

Linda Berg (2007): *Multi-level Europeans. The Influence of Territorial Attachments on Political Trust and Welfare Attitudes*. English text. Göteborg Studies in Politics 104. Department of Political Science, Box 711, 405 30 Göteborg, Sweden. Göteborg 2007. 207 pages. ISBN: 978-91-89246-32-4, ISSN: 0346-5942

*Multi-level Europeans* explores if the multi-level system in Europe can be seen as challenging both traditional state roles and the European integration process. According to some system-building theories, territorial identity is expected to be important for legitimacy and solidarity. However, the author argues that such a discussion should take account of all levels of the multi-level system, and would benefit from shifting its focus from the level of the system to the individuals who live in it; thereby, investigating the influence of individuals' territorial attachments on political trust and welfare attitudes.

Three challenges are put forward: 1) the challenge of territorial attachments, i.e., the possibility that individual attachment to other than country levels could lead to decreasing national attachment; 2) the challenge of political trust, i.e., that trust in national political institutions and politicians could decrease as an effect of multi-level territorial attachments; and 3) the challenge of welfare attitudes, i.e., that multi-level territorial attachments could lead to less support for welfare state policies. Moreover, these relationships may be affected by different institutional contexts. Empirically, these challenges are investigated by analyzing two different types of data sets, combining comparative data from all the EU member states with more detailed data from Sweden.

The results indicate that neither the territorial attachments themselves, nor their impact on political trust, constitute a challenge to the role of the state (or to the continuation of European integration). Rather, the European multi-level system seems to have enhanced both attachment to and trust in a number of territorial levels, including the states and the EU. However, the relationship between multi-level territorial attachments and welfare attitudes is of more concern. Sustaining support for the welfare state might be somewhat difficult if the majority of people have strong attachments to territorial levels other than the state. Moreover, the preference for EU-level as decision-making for welfare issues is low, even among people with European attachments, and thus there is no demand for a "social Europe". In this regard, the European multi-level system may challenge the traditional role of the (welfare) state, but without offering any immediate alternative at the European level. Finally, my results indicate the relevance of also considering the institutional context, not least regarding variations of the experience and significance of the multi-level system.

**Key words:** Identity, territorial attachments, political trust, welfare attitudes, Institutional context, system-building, multi-level system, Europe, EU, Sweden