

Public opinion and attitudes towards the EU

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Course Outline

This course draws insights into those who are at the heart of democracy – the citizens. The seminar is designed to explore what dimensions of political attitudes exist, how they are distributed over citizens and countries, and how they are connected to the political system. It will set a special focus on the role of political attitudes in the multilevel system of the European Union. Thereafter, it focuses on the relationship between the EU, as a political system, and its citizens.

Its main purpose is to help students understand the mechanisms through which the EU relates to its citizens and to expose them to debates about EU's (lack of) legitimacy. It starts, therefore, by outlining the institutional structure of the EU and the public and/or scholarly opinions about these institutions. Following this, the course focuses on two related phenomena: the determinants of citizens' attitudes to the EU and towards European integration more broadly; and electoral behaviour in the EU, including European Parliament elections and referendums on EU issues. The final part of the syllabus has been tailored specifically to the research of the course instructor and to most recent academic debate: the polarisation of citizens' attitudes thesis versus the ambivalent and indifferent reactions. In the heart of this debate is the question of the politicisation of European integration process as a possible medicine to the legitimacy crisis of the EU and more precisely its alleged democratic deficit.

The course aims to develop students' critical appreciation of public opinion and elections in the EU. Students will become familiar with the range of theoretical interpretations of how European citizens politically think and politically behave in the EU political process. Upon completion of the course students should understand the role of economics, identity, and party/elite cues in determining whether individual citizens are Euro-sceptical, Euro-enthusiastic or Euro-indifferent. They should be able to understand how the determinants of citizens' attitudes vary across political and economic context. Finally, students should also be able to assess the arguments in favour of and against using direct democracy in order to compensate the alleged democratic deficit of the EU and be familiar with main predictors of political behaviour in referendums.

Course organization

There is no textbook required for this course. The material used consists in peer-review journal articles. For each session, the reading of two articles will be compulsory. Other readings will be suggested for those who feel inclined to have some further readings. The reading for each week must be completed before the class meets. As you read, try to think of questions about the topic that you can answer in your reading. The success of this course depends upon your active participation in class. Therefore, having read all the material before each class and having thought about the readings is crucial to having a meaningful conversation. Readings will be made available to students from Course 2 on. The syllabus may be slightly modified to take into account specific demands of the students.

Assessment

The course will be assessed through:

- a) **Readings and participation.** From Course 2 on, two readings (typically a published paper or book chapter) are proposed for every session and must be done. Participation is encouraged. Participation, particularly in the discussion of the texts, will count for 20% of the final grade.
- b) **A written essay** (5000 to 7000 words, ie 8 to 12 pages). The essay topic must be validated by the instructor. The paper is typically related to issues of the course sessions and will be encouraged to use empirical data, either analysed by the student or coming from published papers. The uses of surveys like Euro barometers, European Social Survey, European Values Surveys is most welcomed as is the (re-)analysis of qualitative data. This written essay will represent 80% of the final grade.

Evaluation criteria

The essay should be quite synthetic, with no more than 10-12 pages for the body of text. Sequence: title page / summary / introduction / body / conclusion / bibliography / appendixes (if any). For the structure of your text, you can rely on the articles presented in the course (they will be made available to you through the platform).

NB: introduction, body and conclusion must be written in continuous text (no bullet points). If you want to be more synthetic, use summary tables, graphs, timelines etc.

Item	Criteria	Grading (total: 20)
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Framing + research question➤ Hypothesis / hypotheses➤ Announcing text's structure	2
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Coherence➤ Rigour➤ Balance (size of respective sections)	2
Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Theoretical depth➤ Quality of demonstration (A to Z)➤ Use of relevant empirical examples➤ Continuity (transitions between sections)	10
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Reminder of research question and hypotheses➤ Synthesis of core results and 'added value' of report➤ Openings, next steps, limitations etc	2
Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Style, vocabulary, layout, written English etc.➤ Quality of bibliography➤ Precision of bibliographical citations in text➤ Interest/originality of appendixes	4

(+ overall “bonus” for originality: testing some particularly original hypotheses, linking up different theories, exploiting original data, gathering extra evidence (e.g. primary sources, interview) ...).

Course topics

Course 1: Wednesday 22nd January 2013, 13h30 – 15h30

Introduction: Part I – Does European public opinion exist? Do attitudes matter?

Politicians care about public opinion and to this respect the European Commission makes no exception quite to the contrary. Surveys provide political headlines and are increasingly used in political strategizing and campaigning; but how do they work and what are their limitations? How do citizens acquire information and convert it into opinions? How can we define and measure public support towards the EU? And from there how can we explain variation in support?

Course 2: Friday 14th February 2013, 14h00 – 16h00

Introduction: Part II – The origins of the Eurobarometer: a brief overview

The idea of European public opinion is closely linked to one instrument: the Eurobarometer. As the only tool to measure public opinion regularly, it has become something of a European institution that has made its contribution to research. Until recently, the Eurobarometer had no competition and this has had important implications on research as such. Indeed, the evolution of research on the mass public and European integration has been driven by a number of important factors, of which the most important is the corpus of publicly available data. This session will present the Eurobarometer both in terms of strength and weakness.

Course 3: Tuesday 4th March 2014, 9h00 – 13h00

Part I: The individual determinants of citizens' attitudes to EU integration: Economics or Identity?

The purpose of this session is to understand why some European citizens are broadly in favour of the EU and the integration process and why other citizens are opposed to it. The session teases out the extent to which Euro-scepticism and Euro-enthusiasm are driven by citizens' economic situation or by citizens' sense of national identity. This is indeed a classical question when studying the individual determinants of citizens' attitudes to EU integration.

Part II: The contextual determinants of citizens' attitudes to EU integration: When the context matters

The factors causing citizens' views on EU integration may vary across citizens depending on the economic context of the citizen (e.g. whether the citizen lives in a rich country or a poor country). But the economical differences are far the only one that needs to be considered in order to understand the national differences in terms of support or resistance towards European integration. This session explores the influence that context can have on citizens' EU views.

Course 4 – Friday, 28th March 2014, 13h00 – 17h00

Part I: (Not-) turning out to vote in European Parliament elections

Is voting in EP elections similar to voting in national general elections? Do voters rely on the same types of issues? Do voters use EP elections to pass judgement on their domestic incumbent government? To what extent are EP elections actually about the EU and associated issues of European integration? Here, we assess whether EU political concerns influence citizens decision making.

Part II: Referendums

Does direct democracy encourage quality deliberation by citizens on key EU matters or do citizens merely use EU referendums as a device to punish unpopular domestic governments? This session aims to assess the evidence relating to how citizens make up their minds how to vote in EU referendums.

Course 5 – Thursday, 3rd April 2014, 9h00 – 13h00

Part I: Where are we now? The politicization of European integration and the question of (non-) polarisation of citizens' attitudes

Have European citizens become increasingly Eurosceptic over the last two decades, turning their backs on European integration? Though many journalists, politicians and academics argue that they have, this session suggests that reactions to European integration cannot be reduced uniquely to a rise in Euroscepticism, but that indifference and ambivalence need also to be brought into the picture when studying EU legitimacy and its politicisation.

Part II: Summary and Conclusion – Presentation and validation of topics

Readings

Course 3

Gabel, M. (1998). Public Support for European Integration: An Empirical Test of Five Theories. *Journal of Politics*, 60(2), 333-354.

* Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (2004). Does Identity or Economic Rationality Drive Public Opinion on European Integration. *Political Science and Politics*, 37(3), 415-420.

Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (2005). Calculation, Community and Cues: Public Opinion on European Integration. *European Union Politics*, 6(4), 419-443.

Course 4

Anderson, C. J. (1998). When in Doubt, Use Proxies: Attitudes toward Domestic Politics and Support for European Integration. *Comparative Political Studies*, 31(5), 569-601.

Duchesne, S., & Frogner, A.-P. (2008). National and European Identifications: A Dual Relationship. *Comparative European Politics*, 6, 143-168.

Course 5

Hurrelmann, A., Gora, A., & Wagner, A. (2013). The Politicization of European Integration: More than a Elite Affair ? *Political Studies*.

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Public Support for European Integration: An Empirical Test of Five Theories

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Public opinion, through its impact on mass behavior, shapes and constrains the process of European integration. Why do citizens vary in their support for European integration? Previous research offers a variety of sometimes conflicting explanations, but the available evidence is insufficient to determine which explanations are valid. This article seeks to contribute to the resolution of this controversy by empirically examining five prominent theories of support for integration. Through regression analyses of Eurobarometer surveys from the period 1978–1992, the analysis shows that the partisan context of integrative reforms and the utilitarian consequences of integrative policy provide robust explanations for variation in support. In contrast, two other prominent theories—political values and cognitive mobilization—are only valid in a limited context, and in this context they exert a small substantive impact on support.

Public attitudes, through mass political behavior, shape and constrain the process of European integration. The influence of public attitudes is most apparent in national referenda on integration. For example, the 1992 Danish referendum on the Maastricht Treaty delayed and ultimately modified the institutional reform of the European Union (EU). Public attitudes also influence EU politics through traditional channels of citizen politics such as lobbying, public protest (e.g., French farmers), and elections. More generally, public attitudes provide the political foundation for integration. Since EU law lacks a supranational means of enforcement, the endurance of the EU political system vitally depends on public compliance with and acceptance of EU law (Caldeira and Gibson 1995; Gibson and Caldeira 1995). Thus, public attitudes—particularly public support—are an important component of European integration.

Why do EU citizens vary in their support for European integration? Several previous studies have identified systematic differences in individual-level support for integration related to partisanship, age, income, occupation, cognitive skills, and political values (Anderson and Reichert 1996; Feld and Wildgen

The author is grateful for the advice and suggestions of three anonymous referees, Chris Anderson, Mark Franklin, Greg Hager, Harvey Palmer, G. Bingham Powell, Chuck Shipan, and Guy Whitten on earlier drafts of this paper. Any errors are the responsibility of the author.

1976; Franklin, Marsh, and McLaren 1994; Franklin, Marsh, Wlezien 1994; Franklin, Van der Eijk, and Marsh 1995; Gabel 1998; Gabel and Palmer 1995; Handley 1981; Hewstone 1986; Inglehart, Rabier, and Reif 1991; Janssen 1991). However, much controversy remains concerning the theoretical microfoundations for these empirical regularities and their implications for European integration.¹ Consequently, in order to predict and explain mass behavior concerning European integration, we need to discern which (if any) of these theories is accurate.

An obvious method for resolving this theoretical controversy is to examine the empirical veracity of the different theoretical claims. Unfortunately, existing empirical evidence is insufficient for such an evaluation. Previous research suffers from two methodological problems. First, previous empirical studies relied primarily on bivariate analyses, which may conceal intervening or spurious relationships. This is an important problem because many of the theories offer explanations for the same evidence. For instance, education may be positively related to support for integration because it raises cognitive mobilization or because it enables citizens to exploit economic opportunities in an integrated market. Without controlling for alternative explanations, it is impossible to test accurately these competing theoretical claims.

Second, the results of these studies—and the validity of the explanations they tested—are difficult to evaluate because they employed different survey questions as dependent variables. This is not merely a problem for comparing empirical results. Since no study has established that a particular measure of support for integration is related to support for actual integrative policies, it is unclear whether the findings of these studies are relevant for making inferences about mass behavior regarding actual European integration.

In this article, I seek to contribute to the resolution of this theoretical debate by performing a rigorous empirical test of five prominent individual-level theories of public support for European integration. In the first section of the paper, I present these five theories and specify testable hypotheses. In the second section, I statistically test these hypotheses using Eurobarometer survey data from 1978–92. To overcome the problems of previous studies, the statistical analysis uses a dependent variable that measures support for actual integrative measures and introduces controls for a variety of potentially confounding factors. In the third section, I discuss the empirical results and their implications for our understanding of public support for European integration.

¹For example, extant theories offer contradictory hypotheses concerning how citizens respond to the content of integrative reforms. One theory contends that citizens' support reflects their political values (e.g., postmaterialism), which are largely unrelated to the content of integrative policies (Inglehart 1970b; Inglehart, Rabier, and Reif 1991). In contrast, a second theory contends that citizens' attitudes reflect their economic concerns related to the content and consequences of integrative policy (Gabel and Palmer 1995).

Five Explanations of Public Support for European Integration

While there are numerous anecdotal and event-specific explanations for public attitudes toward European integration, this article will focus on five theoretical explanations. I chose these explanations because they offer generalizable hypotheses for which previous studies offer at least some empirical evidence. Thus, they are viable explanations that provide a theoretical basis for prediction and explanation. This section provides a brief description of these five theories.

Cognitive Mobilization

The first theory to be tested involves the relationship between citizens' cognitive skills and their attitudes toward European integration. Ronald Inglehart (1970a), who first investigated this relationship, argued that high cognitive mobilization, characterized by a high level of political awareness and well-developed skills in political communication, enables citizens to identify with a supranational political community. This argument is based on two assumptions. First, Inglehart (1970a) contended that well-developed cognitive skills are necessary for understanding information about European integration because this information is often at a high level of abstraction. Second, according to Inglehart's operationalization of this hypothesis, the influence of cognitive mobilization is message independent—all information about integration promotes support (e.g., Inglehart, Rabier, and Reif 1991).² Thus, as a citizen's cognitive mobilization increases, she is more familiar with and less threatened by the topic of European integration (Inglehart, Rabier, and Reif 1991, 147; Janssen 1991, 467).

Inglehart, Rabier, and Reif (1991) and Janssen (1991) provided evidence supporting this hypothesis. Inglehart et al. (1991) used bivariate analyses of Eurobarometer surveys of all EU member-states from 1973–86. Janssen (1991) found evidence from the 1973–89 Eurobarometer surveys in Germany, France, Italy, and the United Kingdom, while controlling for political value orientations. However, these studies did not include necessary control variables for alternative and potentially confounding explanations that will be discussed below.

Political Values

The second theory to be tested is Ronald Inglehart's theory of a Silent Revolution, which is arguably the most often cited explanation for Europeans' attitudes toward European integration (Janssen 1991, 444). Inglehart (1970b, 1990) posited that support for European integration is associated with value orientations regarding economic and political issues. According to the theory,

²Note that Inglehart (1970a, 48) mentioned that cognitive mobilization could be related to the content of elite messages. However, scholars have neither theoretically developed nor empirically examined this contention.

citizens' political attitudes are shaped by the socioeconomic conditions surrounding their formative, or preadult, years. These conditions are expected to instill certain values and attitudes, including national identity, that tend to persist over an adult's lifetime. Value priorities primarily concerned with economic and physical security are considered "materialist," and value priorities that include such needs as intellectual fulfillment, self-actualization, and belonging are "post-materialist." Inglehart, Rabier, and Reif (1991, 152) argued that the EU represents a vehicle for social, political, and economic reform toward a less nationalistic, more egalitarian society that would be more attractive to postmaterialists than materialists. Consequently, citizens with postmaterialist values should be more supportive of European integration than those with materialist values.

The existing empirical evidence regarding this theory is inconclusive. Evidence from surveys of the publics of the original EU member-states is consistent with this explanation (Anderson and Reichert 1996; Inglehart 1970b; Inglehart, Rabier, and Reif 1991, 152) while more recent and comprehensive evidence is unclear. Anderson and Reichert (1996) found that the hypothesis held for citizens in the original member-states but that postmaterialists expressed less support than materialists in the later member-states. Janssen (1991) found scant supportive evidence once he controlled for cognitive skills, but he only studied public attitudes in four EU member-states. While these findings are suggestive, they remain dubious because they derive from analyses that lacked controls for alternative explanations. Several factors (e.g., income, education, and partisanship) that are potentially related to both support for integration and political values need to be controlled for in order to estimate the independent effect of values on support for integration.³

Utilitarian Appraisals of Integrative Policy

The third theory to be tested is a utilitarian model of public support for European integration first proposed by Gabel and Palmer (1995) and further developed by Gabel (1998). Gabel and Palmer (1995) argued that EU citizens in different socioeconomic situations experience different costs and benefits from integrative policy; that these differences in economic welfare shape their attitudes toward integration; and consequently, that citizens' support for integration is positively related to their welfare gains from integrative policy. Specifically, Gabel and Palmer investigated how the economic consequences of EU market liberalization for capital, goods, and labor influence support for integration. They argued that market liberalization provides differential benefits for EU citizens

³Of those who have conducted studies, Anderson and Reichert (1996) provide the most rigorous examination of the political values hypothesis. They control for several individual-level characteristics: education, income, age, gender, and being employed as a farmer. However, they did not control for three of the theories discussed in this article that may confound the relationship between values and support: cognitive mobilization, class partisanship, and support for government.

depending on their physical proximity to other EU markets and their capital resources—both human and financial.

According to Gabel and Palmer (1995), the liberalization of the EU labor markets affects citizens differently according to their level of education and occupational skills—that is, their human capital. Human capital is a strong indicator of a citizen's ability to adapt to the occupational competition introduced by a liberalized EU labor market (Tsoukalis 1993, 230). Thus, Gabel and Palmer (1995) predicted that a citizen's support for integration would be positively related to his or her level of education and of occupational skills.

Second, Gabel and Palmer (1995) posited that the liberalization of capital markets and the movement toward Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) affect EU citizens differently depending on their income level. Wealthy EU citizens are more likely to benefit from capital liberalization since they can exploit the greater investment opportunities provided by more open financial markets (Frieden 1991, 434). In addition, the European Monetary System (EMS) provides a general benefit to holders of financial assets: low inflation.⁴ In contrast, EU citizens with low incomes are generally hurt by capital liberalization because they depend primarily on wages from labor for their welfare. Capital liberalization reduces their welfare by making it less costly for capital to move rather than accede to labor demands (Frieden 1991, 434). In addition, low-income citizens are more dependent upon social welfare spending, which is constrained by capital mobility and the EMS.⁵

Finally, Gabel and Palmer (1995) argued that the free movement of goods and people influences citizens differently depending on where they reside. Europeans residing near borders with other EU members benefit more from increased economic interaction between the neighboring countries than do nonborder residents. Thus, Gabel and Palmer (1995) posited that, all things being equal, residents of border regions should express greater support for integration than residents of nonborder regions.

Gabel and Palmer (1995) and Anderson and Reichert (1996) presented evidence from multivariate analyses that supported these hypotheses. Income, education, occupational skills, and proximity to border regions were all positively associated with support for integration. However, this evidence is not conclusive because the analyses did not include controls for several alternative explanations. For example, since education, income, and occupational skills are

⁴Due to the anti-inflationary bias of German monetary policy, membership in the Exchange Rate Mechanism of the EMS requires low domestic inflation so as to maintain exchange-rate parities. In general, this anti-inflationary bias has also been present in non-ERM member-states, as they adjusted their economies in anticipation of eventual ERM membership. This anti-inflationary bias represents a benefit for citizens holding capital assets, since the value of financial assets is inversely related to inflation.

⁵The anti-inflationary bias of the EMS limits spending on social welfare programs by constraining its members' fiscal policies.

positively correlated with cognitive skills, the evidence supporting the utilitarian theory may merely capture the influence of cognitive mobilization on support.

Class Partisanship

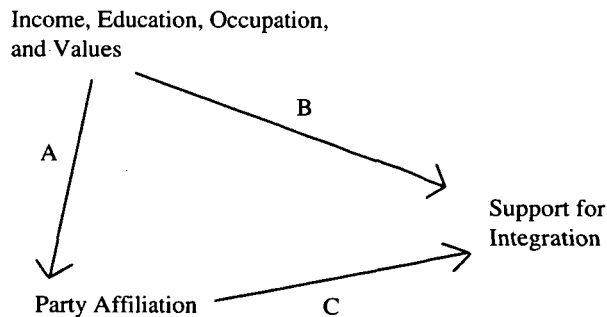
Many studies of public attitudes toward European integration have investigated how citizens' partisanship relates to their support for integration (Franklin, Marsh, and Wlezien 1994; Franklin, Marsh, and McLaren 1994; Franklin, Van der Eijk, and Marsh 1995; Inglehart, Rabier, and Reif 1991). A general contention is that citizens adopt attitudes toward integration that reflect the position of the party they support (but see Siune and Svensson 1993). That is, the party shapes its supporters' attitudes toward integration independent of their personal characteristics (e.g., occupation, income, and values) that might influence both their choice of party and support for integration. The arrow labeled C in Figure 1 represents this partisan influence.

Specifically, Inglehart, Rabier, and Reif (1991) identified a class-based partisan cleavage in support for European integration. They found in Eurobarometer surveys from 1973–89 that supporters of Left parties were less favorable toward integration than supporters of Right parties, and they attributed this difference to the positions of Left and Right parties on European integration. Generally, parties of the Left (particularly Communist parties) have been more skeptical of integration than parties of the Right because of their perception that integration is a manifestation of capitalist forces (Wessels 1995). Consequently, Left parties have been generally less supportive of integration than parties of the Right (Budge, Robertson, and Hearl 1987).

It is important to note, however, that this empirical evidence came from a simple bivariate relationship that did not control for personal political and economic characteristics that may be related to partisanship and support for

FIGURE 1

Partisanship and Support for Integration



integration.⁶ Thus, the apparent relationship between class-based partisanship and support for integration may be spurious. With reference to Figure 2, this means that the arrow labeled C may not exist. Of course, one might also argue that arrow B does not exist because partisanship accounts for the relationship between personal characteristics (e.g., income) and support for integration. To resolve this debate, the ensuing analysis will estimate the independent effects of these personal characteristics and partisanship.

Support for Government

Another group of scholars posits that parties play a different role in shaping public support for integration. Several studies by Franklin and other scholars (1994, 1994, 1995) have argued that voters tie their support for integration to their support for their government (the presidency in France). The prime minister of each member-state (the president in France) is responsible for negotiating all integrative reforms and for designing and representing his or her national position vis-à-vis the EU. Consequently, these studies contend that citizens project their evaluations of the party of the national leader onto integration.⁷ Evidence from aggregate-level bivariate analyses of referendum votes in France, Ireland, and Denmark supports this assertion (Franklin, Van der Eijk, and Marsh 1995). However, there is no evidence that this relationship holds outside referenda or in the presence of controls for other predictors of support for integration.

Measurement and Methodology

Data

To test these competing hypotheses, I use a series of ordinary least squares regressions of Eurobarometer survey data from fall 1978 through spring 1992 including all EU member-states.⁸ I chose these data for both theoretical and

⁶Some readers might criticize the "class partisanship" hypothesis on the grounds that strong opposition to integration currently comes from extreme parties, not mainstream parties from the Left or the Right (Taggart 1995). While this may be true, it is not particularly relevant to the time period of this analysis. The only relevant concern for this study is that evidence in support of the "class partisanship" hypothesis could be explained by the influence of extreme parties. This seems implausible, since extreme parties exist on both the Left and the Right and command a small amount of electoral support (particularly during the period of this study) relative to the mainstream parties.

⁷Note that the relationship between citizens' support for government and their support for integration may be attenuated when the government is not seen as clearly prointegration, such as the British Labor government of 1974 and the British Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher, particularly in 1987.

⁸The Eurobarometer data were originally collected by Jacques-Rene Rabier, Helene Riffault, and Ronald Inglehart, and made available by the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research. Neither the collectors of the Eurobarometer data nor the consortium bear any responsibility for the interpretations presented here. Note that I exclude surveys of nations that were not yet members in the year surveyed (e.g., Portuguese in 1986).

practical reasons. Theoretically, I want to test the validity of these hypotheses independent of time and nation. Since these hypotheses specify individual-level mechanisms presumably common to all EU citizens in all years, using this dataset allows for the most general test of these hypotheses while controlling for national and temporal factors. In addition, most of the previous empirical tests of these explanations were conducted upon Eurobarometer data from this time period. By using this dataset, I reduce the chance that any discrepancy between this analysis and those of previous studies is an artifact of the data.

A large dataset is also necessary on practical grounds due to multicollinearity. In any one year for a particular nation, several of the explanatory variables—e.g., occupation, income, values, and partisanship—are highly correlated. This generally serves to widen confidence intervals and reduce the power of hypothesis tests for each parameter. A simple solution to the problem of multicollinearity is to obtain more data (Corlett 1990), which is achieved in this case by merging surveys together. The combination of these surveys maximizes the independent variation from which to draw statistical inferences and thereby enhances our confidence in the estimated relationships for these variables. Surveys prior to fall 1978 were omitted because they lacked the necessary questions for the dependent variable, and surveys after spring 1992 were omitted due to unavailability.

Dependent Variable

To measure citizens' support for European integration, one would ideally use an indicator that explicitly captures variation in support for actual integrative reforms over time and across nations. Unfortunately, such a measure is not available for any substantial sequence of surveys. Occasionally, the Eurobarometer includes survey questions related to specific integrative reforms (e.g., monetary union), but these questions are asked in only a small number of surveys and sometimes in only a subset of EU member-states. Consequently, one must construct an indicator of support for integration from survey questions of a more general nature.

Previous researchers identified the following two Eurobarometer survey questions as general indicators of support for integration:

Membership⁹: Generally speaking, do you think that (your country's) membership in the European Community (Common Market) is a bad thing (1), neither good nor bad (2), or a good thing (3)?

Unify¹⁰: In general, are you for or against efforts being made to unify Western Europe? very much against (1); somewhat against (2); somewhat for (3); very much for (4).

⁹Responses of "don't know" were excluded from the analysis since respondents could express indifference through the intermediate category. Note that the inclusion of the "don't know" responses as an intermediate category did not alter the results reported in tables 1 and 2.

¹⁰Responses of "don't know" were coded as 2.5.

Researchers have not established empirically that these questions are related to support for actual integrative policies. This casts doubt on any inferences drawn from these survey measures. Consequently, before adopting either of these questions as a dependent variable, I will assess whether they are related to support for integration.

To answer this question, I examined the relationship between responses to these two questions and responses to four questions from the Fall 1988 Eurobarometer that explicitly asked respondents whether they supported concrete proposals for European integration: a collective organization for defense, a single European currency, a common foreign policy, and a European Government responsible to the European Parliament.¹¹

Correlations among responses to these four questions are displayed in Table 1.¹² The strength and direction of these correlations indicate that EU citizens who were supportive of a particular integrative measure were also supportive of the other proposals. This suggests that respondents have a general pro- or anti-integration orientation that informs their support for integrative proposals. To capture this orientation, I combined responses to these variables to construct an index of support for integrative policies ranging from 0 (against all proposals) to 4 (support all proposals). This index, called *Policy*, is highly correlated with each of the four questions (see Table 1).

How do the survey responses to *Unify* and *Membership* relate to *Policy*? The correlations of *Policy* with *Unify* and *Membership* are 0.53 and 0.47,

TABLE 1
Pearson's Correlation Coefficients for Integrative Policy Variables

	Common Defense	Common Foreign Policy	Single Currency	European Government	Policy
Common Defense	—	.27	.21	.32	.67
Common Foreign Policy	—	—	.41	.44	.77
Single Currency	—	—	—	.45	.75
European Government	—	—	—	—	.79

All correlations are significant at .001 level.

¹¹Each of the four question asked the respondent if she were for or against implementing the particular proposal between the twelve countries of the EC by 1992. I coded a response of "against" as (0), "don't know" as (0.5), and "for" as (1).

¹²In calculating the correlations, national weights were applied to all observations so as to provide a representative sample of the EU population. In addition, an identical analysis was conducted that excluded all responses of "don't know". The results were very similar to those presented here. In interpreting the correlations, remember that discrete variables allow only a crude representations of the actual continuum of responses to each question. This tends to attenuate the magnitude of the correlations among the variables (Kim and Mueller 1978, 74).

respectively. Thus, both *Unify* and *Membership* capture respondents' support for actual integration. Their correlations with *Policy* are in the expected direction and large given that the survey questions have a small number of response categories.¹³ However, a better indicator of support would include more response categories so as to capture more fully the range of support for integration. Since *Membership* and *Unify* are the only appropriate and consistently asked survey questions, the sole option is to combine responses to these questions into a single indicator. Gabel and Palmer (1995, 14) argued—but never demonstrated—that this combined indicator provides a better measure of the underlying level of support for integration than either question alone.

To demonstrate this, I created a variable, *Support*, by adding together responses to *Membership* and *Unify*. The correlation between *Support* and *Policy* is 0.57, which indicates that *Support* is indeed more strongly correlated with *Policy* than either *Unify* or *Membership* alone. Consequently, I use *Support* as the dependent variable in the regression analysis. In the regression analysis, I scale *Support* so that it ranges from 0 to 100, with higher scores representing greater support for integration. This scale, although not continuous, eases interpretation of the results.

Explanatory Variables

The explanatory variables are constructed so as to examine the five individual-level theories of support for European integration. To test the cognitive mobilization theory, I adopt the same survey question that was used in previous studies (e.g., Inglehart, Rabier, and Reif 1991, 147): "When you get together with friends, would you say you discuss political matters, frequently, occasionally, or never?" I created a dummy variable for each response category. The expectation is that support will increase with frequency of political discussion.¹⁴

To test the political values theory, I use a survey question adopted by Inglehart for this purpose in previous studies (Inglehart 1990). Respondents were asked to choose what should be their nation's goals (first and second choice) from the following list of options: maintaining order; (c) giving the people more say in important government decisions; (c) fighting rising prices; and (d) protecting freedom of speech. Respondents choosing (a) or (b) as their first and second choices were coded as "materialist." Respondents choosing (b) or (d) as their

¹³Recall that correlations between discrete variables are generally attenuated due to the limited variation in responses (Kim and Mueller 1978, 74). Thus, the magnitude of the correlation is, at least in part, a result of the limited number of response categories for *Membership* and *Unify*.

¹⁴Note that previous research has also used a question concerning the frequency with which a respondent "persuades friends to share his views" as a measure cognitive mobilization. I do not include both measures in the analysis for two reasons. First, if they are included simultaneously they may be severely collinear. Second, the results and implications of the regressions in table 6 are very similar when the alternative measure of cognitive mobilization is employed. These supplemental regression results are available from the author on request.

first and second choices were designated as "postmaterialist." The theoretical expectation is that postmaterialists will be more supportive of European integration than materialists.¹⁵

To test the utilitarian theory, I identified respondents according to occupational skill level, income level, education level, and residence. The coding replicates that used by Gabel and Palmer (1995). First, I constructed occupational dummy variables for manual laborers, unemployed citizens, executives, and professionals.¹⁶ The expectation based on human capital is that manual laborers and the unemployed will be less supportive of integration than executives or professionals. Second, I constructed dummy variables for four levels of income¹⁷ and for four levels of education.¹⁸ The expectation is that support will increase with income (financial capital) and with education (human capital). Third, I constructed a dummy variable for respondents living in regions bordering on EU member-states.¹⁹

To test the class partisanship theory, I coded respondents according to whether they supported a party of the Left or the Right. In all of the surveys from 1978–92, respondents were asked a variation of the following question²⁰: "If there were a general election tomorrow, which party would you support?" Based on responses to this question, I created two dummy variables: *Support for Proletariat Party* and *Support for Bourgeois Party*. *Support for Proletariat Party* is coded 1 for respondents who named a party that represents

¹⁵Note that previous research indicates that this survey question may not in fact measure materialist or postmaterialist values and that the theory itself is suspect (e.g., Clarke and Dutt 1991; Duch and Taylor 1993). For the purposes of this article, I am only interested in testing whether the previous empirical results regarding this theory hold up when appropriate controls are added to the analysis. Thus, I employ this survey question because it replicates the one used in previous studies.

¹⁶The occupational dummy variables are coded according to the categories reported in the Eurobarometers. Eurobarometer surveys beginning in 1989 adopted more specific categories than those prior to 1989. For these later surveys, I combined occupational categories so that they matched those of the pre-1989 surveys.

¹⁷Note that I follow Gabel and Palmer (1995) and use income defined in the Eurobarometer according to national quartiles, not EU-wide quartiles. This is appropriate because the adverse effects of integration on those of "low income" concern how capital mobility and the anti-inflationary bias of the EMS constrain welfare spending. Welfare benefits are distributed according to a citizen's relative national income. Thus, by defining income in comparison to other citizens from the same nation, I can distinguish citizens according to whether their welfare is enhanced or reduced by European integration.

¹⁸Educational categories are divided according to the age the respondent completed his or her education. Respondents completing their education before age 15 were coded as "low". Respondents completing their education between ages 14 and 20 were coded as "low-mid". Respondents completing their education at ages 20 or 21 were coded as "high-mid". Respondents completing their education after age 21 were coded as "high".

¹⁹Respondents residing in regions with land borders with other EU member-states were coded as border residents

²⁰For pre-1986 Eurobarometer surveys, Italians were asked: "Do you feel closer to any one of the parties on the following list than to all others? If yes, which one?"

working-class interests and 0 otherwise. I identified proletariat parties based on party platform descriptions (Delury 1983; Featherstone 1988; Gallagher, Laver, and Mair 1992).²¹ *Support for Bourgeois Party* was coded 1 for respondents who named a party that represents the interests of capital and 0 otherwise, based on information from the previously cited sources.²² The expectation is that supporters of proletariat parties will be less supportive of integration than supporters of bourgeois parties.

Finally, to test the support for government theory, I created a dummy variable coded 1 for respondents who supported the prime minister's party (or, for France, the president's party) and coded 0 otherwise. Coding was based on responses to the same survey question that was used to assign class partisanship. The expectation is that respondents supporting the government will express greater support for integration than respondents not supporting the government.

Control Variables

I also include several variables that are designed to control for other potentially confounding factors. First, I control for age,²³ since the distribution of occupations, values, and level of education may have some generational trends. Second, I include several demographic variables—gender and occupation—that often influence political attitudes and may be related to the explanatory variables.²⁴ Although the effects of these control variables on support may be interesting in their own right, my analysis will focus on the explanatory variables.

Model Estimation

To estimate the relationships between these variables and support for integration, I use ordinary least squares regressions of pooled cross-sectional data. The pooled design has become infamous for its associated methodological problems (see Beck and Katz 1995; Sayrs 1989; Stimson 1985). However, this study uses individual-level rather than aggregate-level data and thus many of these methodological problems do not apply. In particular, the time-series problems (e.g., autocorrelation) of pooled models of cross-national (panel) data are

²¹The proletariat parties were (France) Communist Party, Socialist Party, and Lutte Ouvriere; (Belgium) Communist Party and Socialist Parties—Walloon and Flemish; (The Netherlands) CPN and PVDA; (West Germany) Social Democratic Party; (Italy) PCI and PSI; (Luxembourg) KP and LSAP; (Denmark) DKP, SD, SPP, and Socialist Left; (Ireland) Labour Party and Workers' Party; (United Kingdom) Labour Party; (Greece) KKE, KKE international, and PA.SO.K; (Spain) PCI and PSOE; (Portugal) CDU and PSP.

²²The bourgeois parties were (France) RPR and UDF; (Belgium) PRL and Liberal Parties—Walloon and Flemish; (The Netherlands) CDA, and VVD; (West Germany) CDU/CSU and FDP; (Italy) CD and PLI; (Denmark) KF; (United Kingdom) Conservative Party; (Spain) CP; (Portugal) PDC and CDS. I was not able to identify a bourgeois party in Luxembourg or Ireland.

²³Age is coded as the self-reported number.

²⁴The variable *Female* is a dummy variable coded 1 for female and 0 for male.

not applicable to this statistical design, which pools a series of independent cross sections.

I am concerned about potential bias in estimation resulting from fixed effects for particular nations and years. Previous research identifies a number of theoretical reasons to believe that varying national traditions may influence the baseline values for citizens of particular nations and that particular events may influence the baseline for a particular year (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993; Gabel and Palmer 1995).²⁵ Such fixed effects, if not accounted for, can cause biased and imprecise parameter estimates. To avoid this problem, the statistical model includes dummy variables for each nation and each year.²⁶ These year variables also capture any time trend (time series) in the errors. Finally, I correct for any heteroskedasticity by calculating White's heteroskedastic-consistent standard errors (see Greene 1993, 391; White 1980).

Statistical Results

The results of the statistical analysis are presented in Table 2. I estimated five regression models. Model 1 includes the full sample of respondents. Models 2–5 examine the robustness of the hypothesized relationships over time and across nations. Previous research suggests two reasons that these hypotheses may not hold in certain national and temporal subsamples. First, as Anderson and Reichert (1996, 236) argued, the project of European integration has changed over time. In particular, the Single European Act (SEA) of 1987 revised the agenda for economic integration, modified the institutions of the EU, and coincided with the accession of Spain and Portugal. By redefining the geographic boundaries, economic goals, and institutional character of the EU, this event may have altered the way citizens perceived and evaluated European integration. To control for this temporal effect, I divided the full sample into pre- and post-SEA subsamples.

Second, the national context of EU membership may influence citizens' perceptions of European integration. The most noted distinction is between the original member-states—France, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg—and those that joined later (Anderson and Reichert 1996; Eichenberg and Dalton 1993). The original member-states initiated European integration to promote cooperative solutions to their economic and

²⁵Gabel (1998) and Gabel and Palmer (1995) found that national baselines vary due to differences in the commercial or security benefits the nation derives for European integration. Dalton and Eichenberg (1993) found that baselines differ across years because of elections to the European Parliament.

²⁶I have also estimated a model that includes all of the explanatory variables and interaction terms for each nation in each year, i.e. France in 1978, Belgium in 1978, etc. This permits me to control for time-specific fixed effects for each nation. The results are consistent with the estimates presented in Table 2. Since this expanded model requires over one hundred additional variables, the results are not presented here.

TABLE 2
Regression Analysis of Five Theories of Public
Support for European Integration

Dependent Variable: Support for European Integration					
Explanatory Variables	Original Members			Later Members	
	1. 1978-92	2. 1978-86	3. 1987-92	4. 1978-86	5. 1987-92
Discuss politics never	-2.72*	-3.10*	-2.53*	-2.50*	-2.11*
Discuss politics frequently	0.45*	1.36*	2.58*	-1.58*	-0.14
Materialists	-0.30*	-0.93*	-2.19*	0.79*	-0.51
Postmaterialists	-0.21	2.01*	2.42*	-4.73*	-2.67*
Professional	3.09*	0.61	1.19*	4.90*	3.85*
Executive	3.19*	1.20*	1.76*	5.89*	4.73*
Manual worker	-3.08*	-2.33*	-2.62*	-3.43*	-3.42*
Unemployed	-2.16*	-1.20*	-2.45*	-4.55*	-2.18*
Low education	-2.58*	-2.16*	-2.58*	-3.38*	-1.89*
High-mid education	1.38*	2.11*	1.30*	2.93*	0.60*
High education	2.11*	3.53*	3.10*	0.91	0.55
Low income	-2.03*	-1.67*	-1.66*	-1.80*	-2.66*
High-mid income	1.05*	1.40*	0.77*	1.71*	0.63
High income	3.16*	2.88*	2.91*	4.10*	3.65*
Border	0.72*	-0.13	-0.24	-2.62*	2.34*
Support proletariat party	-3.08*	-0.47*	0.92*	-11.71*	-2.30*
Support bourgeois party	2.26*	2.63*	2.72*	2.13*	-1.19*
Support governing party	2.50*	2.49*	0.62	4.05*	6.64*
Number of cases	235855	75261	52664	50243	57687
Adjusted R ²	.15	.07	.06	.13	.16

*Denotes .01 significance level based on standard errors calculated from a heteroskedasticity-consistent covariance matrix (see White 1980).

Results for the control variables are presented in Table 3.

security concerns resulting from World War II. The later members joined the EU under dramatically different conditions. There was no serious threat of war among West European nations and the postwar economic expansion had slowed considerably. Consequently, citizens in the later member-states may evaluate and perceive European integration in fundamentally different terms than citizens of the original member-states. For this reason, I have also divided the full sample into two groups according to nationality: original members and later members. Models 2 and 3 report regression results for citizens from the original member-states in the pre- and post-SEA time periods. Models 4 and 5 display regression results for respondents from the later member-states in these two time periods.

TABLE 3
Results for the Control Variables in the Five Models in Table 2

Dependent Variable: Support for European Integration					
<i>Control Variables</i>	<i>1. 1978-92</i>	<i>2. 1978-86</i>	<i>3. 1987-92</i>	<i>4. 1978-86</i>	<i>5. 1987-92</i>
Female	-2.89*	-1.77*	-1.87*	-3.83*	-4.02*
Retired	0.58*	-0.24	0.84	1.55*	0.22
Small business owner	-0.23	-1.22*	-1.02	0.35	-0.10
Farmer	1.11*	-3.53*	-4.51*	4.93*	0.15
Student/military	1.09*	0.95*	1.40*	-0.58	1.61*
Housewife	-0.22	-0.43	0.18	-0.93	-0.51
Age	0.03*	0.05*	0.01	0.07*	-0.01
France	14.99*	-6.58*	-7.22*	—	—
West Germany	13.90*	-6.97*	-9.61*	—	—
Italy	22.13*	—	—	—	—
The Netherlands	16.05*	-4.34*	-6.39*	—	—
Luxembourg	18.20*	0.02	-5.67*	—	—
Belgium	15.43*	-5.92*	-5.60*	—	—
Ireland	9.88*	—	—	6.76*	10.23*
Denmark	-6.63*	—	—	-5.00*	-7.96*
Greece	12.88*	—	—	12.86*	13.64*
Portugal	21.55*	—	—	—	17.66*
Spain	18.36*	—	—	—	14.21*
1978	-0.18	0.76	—	0.74	—
1979	-1.31*	1.11*	—	-3.12*	—
1980	-4.41*	-1.26*	—	-7.34*	—
1981	-6.20*	-3.45*	—	-7.63*	—
1982	-6.10*	-3.90*	—	-6.12*	—
1983	-3.52*	-1.61*	—	-3.80*	—
1984	-5.64*	-3.29*	—	-6.21*	—
1985	-3.40*	-0.52	—	-4.93*	—
1986	-1.14*	—	—	—	—
1987	-0.29	—	2.58*	—	-3.61*
1988	-0.52	—	0.20	—	-2.49*
1990	2.58*	—	1.02*	—	3.72*
1991	3.93*	—	1.11*	—	6.13*
1992	0.57	—	-2.79*	—	2.23*
Intercept	62.82*	80.72*	82.04*	62.90*	67.62*

*Denotes .01 significance level based on White (1980) standard errors.

The baseline respondent in each model has the following characteristics: "occasionally" discusses political matters with friends; has "mixed" political values;²⁷ works in a white-collar profession; finished school between age 14 and 20; falls in the second-to-lowest national income quartile, and resides in a non-

²⁷A combination of "materialist" and "postmaterialist" responses to the value question.

border region. The baseline year and nation differ across models so that the largest national and annual sample serves as the omitted categories.

Focusing first on the cognitive mobilization theory, the regression results offer limited support. In the original member-states, support for integration is positively related to the frequency of political discussion. In contrast, the results for the later member-states are less consistent with the hypothesis. In models 4 and 5, political discussion is related to support in a curvilinear fashion. Moreover, in model 4, respondents who frequently discuss politics expressed, on average, less support than those who occasionally discuss politics. The results also provide only limited support for the political values theory. The results for the original member-states are consistent with the hypothesis that postmaterialists express greater support for integration than materialists. However, the results are exactly the opposite for the later member-states. In models 4 and 5, materialists were, on average, more supportive of integration than postmaterialists.

The results offer strong support for the utilitarian hypotheses. First, support for integration was positively related to the level of human capital. In all models, the least-educated respondents were, on average, less supportive of integration than the most-educated respondents. Also, respondents from skilled occupations (i.e., professionals and executives) expressed, on average, greater support for integration than respondents whose occupation did not provide skilled training (i.e., manual laborers and the unemployed). Second, in all models support for integration was positively related to the level of financial capital. Respondents from the highest income quartile expressed, on average, greater support than respondents from the lowest income quartile. Fourth, the results offer some evidence that residence in an intra-EU border region is positively related to support. Residents of border regions were greater than two points more supportive of integration than nonborder residents in the later member-states. However, border residents in the original member-states expressed the same support for integration than nonborder residents.

Finally, the results support the class partisanship theory and the support for government theory. Respondents who identified with a proletariat party were less supportive of integration than respondents who identified with a bourgeois party. Respondents who indicated electoral support for the prime minister (president in France) expressed, on average, greater support for integration than respondents who did not intend to vote for the incumbent. The only exception was in model 3, where support for government did not have a statistically significant effect on support for integration.

Note that the *R*-squared statistic is reported out of convention. *R*-squared, as a measure of goodness-of-fit, is largely irrelevant to this analysis. This analysis is designed to estimate the relationship between the explanatory variables and the dependent variable, not to explain all variation in support for

integration.²⁸ Here the primary concern with a low R-squared is that it might signal the absence of other causal variables that possibly confound the estimates for the explanatory variables. By including control variables for a variety of potential confounding factors, I minimize this possibility.

Substantive Significance

Up to this point, I have focused primarily on appraising the validity of the five explanations according to the direction and statistical significance of the parameter estimates. But we are also interested in substantive significance: the magnitude of the impact each explanation has on support for integration. We would like to distinguish explanations that account for large differences in public support for integration across all member-states and years from those whose impact is small or limited to only a particular set of nations or years. To assess substantive significance, I calculated the maximum difference in support associated with each theory and compared these differences across theories and models.²⁹

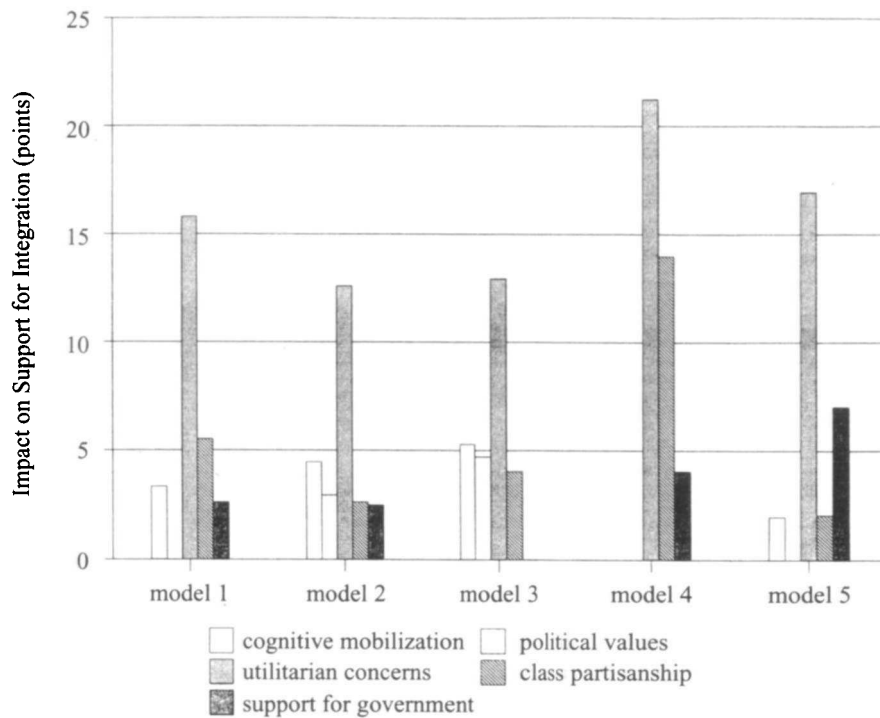
Figure 2 provides a visual comparison of the substantive significance of the five explanations. Each filled bar on the figure represents the maximum difference in support accounted for by a theoretical explanation. Thus, I do not report results that contradict a theory.³⁰ The height of each bar represents the number of points of support associated with the largest possible impact of the variable(s) for each theory, holding all other variables constant. For example, for the class partisanship hypothesis in model 1, bourgeois partisans expressed, on average, 5.34 (2.26 + 3.08) points greater support for integration than proletarian partisans. For the utilitarian theory, I added the difference in support associated with

²⁸Also, as a measure of goodness-of-fit, *R*-squared is likely to underestimate the amount of variation in support for EU membership explained by the model. The dependent variable is polychotomous and consequently suffers from measurement error in capturing the continuous range of support. Limited response categories necessarily impose some restrictions on how well respondents can express their exact level of support. Thus, some of the variance in the dependent variable is not systematic and therefore cannot be accounted for by the explanatory variables. Note that this measurement error does not bias the parameter estimates for the explanatory variables.

²⁹Some readers may prefer to calculate substantive significance by weighting the impact of the variables according to the distribution of responses across categories and then comparing the weighted effects of the theories. Calculated in this way, the relative substantive significance of the theories is largely consistent with the conclusions drawn from the results in Figure 1. These alternative calculations are available from the author upon request.

³⁰I calculated substantive significance for all explanations with a statistically significant difference in the predicted direction between the corresponding variables. To estimate whether there was a statistical significant difference, I used the following t-test for each pair of parameter estimates (e.g., low and high education): $t = (b_1 - b_2) / [\text{var}(b_1) + \text{var}(b_2) - 2 \text{cov}(b_1 b_2)]^{1/2}$.

FIGURE 2
Substantive Significance of the Five Theories



high and low education, high and low income, skilled and unskilled occupation, and border residence.³¹

By comparing the height of the bars within and across models, one can appraise the relative substantive importance of each theory. It is clear from the comparison that the utilitarian theory has by far the greatest consistent impact on support for integration. In all five models, the combined independent effects of the utilitarian variables is greater than that of any other theory. Thus, the evidence indicates that the utilitarian theory is robust in both its statistical and its

³¹Note that estimating the difference in support associated with occupational skills is complicated by the fact that there are two regression coefficients for skilled occupation (executives and professionals) and two coefficients for unskilled occupations (unemployed and manual laborers). I used the difference between the average of the coefficients for the skilled occupations and the average of the coefficients for the unskilled occupations. In model 1, for example, the coefficients for the skilled occupations (3.09 and 3.19) average to 3.14 and the coefficients for the unskilled occupations (−3.08 and −2.16) average to −2.62. The difference in support associated with the occupational skills in this model is then 5.76

substantive significance. Where the evidence supports the political values and cognitive mobilization theories (models 2 and 3), their substantive impact is relatively small. Class partisanship has a small substantive impact except in model 4 where the impact is almost 14 points. The support for government theory also has a generally small substantive impact, with a larger influence in the later member-states than in the original member-states.

Summary and Discussion

The previous analysis rigorously tested five prominent individual-level theories of public support for European integration. The analysis improved upon previous studies in two important ways. First, it identified and analyzed a dependent variable that measures public support for actual integrative measures. Second, it estimated the independent effect of each theory on support while controlling for a variety of potentially confounding factors and for different national and temporal contexts.

The results support five conclusions, some of which differ substantially from those of previous studies. First, consistent with previous findings, the utilitarian theory provides a robust explanation for variation in support for integration. Across various sets of nations and years, citizens' support for integration is positively related to the level of economic benefits they expect to derive from European integration. Second, the class partisanship theory also offers a robust explanation for support. The results demonstrate that class partisanship exerts an influence on support for integration independent of a variety of socioeconomic characteristics that might confound the relationship. That is, the partisan influence represented by arrow C in Figure 2 exists. Third, the support for government theory provides a systematic explanation for support for integration except in the original member-states in the post-SEA period. This finding, based on survey data, complements previous evidence of this relationship based on studies of referendum votes. Also, the statistical analysis showed that this relationship is robust in the presence of controls for several potentially confounding factors.

Fourth, the results indicate that the political values and cognitive mobilization theories only clearly provide valid explanations for citizens in the original EU member-states. The result concerning political values confirm those of Inglehart, Rabier, and Reif (1991) and Anderson and Reichert (1996). The results concerning cognitive mobilization, however, differ substantially from previous findings. Previous research concluded that cognitive mobilization is positively related to support for integration across member-states and years (Inglehart, Rabier, and Reif 1991; Janssen 1991). Using the same survey measure of cognitive mobilization employed in these previous studies, this analysis indicates that the theory is only clearly valid for citizens in the original member-states.

Fifth, the analysis identified differences in the substantive significance of the five theories—an issue that has not been addressed in previous studies. The

results indicate that the utilitarian theory is the strongest and most robust predictor of support for integration. It is also worth noting that, in addition to having limited applicability, the cognitive mobilization and political values theories have a relatively small impact on support.

What are the implications of these conclusions for our understanding of mass behavior regarding European integration? The most obvious implication is that a citizen's support for integration is (at least potentially) flexible. To see this, it helps to divide the theories into two groups. On one side, the cognitive mobilization and political values theories posit that a citizen's support for integration is based on personal political characteristics that are generally immutable throughout adulthood. On the other side, the remaining theories contend that citizens may change their support for integration depending on certain factors: how integrative policy affects their welfare (utilitarian), how their political party portrays integration (class partisanship), and their support for the governing party (support for government). The results indicate that, across nations and time, the latter group of theories account for much greater variance in support for integration than the former group. In other words, citizens differ in their support for integration due largely to factors that may change over time.

While this conclusion applies in general, there is an interesting difference between the original and later member-states in the sources of variation in support. The first group of theories exerts an influence on support in the original member-states while it appears to have little effect in the later member-states. This means that elites in the original member-states may have less success in shaping public support for integration than elites in the later member-states. Regardless of how elites reform the EU or structure partisan debate, citizens in the original member-states will continue to support or oppose integration based, in part, on their political values and cognitive mobilization. In contrast, elites in the later member-states have relatively greater opportunity to manipulate public opinion through partisan channels, the timing of referenda in response to support for government, and by modifying the economic impact of integration.

Finally, these results have implications for current efforts toward Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). It appears likely that many of the EU member-states will only adopt EMU if it succeeds in a public referendum. The findings of this study indicate that public support for such a reform will depend on the popularity of the governing party, the context of partisan politics, and how the economic benefits and costs are distributed. While it is too early to speculate about the future popularity of the governing party or the context of partisan politics, the economic consequences of EMU deserve some attention. An obvious economic consequence of EMU is that member-states must reduce (often dramatically) their national deficits and debts. To meet and maintain these fiscal standards, member-state governments have privatized national industries and reduced social spending. According to the findings of this study, one would expect

citizens who are disadvantaged by these reforms to oppose EMU.³² This implies that the success of referenda on EMU will depend, at least in part, on how well the EU accommodates these “losers” from EMU.

Surprisingly, prointegration elites seem to have ignored this point. EMU is generally promoted on its macroeconomic merits—EU-wide GDP growth and price stability—with little attention to the adverse microeconomic consequences. Given the findings of this study, these elites might consider packaging EMU with some sort of fiscal federalism or redistributive policies at the EU level so as to compensate the economic “losers.” Otherwise, EMU may fail in referendum or, if passed, elicit considerable public controversy.

Manuscript submitted 17 June 1996

Final Manuscript received 23 May 1997

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³²Recent public sector labor strikes in response to fiscal austerity packages in France illustrate this opposition.

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Does Identity or Economic Rationality Drive Public Opinion on European Integration?

How do citizens respond to the reallocation of authority across levels of government? This article investigates the relative importance of economic versus identity bases of citizen support for the most far-reaching example of authority migration—European integration.

Most scholars have explained preferences over European integration in terms of its economic consequences. We have precise expectations concerning how individual attributes (e.g., education, occupation, factor mobility, and sectoral location) affect support for international regimes. The search for plausible economic sources of preferences has widened to include economic perceptions (as well as objective conditions), group (as well as individual) utility, and national economic institutions that mediate individual interests.

But there is a new—or, rather, old—kid on the block. Its hard core is the assumption that citizen preferences are driven by group attachments, by the loyalties, values, and norms that define who a person is. This line of analysis is as old as the study of European integration (Deutsch 1957; Haas 1958; Inglehart 1970), but while the pioneers were chiefly concerned with how regional integration affects identity, recent research flips the causal arrow.¹

One would expect European integration to convey home field advantage to both research programs. The European Union (EU) is a regional trade regime with sizeable distributional effects. It is also a system of multi-level governance in which national authority is pooled and limited. So we are conducting what Arend Lijphart describes as a crucial experiment, a case in which “all of the variables which the researcher tries to relate to each other are present” (1979, 444).²

There need be no suspense concerning our conclusion. Citizens do indeed take into account the economic consequences of European integration, but conceptions of group membership appear to be more powerful.

We proceed in two steps. First, we set up an economic explanation of public opinion on European integration. We identify six lines of theorizing. We cannot sacrifice comprehensiveness to parsimony because our analysis will be convincing only to the extent that we bring the main economic contenders into the ring—and there are many.

Second, we theorize identity as a source of public opinion on European integration. What would one expect if group identity drove preferences? The answer is not obvious. Citizens who attest strong national identity are more, not less, likely to identify with Europe. We argue that the way a citizen conceives her national identity is decisive. Does a citizen conceive her national identity in exclusive or inclusive terms? Is that citizen positively or negatively oriented to multiculturalism?

Theorizing Support for European Integration

Political Economy

The main thrust of European integration has been to sweep away barriers to economic exchange, facilitate mobility of capital and labor, and create a single European monetary authority. So it is not surprising that explanations of public opinion on European integration have focused on economic factors.

The simplest expectation is that reducing trade barriers favors citizens with relatively high income, education, and occupational skills (Gabel 1998; Inglehart 1970). There are several reasons for this. International economic openness rewards those with high levels of human capital. It increases the international substitutability of labor as firms are more able to shift production across borders, and this intensifies job insecurity, particularly for less skilled workers. Finally, international economic openness puts pressure on welfare systems and shifts the burden of taxation from mobile factors of production (e.g., financial capital) to immobile factors (e.g., labor).

Economic internationalization also affects relative scarcity of assets. According to the Stolper-Samuelson theorem, trade benefits individuals who own factors with which the national economy is relatively well endowed and hurts individuals who own factors that are relatively scarce (Mayda and Rodrik 2002; O’Rourke and Sinnott 2001). Hence, in the wealthiest, most capital-rich member states we expect unskilled workers to be Euroskeptical and managers and professionals to be Euro-supportive, while in the poorest, most labor-rich member states we expect the reverse.³

Citizens may be sensitive to their *collective* economic circumstances, as well as to those that affect them *individually* (Anderson 1998). It seems reasonable to expect that residents in countries that are net recipients of European

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Union spending will be inclined to support European integration, while those in donor countries will tend to oppose (Brinegar et al. 2004). The same logic is often at work in regional or federal states, where poorer regions champion centralization to increase the scope for redistribution while prosperous regions favor decentralization.

Subjective economic evaluations can be expected to influence public opinion on European integration alongside *objective* factors (Rohrschneider 2002; Eichenberg and Dalton 1993). European integration is perceived by most citizens to shape their economic welfare in a general sense. Citizens who feel confident about the economic future—personally and for their country—are likely to regard European integration in a positive light, while those who are fearful will lean towards Euroskepticism.

Finally, preferences may be influenced by *institutions*. The European Union encompasses countries with contrasting degrees of labor and business coordination, each of which is costly to change (Hall and Soskice 2001). We assume that the further a country is from the EU median (low labor coordination, relatively high business coordination), the greater the costs imposed on its citizens by EU legislation.

Political-economic institutions may *interact* with support or opposition to redistribution (Brinegar et al. 2004; Marks 2004; Ray 2004). If European integration converges on a mixed-market model, citizens in social democratic Scandinavian economies can expect to see their welfare systems diluted, while citizens in liberal market economies, such as Britain, can expect more redistribution. Hence in social democratic systems, the left will be opposed to European integration and the right will be supportive. In liberal market systems, the left will support integration and the right will be opposed.

Economic theories of preference formation work best when economic consequences are perceived with some accuracy, are large enough to matter, and when the choice a person makes actually affects the outcome. To the extent that these conditions are not present, group identities are likely to be decisive (Chong 2002; Elster 1990; Sears and Funk 1991; Young et al. 1991). What would one expect to find if public opinion were shaped by group identity?

National Identity

Humans and their ancestors evolved an emotional capacity for intense group loyalty long before the development of rational faculties, and such loyalties can be extremely powerful in shaping views toward political objects (Citrin et al. 1990; Massey 2002; Sears 1993). The strongest territorial identities are national, and we suspect that such identities constrain preferences on European integration.⁴

To understand the effect of national identity one must come to grips with a paradox. On the one hand, individuals often identify with several territorial communities simultaneously (Citrin and Sides forthcoming; Klandermans et al. 2003). It is not at all unusual for citizens to have multiple identities—to feel, for example, strongly Catalan, Spanish, and European—at one and the same time (Diez Medrano 2003; Marks 1999). Haesly (2001) finds positive, rather than negative, associations between Welsh and European identities and between Scottish and European identities. Klandermans and his co-authors (2003) detect a cumulative pattern of identities, in which farmers who identify with Europe tend also to identify with their nation. Risse (2003) conceptualizes the relationship as akin to a marble cake in which multiple identities are meshed together. Van Kersbergen (2000) conceives of European allegiance as embedded in national allegiance. Citrin and Sides find that “even in an era in which perceptions of the European Union as successful seemed to decline, the tendency to identify with both nation and Europe

Table 1
Explaining Support for European Integration - A Multi-Level Analysis

	Multilevel estimates	
	understandardized coefficients	standard errors
Constant	71.96***	(2.185)
National Identity		
National Attachment	1.712***	(0.415)
Exclusive National Identity	-12.740***	(0.559)
Multiculturalism	4.163***	(0.309)
Political Economy		
Education	0.932**	(0.338)
Professional/Manager*Gross National Income	0.072*	(0.044)
Manual Worker*Gross National Income	-0.033	(0.028)
Fiscal Transfer	3.973***	(0.970)
Type of Capitalism	5.370**	(1.796)
Personal Economic Prospects	2.292***	(0.615)
National Economic Prospects	3.074***	(0.445)
Variance Components		
Country-Level	27.316**	(11.024)
Party-Level	4.599**	(1.838)
Individual-Level	453.831***	(7.382)
-2 x Log Likelihood	68833	

Note: * = $p < .10$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

increased” (forthcoming, 8; also Hermann, Brewer, and Risse forthcoming).

But it is also true that opposition to European integration is often couched as defense of the nation against control from Brussels. Radical right-wing political parties in France, Denmark, Italy, and Austria tap nationalism to reject further integration, and since 1996 such parties have formed the largest reservoir of Euroskepticism in the EU as a whole (Hooghe et al. 2002; Taggart 1998). Christin and Trechsel (2002) find that the stronger the national attachment and national pride of Swiss citizens, the less likely they are to support membership in the European Union. Carey (2002) shows that national attachment combined with national pride have a significant negative effect on support for European integration.

To resolve these conflicting expectations, we need to theorize how national identity can both reinforce and undermine support for European integration. Diez Medrano argues that national histories are crucial. Constructing patterns of discourse in the UK, Spain, and Germany, Medrano finds that English Euroskepticism is rooted in Britain’s special history of empire, that West German pro-Europeanism reflects World War II guilt, and that the Spanish tend to support European integration as proxy for modernization and democratization (Diez Medrano 2003). A research team led by Stråth and Triandafyllidou links party programs, public opinion, educational curricula, and media within nine EU and prospective EU countries. Such studies reveal the stickiness of national identity within unique national contexts.

Can one generalize about the connection between national identity and public opinion? We begin with the basic distinction between exclusive and inclusive national identity, and we hypothesize that citizens who conceive of their national identity as exclusive of other territorial identities are likely to be considerably more Euroskeptical than those who conceive of their national identity in inclusive terms. We know, for example,

that individuals who identify themselves exclusively as Belgian or exclusively as Flemish oppose multi-level governance, while those who identify themselves as both Belgian and Flemish support it (Maddens et al. 1996). We expect to find something similar at the supranational level.

Under what circumstances will citizens perceive their national identity as exclusive or inclusive? While national identities are normally formed before adolescence (Druckman 1994), we hypothesize that their consequences for particular political objects, such as European integration, are continuously *constructed* through socialization and political conflict (Str  th and Triandafyllidou 2003; Diez Medrano 2003). But who does the framing? Literature on American public opinion suggests that public opinion may be cued by political elites (Zaller 1992, 97–117). The sharper the divisions among national elites on the issue of European integration, the greater the scope for national identity to be mobilized, and the more we expect exclusive national identity to bite. One sign of such division is the existence of a radical right political party. Parties like the Vlaams Blok in Belgium and the French Front National make a fetish of exclusive national identity with slogans such as “Boss in Our Own Country” and “We give them our factories; they give us their immigrants. One solution: The Nation.” Such sentiments reinforce Euroskepticism.⁵ In countries where the elite is squarely behind the European project, we expect national identity to lay dormant or to be positively associated with support for integration. In countries where the political elite is divided on the issue, national identity is likely to rear its head.

Analysis

To measure support for European integration we combine three complementary elements of support: the *principle* of membership, the desired *speed* of integration, and the desired *direction* of future integration. The results reported below are robust across these component measures. This and other variables in our analysis are detailed in the appendix.⁶ We use multilevel analysis to probe variation at the individual, party, and country level.⁷ Table 1 presents unstandardized coefficients and standard errors for variables of interest.⁸

Figure 1 illustrates the relative effect of the most powerful variables. The solid boxes encompass the inter-quartile range and the whiskers indicate the 5th to the 95th percentiles, holding all other independent and control variables at their means. For example, an individual at the 5th percentile on *Multiculturalism*

has a score of 65.9 on *Support for European Integration* on a 0–100 scale, and an individual at the 95th percentile scores 74.3. The variables towards the left of Figure 1 have the largest effect across their inter-quartile range.

Citizens do appear to take economic circumstances into account. The EU redistributes money from rich to poor countries, and this gives rise to a predictable pattern of opposition and support. *Fiscal Transfer* is the most powerful economic influence that we find. A citizen of Greece, the country with the highest per capita net receipts from the EU, will be 15% more supportive of European integration than a citizen from Germany, the country with the highest net contribution, controlling for all other variables in our analysis. The differing length of the 95% whiskers in Figure 1 for this variable indicates that its association with support for European integration is not linear. *Fiscal Transfer* sharply delineates four countries (Greece, Portugal, Spain, and Ireland) that receive the bulk of cohesion funding and which tend to be pro-EU.

We also confirm the effect of *Type of Capitalism*. Support for European integration is higher in countries whose economic institutions are less likely to be challenged by EU legislation because they are close to the EU median.⁹

Together, seven variables that tap individual and group economic interest (listed in the appendix) account for 15% of total variance in public opinion, which is in line with previous studies. The surprise is that these economic influences are overshadowed by identity.

Three variables that tap identity—*Exclusive National Identity*, *Multiculturalism*, and *National Attachment*—together explain 20.8 % of the variance in *Support for European Integration*. These variables also account for more than two-thirds of the variance across countries.

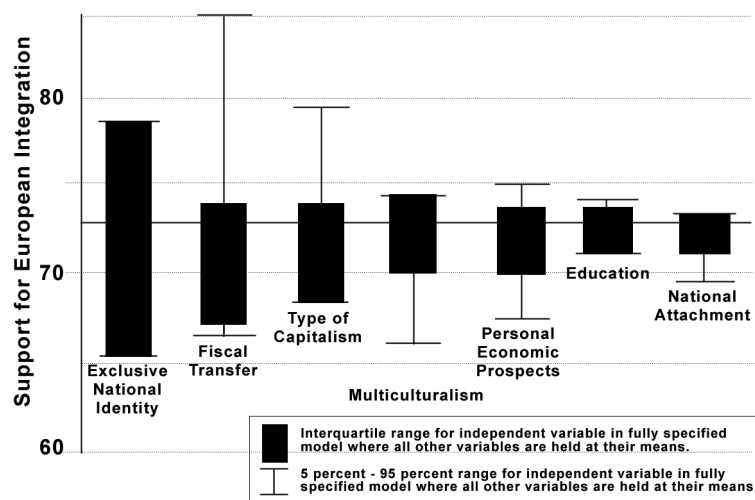
The paradox that we identified earlier is apparent: national identity both contributes to and diminishes support for European integration. Attachment to one’s country is positively correlated with *Support for European Integration* in bivariate analysis.¹⁰ But national identity is Janus-faced: under some circumstances it collides with European integration.

The extent to which national identity is exclusive or inclusive is decisive. A Eurobarometer question compels respondents to place either European or national identity above the other, and separates those who say they think of themselves as “only British (or French, etc.)” from those who say they have some form of multiple identity. Estimates for *Exclusive National Identity* are negative, substantively large, and significant in the presence of any and all controls we are able to exert.¹¹

On average, an individual in our sample who claims an exclusive national identity scores 53.3 on our thermometer scale for support for European integration, compared to 72.8 for a person who does not. The difference, 19.5%, is the baseline in Figure 2.¹² In some countries, citizens who have exclusive national identity are only slightly more Euroskeptical than those with multiple identities. In others, exclusive national identity is powerfully associated with Euroskepticism. In Portugal, exclusive national identity depresses a citizen’s support by just 9.5%. In the UK, at the other extreme, the difference is 29.5%.

How can one explain this variation? Our hunch, derived from what we know about American public opinion, seems to be on the right track. The more divided a country’s elite, and the more elements within it mobilize against European integration, the stronger the causal power of exclusive national identity. Political parties are decisive in cueing the public, and the wider their disagreement, the more exclusive identity is mobilized against European integration. Divisions within political parties are positively correlated

Figure 1
Effects of Independent Variables



with the causal power of exclusive national identity, as is the electoral strength of radical right parties. These two variables account for an estimated 57% of the country variance illustrated in Figure 2.

We have argued that there is no necessary connection between national identity and support or opposition to European integration. The dots have to be filled in, and we find that the connection is stronger when elites, particularly those leading political parties, are polarized on the issue.¹³

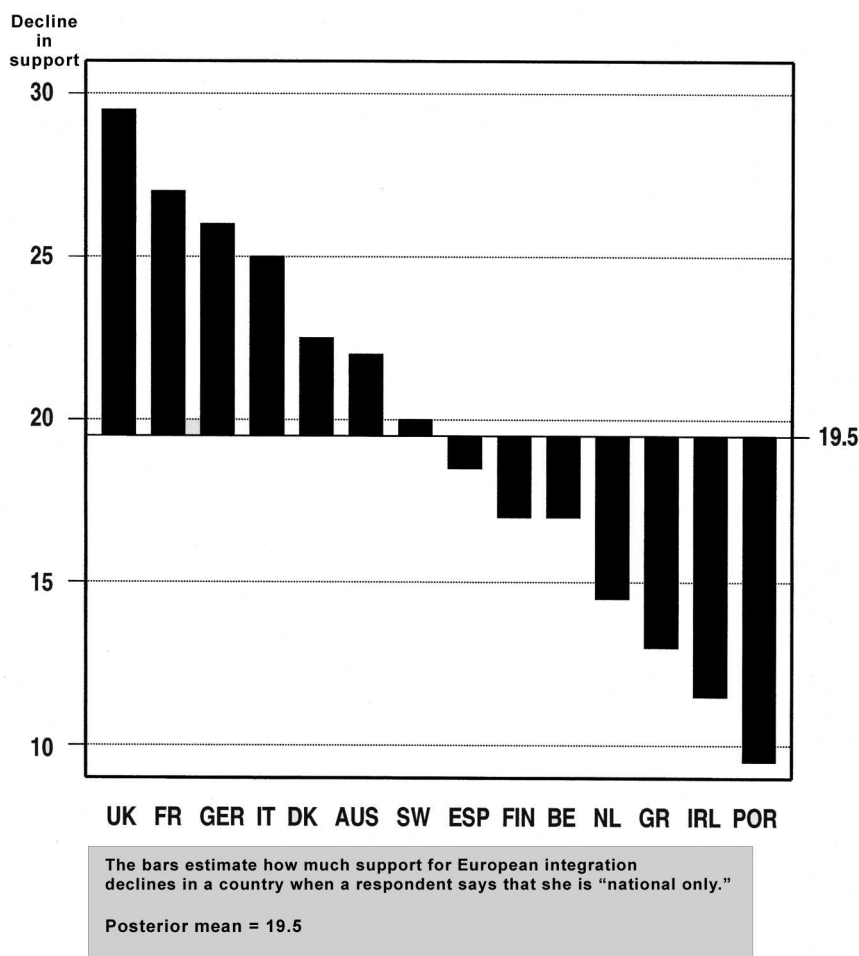
Conclusion

It is fruitless to seek general validity in either economic or identity theories of preferences. We need to inquire into their relative causal power. In this article, we do this for a single object: public opinion on European integration. Most scholars have conceptualized European integration as an economic phenomenon, and the bulk of research has therefore theorized public opinion as a function of the distributional consequences of market liberalization. But the European Union is also a supranational polity with extensive authority over those living in its territory. It is therefore plausible to believe that European integration engages group, and above all, national identities.

Both theories bite. A multi-level model that combines both sources of preference can explain around a third or more of the variance across individual citizens in the EU, and the bulk of variation across countries. However, we find that identity appears to be the more powerful influence. To understand how the public views European integration, one needs to consider how individuals frame their national identity. Do citizens consider national identity as something that can go hand in hand with European integration, or do they believe that European integration limits or threatens their national identity? There is nothing mechanistic or inevitable about one or the other position.

Identity is simple and complex. Citizens can answer the question "What is your nationality" with much greater ease and validity than they can tell you for which party or candidate they voted in the previous election. Like some in-group/out-group identities, national identities are formed early in life. Children as young as six know full well whether they are British, German, or Swedish. Yet the political implications of national identity emerge from debate and conflict. Whether a person is Belgian or British is (usually) a simple fact, but what does this national identity imply for the political choices one makes?

Figure 2
Exclusive National Identity and Support for European Integration



To understand the political implications of identity one therefore has to probe how identity is constructed and mobilized. Political elites and parties appear to be key. Exclusive national identity is mobilized against European integration in countries where the elite is polarized on European integration, where political parties are divided, and where radical right parties are strong. Data over time would help scholars probe further.

In terms of deductive sophistication, identity theory cannot compete with economic theory—yet. But this is like comparing a gasoline engine, honed over decades, with a hydrogen engine. If group identities are decisive for preferences over a wide range of political objects, as recent research suggests, then we can safely predict that the theories of group identity will become more sophisticated and more powerful.

Appendix: Variable Descriptions

Support for European Integration	An index of three items: (1) Principle of membership – “Generally speaking, do you think that [our country’s] membership of the European Union is (a bad thing, neither good nor bad, a good thing)?” (2) Desired speed – (1=integration should be brought to a “standstill”; 7= integration should run “as fast as possible”), and (3) Desired direction – “In five years’ time, would you like the European Union to play (a less important role, same role, a more important role) in your daily life?” The correlation is 0.409 between (1) and (2), 0.448 between (1) and (3), and 0.473 between (2) and (3). Standardized item = 0.706. The index is recoded as a 0-100 thermometer scale, with higher scores indicating greater support.
Education	Measured by the age of respondents when they stopped full-time education (D.8) and recoded on a 4-point scale.
Professional/ Manager* Gross National Income	Interaction term of (1) a dichotomous variable Professional Manager that takes a value of 1 when respondent is professional (self-employed or employed), general manager, or business proprietor (D.15), and (2) gross national income per capita for respondent’s country of residence (in US dollars at exchange rate prices for 2001, divided by 1000). Values range from zero to 30.6 for Denmark. <i>Source:</i> World Development Indicators Database (Worldbank, April 2003.)
Manual Worker* Gross National Income	Interaction term of (1) a dichotomous variable Manual Worker that takes a value of 1 when respondent is skilled or unskilled manual worker, or non-desk employee (e.g., salesman, driver) (D.15), and (2) gross national income per capita for respondent’s country of residence (in US dollars at exchange rate prices for 2001). Values range from 0 to 30.6 for Denmark. <i>Source:</i> World Development Indicators Database (Worldbank, April 2003.)
Personal Economic Prospects	An index of three items measuring respondents’ expectations (worse, same, better) concerning their future life, the financial situation in their household, and their job situation (Q.501, Q503, Q505). Standardized item = 0.763. Values range from 1 to 3.
National Economic Perspectives	An index of two items measuring respondents’ expectations (worse, same, better) concerning the economic situation and the employment situation in their country (Q.502, Q504.) Values range from 1 to 3.
Fiscal Transfer	Net fiscal transfers per country as percentage of GDP as an annual average over the period of 1995-2000. Values range from -0.56 for Germany to 3.88 for Greece. <i>Source:</i> Commission of the European Union (2001.)
Type of Capitalism	Categorization based on type of national production system (liberal market vs. mixed vs. coordinated) and extent of welfare redistribution (limited, medium, extensive—measured by Gini index). Country scores reflect distance from the median (mixed system, medium redistribution) whereby the median category is 2, adjacent cells are 1, and two cells removed are 0. <i>Source:</i> Gourevitch and Hawes (2001.)
National Attachment	Question Q. 803: “People may feel different degrees of attachment to their town or village, to their region, to their country, or to Europe. Please tell me how attached you feel to ... (3) [our country]: very attached, fairly attached, not very attached, not at all attached, don’t know.” This is a 4-point scale.
Exclusive National Identity	A dichotomous variable that takes the value of 1 for respondents with exclusive national identity ([nationality] only). Recoded from: “In the near future, do you see yourself as (1) [nationality] only, (2) [nationality] and European, (3) European and [nationality], or (4) European only?” (Q.23.)
Multiculturalism	“Thinking about the enlargement of the European Union to include new countries, do you tend to agree or tend to disagree with the following statement ... ‘With more member countries, Europe will be culturally richer’ (tend to disagree, don’t know, tend to agree).” (Q.399.) This is a 3-point scale.

Note: Q and D notations refer to questions in the Eurobarometer codebook (Hartung 2002).

Notes

* For comments and advice we are grateful to Stefano Bartolini, Tanja Börzel, Christophe Crombez, Gerda Falkner, Rusanna Gaber, Peter Hall, Elizabeth Gerber, Adrienne Héritier, Ken Kollman, David Lake, Christiane Lemke, Ivan Llamazares, Jane Mansfield, Thomas Risse, Edeltraud Roller, Dieter Rucht, Alexander Trechsel, Anna Triandafyllidou, Bernhard Wessels, and to the Steiner political science discussion group at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Earlier versions were presented at the European University Institute, Florence; the Center for European Studies at Harvard University; Humboldt University, Berlin; the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; the Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna; The Social Science Research Center, Berlin; and the 2003 APSA Meeting, Philadelphia. We received institutional support from the Center for European Studies at the University of North Carolina, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, and the Social Science Research Center, Berlin. We alone are responsible for errors.

1. Research on public opinion on trade liberalization has come up with an interesting and unexplained fact. Citizens who attest high levels of national attachment tend to oppose trade liberalization both in the United States and across OECD countries. National attachment appears to be a more powerful influence than conventional economic factors, a finding that is all the more “disturbing” because it has emerged in two independent tests of economic, not identity, theories (O’Rourke and Sinnott 2001; Mayda and Rodrik 2002).

2. An additional virtue is that data on public support for European integration are more comprehensive than for any other international body.

3. Eurobarometer data do not allow us to test a Heckscher-Ohlin model, which hypothesizes that support for economic internationalization varies across export-competing and import-competing sectors. However, analysis of public opinion on trade protectionism suggests that the substantive effect of sectoral location is small (Mayda and Rodrik 2002).

4. Recent work emphasizes how a clash of identities on issues such as immigration, multiculturalism, and European integration structures politics (Kriesi and Lachat 2004).

5. Our hypothesis would be tautological if elites follow citizens, or if citizens vote for radical right parties *because* they are Euroskeptic. Neither concern has empirical validity.

6. Data are from Eurobarometer 54.1 (fieldwork in the fall of 2000). The dataset was made available by the Mannheim Zentrum für Umfragen, Methoden und Analysen (ZUMA).

7. Multi-level analysis is preferable to standard OLS regression when cases are clustered in groups (Steenbergen and Jones 2002). Our full multilevel model explains about 38% of the total variance among 7,641 respondents across the EU minus Luxembourg (<http://www.unc.edu/~hooghe>). We weight countries equally in all results reported here.

8. We control for gender, age, occupation, opinion leadership, knowledge of European politics, partisanship, left-right self-identification, and attachment to Europe (see www.unc.edu/~hooghe for details).

9. Some observers argue that there is convergence on liberal market capitalism. This hypothesis fares worse in our empirical test than the one specified here.

10. The association between *National Attachment* and *Support for European Integration* is usually insignificant under controls, and becomes negative when we control for *European Attachment*.

11. To ensure that our measure of *Exclusive National Identity* does not tap absence of European identity, we control for *European Attachment*. This imposes conservatism in estimating the effect of our identity variables.

12. The bars in Figure 2 are empirical Bayes estimates derived from a random coefficients multi-level model using

13. See <http://www.unc.edu/~marks> for details. Data on party divisions and the radical-right vote are from an expert survey conducted by Marks and Steenbergen in 1999. Our data do not allow us to evaluate the direction of

influence between voters and political parties. Here we make the contestable claim that parties cue the implications of exclusive national identity for citizens (Carrubba 2001).

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European Union Politics

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Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks
European Union Politics 2005 6: 419
DOI: 10.1177/1465116505057816

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What is This?



European Union Politics

DOI: 10.1177/1465116505057816

Volume 6 (4): 419–443

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Calculation, Community and Cues

Public Opinion on European Integration

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ABSTRACT

This article summarizes and extends the main lines of theorizing on public opinion on European integration. We test theories of economic calculus and communal identity in a multi-level analysis of Eurobarometer data. Both economic calculus and communal identity are influential, but the latter is stronger than the former. We theorize how the political consequences of identity are contested and shaped – that is to say, politically cued – in national contexts. The more national elites are divided, the more citizens are cued to oppose European integration, and this effect is particularly pronounced among citizens who see themselves as exclusively national. A model that synthesizes economic, identity, and cue theory explains around one-quarter of variation at the individual level and the bulk of variation at the national and party levels.

KEY WORDS

- cueing
- European integration
- identity
- political economy
- public opinion

What drives citizens to support or oppose European integration? The question is as old as the European Union, and it has been the subject of some one hundred articles, yet there is no scholarly consensus on the answer. There are three main families of explanation. Most research on the topic builds on trade theory to conceptualize a calculus of economic costs and benefits. The presumption is that citizens evaluate the economic consequences of European integration for themselves and for the groups of which they are part, and that such consequences motivate their attitudes. An alternative line of explanation draws on the psychology of group membership to examine how social identities, including, above all, national identities, constrain support for European integration. These two families of theorizing have often been pitted against one another as mutually exclusive conceptualizations. But a new line of research, drawing on cognitive and social psychology, challenges this either/or thinking by examining how political cues – grounded in ideology or in elite communication – mediate the effect of economic calculation and community membership.

These approaches conceive the European Union in contrasting ways. Economic theories view the EU as a regime that facilitates economic exchange, with profound distributional consequences for individuals arising from differences in asset mobility and for countries arising from varieties of capitalism. Social identity theory conceives of the European Union as a polity overarching established territorial communities, and considers how public opinion is constrained by citizens' conceptions of their identities. Cue theory regards the European Union as an extension of domestic politics, and infers that public attitudes are therefore guided by domestic ideology and domestic political organizations.

This article has three purposes. First, we take stock of the field to convey the current state of knowledge and, hence, our point of departure. The study of public opinion on European integration is fast-moving, and it is useful to compare the explanations that are now on the table. Our second purpose is to evaluate the relative causal power of the two most compelling explanations – economic theory and identity theory – in a way that proponents of each would find reasonable. In earlier work we find that both theories bite, but that identity appears the more powerful influence (Hooghe and Marks, 2004). Our third purpose is to build on this analysis to theorize how economic calculation and identity are cued by elites. Given that the European Union is rarely foremost in citizens' minds, we need to understand how interests and identity come to bear on European integration. The resulting model explains slightly more than one-quarter of the variance at the individual level and the bulk of variance at the country and party levels.

Theorizing support for European integration

Economic models

European integration has engendered new forms of competition and, hence, new inequalities (Kriesi and Lachat, 2004). In general, trade liberalization and increased factor mobility advantage those with higher levels of human capital, and hurt those with less (Anderson and Reichert, 1996; Gabel 1998a, 1998b; Inglehart, 1970). Trade liberalization increases the international substitutability of labor because firms are more able to shift production across borders, and this intensifies job insecurity for less-skilled workers (Rodrik, 1997). International economic openness puts pressure on welfare systems and shifts the burden of taxation from mobile factors of production to immobile factors (Huber and Stephens, 2001; Scharpf, 2000). Following Gabel (1998b), we hypothesize that respondents' general level of education picks up these mobility effects (*education*).

Economic internationalization affects the relative scarcity of assets in a national economy depending on prior factor endowments (Brinegar and Jolly, 2005). According to the Heckscher–Ohlin theorem, trade benefits individuals who own factors with which the national economy is relatively well endowed and hurts individuals who own factors that are relatively scarce (Mayda and Rodrik, 2002; O'Rourke and Sinnott, 2001). Hence, in the most capital-rich member states we expect unskilled workers to be Euro-skeptic and managers or professionals to be Euro-supportive, whereas in labor-rich member states we expect the reverse (*manual worker*gross national income* and *professional*gross national income*).¹

Theories of public opinion derived from individual egocentric calculation have been extended in two directions. First, *subjective* as well as *objective* factors have been taken into account. Second, *sociotropic* evaluations concerning one's group (in this case, country) can be theorized alongside *egocentric* evaluations. The corresponding four lines of theorizing are represented in Figure 1.

Citizens may be sensitive to their *sociotropic* or collective economic circumstances (cell II in Figure 1), as well as to those that affect them *individually* (cell I in Figure 1). It seems reasonable to expect residents of countries that are net recipients of European Union spending to support European integration, and those in donor countries to oppose it (*fiscal transfer*) (Anderson and Reichert, 1996; Brinegar et al., 2004; Diez Medrano, 2003). The same logic is often at work in regional or federal states, where poorer regions champion centralization to increase redistribution whereas prosperous regions favor decentralization (Bolton and Roland, 1997).

	Objective evaluation	Subjective evaluation
Egocentric	I Education Manual worker*GNI Professional*GNI	III Personal economic prospects
Sociotropic	II Fiscal transfer Type of capitalism	IV National economic prospects

Figure 1 Economic models of public opinion on European integration.

Sociotropic preferences may be shaped by political-economic institutions (Brinegar et al., 2004; Ray, 2004). The European Union encompasses countries with contrasting systems of economic coordination: liberal, social democratic, continental/Christian democratic, and mixed (Hall and Soskice, 2001). Citizens' cost-benefit calculations concerning European integration are likely to be influenced by the type of capitalism in which they live and work. Political-economic institutions are costly to change, and hence we expect citizens in more peripheral systems – liberal and social democratic – to be Euro-skeptical (*type of capitalism: liberal, social democratic, continental/Christian democratic, mixed*).

Subjective economic evaluations can be expected to influence public opinion on European integration alongside *objective* factors (Anderson, 1998; Christin, 2005; Eichenberg and Dalton, 1993; Rohrschneider, 2002). European integration is perceived by most citizens to shape their economic welfare in a general sense. Citizens who feel confident about the economic future – personally (cell III) and for their country (cell IV) – are likely to regard European integration in a positive light, whereas those who are fearful will lean towards Euro-skepticism (*personal economic prospects* and *national economic prospects*).

The economic approach to public opinion is likely to be most valid when economic consequences are perceived with some accuracy, when they are large enough to matter, and when the choice a person makes actually affects the outcome. To the extent that these conditions are not present, attitudes may be sensitive to group identities (Chong, 2000; Elster, 1990; Sears and Funk, 1991; Young et al., 1991).

Identity

The premise of social identity theory is that 'who one is' depends on which groups one identifies with. Humans evolved a capacity for intense group

loyalty long before the development of rational faculties. These loyalties can be extremely powerful in shaping views towards political objects (Massey, 2002; Sears, 1993; Sniderman et al., 2004). The strongest territorial identities are national, and we suspect that such identities constrain preferences concerning European integration.

The European Union meshes national and European governments in a system of multi-level governance that pools sovereignty over important aspects of citizens' lives. To the extent that European integration makes it more difficult for national governments to pursue distinctly national preferences, it undermines national self-determination and blurs boundaries between distinct national communities.

European integration reinforces multiculturalism. It erodes exclusionary norms of 'us' and 'them' that are deeply rooted in the creation of European national states. Kriesi and Lachat (2004) observe that individuals who strongly identify with their national community and who support exclusionary norms tend to perceive European integration as a threat. De Vreese and Boomgaarden (2005) show that anti-immigration sentiment is associated with Euro-skepticism. Similarly, McLaren finds that '[a]ntipathy toward the EU is not just about cost/benefit calculations or about cognitive mobilization . . . but about fear of, or hostility toward, other cultures' (McLaren, 2002: 553). Not only does European integration create economic losers and winners; it provokes a sharp sense of identity loss among defenders of the nation (*national attachment*) and among anti-cosmopolitans (*multiculturalism*).

The relationship between national identity and European integration is double-edged. On the one hand, national identity and European identity may reinforce each other (Citrin and Sides, 2004; Klandermans et al., 2003). It is not unusual for citizens to have multiple identities – to feel, for example, Catalan, Spanish, and European – at one and the same time (Diez Medrano and Gutiérrez, 2001; Marks, 1999; Marks and Llamazares, forthcoming). Haesly (2001) finds positive, rather than negative, associations between Welsh and European identities and between Scottish and European identities. Klandermans and his co-authors (2003) detect a cumulative pattern of identities, in which farmers who identify with Europe tend also to identify with their nation. Risse (2002) conceptualizes the relationship as akin to a marble cake in which multiple identities are meshed together. Van Kersbergen (2000) conceives of European allegiance as embedded in national allegiance. Citrin and Sides find that 'while the nation retains primacy in most people's minds, the growing sense of Europeaness implies that more people are integrating a sense of belonging to two overlapping polities' (2004: 170).

But it is also true that opposition to European integration is couched as defense of the nation against control from Brussels. Radical right political parties in France, Denmark, Italy, Belgium, and Austria tap nationalism to

reject further integration, and since 1996 such parties have formed the largest reservoir of Euro-skepticism in the EU as a whole (Hooghe et al., 2002; Taggart, 1998). Christin and Trechsel (2002) find that the stronger the national attachment and national pride of Swiss citizens, the less likely they are to support membership in the European Union. Carey (2002) shows that national attachment combined with national pride has a significant negative effect on support for European integration. Luedtke (2005) finds a strong negative association between national identity and support for EU immigration policy.

To resolve these conflicting expectations, we need to theorize how national identity can both reinforce and undermine support for European integration. Diez Medrano (2003) argues that national histories are crucial. Analyzing patterns of discourse in the UK, Spain, and Germany, Medrano finds that English Euro-skepticism is rooted in Britain's special history of empire, that West German pro-Europeanism reflects Second World War guilt, and that the Spanish tend to support European integration as proxy for modernization and democratization (Diez Medrano, 2003). A research team led by Str  th and Triandafyllidou (2003) links party programs, public opinion, educational curricula, and media within nine EU countries. These studies emphasize the stickiness of national identity within unique national contexts.

Can one generalize about the connection between national identity and public opinion? We begin with the basic distinction between exclusive and inclusive national identity, and we hypothesize that citizens who conceive of their national identity as exclusive of other territorial identities are predisposed to be considerably more Euro-skeptical than are those who conceive their national identity in inclusive terms (*exclusive national identity*). We know, for example, that individuals who identify themselves exclusively as Belgian or exclusively as Flemish are more likely to oppose multi-level governance than are those who identify themselves as both Belgian and Flemish (Maddens et al., 1996). We expect to find something similar at the supra-national level (Hooghe and Marks, 2004).

However, the impact of identity on political attitudes is neither automatic nor uniform (Diez Medrano, 2003; Kriesi and Lachat, 2004). The connection between individuals' communal identity and their attitude toward European integration appears to be politically constructed, as we theorize in the next section.

Political cues

The premise of cue theory is that underlying values and interests need to be primed to become politically salient. An experiment examining immigrant attitudes among Dutch citizens finds that individuals who are prompted to

think about national identity are much more likely to oppose immigration than are respondents whose personal identity is primed (Sniderman et al., 2004). This has directed attention to cognitive short-cuts, contextual factors, and elite cues, each of which help a person respond to a survey question about an issue that is seldom on his or her mind (Feldman, 1988; Steenbergen and Jones, 2002; Zaller, 1992).

The cues that appear most relevant to European integration arise in member states. The European Union is part of a system of multi-level governance that encompasses domestic political arenas, and so one would expect domestic politics to shape public views on European integration. A stream of research examines how national contexts frame views on European integration. Taking off from Franklin et al.'s 'uncorking the bottle' model (1994 and 1995) and Anderson's national proxies model (1998), this research emphasizes the quality of national governance (Sánchez-Cuenca, 2000), national democratic performance (Rohrschneider, 2002), or incumbent support and political ideology (Ray, 2003a). Here we hypothesize that public opinion is constrained by political ideology, political parties, and political elites in those domestic arenas.

Political choice in European domestic politics is structured by a general left/right dimension. Previous research has found that this dimension – in the aggregate – has little bite on public opinion on European integration (*left/right*) (Ray, 2003a, 2003b; Van der Eijk and Franklin, 1996). But some writers have suggested that the implications of left and right for public opinion on European integration depend on a country's political-economic institutions (Brinegar et al., 2004; Brinegar and Jolly, 2005; Marks, 2004; Ray, 2004). In most countries, European integration has become a left-leaning project because it holds out the prospect of continental-wide regulation. However, citizens in social democratic societies are likely to perceive European integration as a source of regulatory competition, and hence as a constraint on market regulation. Hence in social democratic systems, we expect the Left to be opposed to European integration and the Right to be supportive (*left/right*social democratic capitalism*).

Literature on American public opinion suggests that citizens are cued by political elites (Druckman, 2001; Zaller, 1992: 97–117). In Europe, the most important political organizations connecting elites to the public are political parties, and we hypothesize that individuals who say that they support a particular party will tend to follow that party's position on European integration (*party cue*) (Steenbergen and Jones, 2002). Cues are likely to be strongest when elites conflict over an issue (Ray, 2003b; Steenbergen and Scott, 2004). Elite conflict punctures passive support for European integration – transforming the 'permissive consensus' that predominated during the EU's

first three decades into a 'constraining dissensus'. We hypothesize that the greater the divisions among political parties and national elites on European integration, the more citizens are likely to oppose the process (*elite division*). We follow Zaller (1992), Ray (2003b), and Steenbergen and Jones (2002) by modeling the causality as elite driven.²

Research on national political parties tells us that conflict over European integration has, in large part, become a struggle over national community values: what does it mean to be British, French, or Greek, and how does this connect to European integration? We hypothesize that citizens who see themselves as exclusively national are particularly receptive to elite warnings that European integration harbors unacceptable foreign influence. We theorize an interaction: the deeper elite division in a country, the more will exclusive national identity be harnessed against European integration (*elite division*exclusive national identity*). In countries where the elite is divided on the issue, exclusive national identity is likely to rear its head. In countries where the elite is squarely behind the European project, we expect national identity to lie dormant or to be positively associated with support for integration.

Models

Table 1 summarizes 11 models of public opinion on European integration. The table lists the dependent variable used in each analysis, the method of analysis, the proportion of the variance explained, and, in italics, the most powerful independent variables. These models are, in our view, the most interesting, influential, and/or original analyses to have appeared over the past decade. They also represent the major directions in theorizing. Direct comparison of results across these models is complicated because the dependent variable varies, as do populations, time points, and methods. But some general lessons can be learned.

Most models, like the field as a whole, emphasize political-economic variables. Identities are far less prominent, though we over-sample in this respect by including McLaren's cultural threat model (2002), Carey's identity model (2002), and Diez Medrano's framing Europe model (2003).

The European Union is a moving target, and it is not surprising that analyses of public opinion have changed over time. Up to the mid-1990s and the Maastricht Treaty, the EU was essentially a means to institutionalize market integration, and analyses of public opinion reflected this. Gabel's book *Interests and Integration* (1998b), from which we draw the policy appraisal and national political economy models, is primarily concerned with economic costs and benefits, as is Anderson and Reichert's economic benefits model (1996). Another stream of work (not represented in Table 1) examines

cross-national variation in support in terms of aggregate economic factors (Carrubba, 1997; Eichenberg and Dalton, 1993 and 2003).

Several models engage domestic politics. Anderson's national proxies model (1998), Rohrschneider's democratic performance model (2002), and Steenbergen and Jones' party cue model (2002) draw attention to national political-institutional variables, of which party support or party cue appear especially powerful. Brinegar et al.'s types of capitalism model (2004) highlights how national political-economic institutions refract left/right positioning on European integration.

In the 1990s, elite conflict on Europe intensified, radical right parties became the Euro-skeptical vanguard, and scholars began to analyze communal identities as sources of public opinion. Carey's identity model (2002) provides evidence that regional, national, and European identities structure EU public opinion. McLaren's cultural threat model (2002) demonstrates that negative attitudes towards the EU reflect general hostility toward other cultures. Diez Medrano's model (2003) attempts to generalize how different national histories frame conceptions of national identity and Europe.

Our analysis builds on these insights. We compare the relative influence of economic calculation and communal identity, and we propose a simple, but encompassing, model that explains around one-third of the variance in public support for European integration.

Method and data

To measure support for European integration we combine three complementary elements of support: the *principle* of membership, the desired *speed* of integration, and the desired *direction* of future integration. The results reported below are robust across these component measures. This and other variables in our analysis are detailed in the appendix (see the appendix³ also for descriptive statistics).⁴

We use multi-level analysis to probe variation at the individual, party, and country level. Our presumption is that political parties and countries are irreducible political contexts that interact with individual attributes to produce political effects – in this case, support for or opposition to European integration. To the extent that individuals are clustered in parties and countries, they should not be regarded as independent units of analysis. Ignoring this biases standard errors because residuals will co-vary across the higher-level groups. By specifying predictors for clustered data across the relevant clusters, one is less likely to mis-specify parameters (Steenbergen and Jones, 2002).

Table 1 Public opinion on European integration

<i>Economic models</i>	<i>Gabel/Palmer's economic voting model (1995)</i>	<i>Anderson/ Reichert economic benefits model (1996)</i>	<i>Gabel's policy-appraisal model (1998b)</i>	<i>Gabel's national political economy model (1998c)</i>	<i>Brinegar et al.'s types of capitalism model (2004)</i>
Dependent variable	Membership + unification	Membership	Membership	Membership	Perceived/desired speed
Economic calculation					
Individual factors	Occupation, income, education, proximity to border	Occupation, ^c income, education	Occupation, ^d income, education, proximity to border	Human capital, ^a relative wage, ^e occupation	
Collective factors	Evaluation of national economy, ^a national benefit ^b	EU trade, budget returns		EU trade	Type of capitalism, Structural funding
Community and identity					
Cultural threat					
Identity					
Political cues					
Ideology/values		Postmaterialism		Political stability ^f	Values, ^h left/right self-placement
Party/elite cues					Party cue ⁱ
Other political cues					
Other factors					
Country dummies	Yes	Gender, age, length of membership No	Gender, age Yes	Geopolitical security ^g Yes	No
Method	OLS pooled time series (EU) .38	OLS over different years (EU) .04–.10	OLS pooled time series (EU) .13–.14	OLS pooled time series (EU) .11–.13	OLS (EU) .17
R ²					

Notes: The strongest variables in each model are italicized.

^a Retrospective evaluation. ^b Benefit question. ^c Dummy for farmer. ^d Dummies: farmer, professional, manual worker. ^e Occupation/ income interaction. ^f % vote parties opposing democratic capitalism. ^g WWII deaths. ^h Views on welfare state, gender equality. ⁱ See Steenbergen and Jones (2002).

Table 1 Continued

Non-economic models	Anderson's national proxies model (1998)	Rohrschneider's democracy model (2002)	Steenbergen/Jones' party cue model (2002)	McLaren's cultural threat model (2002)	Carey's identity model (2002)	Diez Medrano's framing Europe model (2003)
Dependent variable	Membership	Support for EU government ^c	Membership + desired speed	Membership + benefit	Membership	Index of support for EMU and CFSP
Economic calculation						
Individual factors	Evaluation of personal economy	Evaluation of personal economy		Occupation, income, education, proximity to border	Occupation, income, education; evaluation of personal economy	Occupation, income, education
Collective factors	Evaluation of national economy	Evaluation of single market, national economy		Perceived economic threat ^e	Evaluation of national economy	Inflation, growth, trade, objective 1 region
Community and identity						
Cultural threat						
Identity						
Political cues						
Ideology/values						
Party/elite cues	Party support ^a	Post-materialism	Party cue ^d			Perceived cultural threat
Other political cues	System support, ^b government support	Perception EU representation, satisfaction with EU democracy		Left/right self-placement	Perceived cultural threat ^g , national pride, ^h territorial attachment ⁱ	Perceived cultural threat European attachment
Other factors						
Country dummies	Not applicable	Not applicable	Opinion leadership		Opinion leadership	Catholic country; distance to Brussels ^k
Method	OLS (individual countries)	OLS; multi-level analysis (individual countries)	No	Yes	Yes	No
<i>R</i> ²	.09–0.20	.23–0.40	Multi-level analysis (EU)	OLS (EU)	Ordered LOGIT (EU)	Multi-level analysis (EU)
			.09	.17–.21	59% correct	.21

Notes: The strongest variables in each model are italicized.

^a Voted for establishment party. ^b Satisfaction with national democracy. ^c (1) EU government responsible to EU Parliament? (2) More power for EP good/bad? (3) EP more/less important role? ^d EU support among political parties, assigned as value to party supporters. ^e Minorities abuse social benefits. ^f Religious practices of minorities threaten way of life. ^g EU threatens national identity, language. ^h Interaction national pride, exclusive national identity. ⁱ Local, region, nation, Europe. ^j Government party, working class vs. bourgeois party. ^k Also WWII deaths, new democracy.

Table 2 The base model

	<i>Unstandardized coefficients</i>	<i>Standard errors</i>
Fixed effects: constant	64.697**	2.965
Variance components		
Country level	110.838**	46.446
Party level	70.261**	13.013
Individual level	593.384**	9.669
-2* log likelihood	70985	

Note: * $p < .01$ ** $p < .001$

We use five controls throughout. Consistent with prior work, we expect support to be greater among opinion leaders, respondents knowledgeable about European politics, men, and younger individuals. We also control for *European attachment* so that our measure of *exclusive national identity* does not tap absence of European identity. *European attachment* is strongly associated with support for European integration ($R = .30$), and its inclusion as a control variable imposes conservatism in estimating the significance and effect of identity variables of theoretical interest.

Results

Let us begin by examining the extent to which variation in public opinion on European integration is clustered among countries and political parties. An empty ANOVA model partitions the total variance into discrete variance components. The ANOVA model, hereafter described as the base model, is shown in Table 2. The individual level accounts for 76.6% of the variance across the sample; the party level accounts for 9.1%; and the country level accounts for 14.3%.

Table 3 presents the results of the multi-level analysis. Each of the theories we discuss has some power. Models 1 and 2 confirm that citizens respond to economic stimuli. Variables that tap occupation along with personal and collective expectations are significant in both models, though they are not particularly powerful when compared with variables that tap type of capitalism (model 1) or fiscal redistribution among countries (model 2).

In model 1, mean support for European integration is more than 25 points lower (on a 100-point scale) in Scandinavian social democratic political

economies than in our reference category, the mixed political economies of France and southern Europe. Model 1 accounts for almost four-fifths of the country variance in our data, considerably more than model 2 or model 3. But what can one infer from the strength of dichotomous varieties of capitalism variables? The three dummy variables in model 1 specify groupings of countries that share distinctive social, political, and cultural features alongside particular types of capitalism. To be sure, Scandinavians tend to be far more Euro-skeptical than southern Europeans, but is this because they have a distinctive political economy, or because Scandinavians have particular identities that lead them to resist rule from Brussels?

To probe further, one must replace country names with variables. In model 2 we replace the dummies representing groups of countries with a measure of fiscal redistribution. Because most redistribution in the EU is from the richer countries of the north to the poorer countries in the south, *fiscal transfer* is strongly correlated ($R > .30$) with three of the dummy variables for country groupings. Adding the variable to model 1 creates unstable coefficients. In model 2 and under the controls exerted in subsequent models, *fiscal transfer* is significant and powerful.

Figure 2 illustrates this by estimating the relative effect of eight influential independent variables, including *fiscal transfer*. The solid boxes encompass the inter-quartile range and the whiskers indicate the range between the 5th and the 95th percentile, holding all other independent variables at their means. An individual in Germany at the 5th percentile on *fiscal transfer* has a mean score of 66.3 on *support for European integration*, whereas an individual in Greece, at the 95th percentile, has a mean score of 81.5, controlling for all other variables in our analysis. The differing length of the 95% whiskers in Figure 2 for this variable indicates that its association with support for European integration is not linear. *Fiscal transfer* sharply delineates four countries (Greece, Portugal, Spain, and Ireland) that receive the bulk of cohesion funding and that tend to be pro-EU.

Three variables that tap identity – *exclusive national identity*, *multiculturalism*, and *national attachment* – are featured in model 3. This model is not as efficient as either model 1 or model 2 in accounting for country variance, but it is considerably better at explaining variance at the party and at the individual level. The reduction in the chi-square ($-2 \times \log \text{likelihood}$) from model 2 to model 3 is 714, and model 3 costs four fewer degrees of freedom. This identity model explains 21.9% of the total variance (excluding *European attachment*).

The double-edged character of identity is apparent: national identity both contributes to, and diminishes, support for European integration. Attachment to one's country is positively correlated with *support for European integration*

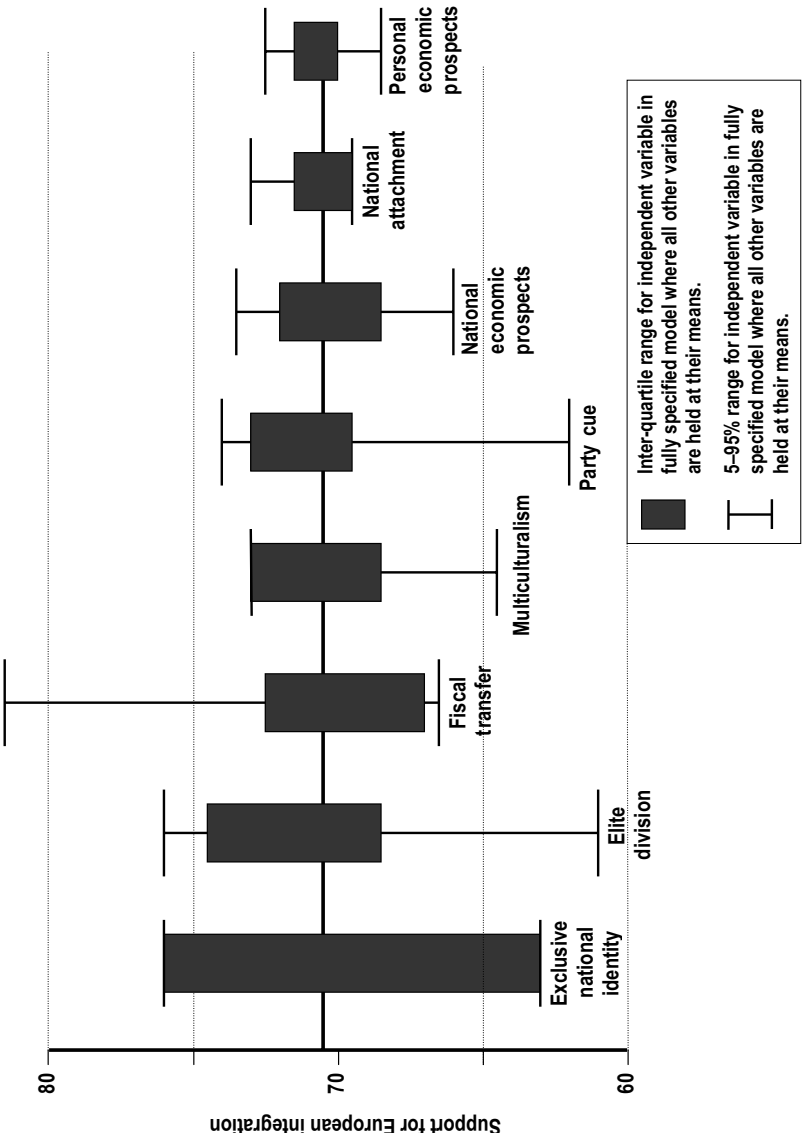


Figure 2 Effects of independent variables.

in bivariate analysis.⁵ But national identity is Janus-faced: in some circumstances it collides with European integration.

The extent to which national identity is exclusive or inclusive is decisive. A Eurobarometer question compels respondents to place either European or national identity above the other, and separates those who say they think of themselves as 'only British (or French, etc.)' from those who say they have some form of multiple identity. Estimates for *exclusive national identity* are negative, substantively large, and significant in the presence of any and all controls we exert. On average, and controlling for all other variables, an individual in our sample who claims an exclusive national identity scores 63.2 on our scale for support for European integration, compared with 76.1 for a person who does not. The difference, 12.9%, is indicated by the solid box in Figure 2.

Two methodological issues arise in relation to our claim that national identity shapes public opinion on European integration. The first concerns causal priority. Is national identity exogenous with respect to public support for European integration? Are we right to assume that national identity causes support, and not the reverse? Our approach is confirmed by empirical research arguing that national factors shape public attitudes on European integration, rather than the reverse (Kritzinger, 2003; Van Kersbergen, 2000). It seems plausible to place identities, especially national identities, earlier in the causal chain than support for or opposition to a particular political system, particularly one as distant to most citizens as the European Union. National identities are more deeply rooted in respondents' minds than are attitudes towards European integration, and, to the extent that one finds an association between them, it seems sensible to argue that identities are causally prior.

The second issue concerns measurement. The Eurobarometer question concerning exclusive national identity is far from perfect for our purpose. The measure we use taps national identity by asking whether respondents see themselves as exclusively national or have some form of national and European identity. We control for *European attachment* to diminish the influence of European identity in our results. We also find that *degrees* of European identity – whether respondents say they see themselves as national first or European first – have little statistical bite. Consistent with our exclusive national identity argument, the difference between respondents with exclusive national identity and any form of mixed identity is considerably greater than the differences among those with varying forms of mixed identity. Average support for European integration is 53.3 on our scale for respondents who have exclusive national identity, and varies between 75.1 and 80.4 across the remaining categories. The active agent in our analysis is, therefore, the divide between individuals with exclusive national identity and those who

Table 3 Public opinion on European integration: Calculation, community, cues

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
<i>Constant (fixed effects)</i>	81.156** (2.792)	70.290** (2.653)	76.216** (2.760)	74.032** (2.295)	75.570** (1.840)	70.550** (1.709)
<i>Economic calculation (fixed effects)</i>						
Education	1.543** (0.357)	1.527** (0.357)		0.997* (0.340)	0.970* (0.339)	0.927* (0.338)
Professional/manager*gross national income	0.119* (0.046)	0.118* (0.046)		0.079 (0.044)	0.072 (0.044)	0.069 (0.043)
Manual worker*gross national income	-0.065* (0.029)	-0.065 (0.029)		-0.040 (0.028)	-0.035 (0.028)	-0.033 (0.028)
Personal economic prospects	2.368** (0.649)	2.378** (0.649)		2.257** (0.616)	2.334** (0.615)	2.314** (0.615)
National economic prospects	4.018** (0.468)	3.994** (0.468)		3.125** (0.446)	3.025** (0.445)	3.115** (0.444)
Fiscal transfer		4.633* (1.589)		4.525** (1.333)	3.408** (1.014)	3.330** (0.864)
Capitalism: liberal	-16.263** (4.841)					
Capitalism: continental/Christian democratic	-11.257* (3.809)					
Capitalism: social democratic	-25.419** (4.134)					

Table 3 continued

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
<i>Community and identity (fixed effects)</i>						
National attachment			-1.598** (0.420)	-1.638** (0.418)	-1.699** (0.416)	-1.691** (0.415)
Exclusive national identity			-13.260** (0.562)	-12.954** (0.560)	-12.835** (0.559)	
Multiculturalism			4.532** (0.310)	4.191** (0.310)	4.173** (0.309)	4.153** (0.309)
<i>Political cues (fixed effects)</i>						
Left/right					0.039 (0.138)	-0.312 (0.144)
Party cue					2.417** (0.241)	2.317** (0.221)
Elite division					-6.439** (2.191)	
Elite division*exclusive national identity						-5.136** (0.223)
Left/right*social democratic capitalism						1.580** (0.294)
-2 *log likelihood	69683	69695	68981	68853	68787	68769
R ² (including European attachment)	.26	.20	.25	.31	.37	.38
R ² (excluding European attachment)	.19	.12	.22	.27	.34	.34

Notes: Multi-level analysis using MLWIN. N = 7641; countries equally weighted.

* $p < .01$, ** $p < .001$

attest to some mix of inclusive national and European identity rather than between those who have different degrees of mixed identity.

Model 4 combines economic and identity variables and is a large improvement over models 1 to 3. This model reveals that economic and identity variables tap different aspects of public opinion. Model 5 introduces political parties, elite divisions, and left/right ideology. *Party cue* is the fifth most powerful variable in Figure 2, while divisions within and across political parties and divisions within the political elite, summarized by the variable *elite division*, are extraordinarily influential. The inter-quartile range in Figure 2 for *elite division* is second only to that for *exclusive national identity*. A citizen in Sweden, the country with the most divided elite, scores on average 60.8 on our scale for support for European integration, whereas a citizen in Spain, with the least divided elite, scores 76.1. This 5–95% range is represented by the whiskers in Figure 2. Model 5 explains 33.5% of total variance when we strip out the effect of *European attachment*, and it is more powerful than any model in Table 1.⁶

Model 6, our final model, is in one key respect simpler than model 5. It combines the two most influential variables in model 5, *elite division* and *exclusive national identity*, into a single interactive term that provides information about the level of elite division *only* for individuals having exclusive national identity. Our hunch, derived from what we know about American public opinion, seems to be on the right track: divisions within a country's elite interact with exclusive national identity to shape attitudes on European integration. Model 6 includes another interaction term, *left/right*social democratic capitalism*, which has a significant positive coefficient consistent with our hypothesis that political-economic institutions refract ideological positioning. In social democratic systems, the Left's response to European integration is framed by its defense of welfare provisions that appear anomalous in a wider European context, whereas the political Right welcomes European norms.

Conclusion

The European Union is an extremely versatile institution. It is an international regime that facilitates economic exchange; it is a supranational polity that exerts political authority over its citizens; and it is part of a system of multi-level governance that encompasses national politics. In this paper we show that the motivations underlying public opinion on European integration draw on all three perspectives. Citizens take the economic consequences of market integration into account, both for themselves and for their countries. They evaluate European integration in terms of their communal identities and their

views towards foreigners and foreign cultures. Further, their attitudes are cued by their ideological placement and by elites and political parties.

A multi-level model that synthesizes these perspectives is considerably more powerful than one that does not. The model we put forward in this paper uses 12 degrees of freedom to account for 25.6% of variance at the individual level and almost all variance at the country and party levels. Comparison with prior models is not easy given variations in method and dependent variables, but, for the first time, readers can review leading models and their basic findings side by side.

Economic interests and communal identities do not speak with a single voice across the European Union, but interact with national institutions and elites. The implications of ideology for public opinion on European integration vary with the expected effect of integration on welfare states. More integration means one thing for welfare spending in a country such as the UK, which has a low level, and quite another in a country such as Sweden, where welfare spending is high. This is reflected in ideological positioning with respect to European integration.

We find that exclusive national identity provides a key to public opinion, but the extent to which exclusive national identity bites on support for European integration depends on how divided national elites are. Where elites are united on Europe, national identity and European integration tend to coexist; where they are divided, national identity produces Euro-skepticism.

National identities are formed early in life. Children as young as six or seven know full well whether they are Spanish, German, or Swedish (Druckman, 1994). Yet the political consequences of national identity are constructed in debate and conflict. We suggest that such construction takes place primarily in domestic arenas, and is cued by political elites and political parties, but we need better data, and data over time, to delve more deeply into the causal connections between elite and public attitudes.

Theories of public opinion on European integration have lagged behind first-hand description. Journalists and close observers of the public mood have for some time emphasized that national identities constrain support for European integration, yet all but a few scholarly analyses have focused on economic calculation. Our finding that identity is influential for public opinion on European integration extends research linking identity conceptions to attitudes on immigration and race (Citrin et al., 1990; De Vreese and Boomgaarden, 2005; Luedtke, 2005; Sears, 1993; Sniderman et al., 2004).

Our analysis suggests that the influence of communal identities may reach well beyond race or immigration. A policy with clear distributional consequences may still be evaluated as an identity issue. Research on trade liberalization has produced the unexplained finding that citizens with strong

national attachment tend to oppose trade liberalization both in the United States and across OECD countries. National attachment appears to be a more powerful influence than conventional economic factors, a finding that is all the more striking because it has emerged in two independent tests of economic, not identity, theories (O'Rourke and Sinnott, 2001; Mayda and Rodrik, 2002). Clearly, we have much to learn about how economic calculation and identity shape public opinion, and about how their effects vary across political contexts.

Notes

For comments and advice we are grateful to Mark Aspinwall, Stefano Bartolini, Tanja Börzel, Gerda Falkner, Rusanna Gaber, Peter Hall, Elizabeth Gerber, Adrienne Héritier, Seth Jolly, Hans-Peter Kriesi, David Lake, Christiane Lemke, Ivan Llamazares, Catherine Netjes, Thomas Risse, Edeltraud Roller, Dieter Rucht, David Soskice, Alexander Trechsel, Anna Triandafyllidou, Bernhard Wessels, and the Steiner political science discussion group at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Earlier versions were presented at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam; the Social Science Research Center, Berlin; the European University Institute, Florence; the Center for European Studies at Harvard University; Humboldt University, Berlin; the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Princeton University; the Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna; and the 2003 APSA Meeting, Philadelphia. We received institutional support from the Center for European Studies at the University of North Carolina, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, and the Social Science Research Center, Berlin. We alone are responsible for errors.

- 1 The literature is divided on how to test this hypothesis. Gabel (1998c) interacts occupational dummies for low- and high-skilled individuals with relative wages (or income). This operationalization has been criticized on the grounds that relative wage/income data at the individual level do not adequately capture variation in national contexts (Brinegar and Jolly, 2005). We follow Gabel by interacting occupation with income, but we use a national variable – gross national income (GNI) – to tap country variation.
- 2 This assumption is controversial, and has been recently challenged (Carrubba, 2001; Gabel and Scheve, 2004). It seems sensible to model the party–public interaction as conditional on the salience of an issue for the public. Recent data and research suggest that European integration has indeed become salient in some recent national elections, though it is not clear how this has varied over time (Evans, 1999; Netjes, 2004; Tilman, 2004).
- 3 The appendix can be found on the EUP web page.
- 4 Data are from Eurobarometer 54.1 (Hartung, 2002; fieldwork in Fall 2000). The data set was made available by the Mannheimer Zentrum für Umfragen, Methoden und Analysen (ZUMA). We include only respondents for whom we have values on all variables in the full model to assure commensurability across explanatory models, and we weight each country to have equal sample size. Neither of these decisions affects our results. There are no

significant differences in means and standard deviations between our restricted sample and the full sample (minus Luxembourg, and each country equally weighted; see appendix). No variables reported here shift in sign or significance across the restricted and full samples or across weighted and unweighted samples.

- 5 The association between *national attachment* and *support for European integration* is usually insignificant under controls, and becomes negative when we control for *European attachment*.
- 6 When we follow Gabel and Palmer (1995) and include national benefit ('Do you believe your country has benefited from European integration') on the left-hand side of the equation along with country dummies, model 5 explains 42.6% of the variance.

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When in Doubt, Use Proxies: Attitudes toward Domestic Politics and Support for European Integration

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Comparative Political Studies 1998 31: 569

DOI: 10.1177/0010414098031005002

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What is This?

This article argues that citizens employ proxies rooted in attitudes about domestic politics when responding to survey questions about the European integration process. It develops a model of public opinion toward European integration based on attitudes toward the political system, the incumbent government, and establishment parties. With the help of data from Eurobarometer 34.0, the study tests political and economic models of public support for membership in the European Union in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, and Portugal. The analyses show that system and establishment party support are the most powerful determinants of support for membership in the European Union. The results also suggest that the relationship between economic factors and support previously reported in research on public opinion toward European integration is likely to be mediated by domestic political attitudes.

WHEN IN DOUBT, USE PROXIES

Attitudes Toward Domestic Politics and Support for European Integration

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Much of the recent literature on international political and economic relations stresses the domestic foundations of international politics by examining the ways in which domestic politics function as a constraint on states' actions in the international arena (see, e.g., Evans, Jacobson, & Putnam, 1993; Garrett & Lange, 1995; Keohane & Milner, 1996; Putnam, 1988). One important constraint originating from the domestic political arena is public opinion. Elites engaged in international politics pay close attention to

AUTHOR'S NOTE: An earlier version of this article was presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association in San Diego, CA, April 16-20, 1996. I am grateful to Ray Duch, Richard Eichenberg, Cliff Morgan, Suzanne Schaer, Gerald Schneider, and the anonymous referees for useful comments. Thanks also to Northwestern University's Kellogg Graduate School of Management for its hospitality while working on this article and to Kathleen O'Connor for her help and insightful comments on earlier ideas. Finally, thanks to Richard Katz for his advice on Italian politics and Michael Marsh for information on Irish party politics.

COMPARATIVE POLITICAL STUDIES, Vol. 31 No. 5, October 1998 569-601
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public sentiment when formulating policies because they are concerned about their survival in office and because they care about satisfying domestic constituencies. Domestic elites involved in the European integration process are no exception in this regard, and a number of the developments within the European Union (EU) have been analyzed using a domestic politics framework (Bulmer, 1983; Cameron, 1992; Scharpf, 1988). Understanding what drives public opinion toward EU among the publics of the member states is thus an important consideration if one is to interpret past and future developments in the European integration process accurately.

Although functionalist and neofunctionalist theories of integration traditionally viewed the integration project as an elite-driven venture and therefore assumed that public opinion was unimportant (Anderson, 1995), recent research has reminded us of the important role that mass publics play in the European integration process (Dalton & Eichenberg, 1992; Niedermayer & Sinnott, 1995). In fact, as the referenda on the Maastricht treaty and EU membership in several European countries have shown, European mass publics have the ability and willingness to constrain and possibly forestall further progress toward a unified Europe. Yet, although it is apparent that citizens' attitudes are an important element of the integration process, we are only beginning to understand the complex nature of public opinion toward a unified Europe (Janssen, 1991).

This study examines the domestic political foundations of mass attitudes about European integration. It thus seeks to contribute to scholarship on the link between domestic and international politics by supplementing studies that focus mostly on the role of domestic and international elites in the integration process (e.g., Garrett, 1992; Moravcsik, 1991; Sandholtz & Zysman, 1989). Such studies typically do not consider the role of public opinion. Instead, they take preferences as given and examine the outcomes of bargains struck among elites. Yet, if domestic public opinion constrains states' actions in the international arena and if EU decision making is driven by political actors who pay close attention to domestic political developments both at home and abroad, citizens' attitudes toward Europe may influence the negotiations among member state governments (Schneider, 1995; Schneider & Weitsman, 1996). It is important to know whether mass publics are supportive of a unified Europe for reasons of economic performance evaluations, domestic political affiliation, approval of government policies, changing political values, or a general goodwill in the form of what has been termed a permissive consensus. Commitments or proposals made by one side may appear more or less credible to the players involved in the integration game depending on the nature of the underlying causes that drive domestic opinion about integration.

The structure of domestic opinion among the publics of the member states is likely to be a crucial ingredient that determines the types of bargains struck at the supranational level because it can impose different constraints on decision makers at the European level (Schneider, 1995).

The study also seeks to contribute to our understanding of public opinion about Europe in several ways. First, it develops a new and systematic individual-level conceptualization of the domestic political foundations of integration support by explicitly categorizing the ways in which different national contexts may affect people's attitudes about Europe. Specifically, it argues that because the citizens of the member states are largely uninformed about Europe, they employ proxies rooted in domestic political considerations (government, party, and system support) when responding to questions about the integration process. Moreover, this article goes beyond earlier studies that focused primarily on the economic foundations of support for Europe by developing a model of how people think about European integration that combines economic considerations with political ones. Finally, the study tests the relationship of attitudes toward domestic politics and support for European integration on the basis of directly comparable data collected in a number of member states. It thus provides a more general test of a domestically driven model of attitudes toward Europe than possible through, for example, studies of referenda on integration issues, given that such contests take place infrequently and only in member states that have constitutional provisions for such direct citizen input.

The next section reviews the literature on public opinion about European integration and considers why and how public opinion toward European integration is affected by attitudes about domestic politics. Next, the article develops three hypotheses about the interplay of public opinion about domestic politics and European integration. Specifically, it examines how support for the incumbent government, partisanship, and system support affects attitudes toward membership in the EU. A concluding section spells out the implications of these findings for future studies of public opinion and European integration.

PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Although it is well-known that public support for an integrated Europe fluctuates over time and varies among groups of the population, there have been only infrequent attempts to explain such variations (see Anderson, 1995, for

an overview). One of the few exceptions has been the research on the economic determinants of public support for an integrated Europe. This approach has focused on two sources of support for integration: economic conditions and economic benefits associated with membership in the EU.

First, scholars have sought to show that citizens' support for EU waxes and wanes with the business cycle. Following theories of economic voting (cf. Lewis-Beck, 1988), this approach argues that European mass publics associate national economic performance with the integration project. Studies have found that national levels of support for the integration project are higher when domestic economic conditions are favorable (Anderson & Kaltenthaler, 1996; Eichenberg & Dalton, 1993; Inglehart & Rabier, 1978) and that individuals who assess economic performance favorably are more inclined to be supportive of integration (Gabel & Whitten, 1997; Sobisch & Patterson, 1995).

Second, scholars have argued that citizens base their support for integration on the perceived or real costs and benefits associated with being a member of the EU. Based on human capital and utility maximization theories of political behavior, researchers have found a positive relationship between economic benefits derived both by individuals and nation-states on one hand and support for a more tightly integrated Europe on the other (Anderson & Reichert, 1995; Duch & Taylor, 1997; Gabel, 1998).

Most of this research on the political economy of public support for European integration either implies or explicitly assumes that citizens have meaningful attitudes toward a united Europe. Thus, when citizens respond to a survey question by stating that they favor their country's membership in the EU, it is assumed that the responses reflect respondents' actual attitudes. Moreover and maybe more important, this research frequently assumes that citizens are economically rational or reasonably well-informed and able to recognize at least the broad contours of the political and economic consequences of the integration process.

Janssen (1991) has speculated that such assumptions may not be warranted: "The issue of integration may be too difficult, too abstract or not interesting enough for the average citizen to form a well thought-out attitude" (p. 467). Empirical evidence from a variety of sources confirms this suspicion. Surveys gauging people's opinions regarding whether they are informed about European integration between 1992 and 1995 show that a significant majority—roughly 65% to 70%—typically feels uninformed about the EU (Eurobarometers 37-43).¹

1. I will refer to the organization associated with the European integration process as the European Union (EU) throughout the article.

Other surveys suggest that these self-assessments indeed accurately portray Europeans' objective knowledge about integration. Some examples may help illustrate the point: In public opinion polls conducted throughout 1992 to 1995, only about 20% to 25% of respondents were able to identify the most powerful EU institution (the Council). In spring of 1995, only 11% of EU citizens managed to identify all member states of the EU—with the help of a map and a list of countries (Eurobarometer 43: 53-54). Similarly, when put to the test with the help of a battery of questions probing citizens' knowledge about the EU, only about a third qualified as knowledgeable (38% in 1993 and 28% in 1994).²

The fact that Europe's citizens are not particularly well-informed about the EU and are thus unlikely to conform to the strict definition of self-interested utility maximizers vis-à-vis the EU also is evident in citizens' responses to a myriad of other questions that gauge their knowledge about things, such as the president of the commission, the Maastricht treaty, and elections to the European Parliament (EP) (Eurobarometers 37.0, 1992 and 39.0, 1993). In a survey conducted in April/May 1994—only about 1 month prior to the EP elections—78% of respondents were unable to identify the approximate date of the upcoming poll.

Given that virtually all measures of knowledge, awareness, and information about European integration indicate that people have fairly little systematic information about even the most basic aspects of the integration project, how can such low levels of awareness and strong economic effects exist side by side? Specifically, how can mass publics be simultaneously ignorant about integration and act in an self-interested rational fashion when it comes to economic benefits to be secured from the integration process?

Instead of arguing against the theoretical possibility of economic influences on support for European integration among some citizens across some of the member states of the EU, this article seeks to emphasize alternative explanations that can be combined with economic ones. Specifically, it argues that attitudes about the advantages and disadvantages of integration are likely to reflect other, more firmly held and extensively developed, political beliefs that are the result of citizens' experiences with domestic political reality. As a result, economic effects, which typically have been modeled to have a direct influence on integration support, may in fact be mediated by attitudes toward domestic politics.

2. In an analysis of German data, Rattinger (1996) finds that more than two thirds of the population can be considered indifferent vis-à-vis the integration process.

INFORMATION DEFICITS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Given that both subjective and objective indicators of awareness and knowledge reveal a citizenry that is only dimly aware of the European integration process, one might be tempted to scold Europe's citizens for not doing their homework. However, the fact that European mass publics are not particularly well-informed about or aware of the integration process is in line with research that shows that citizens generally have more information and more crystallized opinions about domestic politics than about foreign policy and international politics (Bailey, 1948; Bennett, 1996; Converse, 1964; Holsti, 1992; Rosenau, 1960). If this is true, how do European citizens construct responses to questions about the EU?

It may not be necessary for European mass publics to have much information to answer questions about the integration process. The relative lack of information about the integration project may result from its lack of relevance for people's lives and the uncertainty associated with the changing nature of a political and economic system still under construction. Moreover, the EU is a complex political phenomenon that often appears removed from domestic political reality. Survey data support such an interpretation. When knowledge about national institutions was tested alongside knowledge about the EU, citizens turned out to be much better informed about domestic politics than about the integration process (Eurobarometer 39: 53-62).³ However, there do not appear to be systematic differences across the countries regarding the gap in knowledge about the EU.

Starting with the assumption that people are not very well-informed about many aspects of international politics, this article develops a model of public opinion that portrays citizens as using the context of domestic politics to form opinions about the European integration process. Because it is likely that few citizens possess the kinds of cognitive structures that are required for the level of information processing that many economic models presume, I expect that people fill their knowledge gaps by using proxies when responding to queries about the integration process.⁴ Thus, given the gener-

3. This is consistent with related research on public opinion about international affairs among the American public (Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1993).

4. This notion is similar to what Lupia (1994) refers to as *shortcuts*. However, because what Lupia labels shortcuts also are labeled *heuristics* in social-psychological research, this study seeks to avoid any confusion by employing the more neutral term *proxies*. Note also that the social-psychological concepts of heuristics or shortcuts are slightly different from proxies. Heuristics or cognitive shortcuts are used when people lack the capacity or motivation to fully process incoming information (Fiske & Taylor, 1984). That is, rather than carefully considering in-

ally low levels of awareness about the EU among citizens of the member states, attitudes about the advantages and disadvantages of integration may essentially reflect other, more firmly held and extensively developed political beliefs that are the result of citizens' experiences with domestic political reality.

Research on voting behavior in European elections and referenda is consistent with such a conceptualization. Scholars have found, for example, that EP elections are regularly driven by domestic political concerns, alignments, and dynamics (Marsh & Franklin, 1996; Reif, 1984; Reif & Schmitt, 1980; van der Eijk & Franklin, 1996). Governing parties, for example, tend to do worse in such contests, whereas small and antiestablishment parties do better than in regular national elections. However, because these contests do not elect a European government and because Europe is seldom an issue in them (cf. van der Eijk & Franklin, 1996), such findings constitute only indirect evidence for the notion that citizens understand and think about the European integration process in terms of domestic politics.

Analyses of the recent referenda on the Maastricht treaty in Denmark, Ireland, and France as well as on EU membership in Sweden, Finland, Norway, and Austria provide more direct evidence by showing a link between domestic political considerations and vote choice (Franklin, Marsh, & McLaren, 1994; Schneider & Weitsman, 1996; Siune, Svensson, & Tonsgaard, 1994). According to this research, the outcomes of contests involving European questions are influenced both by the popularity of incumbent governments and attitudes about the issue to be decided in the referendum (Franklin, van der Eijk, & Marsh, 1995). However, it is complicated to make straightforward inferences about individuals' attitudes about Europe on the basis of these results given that referenda are held infrequently and only in a relatively small number of member states and because they differ with regard to the precise issue to be decided. Moreover, the specific role of governments in either putting such referenda before the people or making public recommendations on how to vote (Schneider & Weitsman, 1996) increases the probability that such contests are seen by voters as opportunities to support or oppose the incumbent government.

formation, people use a heuristic, such as source expertise, to assess the quality of the message. Proxies as used in this study, however, presume that people are capable of using information when available. However, in most cases, they are likely to lack the relevant information about EU when asked in a survey. Thus, proxies are used to fill gaps in people's knowledge. When asked to evaluate the EU, respondents may have little knowledge about the EU but instead substitute their attitudes toward similar political structures. Thus, differences between proxies as used here, and heuristics or shortcuts as used in social-psychological research are analogous to differences between knowledge and the ability or motivation to process information.

DOMESTIC POLITICS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Citizens compensate for a gap in knowledge about the EU by construing a reality about it that fits their understanding of the political world. For most people, this means that they rely on what they know and think about domestic politics. Although much of the research on foreign policy attitudes in the United States has focused on ideology and party identification as cues that structure such attitudes (Sulfaro, 1996), the model of attitudes toward Europe developed below argues that people employ a slightly different set of proxies that also are related to a member state's domestic politics.

From the vantage point of the average citizen, European integration activities can be construed in one of the following ways: (a) the EU as a set of political institutions, (b) the integration process as a series of regular political events that involve the governments of the member states, and (c) European integration as a political issue. Because I expected citizens to rely on political proxies when asked about the merits of the integration project in an opinion survey, I expected them to construe a picture of the EU by using information about political parties, the domestic political system, and those who govern it.

SYSTEM SUPPORT AS PROXY

Because the EU is a set of political institutions that includes an assembly, a judicial branch, and an executive, support for European integration was expected to reflect attitudes toward political institutions in general and the political system in which citizens live in particular. Such attitudes constitute very general orientations toward democratic governance that also have been referred to as diffuse support (Dalton, 1996). Citizens who display trust and goodwill vis-à-vis political institutions are assumed to be sanguine about the integration project (Martinotti & Steffanizzi, 1995). In other words, because states that seek to integrate must themselves be integrated (Hoffmann, 1966), countries with citizens who are satisfied with the performance of democratic institutions will support integration efforts. Conversely, this hypothesis predicts that those who are dissatisfied with the working of political institutions at home display higher levels of dissatisfaction with European institutions. In fact, because of the long-standing debate centering around the democratic deficit of the EU, they may be even less satisfied with the way democracy works at the European level.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AS PROXY

As a result of EU's institutional design, it is the governments of the member states—first and foremost—that participate in EU activities and decision making. Thus, aside from constituting a set of political institutions, the EU also consists of a series of regular and often highly publicized political events involving member state governments. Information about these activities is communicated via mass media that report on the meetings of ministers and heads of government for conferences and negotiations. Because EU's power center is located in the Council of Ministers—that is, a set of formally defined intergovernmental relationships—citizens regularly observe, read, and hear about heads of government and ministers meeting and negotiating the policies of the EU.⁵

If citizens viewed the integration process as a set of events in which their government takes part and form evaluations of the integration process based on their support for the incumbent government, I expected a positive relationship between government and integration support.⁶ In contrast to notions of general (or diffuse) system support mentioned above, the government support proxy corresponds to what has been labeled specific support. Attitudes toward the incumbent government were thus expected to be a key ingredient affecting public opinion about Europe in the member states of the EU, both for formal institutional reasons and reasons of information availability.⁷ This expectation was consistent with what we knew about the effects of government support and voting behavior in referenda. However, it is yet unclear whether such effects exist once we control for other political factors or when we examine political behavior in nonreferenda contexts such as public opinion polls.

5. This is an accurate characterization of EU decision-making mechanisms at the time the surveys analyzed here were conducted. It should be noted, however, that institutional reforms resulting from the Single European Act (SEA) in 1987 and the Maastricht Treaty on European Union in 1993 have led to somewhat of a shift of power toward the European Parliament (Tsebelis, 1994). Note also that it may not matter as much for the present analysis whether the actual decision-making procedures have changed markedly but that citizens think the Council of Ministers is the central locus of power in the EU.

6. The one case where this hypothesis might not hold is Great Britain, especially under Margaret Thatcher as prime minister. It was therefore excluded from the analysis. Future studies are required to examine the British case in some detail.

7. Although it is true that some governments are less supportive of European integration than others, it would be difficult if not impossible to find member state governments that plead for outright dissolution of the EU (Schneider, 1995). Instead, controversy arises mostly from disagreements over the speed and depth of integration and not integration as a worthwhile goal per se.

ESTABLISHMENT PARTY SUPPORT AS PROXY

The third hypothesis tested below can be labeled the *establishment party support hypothesis*. It assumes that party support structures the distribution of preferences regarding European integration as a political issue. Because it is widely acknowledged that the institutional structure of the EU leaves little room for party politics to have an impact on the decisions taken in the council, many have assumed that parties do not matter to the politics of the EU (Hix, 1995).⁸ Yet, if the integration process is an elite-driven project, political parties can provide an important link between European publics and elites (Lawson, 1980).

Simply put, European integration and EU membership are political issues that are used by parties for purposes of domestic political competition. Parties and their programs reflect changes in society and the strategic considerations of party leaders; party support reveals differences across groups of voters regarding the EU. However, the conceptualization of how party support affects public opinion about Europe is not easily captured with the help of traditional categories of partisanship because regional integration is not an issue that is easily, if at all, represented on the classic Left/Right axis. This is because

party systems of today developed in a previous era when the major differences requiring representation had to do with matters of religion and with the degree to which market forces should be controlled in the interests of working people. The European question cuts across these differences. (Franklin, Marsh, & McLaren, 1994, p. 465; see also Deflem & Pampel, 1996; Wilson, 1995)

It should thus not come as a surprise that studies that have sought to show a correlation between Left/Right attitudes or party affiliation and support for integration have been largely unsuccessful (Featherstone, 1988; Hewstone, 1986; Wessels, 1995; see also Feld & Wildgen, 1976). Similarly, extensive research on foreign policy attitudes in the United States has failed to turn up consistent evidence for the view that attitudes toward foreign policy and international politics are structured along the Left/Right (or liberal/conservative) dimension (Hurwitz & Peffley, 1987).⁹

8. See, however, Garrett's (1992) treatment of the negotiations about the SEA, which highlights the importance of party.

9. One might argue that a second reason would be that much of the conflict over the shape of a unified Europe is intraparty conflict and not conflict between political parties. However, although this may be the case, it also is true that political parties do use the EU as a political wedge that differentiates them from their competitors. Moreover, the issue at hand is not so much

Instead of a Left/Right cleavage on the European question, there appears to have developed a schism between establishment and new parties across the member states of the EU (Rattinger, 1994).¹⁰ By opposing European integration—both explicitly and implicitly—new parties and antiestablishment parties use the European issue as a sort of “ideological crowbar” (Taggart, 1998, p. 382)—that is, a symbolic issue that allows them to prove that they are both real political parties and different from the established parties that are accused of having become “cartel parties” (Katz & Mair, 1995). They are in a position to do so because, to many voters, the EU is a symbolic issue with little substantive content and because integration is supported by the vast majority of established parties. Thus, aside from being a series of events, the EU and European integration are also political issues that are used to score points in the domestic competition for voters. Thus, if the establishment party hypothesis of support for European integration were to hold, supporters of anti-Europe and antiestablishment parties should be less supportive of the integration project.¹¹

DATA AND RESEARCH DESIGN

To test these hypotheses regarding domestic political attitudes alongside other prominent explanations of support for European integration, I rely on a series of multivariate ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analyses conducted separately for individual countries. These are based on data collected in the fall of 1990 (Eurobarometer 34.0). Fieldwork was conducted in October and November of that year. This data set is particularly useful because it includes a set of questions about economic performance evaluations, which

whether there are significant intraparty differences on EU but whether voters perceive parties to be different on the issue and thus use party attachment as a proxy to answer questions regarding the integration process.

10. Note that antisystem party support is both theoretically and empirically distinct from alienation or trust or government support, although they may be correlated. In fact, the overall bivariate correlations are fairly low (overall Pearson's r of party support and democracy satisfaction is .12; between party support and government support is .34). See also Appendices A and B.

11. Note, however, that not all party systems across the member states of the EU have such expressions of antiestablishment discontent. Moreover, conflict may also exist within parties rather than across them (Wilson, 1995). The British Conservatives are the most prominent examples of such a phenomenon. I exclude these cases for reasons of comparability. This means, however, that the applicability of the party hypothesis is limited to those systems with significant antisystem parties.

is one of the main alternative hypotheses for explaining variation in support for European integration.¹²

The countries included in this study were Belgium, Denmark, France, (West) Germany, Ireland, Italy, and Portugal. These countries were selected because they provide meaningful variation across the independent variables, and because they include a mix of countries that joined the EU in the 1950s (Germany, France, Italy), the 1970s (Denmark, Ireland), and the 1980s (Portugal). Moreover, these countries were chosen because their party systems have significant elements of antiestablishment support that can be measured both at the level of national and EP elections (see Taggart, 1998).

THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The dependent variable was support for a country's membership in the EU.¹³ The exact question wording was as follows: "Generally speaking, do you think that (your country's) membership of the European Community is a good thing, a bad thing, or neither good nor bad?" Respondents were coded as 3 (*a good thing*), 2 (*neither good nor bad*), or 1 (*a bad thing*).

THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

The independent variables were measured by survey items that assess political attitudes (system, government, and establishment party support), economic performance assessments, interest in EU politics, political values, and demographic characteristics.

This analysis relied on satisfaction with the way democracy works as an indicator of system support.¹⁴ As a form of diffuse goodwill, satisfaction with the way democracy works gauges whether citizens are satisfied with the

12. Although there presumably are a number of Eurobarometer surveys that could be used to test the propositions contained in this article, no one recommends itself more than another. Testing them with the help of Eurobarometer 34.0, therefore, should be as valid as any other tests that could have been conducted. As noted below, further studies are needed to examine the validity of the findings reported here at different points in time.

13. Note that it is not necessary to use different questions eliciting support for the integration process because they tend to be highly correlated (Gabel & Palmer, 1995). I also analyzed the models presented below with the help of support for a unified Europe and support for a European government as the dependent variables. As expected, the results are very similar to those analyzed here.

14. Studies that have relied on satisfaction with democracy as an indicator of system support include, for example, Anderson and Guillory (1997), Clarke, Dutt, and Kornberg (1993), Harmel and Robertson (1986), and Lockerbie (1993).

workings of political institutions in general regardless of whether they are national, subnational, or supranational institutions. The exact question wording was as follows: "On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in (your country)?" Respondents were coded from 1 through 4, in which 1 = *not at all satisfied*, 2 = *not very satisfied*, 3 = *fairly satisfied*, and 4 = *very satisfied*.

Government support was a variable coded from responses to the following question: "If there were a general election tomorrow, which party would you vote for?" Respondents who indicated that they would vote for one of the governing parties were coded as supporters of the government (coded 1). All others were coded as nonsupporters (coded 0).

Support for establishment/antiestablishment and pro-/anti-EU political parties was measured with the help of a variable that was coded from responses to the following question: "Which party did you vote for in the last general election?" Respondents who indicated that they supported establishment parties were coded as 1; all others were coded as 0.¹⁵ Appendix B lists the coding of parties with regard to whether they fall into the establishment/antiestablishment or pro-EU/anti-EU categories.¹⁶

We measured economic assessments by responses to two questions that asked respondents to evaluate national and personal economic conditions, that is, to form sociotropic and egocentric evaluations of economic performance: "Compared to 12 months ago, do you think that the general economic situation in this country is [fill in response]?" and "Compared to 12 months ago, do you think the financial situation of your household now is [fill in response]?" Both variables were coded from 5 (*a lot better*) to 1 (*a lot worse*); 4 (*a little better*), 3 (*stayed the same*), and 2 (*a little worse*) were the intermediary categories.

Following the pathbreaking work by Ronald Inglehart (1977), the analyses also controlled for interest in EU politics and political values. Individuals who displayed greater levels of interest in the politics of the EU and individuals with postmaterialist value orientations were expected to display higher levels of support for integration (Inglehart, 1977; however, see Janssen, 1991,

15. The original research design called for using the following question: "Do you consider yourself to be close to any particular party?" However, this question had a great number of missing cases because citizens were unable or unwilling to state their party attachment. Voting behavior in the last election is used as a proxy for partisan identification because there is a strong correlation between party attachment and actual vote (the average correlation across the seven countries investigated here is 0.78) and because there were fewer missing cases when voting behavior was ascertained.

16. Note that I also tested for the possibility that ideological self-placement on the Left/Right scale affects support for integration. However, I found no systematic evidence for such effects.

for a contrasting view).¹⁷ The exact question wording of the political interest variable was as follows: "And as far as European politics are concerned, that is matters related to the European Community, to what extent would you say that you are interested in them?" Respondents were scored from 1 (*not at all*) through 4 (*a great deal*) (2 and 3 are intermediary categories). Based on the four-item political values battery, respondents also were classified as having materialist (coded 1), mixed materialist/postmaterialist (coded 2), and post-materialist (coded 3) value orientations.

Finally, I included the standard demographic indicators of education and income with the expectation that higher status respondents are more supportive of the integration process (Anderson & Reichert, 1995).

ANALYSIS

It should be noted that the relationships among government support, party support, democracy satisfaction, and support for European integration hypothesized above have implications for modeling the relationship between economic performance evaluations and integration support documented in earlier research (Anderson & Kaltenthaler, 1996; Eichenberg & Dalton, 1993; Gabel & Whitten, 1997). Because economic conditions frequently have been found to affect both system support, support for the incumbent government, and vote choice in general (Anderson & Guillory, 1997; Clarke, Dutt, & Kornberg, 1993; Lewis-Beck, 1988), models that include government, system, and party support as independent determinants of support for European integration need to be sensitive to the different ways in which economic conditions can influence integration support.¹⁸

Specifically, prior findings may have to be qualified because it is possible that the effects of economic evaluations on integration support are indirect rather than direct. If economic conditions affect government/system support and vote choice, which, in turn, affect support for integration, it is likely that economic conditions affect integration support only indirectly. Therefore, I

17. Presumably, the relationship between interest in EU politics and support for EU membership can be reciprocal. Because I simply control for interest given previous work on the subject, the inclusion of the interest variable is not intended to convey that the relationship is likely to work only in one direction.

18. Although the different domestic proxies are sufficiently distinct conceptually, it is possible that they are not distinct empirically. Note, however, that there are no multicollinearity problems among the independent variables. The bivariate correlations among them, albeit positive, are modest and thus are unlikely to affect the efficient estimation of effects. The correlations are provided in Appendices A and B.

test below whether economic conditions affect integration support directly, that is, in addition to government, system, or party support, or indirectly by way of the mediating political variables.

There are two ways to test for indirect economic effects on support for EU membership. One involves what is called an instrumental variable approach (e.g., Hanushek & Jackson, 1977); the other involves the estimation of economic effects on the dependent variable of interest with and without the (potential) mediating variables included in the model (Baron & Kenny, 1986; James & Brett, 1984; Judd & Kenny, 1981).¹⁹ I have chosen to display the latter results because they are of greater substantive interest and because they are easier to interpret.

According to Baron and Kenney (1986), testing for mediation involves estimating three equations. First, I examine the effects of the independent variable(s) (economic assessments) on the dependent variable (support for EU membership); second, I estimate the impact of the mediating variable(s) (democracy satisfaction, government support, and establishment party support) on the dependent variable (support for EU membership); Stage 3 involves regressing the dependent variable (support for EU membership) on both the mediating variable(s) (democracy satisfaction, government support, and establishment party support) and the independent variable(s) (economic assessments) in the model. Mediation is concluded if the effects of the independent variable(s) (economic assessments) drop out when the mediating variable(s) (democracy satisfaction, government support, and establishment party support) are included (see the example discussed in Baron & Kenny, 1986, p. 1177).²⁰

The models whose results are shown below are thus:

$$EU = \gamma_1 \cdot IC + \gamma_2 \cdot PEC + \gamma_3 \cdot NEC + \gamma_4 \cdot EUIN \quad (1)$$

$$+ \gamma_5 \cdot PM + \gamma_6 \cdot ED + \gamma_7 \cdot INC + \epsilon$$

$$EU = \gamma_1 \cdot IC + \gamma_2 \cdot D + \gamma_3 \cdot G + \gamma_4 \cdot P + \gamma_5 \cdot EUIN \quad (2)$$

$$+ \gamma_6 \cdot PM + \gamma_7 \cdot ED + \gamma_8 \cdot INC + \epsilon$$

19. In the present context, the instrumental variable approach involves a so-called two-stage procedure. This approach is difficult to implement here because there are few if any appropriate instrumental variables—that is, variables that are highly correlated with the independent variable with which it is associated but uncorrelated with the disturbances. Moreover, this procedure leads to much higher variances than OLS. Thus, this estimation technique achieves consistent estimates at the cost of high variance and bias (Kennedy, 1985, p. 115; see also Hanushek & Jackson, 1977, pp. 234-243).

20. Separate analyses revealed that economic assessments indeed affected satisfaction with democracy and incumbent support. This means that I found support for significant effects of the independent variable on the mediating variables.

$$EU = \gamma_1 \cdot IC + \gamma_2 \cdot D + \gamma_3 \cdot G + \gamma_4 \cdot P + \gamma_5 \cdot PEC + \gamma_6 \cdot NEC + \gamma_7 \cdot EUIN \\ + \gamma_8 \cdot PM + \gamma_9 \cdot ED + \gamma_{10} \cdot INC + \epsilon_i \quad (3)$$

The acronyms in the above equations are as follows: EU = support for membership in the EU; IC = intercept; PEC = personal economic evaluations; NEC = national economic evaluations; EUIN = interest in EU politics; PM = postmaterialism/materialism scale; ED = Education; INC = income; D = democracy satisfaction; G = government support; and P = establishment party support.

The analysis proceeds in three stages. Stage 1 involves testing what can be considered a traditional or politics-free model of support for EU membership. In contrast to models of public support for European integration, which are based on aggregate time-series or pooled cross-sectional data, I first test the usefulness of traditional explanations of support for EU membership at the individual level in single-country analyses. This serves several purposes: to assess the validity of economic models at the level of individual countries, to obtain an estimate of economic effects in the absence of political variables, and to establish a baseline against which the performance of the political hypotheses can be compared. Stage 2 consists of testing the political hypotheses of public opinion toward European integration, and Stage 3 involves testing the political hypotheses in combination with economic factors.²¹

RESULTS

STAGE 1: THE INDEPENDENT EFFECTS OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Table 1 shows the results of a series of OLS regressions of support for EU membership on interest in EU politics, political values, demographic variables, and economic evaluations.

Economic Evaluations

In this politics-free model, both personal and national economic performance assessments affected support for EU membership. However, whereas

21. Although it is possible to test for country-specific effects in the context of pooled models with dummy variables, this article proceeds at a more basic level of analysis by analyzing each country separately. Given the more than adequate number of cases available, this is unlikely to constitute a problem for statistical significance.

Table 1
Ordinary Least Squares Estimates of the Effects of Economic Evaluations on Support for European Union Membership in Seven Member States

Independent Variable	Belgium	Denmark	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Portugal
Economic evaluation (personal)	0.057** (0.021)	0.037 (0.029)	0.081*** (0.020)	-0.018 (0.027)	0.034* (0.020)	0.038* (0.022)	0.022 (0.026)
Economic evaluation (national)	0.050** (0.019)	0.169*** (0.028)	0.042* (0.021)	0.066** (0.022)	0.039* (0.018)	0.039* (0.018)	0.100*** (0.023)
Interest in European Community politics	0.176*** (0.019)	0.205*** (0.030)	0.150*** (0.021)	0.204*** (0.021)	0.122*** (0.020)	0.105*** (0.018)	0.114*** (0.022)
Postmaterialism	0.007 (0.027)	-0.170* (0.043)	0.014 (0.031)	0.085** (0.030)	0.019 (0.032)	0.030 (0.028)	0.006 (0.030)
Education	0.017 (0.013)	0.043 (0.027)	0.090*** (0.021)	0.012 (0.020)	0.061** (0.024)	0.041** (0.016)	0.043* (0.018)
Income	0.000 (0.001)	0.014* (0.006)	0.009* (0.005)	0.000 (0.005)	-0.001 (0.005)	0.002 (0.003)	0.001 (0.005)
Constant	1.915*** (0.091)	1.397*** (0.157)	1.586*** (0.096)	1.778*** (0.112)	2.054*** (0.100)	2.125*** (0.090)	1.942*** (0.098)
R ²	0.12	0.11	0.13	0.13	0.07	0.07	0.09
SEE	0.517	0.755	0.580	0.557	0.573	0.507	0.547
N	926	956	966	953	973	995	917

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.

* $p < .10$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$; two-tailed test.

the coefficients for evaluations of national economic performance achieved statistical significance and were in the expected direction in all seven member states analyzed here, personal assessments failed to clear the .1 threshold (two-tailed) in Denmark, Germany, and Portugal. The largest effects of personal economic evaluations on support for EU membership were found in France, whereas national economic evaluations had the strongest impact on support for EU membership in Denmark and Portugal.

Interest in EU Politics and Political Values

The results show that interest in EU politics was the most significant and consistently important variable affecting support for EU membership. Those who were interested in EU politics also were more supportive of their country's participation in the EU. The effects for education and income were somewhat mixed, although they were in the expected direction when statistically significant. In contrast to expectations, however, postmaterialism was not a strong determinant of support for EU membership. In fact, it was statistically significant only twice (Denmark and Germany) and displayed a negative coefficient in the Danish case. The Danish results suggest that individuals who held materialist values were actually more supportive of Denmark's EU membership (cf. Anderson & Reichert, 1995).

STAGE 2: INDEPENDENT POLITICAL EFFECTS

Table 2 shows the independent effects of the political variables—system, government, and establishment party support—on support for membership in the EU. The results established that democracy satisfaction had the most consistently significant and most powerful effects on support for EU membership. It was statistically highly significant in each of the member states analyzed here. The strongest effects were found in Denmark and followed by France and Germany, whereas the weakest effects existed in Italy and Ireland.

Government support had significant effects only in Denmark, whereas establishment party support had a strong influence on EU support in Denmark, Portugal, and France (and somewhat weaker but also significant effects in the Irish case). This suggests that government supporters were more supportive of EU membership only in Denmark, whereas antiestablishment party supporters were considerably less supportive of EU membership in the Danish, Portuguese, and French cases.

The effects for the political interest, political values, and demographic variables were similar to those found in the estimation of Model 1. The results provided the required support for the mediation tests outlined by Baron

Table 2
Ordinary Least Squares Estimates of the Effects of Democracy Satisfaction, Party Attachment, and Government Support
on Support for European Union Membership in Seven Member States

Independent Variable	Belgium	Denmark	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Portugal
Democracy satisfaction	0.110*** (0.026)	0.164*** (0.031)	0.133*** (0.029)	0.130*** (0.033)	0.072* (0.024)	0.065** (0.024)	0.121** (0.043)
Government support	-0.004 (0.047)	0.318*** (0.055)	0.073 (0.054)	0.062 (0.045)	0.026 (0.044)	0.067 (0.047)	0.054 (0.059)
Party attachment	0.004 (0.062)	0.216*** (0.056)	0.206*** (0.064)	0.059 (0.073)	0.091* (0.055)	-0.002 (0.047)	0.220** (0.085)
Interest in European Community politics	0.159*** (0.023)	0.155*** (0.030)	0.163*** (0.028)	0.190*** (0.025)	0.125*** (0.023)	0.103*** (0.020)	0.087* (0.035)
Postmaterialism	0.024 (0.033)	-0.136** (0.042)	0.036 (0.040)	0.104** (0.036)	0.039 (0.036)	0.042 (0.031)	-0.017 (0.046)
Education	0.021 (0.018)	0.052* (0.028)	0.057* (0.029)	0.022 (0.027)	0.064* (0.030)	0.049** (0.017)	0.043 (0.039)
Income	0.000 (0.033)	0.009 (0.006)	0.011 (0.007)	-0.011* (0.006)	0.008 (0.006)	0.000 (0.004)	-0.005 (0.007)
Constant	1.981*** (0.116)	1.352*** (0.153)	1.416*** (0.122)	1.541*** (0.145)	1.866*** (0.125)	2.181*** (0.086)	1.968*** (0.175)
R ²	0.12	0.17	0.19	0.15	0.08	0.07	0.07
SEE	0.490	0.720	0.550	0.546	0.572	0.499	0.574
N	596	899	544	687	774	797	416

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.

* $p < .10$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$; two-tailed test.

and Kenny (1986) because the mediating variables influenced the dependent variable in the expected fashion.

STAGE 3: COMPARING ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EFFECTS

Table 3 shows the results of a series of OLS regressions with support for EU membership as the dependent variable and system support, government support, and support for establishment parties as independent variables (in addition to those variables analyzed in Table 1). Although there were some noteworthy cross-national differences, the results furnish consistent evidence that European mass publics construe the EU in particular ways and with domestic politics in mind. The coefficients, when significant, consistently were in the expected direction, thus providing strong support for the satisfaction with democracy hypothesis, somewhat weaker support for the establishment parties hypothesis, and little to no support for the government support hypothesis. Moreover, when considered on a country-by-country basis, it also is clear that different domestic political attitudes structure opinions about European integration in different countries, suggesting that the domestic politics of the member states need to be considered separately when examining public support for integration.

Economic Evaluations

Looking at the effects of economic performance evaluations on support for EU membership in the full models that included the political variables, the results shown in Tables 1, 2 and 3 suggest that the effects of economic conditions on support for European integration were at least partially indirect and mediated by the political variables. Whereas Table 1 shows robust and sizable economic effects on support for EU membership, Table 3 (which includes the political variables) shows much weaker and statistically less significant effects.

These findings are noteworthy because economic performance evaluations display less powerful effects than those reported in analyses that did not control for domestic political attitudes as possible influences on support for EU membership. The results presented here thus stand somewhat in contrast to studies that have relied heavily on economic motivations as causes of attitudes toward Europe and shed new light on the ways in which economic performance evaluations (and, by implication, objective economic performance) may affect support for European integration.

Table 3
Ordinary Least Squares Estimates of the Effects of Democracy Satisfaction, Party Attachment, Government Support, and Economic Evaluations on Support for European Union Membership in Seven Member States

Independent Variable	Belgium	Denmark	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Portugal
Democracy satisfaction	0.096*** (0.027)	0.133*** (0.032)	0.125*** (0.031)	0.110** (0.034)	0.060* (0.025)	0.051* (0.025)	0.068 (0.048)
Government support	-0.008 (0.048)	0.302*** (0.056)	0.068 (0.054)	0.049 (0.046)	0.016 (0.045)	0.078 (0.048)	0.032 (0.060)
Party attachment	0.007 (0.063)	0.246*** (0.056)	0.223*** (0.065)	0.050 (0.074)	0.095* (0.056)	-0.017 (0.048)	0.190* (0.085)
Economic evaluation (personal)	0.042 (0.027)	0.034 (0.029)	0.069** (0.026)	-0.021 (0.033)	0.043* (0.023)	0.022 (0.024)	0.045 (0.041)
Economic evaluation (national)	0.023 (1.20)	0.137*** (0.028)	-0.025 (0.027)	0.057* (0.028)	0.010 (0.021)	0.033 (0.021)	0.082* (0.036)
Interest in European Community politics	0.157*** (0.024)	0.160*** (0.031)	0.162*** (0.028)	0.188*** (0.025)	0.117*** (0.024)	0.101*** (0.021)	0.055 (0.035)
Postmaterialism	0.019 (0.034)	-0.122** (0.042)	0.037 (0.040)	0.096** (0.036)	0.034 (0.037)	0.048 (0.032)	-0.009 (0.045)
Education	0.020 (0.018)	-0.032 (0.028)	0.052* (0.030)	0.029 (0.027)	0.063* (0.031)	0.045** (0.018)	0.033 (0.039)
Income	0.000 (0.001)	0.009 (0.006)	0.010 (0.007)	-0.010* (0.006)	0.007 (0.006)	0.002 (0.004)	-0.002 (0.008)
Constant	1.819*** P	0.955***	1.312***	1.494***	1.780***	2.055***	1.799***
(0.135)	(0.179)	(0.134)	(0.161)	(0.133)	(0.106)	(0.182)	
R ²	0.13	0.20	0.20	0.15	0.09	0.08	0.09
SEE	0.490	0.714	0.549	0.545	0.574	0.498	0.561
N	579	868	533	674	759	765	404

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.

The Political Hypotheses

The results revealed that the system hypothesis was supported across six of the seven countries investigated here. The finding that satisfaction with democratic institutions translates into higher levels of support for European unification underscores the notion that those citizens who are more supportive of the way political institutions work at home are more likely to support European institutions and their country's participation in them. Satisfaction with democracy influenced support for EU membership most strongly in Denmark, France, and Germany and had a weaker effect in Belgium, Ireland, and Italy.

The second most successful hypothesis was the establishment party hypothesis. It was confirmed in Denmark, France, and Portugal, indicating that followers of establishment parties had more favorable attitudes toward EU membership in these countries. These results are consistent with what we know about the domestic political context in all three countries because they also had the most significant anti-EU movements among antiestablishment parties in Western Europe (Taggart, 1998). Although the coefficient for establishment party support achieved statistical significance in the Irish case as well, the substantive effects were considerably weaker.

There was remarkably little evidence for the government support hypothesis, however. The only country in which the government support hypothesis was corroborated was Denmark, indicating that supporters of the Danish government were more likely to favor their country's membership in the EU. Moreover, additional analyses (results not shown here) revealed that government support structured Danish attitudes about EU membership to a greater extent than either democracy satisfaction or establishment party support: The standardized coefficient for government support was about twice as large as that of the other two political variables.

Overall, the results for the political hypotheses of support for EU membership showed that Denmark was the country where citizens appeared to use domestic politics as a proxy for EU support most consistently. Conversely, public opinion toward membership in the EU appeared to be least driven by attitudes toward domestic politics in Belgium, Germany, Italy, and Portugal, suggesting that the publics in these member states have opinions about Europe that are less constrained by domestic political attitudes.

DISCUSSION

The analyses showed that European mass publics are largely uninformed about the integration process. This lack of systematic information has impor-

tant consequences for the study of public opinion about Europe. Because citizens lack crucial information about the integration process, they resort to proxies derived from domestic political reality to comprehend and form opinions about it. This does not mean that opinions about Europe are irrational or lack coherence. Instead of seeking out information about the minutiae of the EU when they have more pressing demands on their time, citizens view the integration process through the lens of how they feel about their own political system, political parties, and, to a lesser extent, their government.

On the basis of survey data collected in seven EU member states, the study was designed to test the validity of three political hypotheses. The first hypothesis, labeled the system support hypothesis, postulated that domestic system support is positively associated with support for EU membership, whereas the second hypothesis (the government support hypothesis) argued that those who support the current government also are more supportive of the integration process. The third hypothesis, finally, suggested that supporters of establishment parties display higher levels of support for their country's membership in the EU (establishment party hypothesis).

The analyses revealed that the system support hypothesis and the party hypothesis received the most consistent support across the countries investigated here. However, party support seems to matter differently than has often been assumed. The results indicate that researchers need to pay attention to which parties stand to gain in support from opposition to the integration process and which parties actively seek out opposition to Europe as a way to appeal to voters across the political spectrum. The importance of system support and the weakness of government support also suggest that, in contrast to referenda, European citizens generally do not rely on attitudes toward the national government to determine the extent of their affinity for integration project. Instead, they appear to rely on the more diffuse satisfaction with the way democratic institutions work as a proxy regardless of who is currently in power.

Although attitudes toward Europe are structured by domestic political concerns and beliefs in powerful and predictable ways, the mass publics of the EU member states are not homogenous with regard to support for European integration. Instead, they reflect variable domestic political contexts across the member states of the EU. Specifically, I find that among the states examined here, Danish public opinion is driven by all three domestic political attitudes hypothesized to affect support for EU membership. In contrast, system support is the proxy used by Belgian, German, and Italian mass publics, whereas French, Irish, and Portuguese public opinion about Europe is to a significant extent driven by support for establishment parties.

The findings also point to the different ways in which economic performance evaluations (and, by implication, objective economic performance) may affect support for European integration. Specifically, the findings show that purely economic models, that is, models that do not control for attitudes about domestic politics, are likely to overestimate direct economic effects, given that they work through government and system support. The results help resolve the incongruence of a coexistence of strong economic effects and widespread ignorance about the integration process by pointing to an alternative individual-level model of attitude formation. They also stand in some contrast to the currently predominant approach to integration support based on cost/benefit considerations, which presumes very high levels of cognitive abilities on the part of average citizens.

There are, however, several questions that have been left unanswered. First, the analyses presented here say little about the dynamics of public support for European integration. Because the research strategy employed here made use of data collected at one point in time to demonstrate the general logic underlying attitudes about Europe, future studies are needed to establish the validity of the findings at different points of the integration process. Furthermore, the analysis was not designed to make statements about those cases—most notably Great Britain—in which there are substantial intraparty struggles about parties' positions concerning the future of Europe. Although it is likely that the effects of the system support variable would not change, it is not clear what the effects of government support and partisanship would be in such a context. In addition, because of its exclusive focus on macro-economic performance evaluations, the analysis did not address the cost/benefit dimension of economic effects on support for a united Europe documented in previous research (Anderson & Reichert, 1995).²²

CONCLUSION

What do these results mean for the European integration process? If domestic public opinion constrains states' actions in the international arena and if EU decision making is driven by elites interested in their domestic political fortunes, citizens' attitudes toward Europe matter to the negotiations among member state governments. The structure of domestic opinion among the

22. It should be noted that it is in principle possible that some of the findings are driven by marginal distributions such that it is easier to find significant effects of government, party, and system support on integration support depending on the marginal distribution of the variables in the overall population. I am grateful to one of the anonymous referees for pointing this out.

publics of the member states is likely to be a crucial ingredient determining the types of supranational bargains that are struck because it can impose different constraints on decision makers at the European level.

However, because different domestic attitudes matter to people in different countries, it is not simply the case that all facets of domestic political attitudes matter equally for elite decisions aimed at pushing integration forward. Given that public opinion in two different countries may be driven by different mass attitudes, the results presented here have implications for the strategic considerations of the players involved in the bargaining among member state governments.

An example may help explain why: Although it is correct to say (and important to know) that public support for European integration is low in Denmark and high in France or Italy, it may be more important for negotiators involved in reaching intergovernmental compromises to know that Danish public opinion is driven by establishment party support and government approval, that government popularity does not matter at all in the French case, or that party support does not affect European attitudes among the Italians at all. Moreover, it reminds us that whereas Danish support may be low and French support high, there are clearly important and identifiable segments of the respective populations whose enthusiasm for an integrated Europe varies and who can possibly be mobilized by political entrepreneurs seeking to generate support for their positions.

The consistent importance of democracy satisfaction across the countries investigated here suggests that citizens predominantly rely on broad notions of diffuse support for democratic institutions as a proxy for evaluating the integration process. However, this also means that recent downward trends in system support across European systems do not bode well for major initiatives aimed at greater political integration. Thus, the results add a political dimension to findings that suggest that hard economic times lead to a drop in support for Europe. Naturally, the two are related, in which case decision makers may want to hold back on proposals until the time is right. The successful signing of the Single European Act (SEA) and the 1992 initiative during a period of good economic and political times should serve as a reminder that timing is important when it comes to initiatives for changing the EU (Sandholtz & Zysman, 1989). Moreover, the results presented in this article suggest a noneconomic source for temporary breakdowns of the integration process. When citizens are unwilling to support the pro-Europe policies of unpopular governments or parties, for example, economic conditions may have a smaller and indirect influence on the ups and downs of the integration process.

But there is more to such good and bad times than weathering a recession or overcoming periods of discontent with domestic political actors and institutions. When antiestablishment and anti-European parties gain public support by opposing the unification of Europe, even established parties may be tempted to advocate policies critical of European agreements if they promise electoral pay-offs. Moreover, as the Danish case shows, unpopular governments may have a harder time convincing citizens that further integration is a good thing, even when citizens are fairly trusting of the system and political institutions in general.

Overall, the findings reported in this study call for the inclusion of political variables in models of public opinion about Europe. Although economic aspects of an integration process aimed at creating a common market in goods, services, labor, and capital are obviously important, an exclusive focus on economic considerations may neglect important political dimensions that underlie citizens' attitudes toward a unified Europe and lead to an incomplete portrait of public support for European integration. If, as can be expected for the foreseeable future, attitudes toward domestic politics continue to play a key role in the formation of citizens' attitudes toward European integration, a sense of supranational community or identity as conceptualized by scholars such as Deutsch and Inglehart may not be necessary to generate high levels of integration support among the publics of the member states—so long as there is significant support for key domestic political actors and institutions. For domestic elites involved in supranational bargaining and decision making, this means, however, that they would do well to remain closely attuned to the public moods of the member states as they plan further steps down the path of integration.

APPENDIX A
Pearson Correlations of Political Variables by Country

		Democracy Satisfaction	Government Support	Establishment Party Support
Belgium	Democracy satisfaction	1.0000	.1238	.0771
	Government support	.1238	1.0000	.4724
Denmark	Democracy satisfaction	1.0000	.1705	.0252
	Government support	.1705	1.0000	.2794
France	Democracy satisfaction	1.0000	.2479	.2236
	Government support	.2479	1.0000	.3507
Germany	Democracy satisfaction	1.0000	.2561	.1736
	Government support	.2561	1.0000	.2738
Ireland	Democracy satisfaction	1.0000	.1128	.0701
	Government support	.1128	1.0000	.3245
Italy	Democracy satisfaction	1.0000	.2272	.1497
	Government support	.2272	1.0000	.6393
Portugal	Democracy satisfaction	1.0000	.1627	.1476
	Government support	.1627	1.0000	.0439

APPENDIX B

Country	Establishment/Pro-Europe Party	Antiestablishment/Anti-Europe Party
Belgium	Parti des Reformes et de la Liberté (PRL) Partij voor Vrijheid en Vooruitgang (PVV) Parti Socialiste Belge (PS) Belgische Socialistische Partij (SP) Parti Social-Chrétien (PSC) Christelijke Volkspartij (CVP) Volksunie (VU) Front-Démocratique Francophone et Rassemblement Wallon (FDF-RW)	Parti Communiste Belge (PCB) Parti Ecologiste (Ecolo) Anders Gaan Leven (Agalev) Union Démocratique pour le Respect du Travail—Respect voor Arbeid en Democratie (UDRT-RAD) Vlaams Blok
Denmark	Socialdemokratiet (SD) Radikale Venstre (RV) Konservative Folkeparti (KF) Centrum-Demokraterne (CD) Retsforbundet (RFB) Kristeligt Folkeparti (KrF) Venstre (V) Venstresocialisterne (VS)	Socialistisk Folkeparti (SFP) De Grønne Det Humanistiske Parti (HP) Danmarks Kommunistiske Parti (DKP) Fælles Kurs (FK) Frenskridtpartiet (FP) Enhedslisten
France	Parti Socialiste (PS) Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche (MRG) Parti Socialiste Unifié et Extrême Gauche (PSU) Union pour la Démocratie Française (UDF)(and constituent parties) Rassemblement pour la République (RPR)	Parti Communiste (PCF) Ecologistes—Les Verts Front National (FN)

Germany	Christlich Demokratische Union/ Christlich Soziale Union (CDU/CSU) Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD) Freie Demokratische Partei (FDP)	Nationaldemokratische Partei (NPD) Die Grünen Die Republikaner Linke Liste/Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (LL/PDS)
Ireland	Fianna Fail (FF) Fine Gael (FG) Labour Party Progressive Democratic Party (PD)	Workers Party (WP) Green Party Sinn Fein (SF)
Italy	Democrazia Christiana (DC) Partito Socialista Italiano (PSI) Partito Repubblicano Italiano (PRI) Partito Socialdemocratico Italiano (PSDI) Partito Liberale Italiano (PLI) Südtiroler Volkspartei (SVP) Sinistra Indipendente Partito Sardo d'Azione (PSDA)	Partito Comunista Italiano (PCI) Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI) Federazione delle Liste Verdi Partito Radicale (PR) Democrazia Proletaria (DP) Lega Lombarda
Portugal	Partido da Democracia Christa (PDC) Partido Popular Monarquico (PPM) Partido Socialista (PS) Partido Social Democrata (PSD)	Coligacao Democratica Unitaria (CDU) Partido do Centro Democratico Social (CDS) Partido Renovador Democratico (PRD) Uniao Democratica Popular (UDP) Movimento Democratico Portugues (MDP-CDE)

Source: Lane, McKay, & Newton (1991); Taggart (1998).

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National and European Identifications: A Dual Relationship

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Different authors show opposing results concerning the relationship between national and European identities. This article confirms empirically that identification with Europe is directly and yet paradoxically related to national identifications. It also shows that the relationship established between these two identifications has changed over the last two decades in a consistent way. The changes in this relationship are interpreted as a consequence of the dual process at stake when people identify with a territorially based community. The first process refers to the sociologically and politically determined individual disposition to feel like a member of a community rather than an isolated individual: it is cumulative as far as identification with nations and with Europe is concerned. The other dimension, on the contrary, is exclusive: it results from the sociological and political process of community building which is made easier by the delimitation of the community, and is hence fuelled by pointing out some significant 'other' such as the European Union. These two processes interact in such a way that the relationship between the two levels of identification is often difficult to spot which explains why there is considerable debate on whether a strong sense of national identity leads the way to European identity or prevents it.

Comparative European Politics (2008) 6, 143–168. doi:10.1057/palgrave.cep.6110128

Keywords: national identity; European identity

Introduction

For a long time, support for European integration could be analyzed without much reference to the attachments of European citizens to their nations.¹ Beyond the recurring acknowledgement of a strong social determination in attitudes towards Europe, analysts did observe important differences in support among European countries, but these were considered as encompassing all sorts of differences in the countries themselves. There was no need to infer major differences in the ways the different peoples of Europe related to their own country.



Nowadays, most European Union analysts consider that the growing process of European integration has changed the very nature of attitudes towards Europe. From 1994 onwards and the establishing of European citizenship, it has been argued that support for the European Union should be analyzed as a European identity-building process rather than as a set of tolerant attitudes towards a remote and foreign object as used to be the case. Hence, the question of the relationship between support for the European Union and the commitment of European citizens to their own country can no longer be avoided (Diez Medrano, 2003). This article will examine the changing relationship between national and European commitment since 1982. This relationship will in turn be apprehended through the notions of national identification and identification with Europe.

Concepts and Definitions

The notion of identity has been deeply criticized in political science² because of the diversity of meanings and uses (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000) associated with it. However, as suggested by the work of Charles Tilly, it is undoubtedly preferable to 'get identity right' and to remember that 'identities are social arrangements', and consequential ones, resulting from collective negotiations about who people are (Tilly, 2003, 608) rather than renouncing the notion. At a collective level, identity — and in this case national identity — can thus be considered as a complex pattern of meanings and values related to the group whose borders are defined by the state's capacity to intervene and which underlies the varied representations and attitudes of the citizens towards each other and towards others (Duchesne, 2003). At an individual level, identity is taken to be a continuous (re)combination of different identifications, that is, of changing but relatively persistent patterns of references to potential groups of belonging (Duchesne and Scherrer, 2003). The notion of identification used in this text represents the link between an individual and the other members of one of his/her many potential groups of reference. Individuals identify with different groups and, while they therefore have different identifications, they have only one identity which may change to a certain extent over time but which is considered to be basically stable. So the notion of identification with the nation or with Europe only refers to whether somebody does in fact feel related to the national or European people, whether they feel concerned by what happens to them, and whether they feel themselves to be part of this citizenry. An individual's identity combines national and European identification with many other possible identifications with groups defined on varied bases such as gender, generation, race, social class, language, geography, ideology, interests, etc.

The focus here will be restricted to the way in which identification with the nation and with Europe relate to each other. A similar point — the observation



that an individual identity is the combination of belonging to diverse groups — is made by most analysts of what they nevertheless call European identity (see, e.g. Castano, 2004 or Bruter, 2005). The choice has been made here to differentiate between identity and identification for conceptual clarity. The distinction is important as the term identification includes the idea that existing senses of belonging at both national and European level will/may change in the middle term. The notion of consistent feelings of belonging³ is relevant when referring to nations as they are old enough for this to be the case. However, the EU is probably still too young to have aroused deep and consistent feelings of belonging among the majority of its citizens. Writing about European identity may be misleading; identification with Europe rightly emphasizes that it is the process itself which is under discussion here.

Current Alternative Hypotheses

Different hypotheses may be considered regarding how the relationship between national and European identification may develop over time. Generally speaking, the old dream of the EU founding fathers was to see citizens identify more and more with Europe and eventually cease to identify with their own nations — a transfer of attachment which was expected to ward off the nationalist conflicts and wars which have cast a shadow over the continent for several centuries. For the time being, this dream has been proved to be partly inaccurate as revealed by a revival of nationalism in conflicts following the collapse of the Soviet Empire in Eastern and Central Europe, or the long-standing electoral success of nationalist parties in Western Europe. However, there exist at least three alternative hypotheses on the way identification with Europe is increasing in a context of persistently strong national identifications.

Firstly, some scholars believe that the European Union has marked the start of a new kind of political system which is free from any kind of exclusive commitment on the part of its citizens — be it because of the development of a basic global solidarity or because of the transformation of political decision systems from governments to multi-level governance (Meehan, 1996; Ferry, 1998; Wiener, 1998; Neveu, 2000; Habermas, 2001; Nicolaidis and Weatherill, 2003). If this is the case, then identification with Europe — more precisely in this sense identification with the European Union — would be a unique process, based on different kinds of feelings of belonging than existing identification with a nation. If this hypothesis is valid, indicators of national and European identification should be statistically unrelated (hypothesis one).

Alternatively, other researchers continue to believe that identification with Europe is developing similarly to the way in which identification with nations developed in the 19th century. They expect feelings of belonging to Europe to be very similar in nature to the way citizens who identify with their nation



relate to it. Such feelings are moreover considered necessary to legitimate the (European) political system and to give rise to much-needed political participation, more particularly, electoral participation. In this case, there are two possibilities. Nations may either be considered to be standing in the way of European integration because the two levels of government tend to compete with each other for the loyalty of European citizens (Hoffmann, 1966; Dogan, 1994; Mayer, 1997; Carey, 2002; McLaren, 2006): here, one would expect a negative and significant statistical relationship between indicators of European and national identification (hypothesis two).

Or, on the other hand, Europe is seen rather as a complement to the nations, an empowerment. Nations thus constitute a kind of model, an incentive framework of 'we-feeling' which encourages citizens to feel and act as members of a political community (Duchesne and Frogner, 1994, 2002; Schild, 2001; Diez Medrano, 2003; Citrin and Sides, 2004; Bruter, 2005). In this latter case, one would expect a positive and significant statistical relationship between indicators of European and national identities (hypothesis three).

As the references cited indicate, these three hypotheses are indeed supported by existing literature. The first hypothesis is mainly discussed from a theoretical point of view, but empirical evidence is provided for the other two. This means that researchers using empirical data have proved that national and European identifications tend to be both antagonist and cumulative. Although they focus on support for European integration rather than on identification with Europe, Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks draw a similar conclusion concerning the effect of national feelings: 'The paradox that we identified earlier is apparent: national identity contributes to and diminishes support for European integration' (Hooghe and Marks, 2004, 417) They suggest that this is due to the various ways national identity may be constructed and mobilized by political elites. The aim of this paper is first to confirm and then complement their interpretation of this apparent paradox.

Indicators and Methodology

Identification refers to in-depth attitudes as opposed to mere opinions; thus, a complex variety of indicators should ideally be used when working on identification. This would allow a distinction to be made between the different dimensions at work in the constitution of attitudes towards Europe and its nations. To what extent do citizens' attitudes towards Europe and their nation embody a true feeling of belonging? To what extent are these attitudes dependent on cognition and evaluation? To what extent are they a consequence of more general political orientation? In what way do they reflect extraneous dispositions to xenophobia and/or open-mindedness and tolerance? In order to establish the true extent of belonging as measured by declaration of support for



the European Union, one needs indicators which account for a certain degree of stability in the attitude measured and its relative independence from current affairs. The analysis of such a topic is hence strongly dependant on available data. Like most researchers working on European attitudes, we will use Eurobarometer surveys that, although they are not as complete as we would like, are the only data available and the only data to cover all EU countries throughout the period of time under study.

Until very recently, the level of identification with the nation was measured by the question asked periodically about national pride. Fortunately, this question was precisely the one that Michelat and Thomas showed in France, in the 1960s, to be the most suitable for measuring the feeling of belonging to the national group⁴ — a feeling which they proved to be relatively independent from the other two main dimensions of national identification: the feeling that one's nation is superior and the attachment to the nation's sovereignty. In their data, these other two dimensions were highly dependent on a general ideological structure (right/left) contrary to the feeling of belonging to the nation.

Measuring the level of identification with Europe is somewhat more complicated. Commission surveys have always asked a series of questions, called 'trend questions', in order to measure public opinion on the European integration process. Very few of them however, are related to the affective dimension of individual relationships with the community. During the 1980s,⁵ they regularly asked one question on respondents' awareness of being European citizens. This question was worded in such a way that identification with the European Community was implicitly considered complementary to identification with one's nation. It was abandoned in 1992 and replaced by another built on the idea of a possible exclusiveness of the two.⁶ This unfortunate change makes it difficult to assess whether and if so how the Maastricht Treaty and public debate about its ratification have transformed the relationship between national and European identification.⁷ Moreover, the answers to this latter question are far from being as stable as a measure of identification should be. However, given the absence of other questions or data sets covering the same range of countries and time periods, an attempt will be made here to draw some inferences from this survey series over the last 20 years. Since 2000, other questions have been introduced and these will be used to confirm our analysis.

Of course, skeptical readers of quantitative survey analyses may wonder about the validity of using questions and notions that probably take on rather different meanings in each of the countries studied, as Juan Diez Medrano clearly showed for Spain, Germany and the UK in *Framing Europe* (2003). We will apply what Jan Van Deth names an 'inferential strategy' (J. Van Deth, 1998, 1–20): if consistency in the relations between our dependant variables (internal consistency) and others (external consistency), can be observed in the



different countries, the questions will be considered to have at least one common dimension of meaning — a dimension that allows comparative analyses to be made — despite the various significations that Europe and the nation may have in the many countries of the sample. Concretely, this means that there will be no attempt to analyze and compare developments and changes in the levels of answers to questions on national pride and European identification. The analysis will instead focus on their statistical relationship. If some kind of consistency in these relations over time can be demonstrated, the hypothesis that the indicator is valid will become even more plausible.

Assessing the Paradoxical Relationship between National and European Identification

Table 1 provides the correlations⁸ between national pride and the corresponding measure of identification with Europe — namely ‘how often do you think of yourself as not only national but also European’ through to 1988, and then ‘if you think of yourself in the near future as national only, national and European, European and national or only European’ from 1994 onwards — for each country and each survey. For the first years of analysis, the results are fairly clear: there is hardly any statistical relationship between the two indicators. The data clearly demonstrate that when someone says they are very proud of their nationality, they are not less likely to feel European. In 1982, in the few cases where Kendall’s tau-b is statistically significant — Belgium, West Germany, France, Italy and Luxemburg — the relationship is such that the more someone says that they are proud of their country, the more often they are likely to think of themselves as European also (see also Duchesne and Frogner, 1994).

In 1992, the indicator of identification with Europe changed. The old and the new questions (whether people feel not only national but also European and whether they see themselves as national and/or European in the near future) were asked in the same survey, but not the question on national pride. Therefore, the impact of the change of question on the measure of the relationship between national and European identification cannot be evaluated. However, in 1994 the interviewees were asked again both about national pride and the likelihood of their feeling European, using the new indicator. A significant negative relationship shows up in most of the countries studied (except for Greece, Ireland and Portugal).⁹

In 1997, a first quick look at the data confirms the antagonism trend: on the whole, in the weighted data set, 54% of the people saying that they are very proud of their nation see themselves as only national in the near future, with only 43% of the people saying that they are rather proud, and 38 and 40% of those that are not very or not proud at all. But a closer look at the data set shows that this relationship is not stable from one country to the other. In the



Table 1 Correlations between measures of national pride and identification with Europe (τ_b de Kendall) by country

Country	1982 March–April	1985 Oct–Nov	1988 Oct–Nov	1994 Nov–Dec	1997 March–April	1999 Oct–Nov	2000 April–May	2000 Nov–Dec	2001 Oct–Nov	2002 March–May	2003 Oct–Nov	2004 Oct–Nov	2005
Belgium	0.11**	0.03	-0.02	-0.26**	0.09**	-0.07*	-0.10**	-0.02	-0.04	-0.13**	-0.14**	-0.14**	-0.10**
Denmark	-0.00	0.06	0.04	-0.16**	-0.07*	-0.15**	-0.24**	-0.14**	-0.19**	-0.23**	-0.11**	-0.19**	-0.16**
West Germany	0.13**	0.06	-0.04	-0.31**	-0.19**	-0.20**	-0.26**	-0.16**	-0.21**	-0.26**	-0.19**	-0.12*	-0.21**
Greece	-0.2	-0.07	-0.12**	-0.04	0.02	-0.12**	-0.12**	-0.01	-0.17**	-0.24**	-0.21**	-0.07	-0.11**
Italy	0.07*	0.04	0.00	-0.13**	0.01	-0.12**	-0.06	-0.01	-0.08*	-0.16**	-0.15**	-0.05	-0.13**
Spain	—	-0.01	0.08	-0.21**	-0.07*	-0.20**	-0.25**	-0.18**	-0.27**	-0.28**	-0.25**	-0.25**	-0.17**
France	0.12**	0.05	-0.04	-0.17**	-0.13**	-0.21**	-0.16**	-0.15**	-0.16**	-0.17**	-0.17**	-0.13**	-0.13**
Ireland	0.01	-0.05	-0.05	-0.05	0.02	-0.15**	-0.24**	-0.02	-0.22**	-0.13**	-0.18**	-0.15**	-0.22**
Northern Ireland	-0.00	-0.01	-0.07	-0.22**	-0.10	-0.16*	-0.14	-0.04	-0.11	-0.07	-0.23**	-0.44**	-0.42**
Luxembourg	0.23**	-0.05	-0.02	-0.09*	-0.15**	-0.19**	-0.21**	-0.13**	-0.23**	-0.26**	-0.25**	-0.25**	-0.23**
Netherlands	-0.02	-0.08	-0.07	-0.15**	-0.08*	-0.15**	-0.12**	-0.18**	-0.15**	-0.19**	-0.08**	-0.19**	-0.12**
Portugal	—	-0.01	0.03	-0.01	0.03	-0.05	-0.19**	0.05	-0.12**	-0.16**	-0.22**	0.04	-0.15**
Great Britain	-0.06	-0.03	-0.05	-0.30**	-0.19**	-0.21**	-0.32**	-0.11**	-0.26**	-0.26**	-0.22**	-0.22**	-0.20**
East Germany	—	—	—	-0.25**	-0.06	-0.18**	-0.13**	-0.05	-0.15**	-0.18**	-0.15**	-0.14**	-0.21**
Finland	—	—	—	—	-0.05	-0.06	-0.06	0.03	-0.02	-0.08**	-0.09**	-0.07	-0.03
Sweden	—	—	—	—	-0.10**	-0.17**	-0.18**	-0.15**	-0.14**	-0.17**	-0.16**	-0.01	-0.09**
Austria	—	—	—	—	-0.06*	-0.17**	-0.22**	-0.06*	-0.14**	-0.29**	-0.17**	-0.18**	-0.14**

*Correlation significant at 5%; **correlation significant at 1%.

The samples in Luxembourg and Northern Ireland are smaller, thus the correlations are less likely to be significant.

Note: a positive and significant correlation means that the more individuals are proud of their nationality, the more they are likely to feel European.



two-thirds of countries where the correlation is negative, it is fully significant only in France, Great Britain, Luxembourg, Sweden and West Germany. Moreover, in five other countries, namely Belgium, Greece, Italy, Ireland and Portugal, the relationship is different. Despite the antagonism implied by the question between thinking of oneself more as national than European or vice versa, most people in these five countries who tend to feel more European than national nevertheless feel proud or very proud of their nations. The correlation computed on the European sample is thus partially an artifact. This serves as a reminder of the danger of analyzing European data as a whole, without referring to the particular structure of territorial identities in each country, as national differences remain very important.

While until 1988, the available data tend to support the thesis that identification with Europe is independent from national identification, data from 1994 on suggests a (growing?) antagonism between these two levels of identification. Different authors have analyzed the 1994 data as proof of change in the nature of identification with Europe: it would appear that the Maastricht Treaty turned mere opinions on a remote and vague object (the EC) into a real process of identity building, potentially conflicting with other allegiances (Mayer, 1997; Blondel *et al.*, 1998; Dupoirier *et al.*, 2000). The question arises as to how the negative and significant correlations of 1994 can best be explained and whether this might be linked to the change of question about identification with Europe or a change in the very nature of identification with Europe. A third hypothesis is also possible: the change of context. In 1994, European elections took place following the ratification and the coming into force of the Maastricht Treaty. During that period, nationalist political forces, what the French now call 'sovereignist', did their best to make themselves heard and understood. The impact of nationalist arguments in electoral rhetoric may account for the strength of the correlations observed in the 1994 data. Their ensuing weakness could then be explained by the diminution of public debate as the electoral campaign became more distant. If this interpretation is valid — if the antagonism between national and European identification was significantly due to the electoral context of 1994 — the same kind of effect should be observable during similar contexts, as long as the corresponding survey questions are available.

Since 1999, the two basic questions — on national pride and whether people feel national and/or European — have been asked every year. Moreover, immediately after the following European election which took place in Spring 1999, they were present in three surveys in a row: Autumn 1999, Spring 2000, and Autumn 2000. It is therefore possible to compare changes in correlations for the period 1994/1997.

In 1999, another year with European elections, a rather strong negative relationship between the two questions can be observed, as in 1994. For the whole (weighted) sample, 58% of the people saying that they were very proud



of their country think of themselves in the near future as national only, while this is the case for 41% only of those who say they are fairly proud of their country, and 38 and 37% respectively of those not very proud or not proud at all of their country. Furthermore, the relationship is equivalent, negative and significant, for almost all countries (except Belgium, Finland and Portugal). This pattern of relationship continues in Spring 2000: again, there is more than 20% difference in the proportion of people thinking of themselves in the near future as national only (which means that they do not think of themselves as Europeans at all) depending on whether they are very proud or not of their country (56% of the very proud as against 35% of the rather proud and 34% of both the not very and not proud at all). The relationship is significantly negative in almost all countries, except Finland (again) and Italy.

But things had become slightly different by Autumn 2000. People saying they were very proud of their country were still more likely to think of themselves as only national, but the difference was much smaller (6 points instead of 17 in 1999 and 21 in Spring 2000). Perhaps more importantly, the relationship became more varied across countries. It is fully significant in eight cases out of 17 — mainly the same as in 1997 (West Germany, France, Luxembourg, Great Britain, Luxembourg and Sweden) plus Denmark, Spain and the Netherlands. In the other countries, the relationship became insignificant and the minus even became a plus in Portugal and Finland. It would appear therefore that the same effect as in 1994 can be observed in 1999: public debate on the EU had an important influence on the nature of the relationship between identification with one's nation and with Europe. In this context, being very proud of one's nation tends to prevent feelings of being European while this is not the case when public debate fades. Of course, the time periods between the surveys in the two cases analyzed are very different, which makes the interpretation less certain. However, the effect remains nonetheless striking.

In 2001, 2002 and 2003, when the two relevant questions were asked again, the correlation between them increased again considerably. In 2002, Kendall's tau-b reached either its highest level or levels similar to those in 1994 and early 2000 everywhere, except in Ireland and Northern Ireland.¹⁰ It remains quasi stable in 2003 for most countries. These strong negative correlations from 2001 onwards confirm our interpretation of the preceding fluctuations in the relationship between national and European identification according to the intensity of the debate on Europe. During this period, the Euro was introduced in 12 European countries and this brought the EC back to the forefront of public debate. This occurred at the same time as the European Convention and the debate on the ratification of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe.

The pattern of correlations observed between the two variables displays a high degree of consistency: the shape of the correlations curve is very similar from one country to the other (cf. Figure 1) — which is absolutely not the case

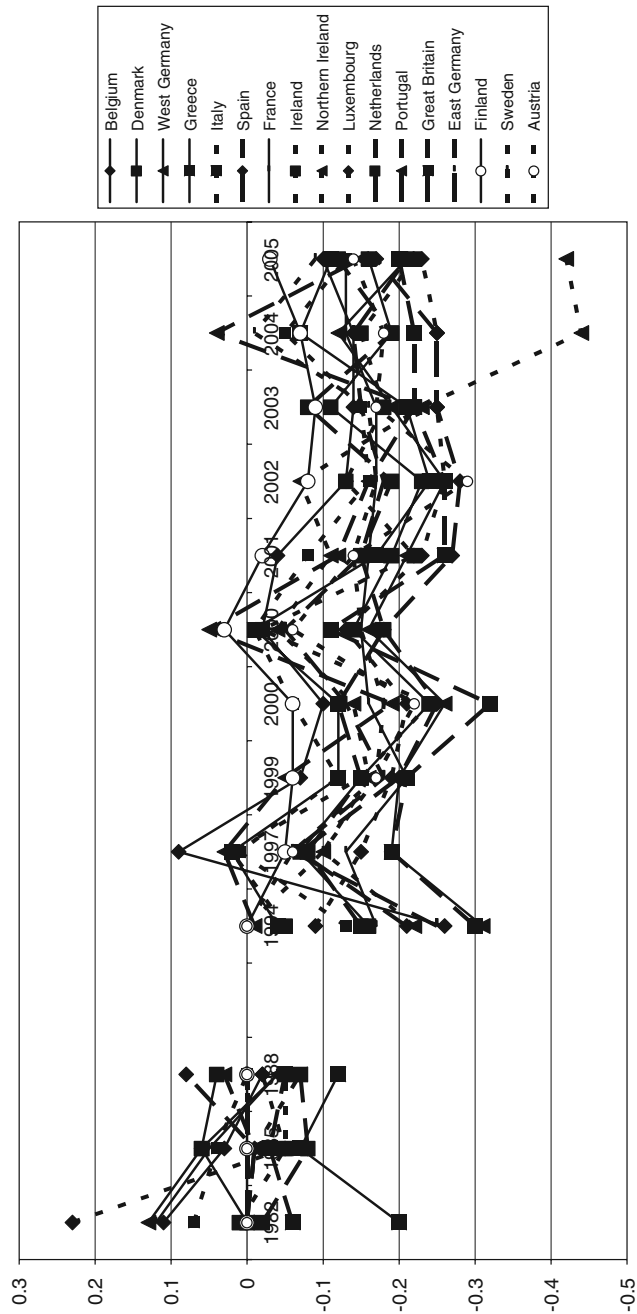


Figure 1 Correlations between measures of national pride and identification with Europe by country.



for correlations between national pride and trend indicators of support for European integration.¹¹ This validates a changing relationship between feelings of national identification and identification with Europe: when Europe is not a matter of public debate, the indicators show the two types of belonging — national and European — to be rather independent from one another. Moreover, considering that the question on identification with Europe implies an antagonism between the two levels, the two identifications could thus even be considered slightly cumulative. However, when public debate focuses on the EC because of European elections, ratification of treaties or indeed the introduction of the Euro, strong national pride seems to hamper the growth of identification with Europe. As Europe evolves from a remote and administrative loosely identified object to a concrete and political system, this second configuration tends to be the norm.

This changing and confusing relationship between national pride and identification with Europe could be interpreted as evidence of the superficiality of attitudes towards Europe and the strength of the influence of elites on the way in which citizens see themselves — which is one way of interpreting G. Marks and L. Hooghe explanation of the paradoxical influence of national identity on attitudes towards European integration (Hooghe and Marks, 2004). However, another interpretation might be suggested here. Rather than being a result of the strong influence of elites on attitudes which are essentially weak, it could be seen as a consequence of the complexity of identification processes. In the next section, further evidence of this complexity will be given by looking at other indicators of relationships to Europe and the nation, and by suggesting a possible explanation: the duality of territorial identification.

National or European Identification: Different Processes at Stake

Since Autumn 2000, the Eurobarometer surveys have also asked people about the extent to which they feel proud of being European, and clearly, except in the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland and Greece, being proud of one's nation is far from being incompatible with being proud of being European (see Table 2). In all four surveys more than 80% of the people on average who say they are very proud of being European also answer that they are very proud of their nation. About two-thirds of the respondents indicating that they are very proud of their country are also very or fairly proud of being European. Great Britain and Northern Ireland are the only places where the majority of respondents who say that they are very proud of their country also say that they are not proud of being European.

It is difficult to understand why, using the same data set over the same time period, there is evidence of a negative relationship between national pride and European identification for almost every country, except the UK and Greece,



Table 2 Correlation (Kendall's table) between National and European pride

<i>Country</i>	<i>2000 Nov–Dec</i>	<i>2001 Oct–Nov</i>	<i>2002 Mar–May</i>	<i>2003 Oct–Nov</i>	<i>2004 Oct–Nov</i>	<i>2005</i>
Belgium	0.38**	0.39**	0.33**	0.29**	0.33**	0.39**
Denmark	0.37**	0.35**	0.36**	0.35**	0.29**	0.21**
West Germany	0.52**	0.46**	0.41**	0.55**	0.36**	0.30**
Greece	0.27**	0.16**	0.01	0.05	0.12**	0.09**
Italy	0.33**	0.30**	0.28**	0.33**	0.33**	0.25**
Spain	0.39**	0.36**	0.34**	0.32**	0.36**	0.25**
France	0.29**	0.25**	0.20**	0.21**	0.26**	0.20**
Ireland	0.28**	0.15**	0.19**	0.19**	0.19**	0.23**
Northern Ireland	0.23**	0.12	0.16*	0.09	0.02	–0.17**
Luxembourg	0.42**	0.31**	0.24**	0.29**	0.33**	0.14**
Netherlands	0.42**	0.41**	0.33**	0.33**	0.26**	0.25**
Portugal	0.32**	0.20**	0.22**	0.19**	0.31**	0.21**
Great Britain	0.04	0.04	–0.07	0.04	–0.01	–0.02
East Germany	0.50**	0.41**	0.33**	0.40**	0.39**	0.34**
Finland	0.33**	0.25**	0.22**	0.28**	0.28**	0.16**
Sweden	0.38**	0.42**	0.31**	0.36**	0.42**	0.36**
Austria	0.36**	0.41**	0.29**	0.33**	0.26**	0.36**

even though national and European pride are clearly positively related. How can a relationship appear to be so highly dependent on the way it is measured and yet be so consistent in the way it changed over the last two decades? The following explanation seems the most likely. The strength of the contextual effect on the changing relationship between national pride as well as the powerful effect of the different measures of identification with Europe are a consequence of the duality of the relationship between national and European identification. This duality is basically a characteristic of the very notion of territorial identification itself. To identify oneself with one's nation or any other group defined by a territory implies two different processes. First, it assumes a natural tendency to identify with a group. Secondly, it implies the propensity to identify with the specific group defined by this specific territory. At the European level, these two processes of identification may generate contradictory relationships with former national identification: the two levels are generally cumulative when the tendency to identify with a group is concerned; and potentially competitive when the disposition to identify with a specific territorial community is at stake. When observed with aggregated data, the interference between these two processes gives rise to the paradoxical statistical relationship between measures of identification with the nation and with Europe.

The first process — the natural tendency to identify with a group — is challenged by the growing individualism of modern societies. Norbert Elias



(1991) has shown how the recurrent shift of the social survival unit from the very local to the nation, then to the continent and perhaps even mankind, has resulted in a growing level of individualism. However, the last two decades have shown that the nation, however abstract or constructed it may be, still generates strong feelings of belonging. It seems to remain a very effective source of group identification, of self-representation as a group member, which fuels we-feelings in other groups, especially in other territories which have an embedded relationship with the nation. In this process of 'we-building', national and European identifications are cumulative: both geographers and political scientists refer to them as 'nested' identities (Herb and Kaplan, 1999; Medrano and Gutiérrez, 2001; Risse, 2003).

The second process, which implies the propensity to identify with the specific group defined by a specific territory, involves the delimitation of the group as a strong constituent of group identification. Since Fredrik Barth's (1969) pioneer work on ethnic identities, the process of 'other-building' has been considered to be a basic characteristic of any kind of identity and a well-documented element in the analysis of nation and nationalism, as in Gellner's (1983) most famous work. Here, rather than reinforcing each other national and European identification, are in a competitive relationship.

This hypothesis of a dual process of identification¹² was first elaborated in reference to a qualitative survey on mass-level representations of citizenship conducted at the end of the 1980s in France (Duchesne, 1997). The in-depth interviews collected for this research suggested that two distinct models of citizenship should be considered. The first one was constructed around the very notion of national identity, while the second one was built in opposition to any form of belonging to a group, be it territorial or not — that is, in opposition to any form of group identification. If European integration had been nothing more than another stage in the individualization of societies, as Elias considers in his later work, we should have found Europe mentioned mostly in the second model, by interviewees reluctant to profess any national commitment. On the contrary, the interviewees who were more nostalgic of a national interpretation of history mentioned it all the more. Europe appeared to be a fallback position against what was not yet named 'globalization'. It was a defense against the progressive removal of national borders, considered by the same people as inevitable, and against the dissolution of all the elements that, from their perspective, constitute the basis of personal identity. But even though they were hoping for the coming changes, they obviously feared them also and saw the change of allegiance from their nation to Europe as a difficult one. In this sense, Europe was thus also clearly conceived of as an 'imagined political community' — and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign' as Benedict Anderson famously defined a nation.



The analysis of the changing but well-founded relationship between national and European identifications presented above may be interpreted as a confirmation of the hypothesis elaborated with reference to the French case. Regardless of the distinctive character of each nation, identification with one's nation together with the identification in progress with Europe results from two distinct processes at least: one refers to the disposition of the individual to identify with collectives; the second relates to a possible competition between groups of belonging, which can, under certain circumstances, drive the individual to arbitrate between them. Concerning the relationship between national and European identifications, the first process tends to generate a positive relationship between the two. This is because national and European feelings of belonging feed on the same tendency to identify with a remote and abstract — or 'imagined' — group. On the other hand, the second process may very well give rise to a negative relationship if the two political communities, the national and the European, are presented as rivals. This is why the statistical relationship between the two indicators of European and national identification varies, according to a consistent pattern, from negative values in the context of public debate on Europe, when the arguments of Euroskeptics or 'sovereignists'¹³ are loudly expressed, to almost insignificant values the rest of the time. This is because the two processes — the cumulative and the exclusive ones — have effects that may neutralize each other in the measurement of the statistical relationship between commitment to the nation and commitment to Europe.¹⁴ This is also why different questions about national and European identifications may produce opposing statistical relationships between the two levels: this happens when the questions do not emphasize the same process at work in territorial identification.

Let us return briefly to the introduction and the three hypotheses found in the literature as mentioned above: how does the interpretation above fit into that framework? Hypothesis one is ruled out by the empirical evidence of a persistent, although complex, statistical relationship between the indicators of national and European attachment.¹⁵ Hypotheses two and three actually both correspond to the two processes of identification. Depending on the way elites and the mass media interpret and advertise the European system in progress, European citizens will tend to expect either an encompassing polity aiming to complement and empower nations or a powerful political system competing with them for sovereignty. The first process — where identifying with Europe means tending to have a 'we-feeling' — is not so much taken into consideration by the literature which it undoubtedly should be.

This idea, that people have a variable disposition to identify with groups defined by territories — that is, that there are people for whom the territory does constitute a valid marker of identity while others are incapable of this



kind of projection, should be tested with data including questions about the refusal of any kind of belonging. The Eurobarometers 54.1 (Autumn 2000) and the 60.1 (Autumn 2003) provide us with new questions. In addition to the questions about national and European pride, we find a series of questions about the degree of attachment to each of the territories nested in Europe — town, region (despite the heterogeneity of these notions in Europe), nation and Europe.¹⁶ The lack of antagonism in belonging to these nested territories can be investigated once again by a simple cross-tabulation between these various attachments. Consequently, this will also provide confirmation that some respondents are characterized by a disposition to reject identification with any level of territorial belonging.

In 2003 for instance, 71.5% of the people in the sample who say that they are very attached to their town also say that they are very attached to their country; 79.5% of those who say they are attached to their region are also very attached to their country and 88.9% of those who are very attached to Europe are also very attached to their country.

The correlations computed for each country (see Table 3) are (almost) all significantly positive and are even stronger for adjacent questions. For instance, correlations between identification with town and region tend to be

Table 3 Correlations between measures of attachment to the nation with measures of attachment to the town, the region and Europe (Kendall's τ_b) by country

Country	2000			2003			2004		
	Town	Region	Europe	Town	Region	Europe	Town	Region	Europe
Belgium	0.49**	0.58**	0.42**	0.54**	0.61**	0.29**	0.41**	0.51**	0.36**
Denmark	0.33**	0.30**	0.27**	0.33**	0.28**	0.21**	0.29**	0.21**	0.12**
West Germany	0.48**	0.61**	0.47**	0.39**	0.50**	0.36**	0.33**	0.45**	0.36**
Greece	0.55**	0.68**	0.19**	0.61**	0.74**	0.13**	0.50**	0.60**	0.14**
Italy	0.38**	0.35**	0.33**	0.46**	0.53**	0.26**	0.50**	0.58**	0.28**
Spain	0.43**	0.56**	0.34**	0.36**	0.45**	0.28**	0.49**	0.50**	0.33**
France	0.49**	0.51**	0.26**	0.45**	0.55**	0.19**	0.40**	0.46**	0.21**
Ireland	0.43**	0.55**	0.27**	0.58**	0.65**	0.20**	0.57**	0.55**	0.19**
Northern Ireland	0.56**	0.62**	0.15**	0.48**	0.55**	0.03	0.24**	0.34**	0.14**
Luxembourg	0.50**	0.57**	0.37**	0.50**	0.55**	0.40**	0.57**	0.59**	0.38**
Netherlands	0.35**	0.39**	0.33**	0.39**	0.46**	0.25**	0.35**	0.36**	0.24**
Portugal	0.66**	0.68**	0.33**	0.61**	0.68**	0.17**	0.56**	0.63**	0.25**
Great Britain	0.34**	0.48**	0.17**	0.41**	0.47**	0.12**	0.38**	0.44**	0.09**
East Germany	0.39**	0.50**	0.47**	0.43**	0.52**	0.40**	0.35**	0.44**	0.47**
Finland	0.32**	0.39**	0.25**	0.39**	0.42**	0.20**	0.37**	0.44**	0.18**
Sweden	0.39**	0.48**	0.36**	0.39**	0.47**	0.32**	0.37**	0.42**	0.30**
Austria	0.56**	0.64**	0.38**	0.61**	0.66**	0.38**	0.45**	0.50**	0.24**

EB 54.1, Autumn 2000.



much stronger than correlations between identification with town and country or correlations between identification with town and Europe. Although the correlations between attachment to the nation and Europe are all weaker than the correlations between the attachment to the nation and its infra-territories, they are all significantly positive — apart from Northern Ireland in 2003. However, the strength of the correlation varies strongly from one country to another. In some places, especially Northern Ireland, Great Britain and Greece, the correlations between the national and the European level are much smaller than the correlation with local levels, while in places like East Germany, Denmark, or Sweden, these correlations are very similar. These results are consistent with the findings that Greece, Great Britain and Northern Ireland display a lesser tendency towards a cumulative character of national and European identities than other EU countries. For the UK, at least two different hypotheses can be formulated. First, the cumulative dimension of territorial identifications can be activated only for nested territories. Obviously, the UK is not perceived by most British citizens as nested in Europe, which is frequently referred to as being abroad. Europe remains an ‘other’, even if sometimes a positive one, in the British context. Secondly, the theory of cumulative identification was elaborated from the French case, where the national link refers very much to the territory: the French ‘imagined community’ is very much described in territorial terms, French soil being at the same time the scene of common history, the common heritage of French citizens and the common graveyard of French people. The first results of a comparative qualitative research on British national identity in England do not display the same reference to the British soil as being a powerful imagined link between the people.

The hypotheses are also consistent with a general decrease in the correlations between the attachment to the country and to Europe from 2000 to 2003 and the contrasting variability in the pattern of correlations between attachment to the country, to the town and to the region, which seem to change quite randomly. Referring to the long-term analysis of the correlation between national pride and the main indicator of identification with Europe, 2000 was considered to be a context of low intensity for antagonism while 2003, on the contrary, displays a high level of the antagonistic dimension between the two types of identification.

Empirical Evidence of the Dual Processes at Stake in the Identification with Europe

It would be appropriate at this point to provide some evidence of the duality of the identification process with Europe. In order to do this, a factor analysis of all the sets of variables in the data set that refer to territorial identification was

computed. Both the Eurobarometers of autumn 2000 and autumn 2003 contain questions on the following: national and European pride; degree of attachment to one's town, region, country and Europe and the current indicator of European identification: 'In the near future do you see yourself as (nationality) only, as (nationality) and European, as European and (nationality) or as European only?' This latter indicator was coded in two categories, distinguishing between respondents who say they feel 'national only' and those who say they feel European in one way or another (see Citrin and Sides, 2004 for justification). The indicator is called 'Euronational'. The analysis using the 2003 data set that is more recent, but has similar results to those contained in the 2000 one are displayed below.

The factor analysis is a principal component one¹⁷ here with normalization of variables. Figure 2 exhibits the first two factors extracting 59.98% of the variance.¹⁸ The circle is the circle of correlations (equal to one): the nearer the variables are to this circle, the more their inter-correlations become statistically significant. Data values on the graph come from Tables 3 and 4.

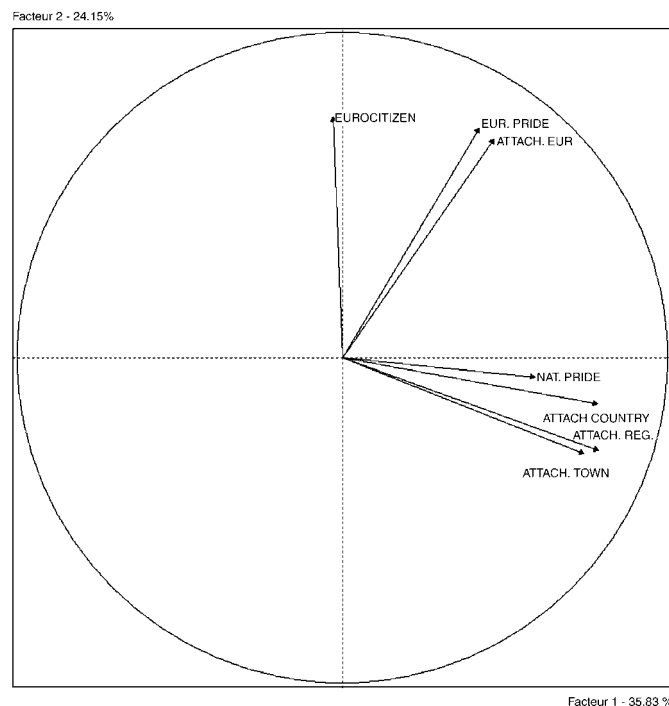


Figure 2 Factor analysis of the variables of national and European pride, sense of belonging to town, region, nation and Europe and European identification (Eurobarometer 60.1, Autumn 2003).



Table 4 First two factor loadings

	<i>Factor 1 (35.83%)</i>	<i>Factor 2 (24.15%)</i>
Nat. Pride	0.59	−0.06
Eur. Pride	0.42	0.71
Attach Town	0.74	−0.29
Attach Reg.	0.78	−0.28
Attach Country	0.78	−0.14
Attach Eur.	0.46	0.67
Euronational	−0.03	0.74

The first factor explains a little more than one-third of the variance. It gathers strong and positive contributions from all the measures of attachment and pride (with loadings contributing slightly more to the factor for the national and sub-national entities). Euronational, which is the only indicator that records a choice between levels of identification, is also the only variable that barely loads on the first factor. The second factor contains strong positive contributions from the questions concerning Europe and negative (although less strong) contributions from all other questions. When the same analysis is carried out at the country level, the results are very similar. The same first two factors appear in the analysis of all countries. The interpretation of these two factors is quite straightforward. The first factor refers to the cumulative dimension of national and European identification, the social desire to belong to any available territorial group, while the second relates back to the exclusive dimension, to the potentially politically constructed antagonism between two political systems, the European and the traditional ones (nation and sub-national entities), competing for legitimacy. However, this competition seems a little less marked between Europe and nation, than between Europe and local entities.¹⁹

The problem with this kind of analysis and indeed this kind of charts is that it postulates a linear relationship between the items of each question. In order to check this, a second factor analysis was carried out, a so-called ‘correspondence factor analysis’, which deals with items instead of variables. With correspondence analyses, two items are close if they represent answers given by the same or similar respondents, that is, respondents who give similar answers to the other questions taken into account in the same analysis (Lebart *et al.*, 2006).

Figure 3 displays the first two dimensions. With correspondence analysis, the points’ coordinates do not necessarily indicate their relative weight. The way items contribute to each dimension is indicated as follows: with (1) if they clearly contribute to the first factor, with (2) if they contribute to the second one. This indication is needed in order to decide if an item should be taken into

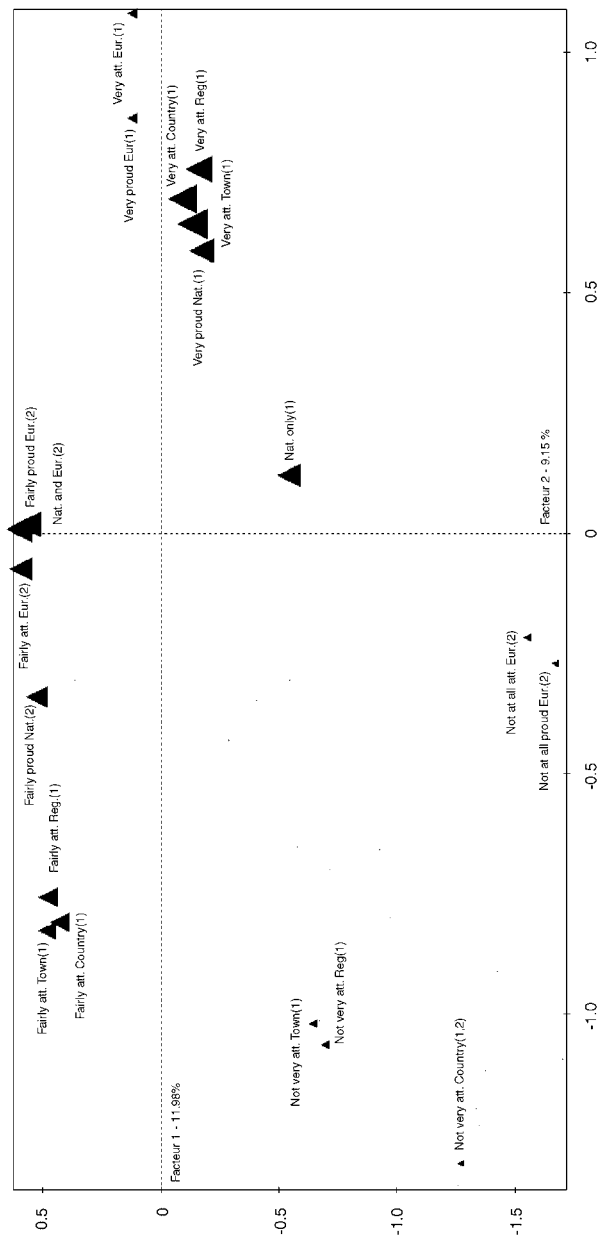


Figure 3 Analysis of correspondences between items relative to questions on identities.



account in the interpretation as its position on the chart is not enough to decide this. Lastly, items are represented thanks to triangles whose proportion is relative to the number of cases.

On the chart, the 'very' items — 'very attached to', 'very proud of a territorial level of belonging' — are very close to one another, more so than the other series — the 'fairly', 'not very' and 'not at all' answers. This means that there is a strong cumulative tendency with these items which is less the case for the other categories. Therefore, respondents who say they feel 'very attached to' or 'very proud of' one of their territorial communities are likely to feel 'very attached to' or 'very proud of' their other territorial communities too. So if someone says they are very proud of their nation, they are likely to feel very proud of being European too, and likely to feel very attached not only to their nation, but to Europe, their region and town also. If they answer that they feel 'fairly' 'or not very proud' of their nation, the answers regarding the other questions, and more specifically Europe, are less predictable.

The first factor opposes the 'very' items concerning all levels of identification, to the 'fairly' and 'not very' items corresponding to the national and sub-national levels only. Not only does this factor oppose strong positive identification to answers with less intensity but also it opposes a European, national and sub-national nested identification to national and sub-national cumulative belonging which does not include Europe.

The second factor is more complicated in that it opposes the 'fairly attached to' and 'fairly proud of' Europe and the nation, as well as what we have called Euronationals,²⁰ to two series of items: on one hand, the item 'national only' and on the other hand, the items 'not at all attached to' and 'not at all proud of Europe' and 'not very attached to the country'. The combination Europe/nation is thus opposed to two different attitudes: on one hand, an exclusive attachment to the nation and on the other hand, a rejection of identification which is more pronounced *vis-à-vis* Europe than the nation. However, respondents who declare that they are not at all proud of their nation are actually quite rare in Eurobarometer surveys.

These results confirm the first factor analysis, with the same mix of cumulative and exclusive identification. They provide a more complex picture of the possible combinations of identifications although the novelty — and thus the scarcity of 'very attached to' or 'very proud of' answers regarding Europe — of identification with Europe plays an important part in the pattern. The first factor corresponds to the process of identification with any available territorial community. Respondents who have a strong tendency to identify with one of them are thus likely to identify with any other, including Europe, while those who do not tend to identify strongly with traditional levels of belonging do not display the same tendency to project themselves in newly available levels of citizenry. Indeed, feeling 'very' attached or proud



corresponds to a different process than less intense feelings of belonging (Duchesne and Frogner, 1994).

It is not surprising then that 'very' items do not load on the second factor. The second factor accounts for the competitive process of identification with different potential sovereign territories and more particularly for the competition between the new European polity and older national and even more sub-national political communities.

This analysis therefore provides clear evidence of the complex combination of territorial attachments that result from the dual process of identification with a political community, especially when a new one develops. The way in which the people of Europe become European — in the subjective sense, that is, develop a feeling of belonging to the EU — depends on what the EU means to them. For those who have a strong tendency towards a *we*-feeling, the European Union is likely to be considered as an encompassing territory in which all other senses of belonging are nested. For others, it is more likely to be experienced as a growing power, which is in competition with older sovereign political communities. In this latter case, the framing of Europe, the way elites and mass media in the different European countries account for European integration, strongly influences people's readiness to develop new allegiances and reorder their older ones.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to make sense of the paradoxical statistical relationship between indicators of attachment to Europe and its nations. In the literature, some authors comment on a negative relationship which they consider to be a sign of persistent nationalistic feelings while others observe a positive relationship which they interpret as the consequence of the complex nature of identities — nested, marbled, or multidimensional.

We would argue that European identity should not be considered as a fact. Instead, attachment to Europe should rather be analyzed as a process, a process of identification with a new, growing potential political community.²¹ As a consequence, we have proceeded to a diachronic analysis of indicators of attachment to any territorial levels, using Eurobarometer data sets. This shows over time that identification with Europe is directly related to national identification, and that the relationship established between these two types of identification is consistent, despite the fact that it changes according to the context. The changes observed can be interpreted as a consequence of the duality of the process of identification with territorial political communities.

On one hand, identification is a process which results from the sociologically and politically determined individual disposition to feel like a member of a



community, that is, to feel subjectively involved in the community or groups to which one objectively belongs. In this respect, nations still appear to be a powerful vehicle for the development of such a tendency towards a *we-feeling* which, in particular, can then be extended to other nested territories such as the European Union. On the other hand, identification results from the sociological and political process of community building which is made easier by the limitation of the community, and is hence fuelled by pointing out some significant 'other' such as the European Union. In the short term, the exclusive dimension is a direct consequence of the actions of national leaders who endeavor to preserve their power and decision-making space.

These two processes of national and European identification interact in such a way that the relationship between these two levels of identification is often difficult to spot. From 1994 to 2000, it seems possible to trace the effect of European electoral campaigns or other specific public debate on the EU. In such periods, the relationship between the indicators of European and national identification become significantly negative, while outside of these periods, the relationship is weaker or non-significant. In these periods of public debate on the EU, the arguments of national anti-European activists activate potential antagonism between Europe and its nations. Between 1994 and 2000, the only available variable to measure European identification is a question that implies competition between the two levels of belonging. The activation of this underlying antagonism therefore has a strong influence on the relationship between European and national identification. In other contexts, that is, when public debate on European integration is less acute, no statistical relationship between the indicators of national and European identification can be observed. This can be interpreted as a neutralization effect of both the cumulative and competitive processes at work in territorial identification.

Since 2000, and the introduction of the Euro, enlargement and the European Convention, public debate on the EU has become recurrent. This explains why the relationship between the former indicators remains significantly negative. However, the growing number of interrogations about the nature of European civic commitment has contributed to introducing new questions about feelings of belonging in Europe in the Eurobarometer surveys. Thanks to this, over the same time period but using different indicators, a reversed relationship between European and national identification can be observed: a significantly positive one. This paradox can be interpreted as complementary evidence for the interpretation of the dual process of territorial identification as mentioned above.

What are the consequences of these results? From a scientific point of view, it seems pointless to continue disputing the cumulative or competing character of national and European feelings of belonging: they are both empirically confirmed. It would undoubtedly be more appropriate to analyze the complex combination of identification processes in greater depth.



From a more political point of view, this analysis aims at finding ways to promote a type of European identification in which Europeans feel committed to the EU without being exclusively so. Fear of the xenophobic and exclusive attitudes of nationalists have led promoters of Europe to frame the EU as a post national, universalistic forward-looking concept (Soysal, 2002). The low turnout in European elections, together with a continuing gap between elites and working class attitudes toward the EU may be interpreted as evidence of the relative failure of this strategy.

This analysis suggests that EU promoters would be well advised to rely on time. Europe has a common history, geography and culture, even if history sometimes means war and culture sometimes means conflicting values. A more traditional, national-like framing of the EU, which emphasizes, these elements would benefit from a cumulative process of identification and secure a sense of European belonging generated by the inclusive power of we-feeling created by national identities. In this context, European citizens would require nothing more than time to become accustomed to and feel at home in their new political community

Notes

- 1 We wish to thank Chantal Barry (Sciences-Po, CEVIPOF) for editing this paper in English, and anonymous reviewers of *CEP* for detailed and fruitful comments.
- 2 On the contrary, this is a central and fully accepted notion in social psychology. Social psychology has strongly influenced the concept of European identity. See Breakwell and Lyons, 1996 and Herrmann *et al.* (2004).
- 3 Although globalization, growing individualism and mass immigration may contribute to eroding national identifications independently from European integration.
- 4 Their research tested almost 50 questions related to national identity (Michelat and Thomas, 1966). The Eurobarometer wording is slightly different however, due in particular to the fact that the questionnaires are administered differently. The Eurobarometer asks 'Would you say that you are very proud, rather proud, fairly proud, not at all proud to be (nationality as specified in the first question)'. While the Michelat/Thomas question was: 'Are you proud of being French? Circle the answer corresponding to your answer: always proud, proud, on some occasions, never proud'.
- 5 Regularly, if we may say so, as the wording changed quite often. But the sense remained the same, namely: 'Do you sometimes think of yourself not only as a (nationality) citizen but also as a European citizen? Does it happen often, sometimes or never?'
- 6 'In the near future do you see yourself as (nationality) only, (nationality) and European, European and (nationality), European only?'
- 7 In the Autumn 2005, in Eurobarometer 64.2, the two questions were asked together with the national pride question. This confirms that the first European identification question, where the two levels are considered complementary, is barely statistically related to national pride, while the second one, where national and European identifications are supposed to be competitive, is significantly and negatively correlated with national pride. Obviously, part of the change results from the change in measurement.
- 8 Kendall's tau-b is one of the most common measures of association for ordinal data. It gives an indication of the strength of the relationship between two questions with categorical answers,



and of the sense of the relationship (it varies in theory between $+1$ and -1 , but with such a data set, an absolute value of 0.4 could be considered as a very strong relationship — but this is just rule of thumb), with a test of significance of the computed association.

- 9 It is interesting to note that this question ('In the near future do you see yourself as (nationality) only, etc.') is called the 'Moreno question', in pollster jargon from the name of a Spanish political scientist, who currently works on Spanish federalism but completed his Ph.D. in Edinburgh. The conflict between nationalist regions and the nation-state is reflected in the question and here, extended to a potential conflict between the European nations and the EC.
- 10 For Northern Ireland and Luxembourg, the results are to be interpreted carefully as the samples are only 300 and 600 people, respectively.
- 11 Two students of the French national school of statistics (ENSAE), Jeremiah Just and Jonathan Lagier, have confirmed the structure of the relationship between national pride and European identification with a complex model of regression, that is, with a fully appropriate statistical tool. For a complete presentation of this supportive evidence, see Duchesne (2004, 684–687).
- 12 Although we considered them at the time as two dimensions of territorial belonging: see Duchesne and Frogner (1994).
- 13 As they would be called respectively in the UK and in France.
- 14 This could also explain why L. Hooghe and G. Marks, find national identity to have negative and positive effect on attitudes toward integration, when applying a multi-level analysis.
- 15 At the mass level: this does not mean that it cannot be true concerning specific segments of the population, as for instance the free moving professional studied by Adrian Favell and his colleagues (Favell, 2003).
- 16 'People may feel different degrees of attachment to their town or village, to their region, to their country or to Europe. Please tell me how you feel attached to your town or county, your region, your country, to Europe? Very attached, fairly attached, not very attached or not at all attached?'
- 17 Confirmatory factor analyses like maximum likelihood technique cannot be used as there is communality greater than 1.
- 18 The data show that only the two first factors exhibit an eigenvalue > 1 and the 'scree test' follows suit.
- 19 Facing Figure 2, one can easily see that a rotation of the axis does not change the interpretation. A 'varimax' or an 'oblique' rotation (with a correlation of 0.102) between the axis (as a dotted line on the Chart) offers two factors with positive contributions of almost all the variables, but with higher loadings for national and sub-national variables for the first factor, and for the European variables for the second *vis-à-vis* national related ones. The distinction between one cumulative factor and one oppositional becomes a distinction between two factors with two common cumulative components but also more pronounced loadings for the two opposite elements of the former second factor.
- 20 That, as we said, combines all declarations of feeling European — national and European, European and national, European on, etc.
- 21 Although attachment to the nations (and sub-national levels) are older, the notion of identification suits them better than identities do as we know that they are also the result of a learning process, acquired during the early socialization phase but constantly reactivated by the media. Michael Billig provides strong evidences of this in *Banal Nationalism* (Billig, 1995).

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The Politicization of European Integration: More than an Elite Affair?

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A growing literature in research on the European Union (EU) claims that European integration has become comprehensively politicized in the EU's population. The most convincing evidence for this assertion stems from research on political and societal elites – studies of party manifestos, interest groups' activities, news media reporting and the like. By contrast, evidence on politicization trends in the broader citizenry is much more ambiguous. This article raises the question of whether politicization is more than an elite phenomenon. Based on a differentiated conception of politicization, it analyzes focus groups conducted with EU citizens in four member states. It shows that, for most citizens, only the fundamentals of European integration have gained political saliency, while the EU's day-to-day activities remain largely non-politicized. In addition, patterns of politicization in the European population are conditioned by significant knowledge deficits.

Keywords: European integration; politicization; political discourse; focus groups

'Politicization' is one of the most intensely discussed concepts in research on the European Union (EU) today. Defined in the most general terms, it refers to the emergence of widespread political debates which unsettle the traditional 'permissive consensus' on European integration (De Wilde, 2011). The idea of politicization as an aspect of regional integration was first brought up in neo-functional theories (Haas, 1958, pp. 11–9; Schmitter, 1969). Its new popularity stems mainly from two debates: first, attempts by theorists of *multi-level governance*, some of them inspired by neo-functionalism, to make sense of the series of contentious EU Treaty referenda which suggest an increase in popular criticism of European integration (De Wilde and Zürn, 2012; Hooghe and Marks, 2009); and second, contributions to the debate about the EU's *democratic deficit*, in which the formation of a 'European demos' of attentive and engaged citizens has been discussed both as a precondition and as a possible outcome of institutional democratization (Habermas, 2001; Hix, 2008).

In the past decade, both strands of the politicization literature have generated a multitude of scholarly contributions, most of which revolve around two issues. First, have Europeans really overcome their traditional indifference towards EU politics (De Wilde and Zürn, 2012; Hooghe and Marks, 2009), or does 'Europe' continue to be a low-saliency issue for most of the population, with little impact on political cleavages (Bartolini, 2005; Moravcsik, 2006)? This question is significant not only for determining how far the EU has moved from intergovernmental to multi-level governance, but also for assessing whether EU citizens are 'ready' for more democratic competition at the EU level (Hix and Bartolini, 2006; Papadopoulos and Magnette, 2010). Second, if politicization has occurred in European society, what are its implications? Does it encourage the EU's further institutional development, including steps towards democratization (Hix, 2008; Statham and Trenz,

2013), or does it produce a ‘constraining dissensus’ that stands in the way of institutional reform (Hooghe and Marks, 2009)? This question divides authors who otherwise agree that politicization is a reality; by contrast, those who claim that the EU remains essentially non-politicized tend to defend the institutional status quo.

The fact that such relatively fundamental questions about politicization persist in the literature can be explained, to a significant extent, by a lack of differentiation in existing academic debates about the issue. As we will argue in this article, the existing literature often does not distinguish clearly enough between different arenas in which politicization may occur, different aspects of European integration that may become politicized, or different member states whose political contexts may shape patterns of politicization. While there is convincing evidence that some politicization has occurred – particularly from studies on the activities of political and societal elites – insufficient attention has been devoted to the questions of whether politicization has reached the broader citizenry, and to what extent it is a homogeneous phenomenon in substantive and geographical respects. As a result, empirical observations about politicization are often forced into a dichotomous framework in which politicization is either present or absent in Europe, either beneficial or problematic for the EU’s development, rather than acknowledging that its shapes and implications might be diverse and context dependent.

In this article, we make the case for a more differentiated analysis of politicization. The argument proceeds in four steps. We begin with a conceptual discussion that disentangles two basic dimensions of politicization. Based on the resulting typology, we then take a look at the existing literature to substantiate the claim that politicization among non-elite parts of the citizenry deserves to be studied more systematically. To fill this gap in the literature, we develop a research strategy for examining citizen discourses about European integration through focus groups. This approach is informed by – and contributes to – the recent ‘qualitative turn’ in EU studies (Bruter, 2005; Díez Medrano, 2003; Duchesne *et al.*, 2013; Favell, 2008; Gaxie *et al.*, 2011; White, 2011). The article then proceeds to report findings from a study that applied this research strategy in four member states: Germany, Austria, the United Kingdom and Ireland. The picture that emerges is more complex than many other assessments of politicization: we show that only the most fundamental aspects of European integration – especially the benefits and costs of membership as well as the legitimacy of EU constitutional arrangements – are politicized in the population, while the EU’s policy-making activities remain largely non-salient. Politicization is also conditioned by the citizens’ knowledge deficits regarding European politics. The resulting pattern can be described as one of ‘uninformed politicization’; it has important implications for the chances of addressing the EU’s democratic deficit by means of institutional reform.

Conceptualizing Politicization: An Analytical Framework

In spite of the recent popularity of the concept, there is no universally accepted definition of what exactly politicization is, and how it can be measured. This article takes as its starting point a definition of politics as the cooperative or conflictive attempt at making collectively binding decisions for a group of people (Weir and Beetham, 1999, p. 8). An issue is politicized, then, if and when it is raised by the participants as a relevant object of – or factor in – the collective decision-making process. This definition implies that politicization is best

studied as a *discursive phenomenon*: it is not sufficient that actors are aware of an issue, or able to form opinions about it; what is required is rather that an issue becomes salient in political communication that seeks to influence – or responds to – collective decision making (Green-Pedersen, 2012).

When applying this definition to European integration, two crucial distinctions are needed. First, we must distinguish between different *arenas of political discourse* in which politicization may occur, each characterized by the discursive presence of specific actors. These include: (a) *institutional arenas* at the core of the political system, which are populated by full-time politicians (e.g., the European Parliament or national parliaments); (b) *intermediary arenas* linking political decision-making processes to the broader citizenry, which tend to be dominated by participants with a strong – and often professional – interest in politics (political parties, interest groups, the media, etc.); and (c) *citizen arenas* in which laypeople communicate about politics (at the workplace, in discussions with friends, etc.). In the first two of these arenas, we can further distinguish between coordinative discourse that is primarily internal and communicative discourse that is directed at a wider audience (Schmidt, 2006). Each arena and type of political discourse has its own rules structuring communication, which are likely to be reflected in distinct patterns of politicization. An understanding of these differences is also essential to assess whether (and how) political engagement with the EU spreads from one arena to another.

The second distinction that is crucial for the analysis of politicization focuses on the various *aspects of European integration* that may become politically salient in one or more of these arenas. After six decades of integration, the internal complexity of the European construction is so high that ‘the EU’ can no longer be treated as one homogeneous object of politicization. Rather, it is necessary to distinguish at least four potential objects of politicization: (a) *membership*, which includes the question of whether one’s own country should be in the EU, the benefits and costs of membership, as well as the adequate geographical reach of the EU (i.e., other countries’ membership); (b) *constitutional structure*, which encompasses the objectives and responsibilities of the EU, its institutions and its decision-making processes; (c) *policy issues* that are currently on the agenda of the EU’s legislative, executive or judiciary institutions; as well as (d) *domesticated issues*, that is, issues in national politics that emerge as an implication of membership, such as budget cuts mandated by Eurozone requirements. These categories are important for interpreting the scope and implications of politicization: while politicization of EU policy and domesticated issues indicates that EU debates are entering the realm of ‘normal politics’, politicization of membership or constitutional structure suggests that the institutional foundations of the EU polity remain contested (Bartolini, 2005, pp. 347–62).

Empirical research on politicization must be clearly situated in both of these dimensions; it must specify which discursive arenas and which aspects of integration it is primarily concerned with. Only after *what* is politicized for *whom* has been identified does it make sense to move on to an analysis of the substance of politicized debates. Depending on the interests of the researcher, as well as the methods applied, this analysis might focus on aspects such as the *extent of conflict* in EU-related debates (are EU issues discussed in a fairly consensual manner, or do they trigger active contestation?), the *political cleavages* that emerge in these debates (how are EU-related positions distributed across the political space, for

instance in relation to the left–right axis?), as well as the *kinds of arguments* that are brought forward (how are political evaluations of the EU justified?).

Assessing Existing Research: What Do We Know?

This analytical framework allows us to bring some structure to existing debates about politicization. As mentioned above, these are characterized by significant disagreements. A number of authors have asserted, in a rather programmatic fashion, that European integration has become fundamentally and comprehensively politicized (De Wilde and Zürn, 2012; Hooghe and Marks, 2009; Statham and Trenz, 2013). Yet while this position is widely shared, other authors maintain that politicization, if it has occurred at all, has been a fairly limited development that has not reached the broad population (Bartolini, 2005; Moravcsik, 2006). By applying the above distinctions, we can get a better sense of the evidence that lies behind these conflicting assessments.

That European integration (with its various aspects distinguished above) is politicized in *institutional arenas* is unlikely to be disputed even by critics of the politicization hypothesis – at least as far as discourse of a largely coordinative nature is concerned. A number of recent studies on such arenas, both at the European and national levels, show that politicization in this context is a reality. They also indicate that politicization does not remain limited to relatively fundamental issues of membership or constitutional structure; rather, policy issues are also controversially debated in institutional fora, including the European Commission (Hooghe, 2000), the Council (Mattila, 2004), the European Parliament (Hix *et al.*, 2006) as well as national parliaments (Wendler, 2012a; 2012b). However, these tendencies in internal debates among politicians (or high-level bureaucrats) are not necessarily reflected in their communicative discourses directed at the citizens: in this context, policy professionals might make the strategic decision to keep EU issues non-politicized.

This raises the question of whether politicization has spread beyond institutional arenas. To answer this question, it makes sense first to examine *intermediary arenas*. In recent years, an impressive amount of research has been done on such arenas, and the results mainly support the politicization hypothesis. A particularly fruitful source of evidence in this context has been the manifestos and communicated positions of political parties, in which issues of EU membership and constitutional structure (Benoit and Laver, 2006; Hooghe *et al.*, 2004; Klingemann *et al.*, 2006; Kriesi *et al.*, 2008; Wüst and Schmitt, 2007), as well as selected EU policies (Pollack, 2000), have been shown to be highly salient. The politicization of EU-related and domesticated policy issues has also been demonstrated in research on associational activity, which includes behind-the-scenes lobbying as well as public mobilization (Berkhout and Lowery, 2010; Greenwood, 2011; Imig, 2004), and in studies of news media reporting (Boomgaarden *et al.*, 2010; De Vreese *et al.*, 2006; Koopmans and Statham, 2010; Statham and Trenz, 2013). While some studies also point to limits of politicization in intermediary arenas (Green-Pedersen, 2012), the evidence, on balance, clearly suggests that these arenas have been affected by significant politicization tendencies.

By contrast, evidence for politicization is more ambiguous with respect to *citizen arenas*, which are populated not by political and societal elites, but by laypeople without a professional interest in politics. The main indicators cited by proponents of the politicization

hypothesis in this context stem from public opinion research, based on surveys such as the Eurobarometer or the European Election Studies. These show that European citizens are able to express structured opinions about EU membership and the EU's constitutional structure (McLaren, 2006; Ray, 2004; Scheuer, 2006; Van der Eijk and Franklin, 2007) and that these positions also have an impact on electoral behavior (De Vries and Tillman, 2011; Gabel, 2000). However, public opinion data have a number of weaknesses as an indicator of politicization. A first problem is that they do not provide good insights into the politicization of European or domesticated *policy* issues, as questions about currently debated policies are not systematically included in the surveys (Gabel and Anderson, 2004). A second problem is more fundamental: it has to do with the limited capacity of public opinion research in measuring political saliency (Zaller, 1992, pp. 76–96). If citizens are asked in a survey about various aspects of European integration, they might be able to come up with an opinion, but the survey will not reveal how intensely they care about the issue,¹ or how closely the response options provided to them correspond to the way in which they would conceive of the topic outside the survey encounter.

For this reason, qualitative methods – such as semi-structured interviews or group discussions – should be considered an essential complement to public opinion studies in research about politicization in the citizen arena. Their advantage lies in the fact that they can better reflect the discursive character of politicization. In recent years, a number of qualitative studies have been conducted that deal with citizen attitudes towards the EU, as well as European identities. Compared to the public opinion studies cited above, they suggest a more limited extent of politicization. What they emphasize instead, quite consistently, is a low degree of interest and information about EU affairs, reflected in a weak discursive presence of EU-related issues in political debates among citizens, particularly if the participants are less educated (Díez Medrano, 2003; Duchesne *et al.*, 2013; Favell, 2008; Gaxie *et al.*, 2011; White, 2011). Yet while these studies clearly hold important insights for the question of politicization, they show relatively little interest in distinguishing patterns of politicization that develop around various aspects of European integration and instead treat (non-)politicization – if they refer to the concept at all – as a phenomenon that is fairly homogeneous in substantive terms.

Operationalizing Politicization: Comparative Focus Group Research

There is hence a significant need for further research that focuses on politicization in citizen arenas and that distinguishes carefully between various objects of politicization. In light of the discursive character of politicization, research on citizens' political communication must be an essential component of this research. Given the fact that spontaneous, day-to-day political communication of laypeople is difficult to access for researchers, we consider focus groups with European citizens a particularly promising research strategy. Focus groups are not a 'natural' setting for political discourse (Morgan, 1997), but the data they generate provide insights into 'the process of people constructing and negotiating shared meaning, using their natural vocabulary' (Gamson, 1992, p. 17). As a qualitative procedure, they cannot claim to rival public opinion studies in producing representative results that could easily be generalized. They do, however, provide two kinds of added value: first, they make it possible to assess the saliency of various aspects of European integration in a setting that

is only loosely structured by the researcher and gives more room to the issues raised by the participants themselves; and second, they allow for an inductive study of the participants' EU-related arguments and evaluations which can pay close attention to the language that is employed and the interactive dynamics that unfold.

For the present study, we conducted a total of sixteen focus groups – four in each of four EU countries: Germany, Austria, the UK and Ireland. This sample of countries was intended to provide some variance with respect to the size of a state's population (large or small), its cultural background (Germanic vs. Anglo-Saxon) and traditional popular attitudes towards EU membership (EU-friendly or EU-skeptic). While all of these factors might be expected to result in distinct patterns of politicization, our study did not aspire to test causal hypotheses; its objective was rather to map whether and how European integration is politicized, and which kinds of differences exist between various aspects of European integration as well as between member states. Each of our focus groups was composed of eight to ten participants; the groups were held in mid-December 2010 in the capital city of each country (Berlin, Vienna, London and Dublin). Participants were recruited, under our supervision, by local public opinion research firms, using their existing panels.² In each country, two of the groups were composed of citizens with higher-than-average levels of income and education, while the other two groups consisted of citizens with lower-than-average income and education. All groups were evenly mixed with respect to other demographic characteristics (such as gender and age). In the group discussions, participants were first asked about the political events that had recently excited them; a second question then focused specifically on the global financial crisis that has developed since 2008. These questions were designed to find out whether EU-related issues – or the EU dimension of multi-level issues such as the financial crisis – were mentioned spontaneously. In later rounds of questioning, participants were asked explicitly about their country's EU membership, EU institutions and policies, their personal attachment to 'Europe', as well as objectives for the EU's further development.³

As indicated above, our analysis of the group discussions focused primarily on two categories: the degree of saliency of various EU-related objects and the kinds of arguments made about them. As in all qualitative research, making sense of our evidence in these respects is an interpretive exercise whose results can best be presented in an analytic narrative. We did, however, establish broad interpretive benchmarks to guide the analysis. With respect to *saliency*, we distinguished three levels: an EU issue was defined as highly salient if it generated a lively debate – triggered either spontaneously by the group members or by the moderator's prompting – in which multiple participants explicitly reacted to each other without the moderator's constant involvement. An issue was defined as moderately salient if most participants, after explicit prompting, were able to develop a position, but mainly responded to questions, with limited discursive interaction. Lastly, an issue was defined as being of low saliency if, even after prompting, participants avoided addressing it, either directly by declaring their lack of interest or competence, or indirectly by moving on to another topic.

Regarding the *arguments and evaluations* made about the EU in the focus groups, our analysis made use of a threefold distinction, derived from discourse ethics, between pragmatic, moral and ethical arguments (Habermas, 1993, pp. 1–17; for earlier applications in

EU-related research, see Sjursen, 2002; Wendler, 2012a). In this categorization, pragmatic arguments focus on EU policy outcomes (e.g., implications for economic well-being), moral arguments assess the EU based on standards of justice and good governance (e.g., democracy) and ethical arguments relate the EU to the values of specific political communities (e.g., national identities). These categories allow us to assess the justificatory resources that European integration draws on, the justificatory pressures to which it is being subjected, as well as the nature of political conflict in EU debates.

Before we report on our detailed results, it is necessary to discuss two limitations of our research design. First, our study provides only a snapshot view of politicization in late 2010, while the concept would ideally call for a longitudinal analysis. This is a limitation that our work shares with many other publications on the issue; still it would be desirable to study politicization more systematically over time. Second, as mentioned above, our research does not produce representative results that could easily be generalized. Focus groups are a qualitative procedure with a small number of participants (136 in our study); there is also a consistent danger of a group being dominated by particularly verbose participants. For these reasons, our research is primarily focused on mapping characteristic patterns of politicization, while it cannot make reliable assessments of the numerical strength and geographic distribution of various positions. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that in many respects the focus groups (particularly those in the same country) turned out to be remarkably similar to each other. They also produced results that are, in many respects, in line with those reported in other qualitative studies on European integration (especially Duchesne *et al.*, 2013; White, 2011). This leaves us confident that our results are more than just an artifact of any particular group composition.

Patterns of Politicization: How Do Citizens Debate the EU?

Politicization, defined as discursive saliency, is a matter of degree. Our focus groups clearly showed that EU-related issues were not completely non-salient; at the same time, it was evident that the EU was not at the forefront of people's minds when they debated politics. As a comparative benchmark, it is useful to compare politicization of EU-related matters to politicization of issues that relate to other political levels, particularly the nation state. Our opening question about the most interesting recent events that had excited participants allowed us to make this comparison. It revealed a clear dominance of state-level politics: all groups gravitated to a discussion of domestic issues that dominated media headlines at the time when the focus groups were held, such as the government's austerity budget in the UK, a negative Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report on school performance in Austria, or the abolition of military conscription in Germany. Even in Ireland, where – shortly after the bail-out from the EU and International Monetary Fund (IMF) – the financial crisis was the dominant topic, the discussion focused on the underlying causes of the country's financial difficulties as well as the national government's response, rather than on the bail-out itself. Spontaneous references to EU-related issues were not completely absent, but occurred only in a minority of our groups, triggered no significant debates and were overshadowed in frequency even by references to local/regional or international issues (such as the WikiLeaks controversy). In short, European integration, as an aggregate category, proved less salient than politics at other levels.

Membership

What picture emerges if we unpack this aggregate category? To make this assessment, we explicitly prompted a discussion about various aspects of European integration. When this was done, participants in all countries were most comfortable discussing – and had the most consolidated opinions about – the issue of membership. In a number of respects, the resulting debates were remarkably similar across groups. A first common trend was that participants generally did not explicitly challenge their own country's membership. Our Vienna groups were the exception; here Austria's decision to join the EU in 1995 was still vigorously debated. By contrast, the question of whether one's own country would be better off outside the EU did not come up as a major topic in the other three national capitals. In Dublin, the claim that EU membership 'has been good for Ireland' was repeated like a mantra in all four groups. Our Berlin groups took Germany's EU membership for granted, but some of them debated whether other member states – especially those affected by the financial crisis – should be kicked out. Even in London, the view that Britain should leave the EU was raised only sporadically. Most of our London participants did not perceive the EU as having a major impact on their lives; the question of British EU membership was hence not treated as having particularly great urgency.

In spite of this widespread consensus on membership, a second tendency apparent in all groups was that the general image of the EU in the debates was overwhelmingly negative. All of the three types of argument distinguished above were used to support this assessment, with pragmatic arguments mainly referring to the EU's inefficiency, waste of money and tendency to over-regulate; moral arguments emphasizing the EU's opacity and remoteness from the citizens which prevent democratic control; and ethical arguments accusing the EU of working to undermine the cultural diversity of the member states. At the same time, and seemingly disconnected from the image of the EU as an institution, the benefits and costs of membership were controversially debated, and positive effects of European integration – defined primarily in pragmatic terms – were explicitly acknowledged. The following exchange from one of our Austrian groups provides an illustration.⁴

Moderator: What importance does Austria's membership in the EU have for you personally?

Susanne: I must say, I am against it, I also voted against it, I am not a fan of the EU, even in my professional life right now I witness this very closely, it has in my opinion brought more disadvantages than advantages for Austria. I do not see any advantages, we are a beautiful country, we have everything for ourselves, we could live self-sufficiently; in my opinion we only have disadvantages.

Ulrike: I was very happy, I was married to a Frenchman and I moved around a lot, also the common currency, I like to be able to check on the internet and compare what things cost in Germany.

Susanne: On that issue, I must say, EU and currency, I do not see this as one, we could have had the euro separately.

Thomas: I agree.

Moderator: So you mean the euro without being an EU member?

Susanne: Exactly.

Iris: Yes, the euro is of course very convenient ...

Moderator: Beyond economic effects, do you feel affected by membership?

Jens: I would say one constantly gets emotional pinpricks, like the [regulation of the] curvature of cucumbers, as if they want to determine everything from up there, and as an ordinary man one thinks, what purpose does that serve, and what will come next? If you only think, these two, Brussels and Strasbourg, where they always go back and forth, twice a month, and all the benefits that they have ...

In this exchange, what the participants perceive as the concrete positive effects of EU membership for their own lives – free travel and the common currency – are discursively separated from the EU as an institution, culminating in the suggestion that one might have the euro without the EU. By contrast, negative effects of membership – especially the undermining of Austrian sovereignty and identity ('emotional pinpricks') – are directly attributed to the EU. While not always quite as explicit, this tendency of separating overall assessments of the EU (overwhelmingly negative; justified by pragmatic, moral or ethical arguments) from assessments of the benefits and costs of membership (controversially debated; with positive evaluations primarily referring to pragmatic arguments) was apparent in most groups.

The concrete issues raised in debating the implications of membership clearly reflected the domestic political contexts in which the debates took place; they hence differed from one national capital to the next:

- Our groups in *Berlin* were dominated by the financial crisis. The prevailing view was that Germany had to pay for the financial irresponsibility of other EU states. Outside the financial realm, criticism of the EU mainly referred to bureaucratic over-regulation, resulting in cultural uniformity. However, benefits of membership such as open borders in the Schengen zone and educational mobility through the Erasmus Program were also mentioned. One of our German groups, from the high income/education category, clearly stood out from the others in its almost euphoric pro-EU attitude. Participants in this group were prototypes of what Neil Fligstein (2008) has described as the culturally cosmopolitan and geographically mobile winners of integration; they pointed to the positive effects of the euro for Germany's economy, along with benefits that membership had brought for them personally.
- The financial crisis played a similarly dominating role in *Dublin*, where it led to a strikingly gloomy mood among our participants. The long-term benefits of EU membership in facilitating Ireland's economic and political development were never questioned, but they were often compared against more recently emerging costs. There were references to the destruction of Irish manufacturing and small-scale industry, to the loss of fisheries, as well as to migrants depressing Irish salary levels. In discussing the financial crisis, it was suggested that the bail-out was mainly in the interest of large EU states. However, such EU-skeptical tones were immediately turned into a self-critique of Ireland. There were regular characterizations of the Irish as lazy and living beyond their means, as well as references to the country not adequately standing up for its interests in Brussels.
- In our groups in *London*, the financial crisis was only a minor theme. As mentioned above, these groups were distinctive in the large number of respondents who could detect little impact of EU membership on their own lives, a fact that is probably best explained by the absence of the most visible symbols of EU membership – the euro and

Schengen – that were referenced in the other countries. As a result, the debate remained unstructured and engaged the participants less than comparable discussions in the other capitals. In evaluations of membership, negative characterizations dominated; the issues that emerged to justify these positions included a loss of British sovereignty and several accusations of EU membership being a waste of money. Positive effects of membership were discussed primarily in the high income/education groups; the main issue mentioned in this context was the free movement of people.

- Our groups in *Vienna*, finally, were the ones who assessed the benefits and costs of EU membership in the most critical terms. While positive aspects of membership were acknowledged – again, free travel and educational mobility were the most important – the majority of participants put more emphasis on negative effects, most importantly increased competition from low-income countries, price increases due to the euro, more migration and (tied to this) an alleged rise in crime rates. Compared to the other three countries, the topos of national identity was particularly strong, and many participants raised issues such as EU product standards – the most prominent example concerned naming requirements for jam ('Marmelade' versus 'Konfitüre') – as well as the EU sanctions imposed on Austria in 2000 as evidence for a detrimental effect of EU membership on Austria's sovereignty and cultural distinctiveness.

One of the most salient issues regarding EU membership, in all countries, was the potential expansion of the EU. In this respect, there emerged what can be described as a 'constraining consensus' in all four countries against the accession of further states any time soon. Two main reasons were brought up against enlargement. First, there was a widespread perception that the EU had expanded too rapidly in recent years, and that this had led to significant problems, most importantly too much migration. Second, enlargement was also opposed based on (more or less explicit) cultural prejudice. One young Londoner put it particularly bluntly: 'As you go out further, the cultures get even scarier'. As discussed above, some participants explicitly called for a smaller EU, particularly (but not only) in Germany.

We can conclude that, while discussions of EU membership had to be explicitly triggered in our focus groups, once the discussion got under way the issue enjoyed moderate to high saliency for the participants. Evaluations of the EU as an institution were decisively more negative than assessments of the concrete benefits and costs of membership. While various kinds of arguments (pragmatic, moral and ethical) were used to criticize the EU, with some variation between member states, it is striking that positive assessments of membership were justified primarily through pragmatic claims that pointed to the personal benefits of integration for the respondents, especially freedom of movement. Our Dublin groups were an exception in this respect, as they acknowledged the broader positive effects of EU membership for Ireland's economic and political development. Even here, however, moral and ethical arguments in favor of EU membership, which are clearly present in politicians' statements or media commentary (Hurrelmann *et al.*, 2013), were almost completely lacking.

Constitutional Structure

In contrast to debates about EU membership, our groups were somewhat more reluctant to discuss the constitutional structure of the EU, and the resulting debates were hampered by

low levels of knowledge. When asked about EU institutions, the great majority of participants reported that they perceived the EU as ‘one big whole’, without distinguishing its various institutions. When pressed, most knew that a European Parliament (EP) exists, but few had precise memories of the most recent election, which was often confused with other voting opportunities, such as treaty referenda. Some had heard of the Court of Justice, but erroneous references to the European Court of Human Rights or even the International Criminal Court as EU institutions were also common. Knowledge about other EU institutions was scattered at best. Regarding EU personnel, some could recite the names of current or former EU politicians, but with considerable inaccuracies. ‘I know the heads of state, but who are all these other people?’, moaned one participant.

In a minority of groups from the high income/education category, individual participants were well informed about EU institutions and defined it as their task to educate the other group members. In most of the groups, however, participants would try to ‘pool’ individual pieces of EU-related information, often leading to highly distorted descriptions. The following exchange from one of our British groups provides an example:

Mike: We have to remember as well that a handful of people have to decide all these laws, what’s it called?

Robert: European rights? Court of European ...

Mike: No, no, where they actually make the decisions in the House ...

Robert: Strasbourg.

Mike: Strasbourg. These people in Strasbourg, they actually have all the monopolies for making all the rules and regulations; the bottom line is, they actually control and tell all the countries what to do. The idea is good, but in practice it doesn’t work.

Robert: But you see, ... I feel, like, helplessness, because I don’t see anything that we could do about it, they seem to impose all these things on us and we can’t do anything, it’s just a kind of despair.

The vagueness of the references to EU institutions in this exchange (‘these people in Strasbourg’) is typical for our group discussions in general. In the light of their knowledge deficits, most respondents did not aim for precision when talking about the EU. The most common reference to the EU was simply by the adverb ‘there’ (in German: ‘*da*’ or ‘*dort*’) when talking about institutions, and the pronoun ‘they’ (in German: ‘*die*’) when talking about EU politicians and bureaucrats.

This lack of knowledge did not prevent participants from passing judgment about the quality of the EU’s constitutional arrangements. Contrary to some public opinion research (for instance, Ecker-Ehrhardt, 2012), we found little evidence that the allocation of policy responsibilities to the EU is comprehensively politicized – most of our participants were simply not aware of the precise scope of EU powers. While there were individual suggestions for a change (in most cases an expansion) of the EU’s policy portfolio, usually concerning issues of personal interest to individual participants in which they perceived their own state as falling short, these remained idiosyncratic and triggered little debate. Participants were more forthcoming with their views on the EU’s democratic quality, and a consensus emerged that it was weak. Criticism of the EP was particularly widespread; it was in most cases not framed in institutional terms or reliant on explicit moral arguments about democracy, but rather focused

on (the lack of) pragmatic policy outcomes and the personal characteristics of MEPs – described as incompetent, lazy, overpaid, even corrupt. Only our group of German cosmopolitans reached a different conclusion; here the EP was praised for representing the interests of the electorate, and its insistence on certain privacy safeguards for the transfer of banking data to the United States was cited as an example. To be sure, participants were also highly critical of politicians at the national level. But when asked explicitly to compare the quality of EU politics to that of domestic politics, most groups came out in favor of the latter, which was described as more responsive to their concerns and easier to navigate.

In spite of their critique of the democratic quality of the EU, most of our participants were reluctant to embrace proposals for democratization, such as a further strengthening of the EP or the direct election of an EU president. The arguments brought forward against such proposals were mainly ethical in nature and stressed the incompatibility of stronger EU-level democracy with national sovereignty and identities. The ways in which the participants perceived the EU's democratic deficit also played a role here: for most, this deficit was not defined in institutional terms, but rather expressed as a fundamental perception of disenfranchisement from EU politics; a sense of being ruled by an organization about which one knows too little, and which appears remote and inaccessible (see the reference to 'helplessness' in the exchange above). In this framing, it is by no means surprising that institutional reform is not widely embraced, as it would amount to tampering with the very same EU institutions that participants view with suspicion.

Constitutional issues, then, were politicized in our focus groups, but in a form different from the one suggested in some previous studies. We found little discussion of EU policy competencies, but a high saliency of questions relating to the EU's democratic legitimacy. The participants' knowledge deficits emerged as a key factor here, structuring the debates about the EU's democratic quality and potential remedies. Most participants were well aware of these knowledge deficits. At the end of one of our London groups, all participants agreed that 'we are really quite ignorant', and remarked how keenly the group discussion had made them aware of this. Blame was usually placed on the EU's lack of transparency. A common thread running through all our discussions was a passionate call for more information. Many demanded specific EU segments in TV newscasts, the publication of information material in more accessible language, and explicit activities by EU politicians to explain the organization to the people.

Policy Issues

While the participants' knowledge deficits did not prevent active debates about constitutional issues, the same is not true for policy issues. In the focus groups, few participants were familiar with EU policies, let alone with those currently on the EU's agenda. This is illustrated by the fact that outside the one exceptional German group, only a handful of participants had heard of the Summit of the European Council that took place later in the same week in which our groups were held (16–17 December 2010), and at which crucial decisions on the euro were to be made. When asked about EU policies, most participants responded by reporting on their general perceptions of the EU or made reference to areas of personal interest, which were seldom taken up by the others. The following excerpt from one of our German groups provides an example:

Moderator: In general, do you think it is a good thing that many decisions are now taken at the European level, in Brussels?

Lieselotte: I do not hear about that at all, other than the fact that the bananas must have a specific curvature and all eggs must be of equal size. ... I have not heard of a single decision, I must admit. With the exceptions of [product] norms that have been defined, but other than that ...

Marcel: I think that with respect to the rule of law, we are close to the top in Germany, in terms of legislation and the judiciary; I think other countries have problems of a different magnitude, and these countries will surely be happy that there is now a European Court of Justice, and European legislation that sets standards for some countries. ...

Horst: But, as far as German legislation is concerned, in certain fields it lags behind European laws and other countries, for instance with respect to family and custody law, there remains much to be done, and scathing decisions by the European court prove that.

This exchange is characteristic in a number of respects. First, participants in most groups had little knowledge of concrete policies decided at the EU level, and when questioned about them often resorted to standard clichés ('the curvature of bananas', etc.). In Berlin in particular, such general assessments often included the perception that EU policies are a device to bring other member states up to Germany's regulatory standard. When concrete European policy decisions were mentioned, these were frequently court decisions – often by the European Court of Human Rights, which is, of course, not even part of the EU – rather than legislative or executive decisions. Second, participants in policy-oriented debates often talked past each other. Policies raised by individual participants tended to be ones about which they cared personally – Horst in the exchange above had already made numerous references to custody law in the preceding discussion – but these remained idiosyncratic and triggered little debate. It was also common that discussions about EU-level policies were immediately brought back to the domestic level; policy making at this level was clearly an issue that participants felt more confident discussing. On the whole, then, our groups suggest little politicization of EU policy making. Concrete EU policy decisions were of low saliency to the participants, and the day-to-day policy process in Brussels and Strasbourg was not on their radar screen.

Domesticated Issues

We also noticed few instances in which domestic policy issues were discussed with an explicit EU reference. The financial crisis in Ireland was an obvious exception; here, the bail-out conditions and their implications for domestic budget making were major themes. Even more remarkable, however, and consistent across all four countries, was the discussion of migration as a domesticated EU issue. EU membership was taken to imply more immigration, a development that was generally viewed critically, but for which the primary blame was put on domestic policies, which were accused of making migration to one's own country particularly attractive. In Dublin, for instance, labor migration from the newer EU states led to a discussion of Irish social benefits collected by migrants, especially children's allowance, and there was a general perception that these benefits were both too generous and too susceptible to fraud. Similar concerns were raised in the other national capitals, particularly in the low income/education groups. For instance, many Vienna respondents

characterized their country as being too attractive for immigrants from the East, a fact that was blamed for a rise in crime rates. In London, participants lamented that their government had 'let in so many East Europeans' that they felt 'alien' in their own country. Members of our Berlin groups expressed concerns that historical sensitivities prevented the country from showing what they considered to be adequate toughness in dealing with immigrants; many referred positively to France's expulsion of Roma in the fall of 2010, and bemoaned the fact that similar policies would not be considered politically correct in Germany. The prominent role of migration in our focus groups underscores the potential of the issue as a rallying cry for populist mobilization. It is significant, however, that migration was discussed primarily in domesticated rather than EU terms. Again, this illustrates that the citizens' interests and emotions are still focused on politics at the national level, even in cases in which an issue's European dimension is evident.

Conclusion: Uninformed Politicization

While we have to be cognizant of their limited generalizability, our focus groups in London, Berlin, Vienna and Dublin suggest that European integration can no longer be described as non-politicized in the European citizenry. European issues are clearly not at the forefront of most people's minds when they talk about politics, but some EU-related topics have achieved (moderate) saliency beyond political elites. Our research indicates, however, that European integration remains a far cry from becoming fully politicized. Politicization is limited to the most fundamental questions brought up by European integration: EU membership and its benefits and costs for one's own country, the possibility of further enlargement, as well as – in the constitutional category – the democratic legitimacy of the EU. By contrast, issues associated with the routine functioning of the EU's political system, especially EU-level policy making, were not significantly politicized. Our study suggests that greater differentiation is needed in academic debates about politicization to capture these differences adequately.

With respect to the arguments raised in EU-related debates, the most striking result of our research is the relatively narrow range of pro-EU claims that were brought forward. While critical assessments of the EU made use of a variety of pragmatic, moral and ethical claims, often reflecting a member state's peculiar economic situation or national experience with European integration, arguments in favor of European integration were primarily framed in pragmatic terms, and mainly referred to the personal benefits derived from the EU's free movement policies. This pro-integration argument, however, was seldom effectively linked to the EU as an institution. Discourses that justify the EU based on more fundamental ethical or moral considerations had little resonance with our participants.

These patterns of politicization are highly relevant for research that seeks to understand the legitimacy deficits of the EU. In addition to the relatively narrow range of pro-EU arguments in laypeople's discourses, our study highlights the importance of another variable that deserves more attention in this respect: citizens' limited knowledge about the EU. In our focus groups, these knowledge deficits resulted in a distinct pattern of *uninformed politicization*, which became evident not only in the vague fashion in which participants discussed European integration, but also in their perception of the EU's democratic quality. For most of our respondents, the EU's democratic deficit was not defined in institutional

terms, but became visible as a more diffuse yet also more fundamental feeling of disenfranchisement. It is important to understand that this type of deficit cannot be easily fixed through institutional democratization, since such reforms necessarily rely on the very institutions that citizens view with suspicion.

(Accepted: 3 February 2013)

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Notes

Research for this article was supported by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Standard Research Grant awarded to Achim Hurrelmann (File No. 410-2009-1113). For detailed comments on earlier drafts, we thank Carlos Closa, Pieter de Wilde, Sophie Duchesne, Ulrike Liebert and Frank Wendler, as well as three anonymous reviewers for *Political Studies*.

- 1 Public opinion researchers may try to get around this problem by asking respondents to identify the most pressing political problems of the day. This procedure has been used to assess how important 'the EU' is compared to other issues; however, it does not allow for a differentiated assessment of the saliency of the various aspects of European integration.
- 2 The institutions we cooperated with were WorldOne Research in London, The Grafton Suite in Dublin, Items Marktforschung in Berlin and meinungsraum.at in Vienna. Our strategy of recruitment resulted in groups whose participants were, for the most part, already familiar with focus group settings. However, we made sure that they had not participated in groups on similar topics or with similar research objectives.
- 3 Our interview guide is available in the online appendix.
- 4 All names in the focus group excerpts have been changed. German-language debates were translated by the authors.

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Supporting Information

Additional Supporting Information may be found in the online version of this article at the publisher's web-site:

Appendix S1: Interview guide for the focus groups.