see Hoffmann-Lange 1995, Gille & Krüger 2000).

One example for a theory-driven analysis on the basis of Eurobarometer-data might be the work of Schmidberger (1997) who explored the contextual influence of regions to the population's attitudes towards the European Union.

The public statement by Laurenz Meyer (CDU) – 'I am proud to be a German' – provoked fierce reactions and led to a very polemical discussion about the right of the Germans to feel a national pride. For example, a member of the government (Trittin, Green Party) replied that Meyer have the mentality of a skinhead (see Der Spiegel 13/2001: 22ff).
At the end of 1998 approximately 7.3 million foreigners lived in the FRG. This amount is equivalent to a proportion of 8.9% of the altogether 82 million people living in Germany. Barely one fifth of these foreigners is to assign to the group of refugees and persons seeking asylum. The rest are foreign workers and their families. Additionally, there are approximately 3.5 million German resettlers (see Bade 1992, 1996, Münz, Seifert & Ulrich 1999, Treibel 1999, Seifert 2000, Terkessidis 2000).

In the year 2000 a new citizenship right has come into force in which the traditionally ancestry principle is supplemented by elements of the territory principle ("ius soli"). According to this law, in Germany born children of foreign parents are getting the German citizenship automatically in addition to their origin citizenship, if at least one parent has a valid residence permit and lives permanently in Germany. But until the age of 23 one of the two citizenships has to be given up; the dual citizenship remains limited. A naturalization again is connected with certain conditions (language skills, duration of stay, giving up the retiring citizenship) and in comparison to other European states relatively rare. Naturalization and dual citizenship in the long run remain exceptions which at the same time could be seen as one expression of the political intention to make a durable immigration into the FRG possible only for political refugees and ethnic Germans.

These comparatively high extent of right-wing orientations among youths is to be reflected for instance by the election results of right-wing extremist parties. It is true that the right-wing extremist parties DVU, NPD and DIE REPUBLIKANER only achieved 3% of the voting at the latest parliamentary elections, but among the youth electors at an age of 18 to 24 years these proportion approximately lay at 10% in West Germany and 20% in East Germany (see Möller 2000: 9). A multitude of empirical investigations and analyses endorses the high level of right-wing extremist and xenophobic attitudes among young people (see Butterwegge & Isola 1990, Fuchs, Gerhards & Roller 1993, Willems 1993, Otto & Merten 1993, Falter, Jaschke & Winkler 1996, Dünkel & Geng 1999, Dollase, Kliche & Moser 1999, Petry, Kalb & Sitte 1999, Schubarth & Stöss 2000).

It is true, that in Germany less ethnic-cultural motives like the protection of a certain language, sovereignty demands of certain ethnic groups etc. are central for regional determined conflicts. But many people see the continuously difficult relation of East and West Germans as a kind of mutual exclusion, founding on different regional identities.