

# The Legitimation of Regional and Global Governance Arrangements: Evidence from a Study of Media Discourses in Three European Democracies and the United States

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# Questions

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- ❑ Legitimacy in the post-national constellation:  
Are international regimes – and regional integration projects such as the EU – legitimate?
- ❑ How may the extent and foundations of a political order's legitimacy be gauged?
- ❑ How is legitimacy (re-)produced, challenged, or transformed? -> legitimation processes

# Some Concepts

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Normative (“diagnostic”) v. empirical perspectives on legitimacy

- > normative: Does a political order need to secure its legitimacy? Does it deserve to be qualified as legitimate? On which grounds?
- > empirical: Are citizens expect a political order to meet standards of legitimacy? Do they qualify it as legitimate? On which grounds?

# Dimensions and Indicators of Empirical Legitimacy

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- ❑ Political attitudes -> legitimacy beliefs
  - ❑ Political behaviour -> (non-)compliance
  - ❑ Political communication -> legitimacy assessments and legitimation discourses in public spheres
  - ❑ Interaction among these dimensions – and between political elites and citizens – in the social construction of legitimacy
- > debates rather than consensus
- > legitimacy as “essentially contested” and “precarious”
- > however, (arguably) against the backdrop of shared collective identities, value orientations, and political or discursive cultures

# Key Issues of the Academic Debate

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- Legitimacy v. a-legitimacy
- Legitimacy v. illegitimacy
- Democratic v. non-democratic foundations of legitimacy

# Four Narratives

		International regime legitimate		International regime illegitimate		
illegitimate	National regime	Zero-sum relationship		Negative-sum relationship		
		Delegitimation	Democratic	Non-Democratic		
			leg.	Scenario I Erosion of dem.	Scenario II Collapse of dem.	
				No Res.	Elevation	No Elevation
Tragedy	Irony					
legitimate	National regime	Legitimation	Res.	Romance	Comedy	
			Scenario IV Stable dem. leg.		Scenario III Transformation of dem. leg.	
			Positive-sum relationship		Zero-sum relationship	

# Four Public Spheres

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- ❑ Media discourses in CH, DE, GB, US
- ❑ Two (centre-left/centre-right) quality papers per country
- ❑ Discourses on national political orders, EU, G8, UN
- ❑ From 1998 to 2007 (event-based time windows)

# Legitimation Grammar and Examples of Statements

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Example 1: The people and their representatives have been sent to the sidelines by the courts, and that's not right (*Washington Post*, 6 February 2004).

The judiciary... is illegitimate... because... it undermines popular sovereignty.

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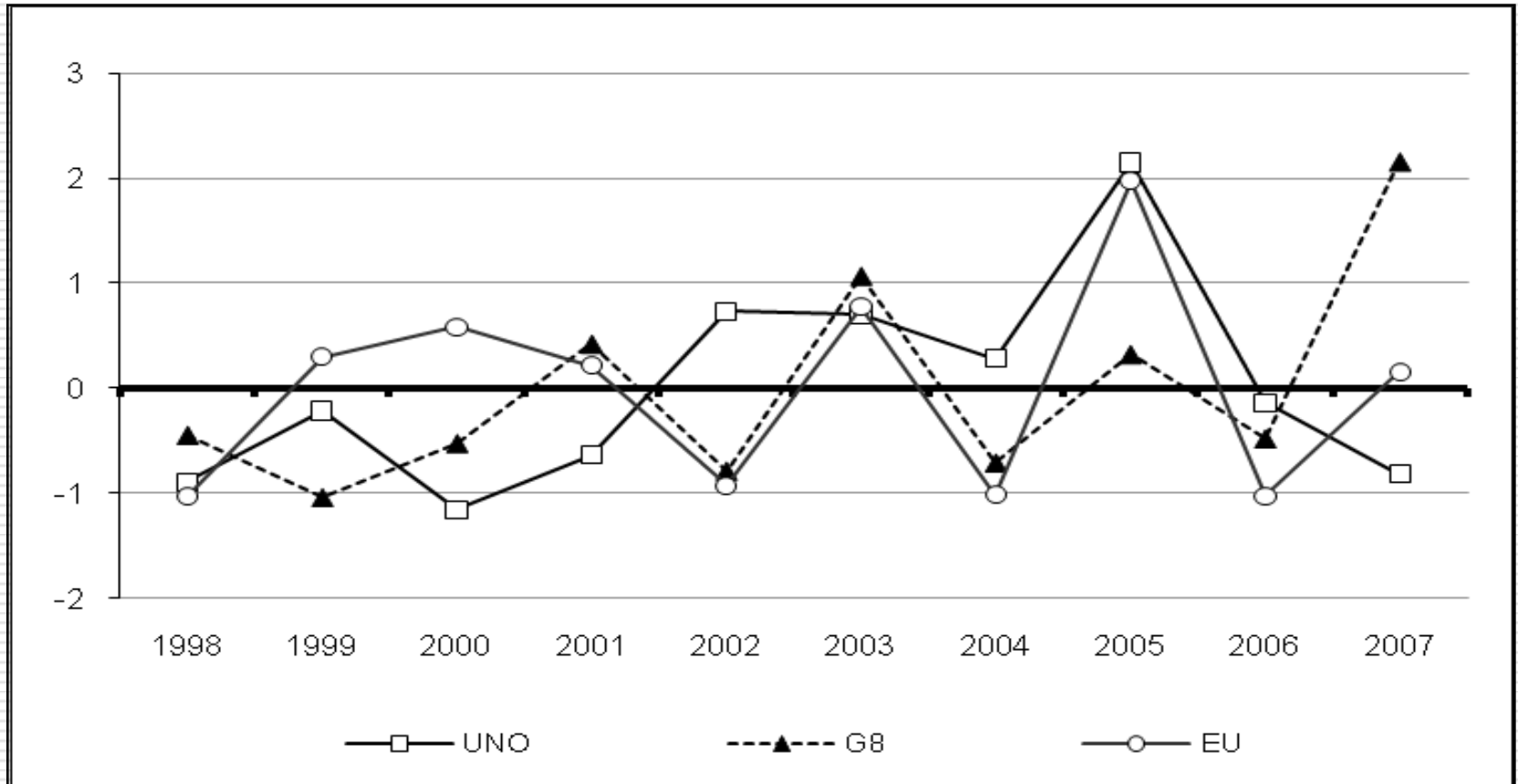
Example 2: Die Brüsseler Behörde [EU-Kommission] ist gewiß kein Lehrbetrieb der Mafia; aber zuletzt ist schon einiges an Betrug, Schlamperei und Korruption zusammengekommen (FAZ, 16 December 1998).

The EU Commission... is illegitimate... because...  
(1) it is inefficient/  
ineffective and  
(2) does not conform  
with legal standards.

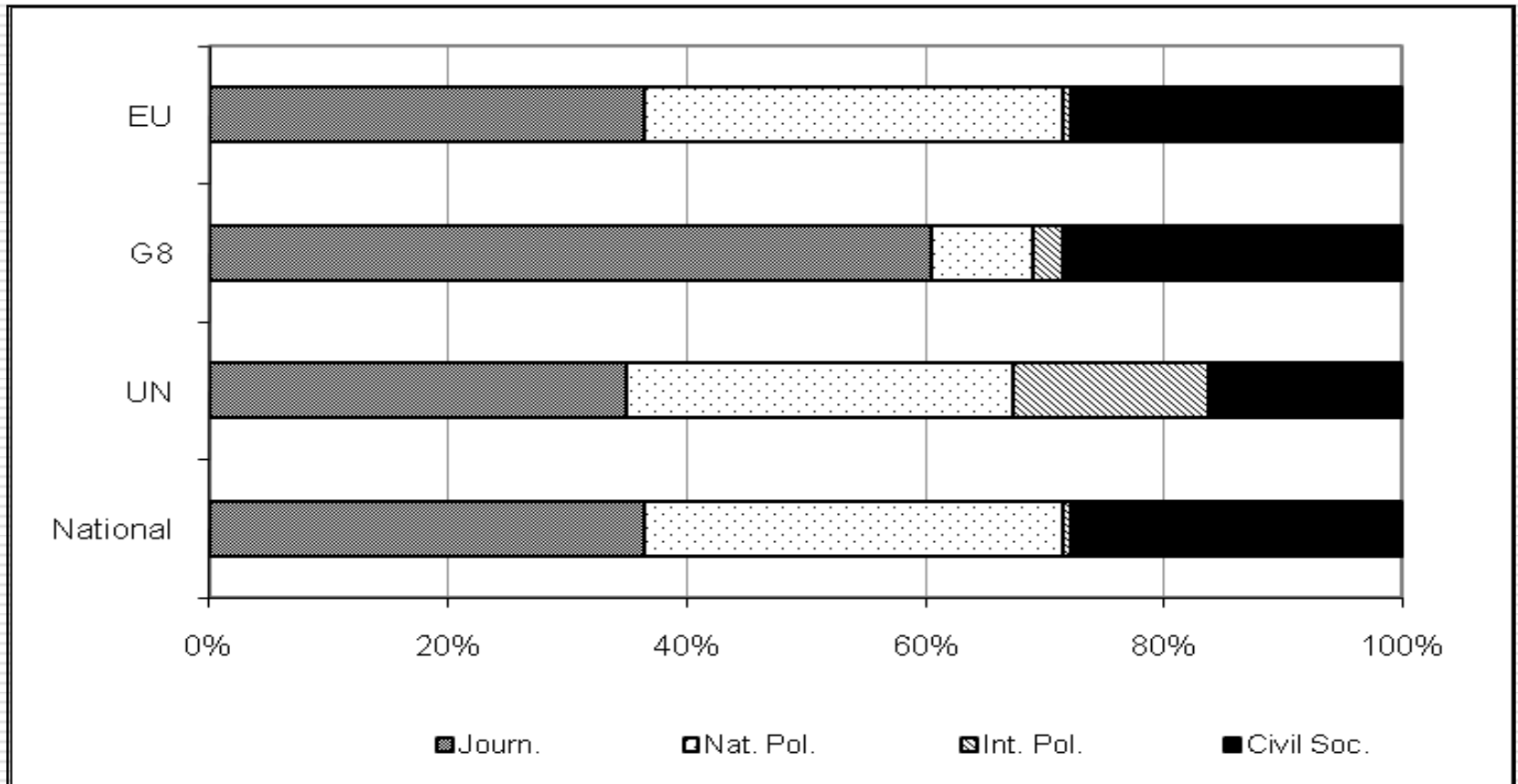
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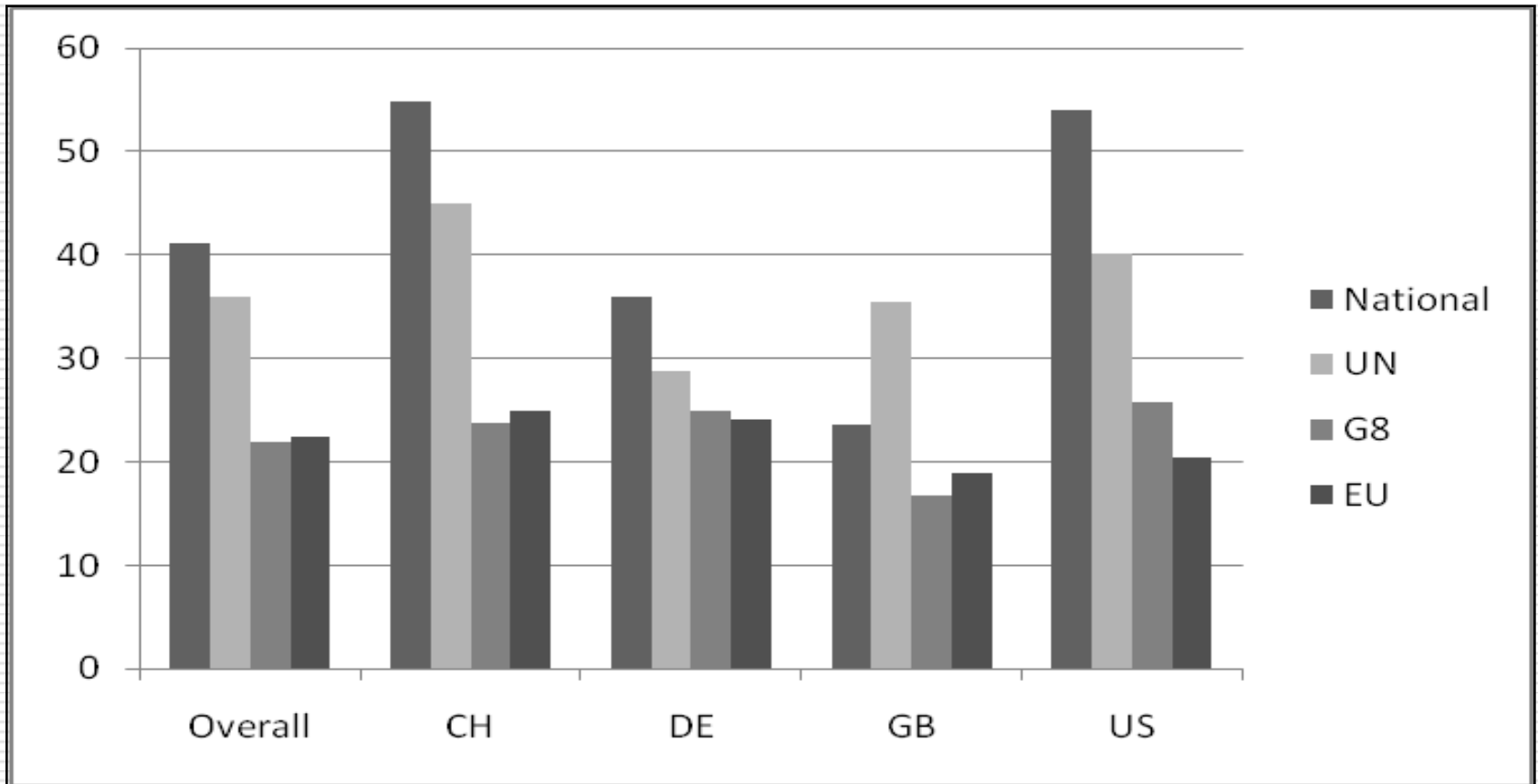
# Legitimation Intensity, International Regimes



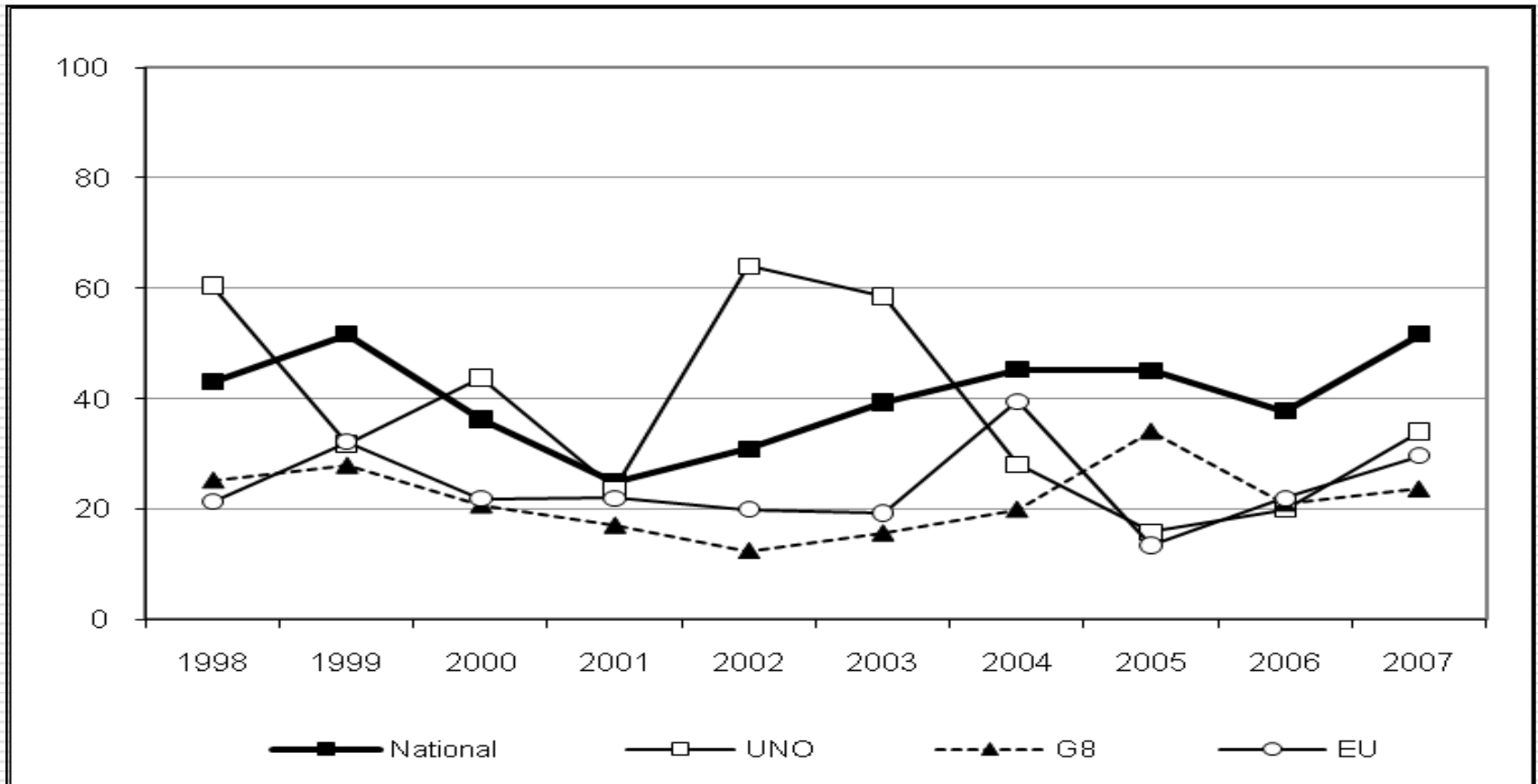
# Speaker Types



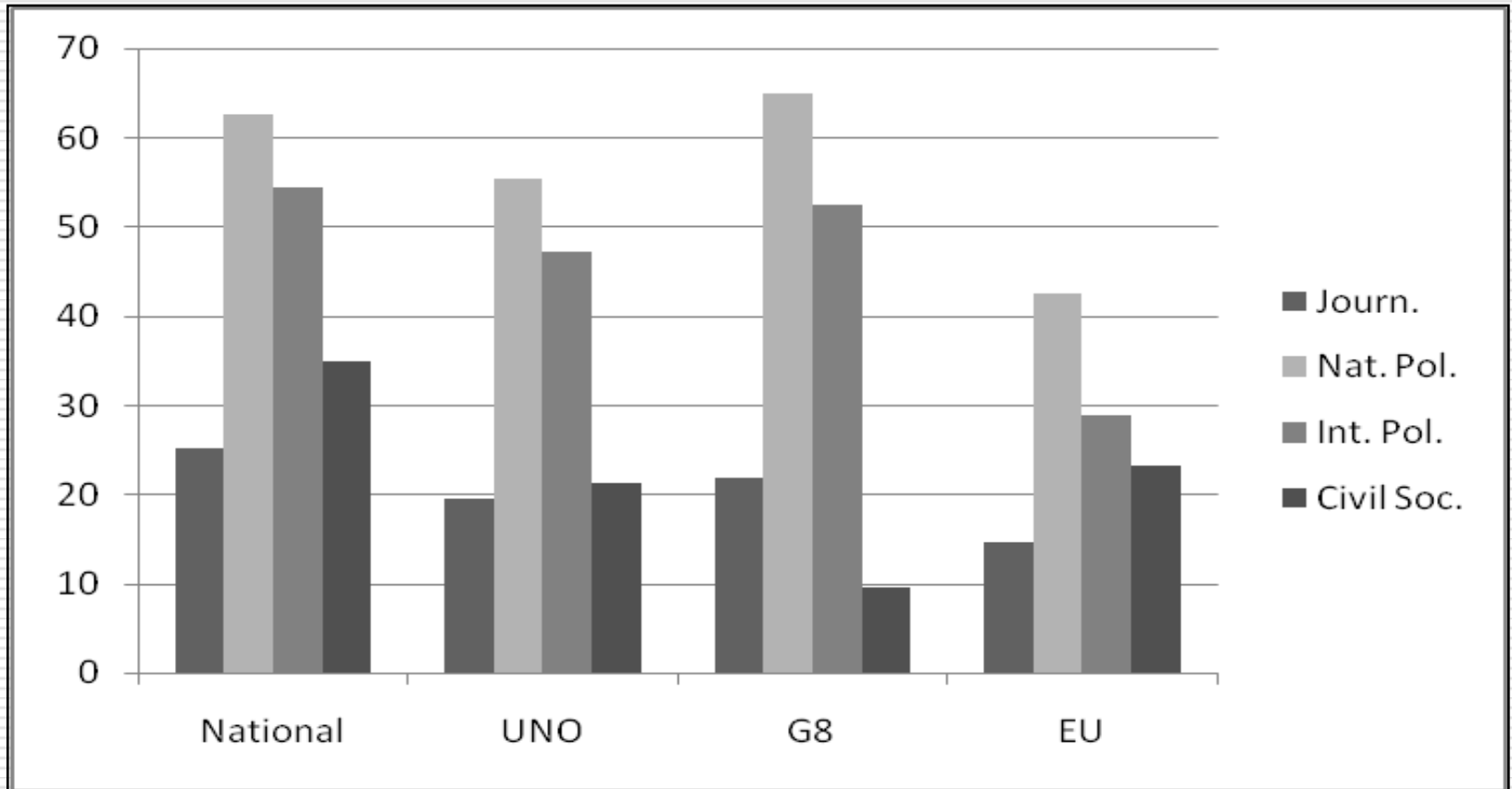
# Legitimacy Levels, National and International Regimes



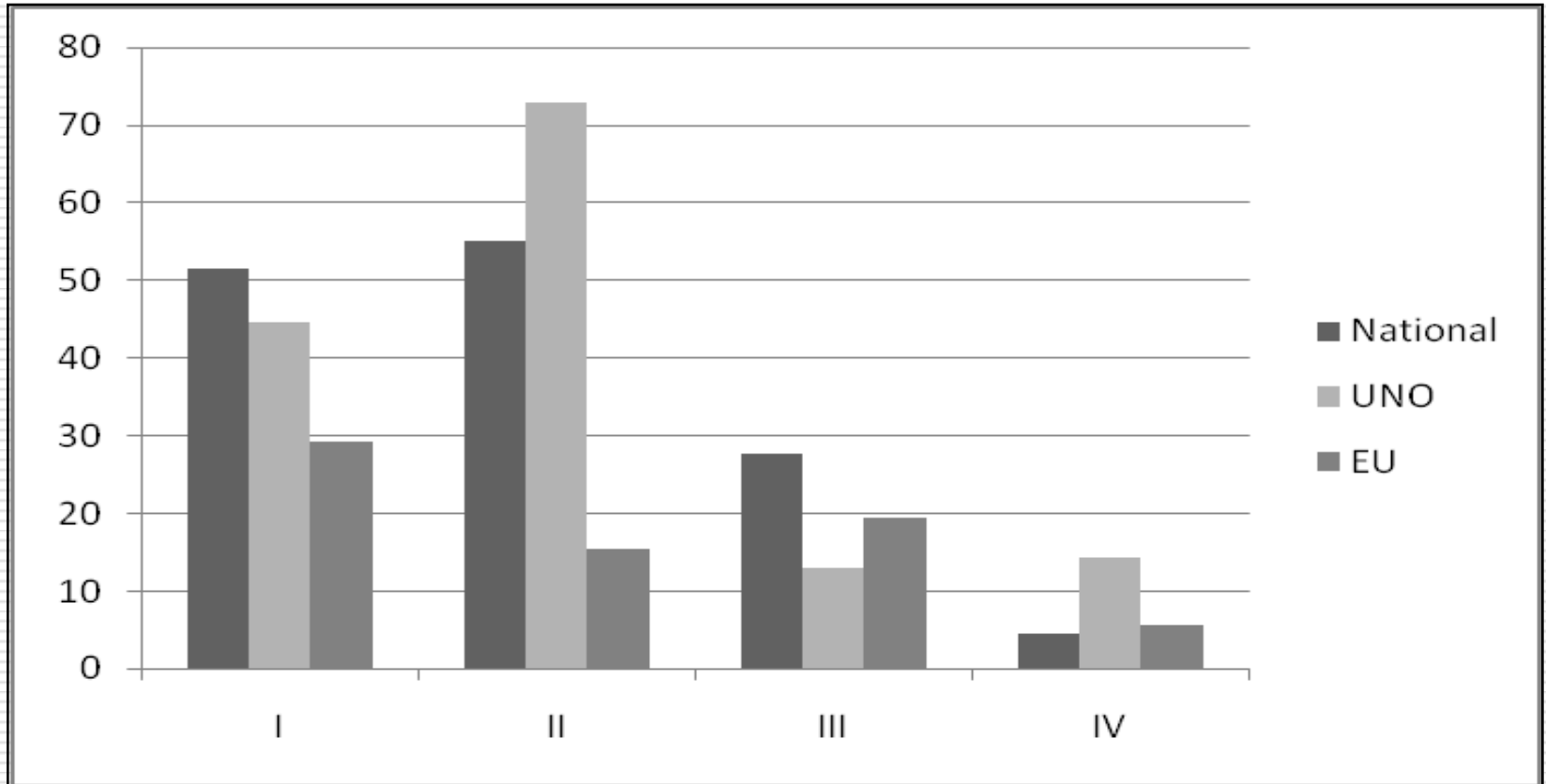
# Legitimacy Levels over Time



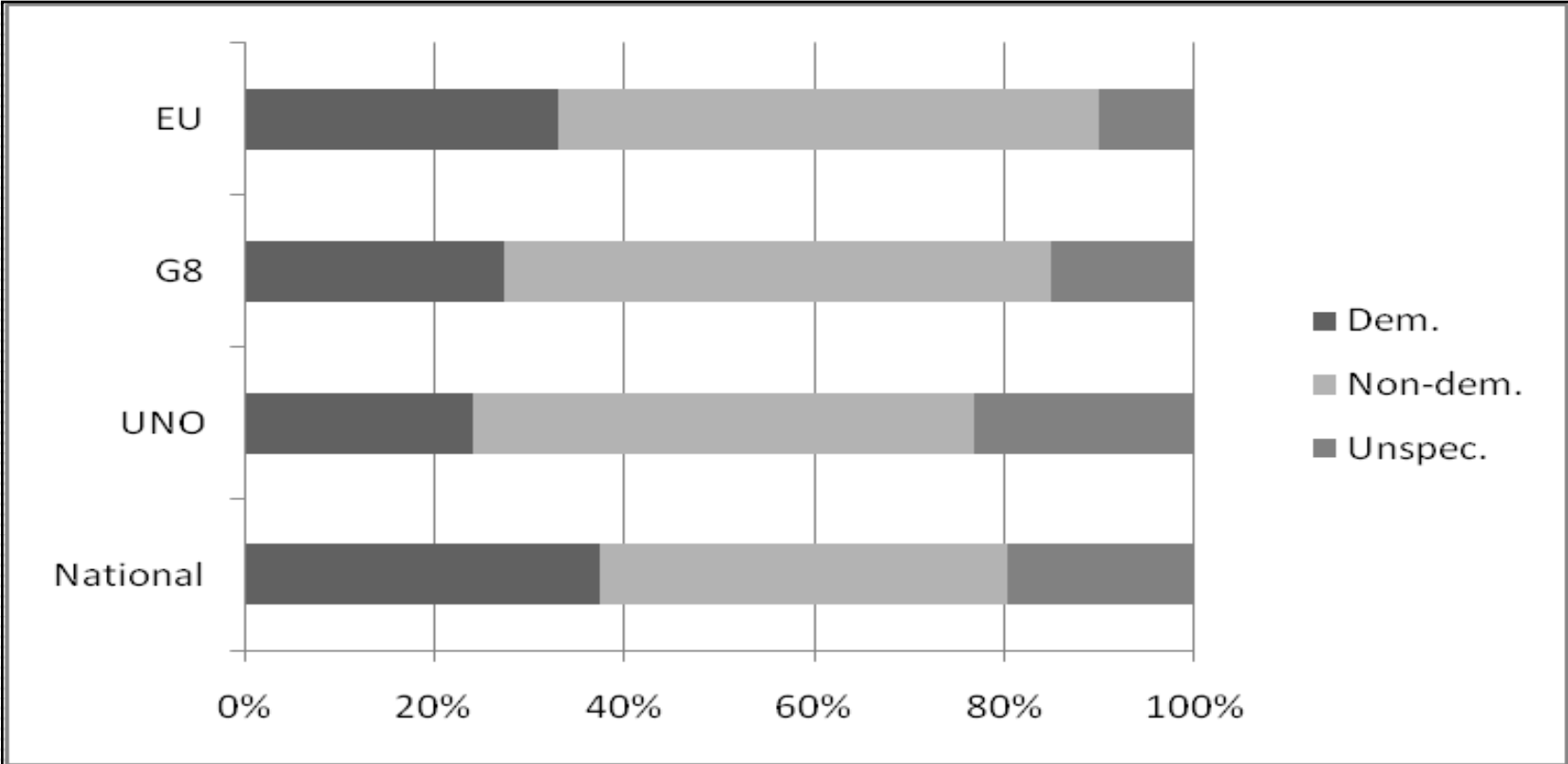
# Legitimacy Levels by Speaker Type



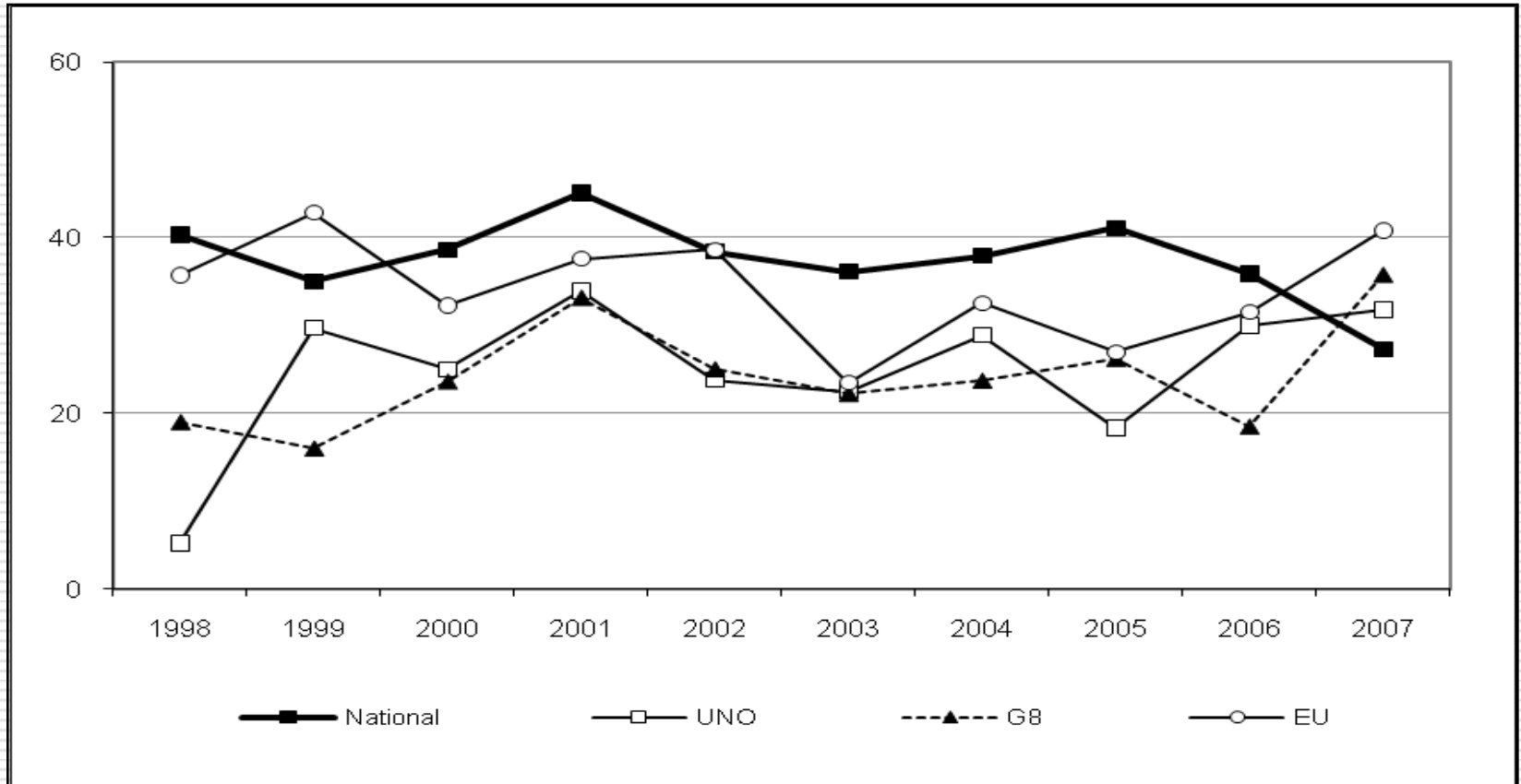
# Legitimacy Levels by Object Type



# Legitimation Criteria

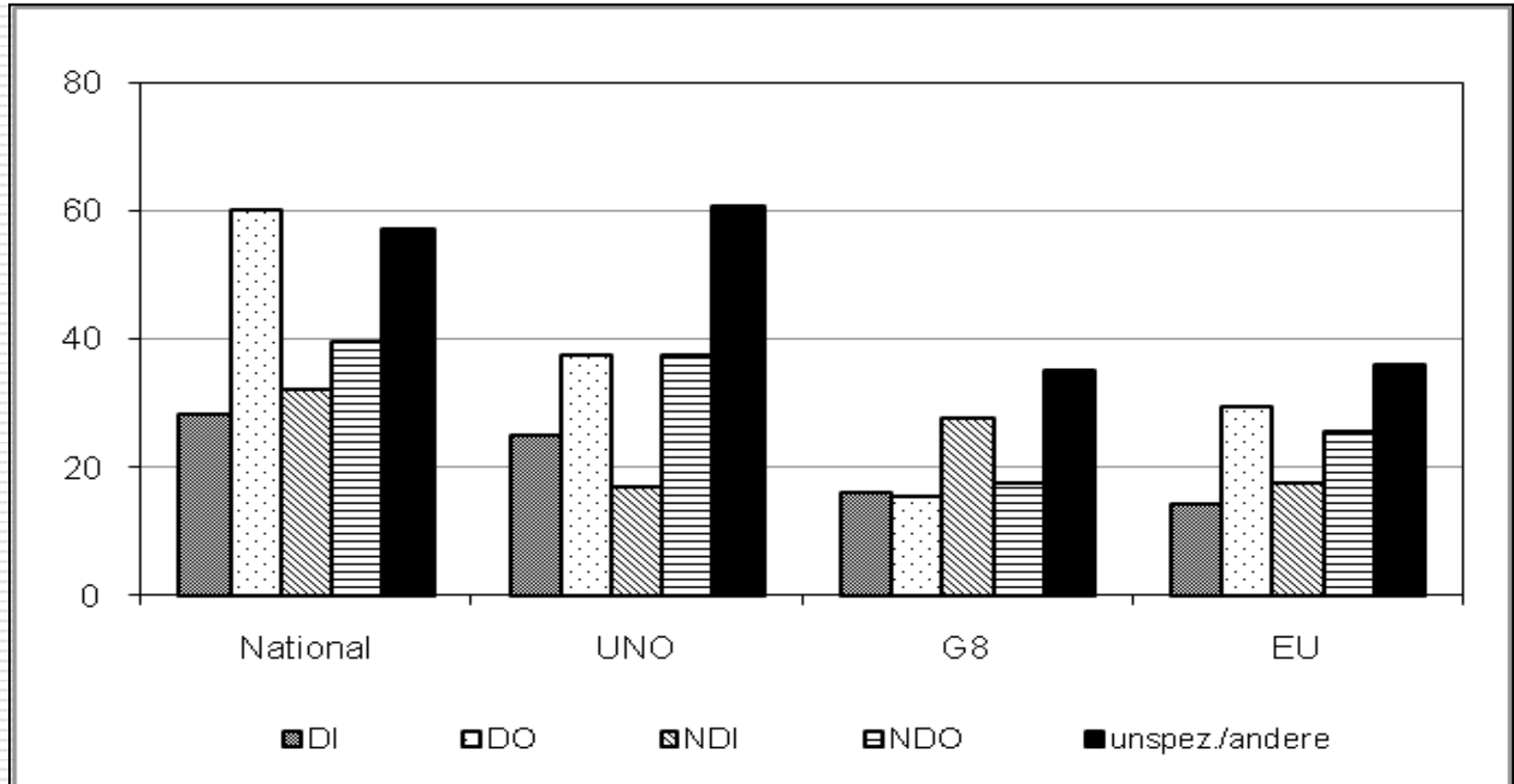


# Democratic Legitimation Criteria over Time

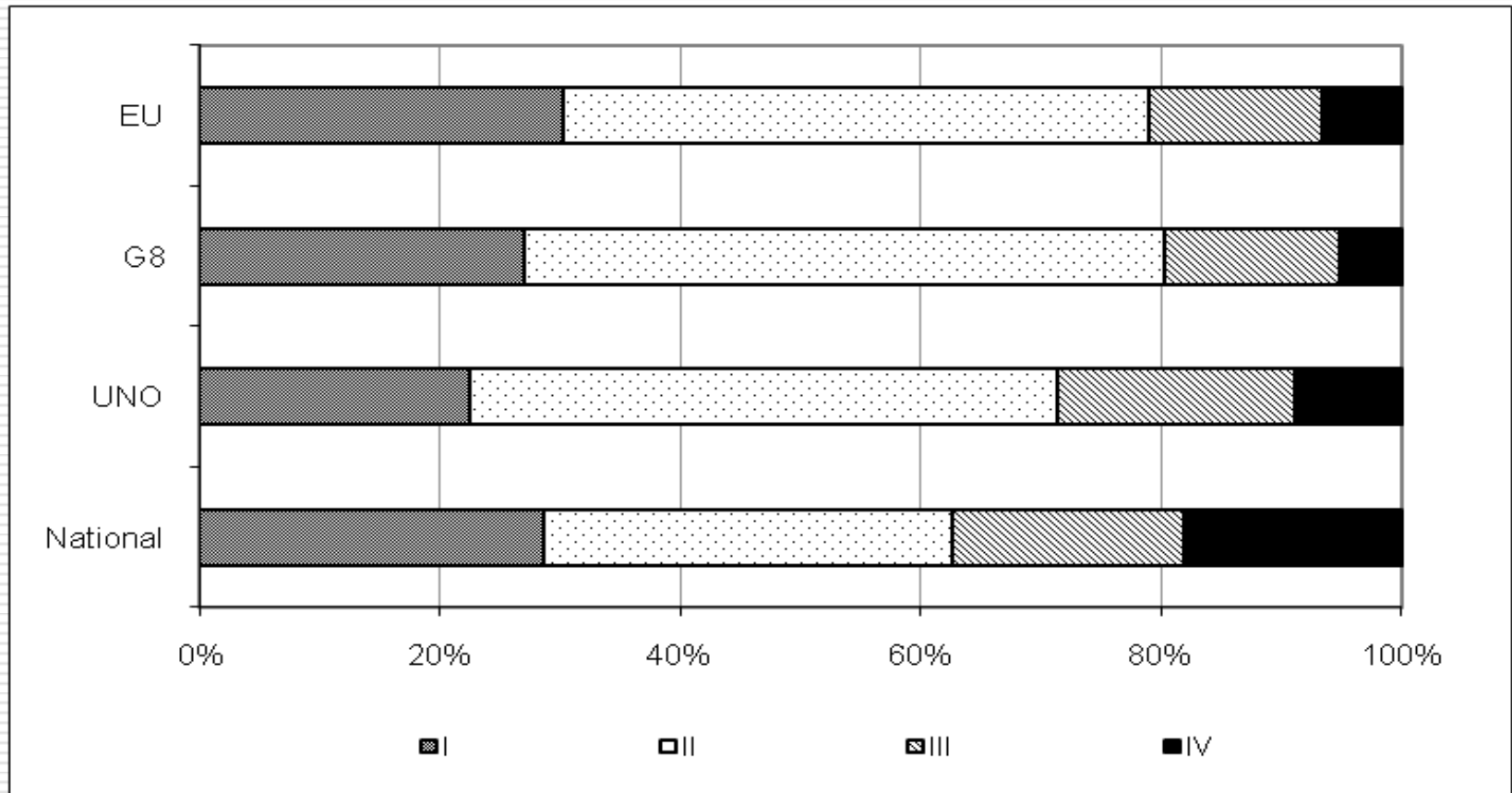




# Legitimacy Levels by Group of Criteria



# Good, (Very) Bad, and Ugly Scenarios



# Summary

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- ❑ International regimes, and especially the EU, are no longer a-legitimate
  - ❑ The democratic nation-state remains more legitimate than international regimes; the global and intergovernmental UN more than regional or supranational regimes
  - ❑ The standard of democratic (input) legitimacy is becoming more problematic, especially for the EU
  - ❑ Yet non-democratic (output) criteria provide no legitimation resources for international regimes either
  - ❑ Public legitimation discourses are more in line with the “tragic” or even “ironic” narratives than with “romance” or “comedy”
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