

Ambivalent or Indifferent? Reconsidering the Structure of EU Public Opinion

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Abstract

In the American context, research on ambivalence established that individuals often simultaneously possess positive and negative considerations on a political object. Yet, little is known about ambivalence in support for European integration. This article proposes a measure that distinguishes ambivalence from indifference in attitudes towards the EU. Using data from Eurobarometer wave 63.4 and the Chapel Hill expert survey I find that the causal logics of ambivalence and indifference are sharply different. Multinomial regression analysis reveals that levels of ambivalence towards the EU increase with political sophistication. Also, citizens are more ambivalent, less indifferent, and less positive about the EU when elite division on European integration is more pronounced. Finally, trust in EU institutions and attachment to Europe decrease indifference and ambivalence about the EU.

Keywords: ambivalence, EU support, European integration, Euroskepticism, indifference, public opinion,

Introduction

In studies of EU public opinion, the dependent variable is typically conceptualized as one-dimensional – i.e. as a continuum from low support to high support for the unification of Europe. This disguises a central aspect of belief systems, namely, that individual opinions are often simultaneously positive and negative. Rather than endorsing one side and refuting the other, many citizens embrace elements of both sides. In research on American public opinion, individuals with competing considerations relevant to one and the same object are considered ambivalent. This study has two goals. First, I suggest a measure that accounts for critical differences in attitudes towards the European Union. The measure distinguishes between indifference, ambivalence, and univalent views. Second, I propose and test a theoretical framework to explain ambivalence in public notions of the EU.¹

Recent work has shown that ambivalence is not only distinct from indifference, but has nontrivial implications for the processing of political information and preference formation. Attitudes marked by ambivalence are held with less certainty, are retrieved from memory with more difficulty and, overall, tend to be less stable over time (Huckfeldt and Sprague, 2000; Zaller, 1992). Most notably, attitudes characterized by ambivalence are more vulnerable to persuasion than one-sided views (Bassili, 1996) and they are more likely to be driven by whatever considerations are momentarily salient, so that context and cues become more relevant (Lavine et al., 1998; Tourangeau et al., 1989). Thus, the extent of ambivalence among Europeans is relevant in order to understand public opinion towards European integration, the success of extreme right- or left wing parties in European Parliament elections or EU referendum campaigns (e.g. Taggart, 1998; De Vries and Edwards, 2009; Hobolt and

Brouard, 2011). Hobolt (2009), for instance, demonstrates in an elaborate framework how an individual's level of support for European integration affects voting behavior in EU referendums. Consequently, better information on the structure of EU public opinion can extend our knowledge on other political processes. Evidence from the US would suggest that in contrast to individuals with univalent attitudes, EU citizens with ambivalent attitudes are more likely to be influenced by EU level events that garner high media attention or the arguments made by elites during EU related campaigns.

In the next section, I conceptualize ambivalent attitudes vis-à-vis univalent opinions. Then, I present a theoretical argument that links cue availability and cue competition to individual level ambivalence in views of the EU. Using Eurobarometer data, I show that the availability of cognitive cues on the EU increases ambivalence while decreasing indifference. Competing elite cues also intensify ambivalence and diminish levels of public indifference. On the contrary, affective cues reduce both levels of indifference and ambivalence among EU citizens. The results, for instance, elucidate a sharp difference between those who view the EU positively and those who are ambivalent, for it is the ambivalent that have a weak emotional involvement with the community. I conclude that the often-cited idea of a public dissensus on European integration is correct (Hooghe and Marks 2009), but needs revision. Rather than describing only the aggregate level, a dissensus is what a significant share of Europeans experience on an individual level when forming their opinions about the EU. I address the theoretical implications of this finding and avenues for future research in a final section.

Mapping ambivalence and its consequences

There are two conceptualizations of ambivalence in the literature: First, ambivalence as a conflict of core beliefs, and, second, as a coexistence of positive and negative evaluations on a single object. According to the first understanding, citizens are only considered ambivalent when their answers on a policy question are instable due to a conflict of their core beliefs. Alvarez and Brehm (1995) give the example of a woman who exhibits ambivalence in her attitude towards abortion policies due to the strong beliefs she holds for both women's rights as well as respect for human life.

Most research in political science employs a broader notion of ambivalence that is rooted in social psychology (e.g. Zaller, 1992; Lavine, 2001). According to this broader notion, ambivalence is the simultaneous endorsement of positive and negative evaluations with respect to an issue or object. Steenbergen and Brewer (2004) reconcile the two approaches and note that a conflict of core beliefs is a particular manifestation of ambivalence. I follow the broader notion of the concept, so that ambivalence is the presence of positive and negative considerations for the EU, while indifference is characterized by the absence of both kinds of considerations. A two-dimensional space clearly maps the viewpoint of ambivalent Europeans (cf. Cacioppo, Gardner, and Bernston 1997) and shows their conceptual distinctiveness from individuals who are indifferent about the EU.

< Table 1 about here >

The effects of attitudinal ambivalence are well documented in the American context. However, in the European context little is known about ambivalence. Ambivalence, for instance, has repeatedly been found to decrease the predictability of political attitudes (for an overview, see Steenbergen and Brewer 2004). This is closely

linked to an ambivalent respondent's greater difficulty in making a political choice. Also, ambivalence increases an individual's dependence on information that is salient at a specific point in time. Alvarez and Brehm examine these effects on US citizens' positions towards abortion policies (1995) and the American Internal Revenue Service (2002). Rudolph (2005) explores an increase in response variability among ambivalent respondents in regard to US campaign financing, demonstrating how group attachment mutes this effect. Basinger and Lavine (2005) explain low predictability of voting behavior with ambivalence in party identification. They demonstrate that ambivalence affects the cues citizens use to make their choice in elections. Economic voting, for instance, becomes more central in the decision making process of citizens who have an ambivalent party affiliation, lack political knowledge, and see little campaign stimulus. Lavine et al. (1998) find experimental evidence for the greater importance of temporarily salient information for ambivalent respondents. Since one's immediate environment or context is usually most salient, they are able to demonstrate ambivalent individuals' greater susceptibility to contextual effects.²

Sources of ambivalence

The public opinion literature provides diverse and, at times, contradictory explanations of ambivalence. Addressing this literature, I develop a theoretical framework that explains ambivalence as a dimension of EU public opinion. At the center of my framework is a theory of cognitive and affective cues. Cognitive cues on the EU involve EU specific knowledge, political cues from the news media, and cues on the EU sent by parties. On the other hand, feelings of attachment to Europe and trust in EU institutions are treated as affective cues, which influence citizens' views

of the EU in a distinct but similar fashion to cognitive cues.

To develop my framework, I built on approaches proposed by Zaller (1992) as well as Steenbergen and De Vries (2012).³ However, these authors primarily focus on cognitive cues. Since it is a well-established observation in social psychology that attitudes are driven both by cognitive assessments as well as affect (e.g. Breckler and Wiggins 1989), I extend existing explanations of ambivalence to include affective sources. I present the cognitive cue centered approaches by Zaller (1992) as well as Steenbergen and De Vries (2012) in the next sections before addressing affective cues.

Zaller's (1992) model on the relation between cognitive cues and political attitudes differentiates between three types of individuals: politically sophisticated citizens, politically unsophisticated citizens, and citizens in between those poles, who make up the majority of the population. Political sophistication refers to the level of attention citizens pay to politics and the extent to which they comprehend political information. Thus, the concept of political sophistication is about the degree to which citizens absorb political cues. Zaller (1992) shows that individuals with low political sophistication are unlikely to be ambivalent about political issues due to their inattention to politics and lack of knowledge about competing political cues. Politically sophisticated citizens are also low in ambivalence, although for different reasons. Zaller (1992) notes that very politically sophisticated citizens are able to assess and reject counter attitudinal messages right away and are thus driven by a coherent set of considerations. He theorizes that all other citizens are expected to be ambivalent. That is because most citizens somewhat follow political news and have some political skills, but are not able to reject all political cues in opposition with their own views. These citizens accept and store numerous competing considerations

on political issues, which makes ambivalence more likely to occur.

The account offered by Zaller (1992) is tailored to the political environment in the United States, especially its two party system. In most European countries, more than two political parties send cues on European integration. Except for cues from extreme right wing parties, political cues are often not aimed for or against the EU, but show more subtle differences. Like Zaller (1992), Steenbergen and De Vries (2012) conceptualize public opinion as a cueing process in which citizens rely on cues to form opinions. However, Steenbergen and De Vries (2012) factor in the specificities of European public opinion formation. For instance, they examine the effect of different cognitive cues separately, such as EU knowledge, news media cues on the EU, and party dissent on European integration. In contrast to Zaller (2012), the authors find that regardless of the level of political sophistication, competing cues always lead to ambivalence. By the same token, they argue that “the clearer the cues are, the better able will the person be to form a coherent attitude and the less variable his or her expressed opinions will be” (Steenbergen and De Vries, 2012: 6).

Steenbergen and De Vries (2012) thus do not find that politically sophisticated citizens – i.e. those with considerable knowledge about the EU – are less ambivalent because they are able to reject competing cues. On the contrary, there is evidence for a positive relationship between cognitive cue availability and ambivalence.

Steenbergen and De Vries (2012) find that greater EU news media salience increases response variation, their indicator of ambivalence. This supports the notion that an increased emphasis on the EU by news media brings about a surge in the provision of competing cues, which, in turn, contributes to public ambivalence. Steenbergen and De Vries (2012) conclude that the salience of dissonant cognitive cues is an important trigger of ambivalence.

In contrast to Steenbergen and De Vries (2012), I argue that the lowest levels of political sophistication and a complete lack of cues on the EU cause indifference rather than ambivalence. An individual lacking any sort of cues is unlikely to be torn between two sides regarding the EU. Additionally, it is hypothesized that cognitive cue availability decreases the prevalence of univalent views on the EU and increases ambivalence regarding the EU. On the one hand, cognitive cues are expected to make seeing the EU in a positive view less likely, and in turn, ambivalence more widespread. I expect this because acquiring an abundance of cognitive cues makes it more likely for citizens to hold cues that are in opposition with each other. On the other hand, the literature provides much evidence that a better understanding of European integration makes a negative view of the EU less common (Inglehart, 1970; Inglehart, Rabier and Reif, 1987; Janssen, 1991).

H 1: *Cognitive cues decrease indifference and increase ambivalence about the EU.*

Another important source of cognitive cues regarding the EU are political parties since politics of European integration are often very technical in nature and the implications of many policies for an individual's personal life can be difficult to assess (e.g. Franklin, Marsh, McLaren, 1994; Ray, 2003). Elites provide cognitive cues that assist the public in making sense of European integration. If elites are divided over European integration, these cues are likely to be in competition with one another.

Steenbergen and de Vries (2012) theorize that both small and large levels of differentiation among party stances towards European integration lead to ambivalence. On the one hand, they argue that agreement translates into little need for

debate and a lack of cues, which in turn intensifies ambivalence. On the other hand, large differences between parties regarding European integration also cause ambivalence because of the dissemination of competing cognitive cues.

In line with Steenbergen and De Vries (2012), I also expect elite division to translate into a salient political debate making competing cues on the EU available and leading to increased ambivalence. Along the same lines, party dissent on European integration is hypothesized to decrease univalently positive views of EU. To date, party consent on European integration expresses an elite consent pro European integration, making positive views of the EU more likely. If there is dissent among parties, it reflects that one or more parties deviate from the elite consent in favor of the EU, which, in turn, makes positive views less likely to occur. In contrast to Steenbergen and De Vries (2012), I argue that a lack of contestation is not connected to higher levels of ambivalence. Instead, elite consent is expected to contribute to higher levels of indifference, rather than ambivalence, since cue availability and cue competition is likely to be very low in the absence of a debate among parties over European integration.

H 2: *Greater party differentiation on European integration leads to higher levels of ambivalence and elite consent to higher levels of indifference.*

As mentioned before, social psychology highlights that attitudes are driven by cognitive assessments as well as affect. In fact, evidence even suggests a supremacy of affect over cognition, particularly when cognitive cues are unavailable or inconclusive (Lavine et al., 1998a). Affective reactions can often be accessed more easily and more quickly than cognitive information (Zajonc, 1984). In many instances, affective responses to an object are perceived as more subjectively valid

and linked more closely to one's self than cognitive cues (Lavine et al., 1998a). Hence, the cognitive cue centered model is extended to also include affective cues. I argue that the availability of affective cues is critical for citizens' views of the EU. Among the different types of affect influencing public attitudes towards European integration, I focus on two key concepts, namely trust in EU institutions and attachment to Europe (McLaren, 2004; McLaren, 2007; Karp, Banducci, and Bowler; 2003; Karp and Bowler, 2006; Hooghe and Marks 2004, 2005). Both concepts express strong feelings and lead individuals to care about objects, which in turn decreases their level of indifference. Strong feelings are also likely to decrease the level of ambivalence, since affective cues can override a potential conflict of cognitive cues.

I hence expect trust in EU institutions to decrease indifference and ambivalence about the EU. For instance, while politically sophisticated individuals who lack trust in EU institutions are likely to be among the most ambivalent individuals, those who do trust EU institutions are likely to be much less ambivalent. In fact, since trust can override competing cognitive cues among highly sophisticated individuals, it should make them univalently positive about the EU.

H 3: *Trust in EU institutions leads to less indifference, less ambivalence and more positive views of the EU.*

Another important affective cue that structures public opinion towards European integration are group attachments. Rudolph (2005) provides a detailed theoretical account and empirical support for the notion that group attachments decrease ambivalence. He argues that feelings of affiliation with a group help

individuals to organize complex political issues. Studies that have applied this finding to EU public opinion include Hooghe and Marks (2004, 2005), who argue that individuals attached to Europe and their nation support European integration at much higher levels than exclusive nationalists. Steenbergen and De Vries (2012) also find that a dual national and European identity decreases ambivalence in support for European integration.

I expect a feeling of attachment to Europe to affect views of the EU in a similar way to trust in EU institutions. I expect attachment to Europe to decrease indifference and ambivalence. Since attachment to Europe is a positive affect, I expect attachment to decrease the likelihood for citizens to hold a negative view on the EU. Further, I hypothesize individuals at any level of political sophistication and cognitive cue availability to be less ambivalent about the EU. Subsequently, citizens who are knowledgeable about the EU and lack an affective attachment to Europe are expected to be ambivalent. Individuals who are knowledgeable about the EU and also a strong affective attachment are expected to have a positive view of the EU.

H 4: *Attachment to Europe decreases levels of indifference, negative views of the EU and ambivalence while making citizens more likely to hold a positive view on the EU.*

Data, Measurement, and Model

The data for the empirical analysis and hypothesis tests come from Eurobarometer wave 63.4, for which the fieldwork took place between May and June 2005. It includes data from representative samples of around 1000 individuals from all countries that were EU member states at the time. This data set offers a unique combination of question items. It is one of the few survey waves that not only asks

respondents about their position on the EU membership of their country, but also asks how attached respondents are to Europe, if they trust EU institutions, how much they know about them, and what meaning the EU has for them personally. The latter question provides the basis for my measurement of ambivalence and indifference.

Dependent Variable

For psychologists ambivalence is a well-known attitude dimension, which is typically accounted for by using two separate measures to gauge an individual's relationship to an attitude object (e.g. Cacioppo, Garner, and Berntson, 1997). By measuring how much someone likes an object independently from how much someone dislikes the same object, one can differentiate between indifference (neither liking, nor disliking), a positive attitude (liking, but no disliking), a negative attitude (disliking, but no liking), and ambivalence (simultaneous liking and disliking). Authors in American political science literature rely on items in the American National Election Study (ANES) that tap on the number of favorable and unfavorable things a respondent mentions about a particular candidate.

European surveys such as the Eurobarometer or European Election Study lack similar items. Steenbergen and de Vries (2012) circumvent this problem by considering the presence of heteroskedasticity in a regression model as an indication of ambivalence. Heteroskedasticity indicates unequal error variances, which can occur for reasons unrelated to ambivalence, such as an omitted variable or a model misspecification. Apart from that, heteroskedasticity refers only to a model as a whole, rather than to any observation individually. As a result, this measure neither

allows an inference on the percentage of Europeans who are ambivalent, nor on which particular respondents are ambivalent.

I suggest a measure of ambivalence based on the meanings of the EU to respondents of a large-N survey. The Eurobarometer question “what does the European Union mean to you personally” provides information on whether a respondent views the EU in a positive way, a negative way or both positively and negatively. Each respondent is being offered thirteen meaning items that have a clearly positive or negative connotation. Seven items are positive (peace, economic prosperity, democracy, social protection, freedom to travel, cultural diversity, stronger say in the world) and six items are negative (unemployment, bureaucracy, waste of money, loss of cultural identity, more crime, not enough control at external frontiers).⁴ A respondent can answer that the EU means to her any one of these items or a combination of them, as there is no upper limit to how many items can be chosen. Only 5.7% of respondents mention none of these 13 options. The meaning selected most often is the freedom to travel, study, and work anywhere in the EU. It was selected by 53.5% of the participants of the survey. Among the negative meanings of the EU to respondents, the modal answer was bureaucracy, which was mentioned by 23.3% (more details on the pattern of the answers can be found in appendix B2).

Based on their answers, respondents fall into one of four clearly distinguishable groups: (1) persons who attach none of the 13 labels to the EU, (2) respondents who attach both negative and positive meanings to the EU, (3) individuals for whom the EU only has positive meanings and (4) a group for whom the EU only has negative meanings. I code the first group as indifferent towards the EU. Following the conceptualization of ambivalence as a simultaneous presence of positive and negative considerations on an attitude object, I code group two as

ambivalent towards the EU. The respondents in group three are considered to have positive views about the EU and the respondents in group four are coded as negative about the EU.⁵

Based on this operationalization, the distribution of the dependent variable looks as follows. The EU has an exclusively positive connotation for 38.6% of the respondents and an exclusively negative meaning for 14.7%. The total share of indifferent respondents is 5.7%, while 41.0% are ambivalent. For the majority of ambivalent respondents (58.9%), the EU has three or less positive meanings as well as three or less negative meanings (appendix B1 provides more details on how conflicted ambivalent respondents are).

< Table 2 about here >

Table 2 presents a cross tabulation of the popular EU membership question (“Do you support the EU membership of [your country]?”) and the four categories of my dependent variable. It reveals that the EU membership question would be an imprecise measure for differentiating between citizens with univalent and ambivalent views of the EU. There are respondents that associate the EU with positive and negative characteristics in each of the EU membership answer categories: i.e. among those saying EU membership is “a good thing”, “a bad thing”, “neither/nor”, or “don’t know”. For instance, 37.6 percent of respondents who find the EU membership of their country a bad thing are ambivalent, as well as almost 40 percent of those who find it a good thing. It is also noteworthy that nearly 50% of the respondents who selected the “neither/nor” category on the EU membership question actually have a one sided view on the EU (18.9% are negative and 27.6% are positive).

Independent Variables

Political sophistication is supposed to capture cognitive cue availability on the EU. It has a prominent role in explaining support for European integration and is operationalized in various ways in the literature. Inglehart's early contribution emphasizes the focal point of the concept, namely an individual's political skills (e.g. Inglehart, 1970). He measures political skills using education and objective knowledge questions. American public opinion literature employs objective knowledge questions on political issues as a primary measurement instrument (e.g. Zaller, 1992; Dancey and Goren, 2010). I use objective knowledge to capture political sophistication. Objective knowledge is tapped by four EU related knowledge questions and has the highest value when a respondent answers all questions correctly. Additionally, cue availability on the EU and sophistication is higher among citizens who regularly consume news media (e.g. De Vreese and Boomgaarden, 2006). Hence, I include a variable for news media consumption. The variable is an index based on the frequency with which an individual attends to news on television, on the radio, and in newspapers.

The second hypothesis addresses the effect of party dissensus on European integration. Party dissensus is operationalized using a measure of dispersion. I calculate a mean EU orientation score for each country based on all parties in each member state and use the standard deviations on this mean for a regression analysis. The standard deviation sums up in one figure the dissimilarity of party positions on European integration within each EU country. The Chapel Hill expert survey (Hooghe et al. 2010) provides data on party positions, including party positioning on European

integration. I use the survey version closest to Eurobarometer wave 63.4, i.e. the survey from 2006. In the expert survey data, each party is placed on a scale from one (strongly opposed to European integration) to seven (strongly in favor). The scores from each party are used to calculate country means as well as a standard deviation for each EU member state. Smaller numbers of the standard deviation indicate relative consensus. This data is not available for Cyprus, Malta, and Luxembourg. These countries will be excluded from the analysis.

In my model, feelings of trust and attachment are treated as affective cues. I operationalize these affective measures using items from the Eurobarometer data set, which offers question items that measure trust in the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Council of the EU, and in the Court of Justice. The four items have been combined in an additive index. The data set does not offer a measure tapping identities, which would have allowed me to construct an exclusive/inclusive or dual identity variable as used in previous studies (Hooghe Marks, 2005; Steenbergen and De Vries, 2012). To capture a person's feelings of closeness to Europe, I use a question item that asks respondents how attached they are to Europe with the four response categories "not at all attached", "not very attached", "fairly attached", and "very attached".⁶

Control Variables

Isolating the effect of cognitive and affective cues on ambivalence in regard to someone's views of the EU requires controlling for confounding factors. My model is concerned with ambivalence and indifference, but it also includes the response

categories of a positive and negative notion of the EU. Therefore, I follow the suggestion of Steenbergen and De Vries (2012) regarding the selection of control variables. In their heteroskedastic regression model, they predict univalent and ambivalent attitudes towards the unification of Europe and apply controls derived from the rich literature of public support for European integration.

At the country level, I use net fiscal transfer and membership length (in decades) as control variables. Individuals who live in EU member states that receive funds from the EU budget have been found to be more positive about European integration than citizens in member states that are net-contributors (Andersen and Reichert 1996). Steenbergen and De Vries (2012) associate response variation in support for the unification of Europe with EU membership length.

Economic models of public opinion on European integration suggest that individuals for whom the EU entails more opportunities are more likely to be supporters of the integration process (Gabel and Palmer, 1995; Gabel, 1998). While the EU provides benefits like the free movement of labor and capital to managers, professionals, and wealthy citizens, it involves more risks for other citizens, such as low skilled workers. I control for occupational skills by using dummy variables and calculating an index of possessions as an instrument to capture wealth and income. Additionally, Hooghe and Marks (2005) emphasize that subjective economic prospects matter and they differentiate between prospects for oneself and for one's country. I control for (subjective) national economic prospects and personal economic prospects.

Political orientations play a role for citizens' attitudes towards European integration (Ray, 2003; Steenbergen, Edwards, De Vries, 2007). However, this link is

not straight forward, especially in a model that pools countries from Western, Central, and Eastern Europe. Rather than an alignment of Euroskepticism with one political side, the evidence seems to suggest that it is extreme political positions (on either side) that go along with anti-European positions among parties (Marks et al., 2006). Thus, I use dummies for political orientation, which could capture this kind of alignment. Besides, individuals with extreme left or extreme right political orientations could generally be less ambivalent about politics, which is controlled for through the use of dummies. Almost 20% of the respondents did not report a political orientation. To keep such observations in my analysis, I use a dummy for these individuals as well. I add standard controls from the literature on EU support, namely age, gender, frequency of political discussions, and education.

Summary Statistics

Summary statistics reveal the salient features of the individuals in the four different categories of the dependent variable (for details see Table A1 in the webappendix). Ambivalent Europeans tend to be more similar to those holding a positive view of the EU than to any other group. Ambivalent respondents and those with a positive view of the EU are characterized, for instance, by a higher knowledge on the EU than individuals with negative views on the EU or those who are indifferent. However, ambivalent respondents are distinct from those with a positive view of the EU in terms of affective measures. On average, ambivalent citizens are less attached to Europe and less trustful of EU institutions than their peers who have a positive view of the EU. Indifferent respondents are different from both ambivalent and positive respondents. Indifferent respondents are closer to those with a negative

view on the EU, but generally have less knowledge on the EU and consume less news.

Method

The data for this analysis is structured in two levels, with individuals being nested within countries. Respondents are likely to be more similar within countries than across countries, which can bias standard errors. Several independent variables vary only at the country level. I use a multilevel model in order to get correct standard errors for both individual and country level predictors. Because of the unordered character of the dependent variable, I estimate a multilevel multinomial logit regression model using Stata's `gllamm` routine.

Results

The results reveal an important difference between indifference and ambivalence towards the EU. Cognitive cues decrease indifference, but increase ambivalence. The availability of cognitive cues makes a univalent view of the EU less likely. Affective cues decrease both levels of indifference and ambivalence. A strong positive affect towards the EU makes individuals more likely to be univalently positive about the EU.⁷ To examine these patterns in detail, I first comment on the raw coefficients of the multinomial logit model displayed in Table 3. Then, I turn to predictive probabilities as a more accessible way to interpret the substantive meaning of the findings.

The estimated model explains a significant share of variance in the dependent

variable.⁸ The coefficients in Table 3 refer to a change in the probability that a respondent is in one of the response categories rather than in the reference group, namely ambivalence towards the EU. All independent predictors except the dummy variables are standardized and hierarchically centered. Thus, the coefficients refer to the effect of a standard deviation increase of an independent variable while all other variables are held at their means. For instance, the negative coefficients for elite division indicate that an increase in elite division makes it less likely for a respondent to be negative, positive, or indifferent about the EU and more likely for a respondent to be ambivalent. Specifically, a one-unit increase in elite division on the EU significantly decreases the logistic probability of a respondent being positive about the EU rather than ambivalent by .16 (second column, Table 3) and by .38 for someone to be ambivalent rather than indifferent (third column, Table 3). Hence, this perspective shows whether the gap between an individual being in a respective rather than a reference category increases or decreases. It does not reveal how an increase in an independent variable affects a respondents' (absolute) probability of being in a response category.⁹

Predicted probabilities show how an increase in an independent variable affects the probability for an individual to fall into one of the four categories of the dependent variable. This perspective puts the regression output on a more meaningful scale and therefore offers a more comprehensive evaluation of the effects. Table 4 presents the predicted probabilities that an individual will fall into each of the response categories based on the results from the model displayed in Table 3. For a more intuitive interpretation of the results, I show the marginal effect of a two standard deviation increase in each of the key independent variables. The figures in Table 4 reveal the change in the predicted probabilities resulting from an increase in

an independent variable from one standard deviation below the mean to one standard deviation above the mean when all other variables are held at their means or reference categories. Figures 1 and 2 provide a graphic representation of these effects. The lines on each dot in these figures represent a 95% confidence interval of the effects.

< Table 3 about here >

< Table 4 about here >

Cognitive cues and the difference between ambivalence and indifference

The results from my analysis confirm hypothesis one. Cognitive cues significantly decrease levels of indifference and increase ambivalence about the EU. Figure 1 shows how the effects of EU knowledge, news media consumption, and elite division on indifference and ambivalence support this conclusion.

The figures in Table 4 reveal that the marginal effect of a two standard deviation increase in EU knowledge is a decrease in the predicted probability that a respondent is indifferent about the EU by 55.8%. In contrast, EU knowledge increases the probability that a respondent is ambivalent about the EU by 7.5%. Cognitive cues from the news media have an analogous effect. A two standard deviation increase in news media consumption results in a drop of the probability for someone to be indifferent by 24.3 percent. The effect on the probability for a respondent to be ambivalent is an increase by 6.7 percent. Additionally, news media consumption makes respondents less likely to be positive about the EU. The same increase in news media consumption decreases the predicted probability for someone to be positive about the EU by 4.5 percent.

The results suggest that cognitive cue availability makes it difficult for Europeans to be indifferent towards the EU. However, this opinion does not necessarily need to be one sided. Rather, EU knowledge and news media consumption seem to provide EU citizens with cues that allow them to view the supranational institution from two different perspectives, a positive and a negative one. The data does not support a curvilinear relationship between cue availability and ambivalence.¹⁰

< Figure 1 about here >

The effect of elite division emphasizes the fundamental difference between indifference and ambivalence. Figure 1 reveals that party dissent over European integration significantly decreases levels of indifference and positive views of the EU, while augmenting levels of ambivalence. The predicted probability changes in Table 4 show that a two standard deviation increase in elite division decreases the probability that a respondent is indifferent about the EU by 45.8%. Elite division also increases the probability of an individual being ambivalent by 16.5%. In countries in which party positions on European integration are more differentiated, the probability of a respondent having a positive view of the EU decreases. The theoretical expectation is that differences in party positions translate into a political debate. First, this is presumed to make it easier for citizens to form an opinion on the EU, making indifference less prevalent. Second, party dissent on European integration is assumed to provide individuals with competing cues and is therefore linked to higher levels of ambivalence and lower levels of univalent views on the EU. The analysis supports both explanations, although elite division is apparently more powerful in decreasing indifference than in increasing ambivalence.

In a nutshell, indifference results from a lack of cognitive cues on the EU. Ambivalence appears to result from an abundance of cognitive cues and their conflict with each other. The availability of cognitive cues also makes individuals significantly less likely to have univalent views of the EU. This analysis examined three sources of such cues, namely EU specific knowledge, the news media, and elites. News media consumption and elite division both lead to lower levels of univalently positive views on the EU. This is in line with my theoretical expectation because both the news media and elites, when divided, are likely to provide conflicting cues on the EU to citizens. These results also have an interesting implication for the role of party politicization of EU politics, as politicization apparently increases the involvement of citizens. At the same time, however, politicization might not necessarily increase the public approval of European integration but spread ambivalence instead.

The effect of affective cues

Affective cues, quite in contrast to cognitive cues, decrease not only levels of indifference but also levels of ambivalence. The affective cues I focus on measure the extent of an individual's positive affect towards the EU, namely trust in EU institutions and attachment to the EU. These types of positive affect also decrease negative views of the EU. Specifically, positive affect is the strongest predictor for a univalently positive view of the EU.

Hypothesis three states that trust in EU institutions decreases indifference and ambivalence, while it increases positive views of the EU. The results confirm this expectation. Figure 2 reveals that the marginal effect of a two standard deviation

increase in trust in EU institutions decreases the probability for a respondent to be indifferent about the EU by 44.7 percent. Furthermore, the same increase in trust also significantly reduces the probability of a respondent to be ambivalent about the EU by 10.8 percent.

Trust in EU institutions also has a strong effect on univalent views of the EU. Specifically, it is a strong predictor for a positive view of the EU. A two standard deviation increase in trust results in a 69.4 percent reduction in the probability for an individual to hold a negative view of the EU and an almost 90 percent increase in the probability for a positive view. In short, trust in EU institutions makes individuals less negative about the EU, less indifferent, and also less ambivalent. In turn, high trust in EU institutions is what differentiates individuals with a positive view of the EU from all other respondents.

< Figure 2 about here >

Attachment to Europe provides another affective cue that decreases levels of indifference and ambivalence. It also makes respondents less likely to have a negative view of the EU and much more likely to see the EU positively. Hypothesis four can be confirmed. Figure 2 reveals the similarity of the effect of attachment to Europe with that of trust in EU institutions. The marginal effect of a two standard deviation increase in EU attachment is a drop of the predicted probability for a respondent to be indifferent by 19 percent as well as a reduction of the probability for an individual to be ambivalent by almost four percent. Attachment to Europe measures a positive affect towards the EU. Parallel to the effect of trust, higher levels of attachment are associated with a lower probability for a respondent to view the EU negatively and a

higher probability for a respondent to be positive about it.

The effect of both types of affective cues points to the same conclusion. In particular, attachment to the EU and trust in EU institutions helps to better understand the difference between ambivalent respondents and those with a positive view of the EU. Both of these groups of individuals know more about the EU than citizens who are indifferent or negative about it. However, these individuals differ substantively in their level of affect for the EU. In a nutshell, politically sophisticated citizens who trust EU institutions and are very much attached to Europe tend to have a positive view of the EU, while those who lack such an emotional involvement tend to be ambivalent.

Conclusion

A growing body of literature casts doubt on the assumption that citizens view political issues and objects in an exclusively positive or negative way. I suggest a measure that differentiates among indifference, univalent views, and ambivalence towards the EU using Eurobarometer data to catch a first glimpse of the extent of ambivalence present among Europeans. It shows that a sizeable number of Europeans are ambivalent. The analysis presents a framework that explains ambivalence on the basis of the availability and competition of cognitive and affective cues. The results reveal that cognitive cues, such as those stemming from EU knowledge and news media consumption intensify ambivalence towards the EU. In turn, cognitive cues decrease the probability for citizens to be positive or indifferent. Levels of indifference towards the EU are further diminished and levels of ambivalence are amplified when party positions on European integration differ greatly and competing cognitive cues become available to the public. Affective cues, by contrast, work in a

different way. Trust in EU institutions and an attachment to Europe reduce both indifference and ambivalence towards the EU.

This suggests a critical distinction between ambivalence and indifference. Ambivalent Europeans are highly informed by the news media and knowledgeable about the EU, while indifference results from low levels of knowledge and little understanding of EU politics. Additionally, indifference is at least in part related to low levels of party dissent on European integration, while a strong politicization of European integration and a debate among parties increases the probability for individuals to be ambivalent. The analysis also uncovered a difference between two groups of respondents who share a comparatively high level of political sophistication, namely those who are ambivalent and those who are positive about the EU. Ambivalence is more widespread and univalently positive views are less prevalent where elites are divided over European integration. Additionally, a lack of affective cues sets ambivalent Europeans apart from those with an exclusively positive view. A positive affect towards the EU in particular is one of the strongest catalysts for a univalently positive stance on the EU. Apparently, affect can motivate a firm position. A lack thereof can leave knowledgeable citizens puzzled where to stand in regard to the EU.

The results relate directly to theories of support for European integration. The notion that public opinion on the EU is characterized by a dissensus rather than a permissive consensus is apparently correct (Hooghe and Marks, 2009). However, the constraining dissensus is not one that manifests itself only at the aggregate level. Rather, future theorizing on the opinions of Europeans should recognize that dissensus on European integration exists in many citizens' minds.

The findings of this study have implications for future research on public attitudes towards European integration. In order to develop a precise understanding of the role of ambivalence, we first need better information. I employ a measure for ambivalence that provides only the first insight into the extent of individuals for whom the EU has a simultaneously positive and negative connotation. Research in psychology uses more elaborate tools to capture ambivalence (e.g. Kaplan, 1972; Thompson, Zanna, Griffin, 1995; Cacioppo, Gardner, Berntson, 1997). The model presented in this paper can inform research analyzing how the Euro crisis affects EU public opinion. It underlines the importance of whether citizens perceive elites to be divided. Elite division over solutions to tackle the crisis could be a catalyst for rising levels of ambivalence towards the EU and a shrinking share of outright EU supporters. Given the significance of affective cues for attitudes towards the EU, it is also likely to be critical if the role of the EU in tackling the crisis contributes to higher or lower levels of trust in its institutions. A third route for future research is to analyze the behavioral consequences of ambivalence, for instance when it comes to national referendums on the EU or European Parliament elections. Ambivalent Europeans might be affected most by campaigns since they are more likely to change their opinions and use different heuristics when making voting decisions as compared to their unambivalent peers. It could well be ambivalent EU citizens who tip the scale, for instance, in referendums on EU related issues. Two research questions in this context can be identified at once, namely how ambivalence affects turnout and whether ambivalent Europeans are in fact, as theory suggests, more easily affected by elite cues and flashy arguments.

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Notes

- 1 See Boomgaarden et al. 2011 for a notable exception that emphasizes the multidimensionality of citizens’ attitudes towards European integration. However, the authors focus on the distinctiveness of different dimensions of support instead of ambivalence as an attitude property. Van Ingelgom (2012), on the other hand, concentrates on indifference rather than ambivalence in attitudes towards European integration.
- 2 For a more thorough treatment of the human decision making process, see for example Lau, 2003; Taber, 2003; Fiske and Taylor, 2010.
- 3 The authors provide an advance copy of their manuscript online at http://catherinedevries.eu/content/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=13&Itemid=28
- 4 It would be preferable if the number of positive and negative items were the same. Since this cannot be changed, positive items have a greater probability of being chosen by a respondent. Thus, the figures for a positive view of the EU might be biased slightly upward, while those of a negative view can be biased downward. However, this is expected to have a negligible impact on the focus of the paper, which is ambivalence and indifference towards the EU.
- 5 To counter the argument that ambivalence might only be present if a respondent is torn between more than a single positive and negative consideration, I tested another coding. In another model (online appendix, Table A7), I coded respondents only as ambivalent if the EU has at least two positive and two negative meanings for her. This does not change the main pattern of the effects of cognitive and affective cues on indifference and ambivalence towards the EU.
- 6 Affective cues are measured with items explicitly gauging a respondent’s feelings. The dependent variable is solely measured on the basis of cognitions, namely the meanings a respondent associates the EU with. This ensures that both instruments measure distinct concepts. Nevertheless, I cannot rule out the possibility that a citizens’ level of trust in EU institutions is in part driven by her attitude towards the EU. My conceptualization reflects the notion that feelings are more quickly accessible than cognitions (e.g. Zajonc, 1984), from which it would follow that affective cues are causally prior to an attitudinal stance on the EU (based on cognitions). This mirrors the dominant understanding in the EU public opinion literature according to which trust in

EU institutions as well as an attachment to Europe are predictors for a citizens' attitude towards the EU rather than results of it (e.g. Carey, 2002; Hooghe and Marks, 2005; McLaren, 2007).

- 7 The VIF scores for all independent level variables are below two, indicating that multicollinearity is not a critical issue. The exact figures can be found in the appendix.
- 8 This is confirmed by a likelihood ratio test. The deviance of an intercept only model is 46521.934, while the deviance of the full model is 42115.402.
- 9 The coefficients themselves do not show whether a variable makes an individual more or less likely to be in one of the four categories of the dependent variable. See Borooah (2002: 51) on this point: "...the direction of change in $Pr(Y_i=m)$ the probability of observing outcome $j=m$, for a small change in X_{ir} cannot be inferred from the sign of β . The reason is that in a multinomial a change in the value of a variable for a particular person affects for him or her the probability for *every* outcome (...). Therefore in effect it depends not just upon the sign of β but also upon the size of that coefficient relative to the size of the other coefficients attached to the variable...".
- 10 In order to test for this possibility, I included squared terms of key independent variables in another version of the regression model (not displayed). This did not yield significant effects.

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Table 1. Two dimensional representation of attitudes towards the EU

	Absence of unfavorable thoughts on EU	Presence of unfavorable thoughts on EU
Absence of favorable thoughts on EU	indifferent	negative about EU
Presence of favorable thoughts on EU	positive about EU	ambivalent

Table 2. Cross tabulation of EU membership support and attitude structure.

	<i>EU Membership of [country] is ...</i>				total
	good thing	neither/nor	bad thing	don't know	
indifferent	3.1 (401)	6.8 (509)	6.4 (215)	33.9 (285)	5.7 (1410)
univalent negative	4.7 (619)	18.9 (1408)	43.8 (1482)	17.5 (147)	14.7 (3656)
univalent positive	52.6 (6904)	27.6 (2057)	12.2 (414)	24.0 (202)	38.6 (9577)
ambivalent	39.6 (5194)	46.7 (3485)	37.6 (1272)	24.6 (207)	41.0 (10,158)
	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100
Total	(13,118)	(7459)	(3383)	(841)	(24,801)

All figures are percentages; absolute numbers in parentheses.

Table 3. Results of multinomial logit regression.

Ref.: ambivalent	p(negative)		p(positive)		p(indifferent)	
	Coeff.	SE	Coeff.	SE	Coeff.	SE
Country level variables:						
Elite division	-.06	.05	-.16 ***	.05	-.38 ***	.06
Net fiscal transfer	.16 **	.06	.32 ***	.05	.35 ***	.07
EU membership length	-.07	.05	.03	.05	.13 *	.07
Individual level variables:						
EU knowledge	-.07 **	.02	-.04 *	.02	-.42 ***	.04
Education	-.20 ***	.03	.00	.02	-.24 ***	.05
News media consumption	-.06 *	.02	-.06	.02	-.17 ***	.04
Attachment to Europe	-.23 ***	.02	.14 ***	.02	-.09 *	.04
Trust in EU institutions	-.54 ***	.02	.38 ***	.02	-.24 ***	.04
Frequency discuss politics	-.01	.02	.01	.02	.17 ***	.04
Possessions	-.20 ***	.03	.12 ***	.02	-.33 ***	.04
National econ. prospects	-.06 *	.03	.07 ***	.02	.10 ***	.04
Personal econ. prospects	-.08 **	.03	-.05	.03	.00	.04
Age	.01	.04	-.04	.03	.09	.06
Gender	-.01	.05	-.04	.03	.00	.08
Occup1 (self emp)	-.07	.10	.10	.08	-.26	.19
Occup2 (managers)	-.13	.10	.06	.07	-.44	.20
Occup3 (other white collar)	-.19	.10	.03	.07	-.13	.17
Occup4 (house person)	-.03	.10	.08	.08	.27 *	.14
Occup5 (unemployed)	-.03	.11	.01	.08	-.25	.18
Occup6 (blue collar)	.10	.08	.01	.13	-.09	.13
Occup7 (students)	-.43	.16	.27 **	0.21	.07	.24
Polor1 (left)	.22	.09	.28 ***	.07	.08	.15
Polor2	-.17	.07	.08	.05	-.12	.11
Polor4	.02	.07	.03	0.05	-.32 *	.13
Polor5 (right)	.24	.09	.12	.07	.04	.16
Polor6 (NA)	.27	.07	.30 ***	.05	.55 ***	.10
Constant	-1.38	.08	-0.32 ***	0.07	-2.60 ***	0.12
-2*Log Likelihood						
N level 2		42,115.402		22		
N level 1		20,782		20,782		

Multilevel multinomial logit regression. Dependent variable reference category: ambivalence; independent variable reference categories: women, retirees. Independent variables (except dummies) hierarchically standardized.

Table 4. The effect of five independent variables on predicted probabilities.

	p(indifferent)				p(ambivalent)				p(positive)				p(negative)			
	-1sd	+1sd	Δ (SE)	Δ %	-1sd	+1sd	Δ (SE)	Δ %	-1sd	+1sd	Δ (SE)	Δ %	-1sd	+1sd	Δ (SE)	Δ %
<i>Cognitive Cues</i>																
Knowledge	0.050	0.023	-0.027* (0.003)	-53.6	0.470	0.506	0.035* (0.008)	7.5	0.353	0.352	0.000 (0.014)	-0.3	0.126	0.118	-0.008 (0.005)	-6.4
News media consumption	0.039	0.030	-0.010* (0.002)	-24.3	0.473	0.505	0.032* (0.008)	6.7	0.362	0.345	-0.017* (0.008)	-4.5	0.125	0.120	-0.006 (0.005)	-4.5
Elite division	0.046	0.025	-0.021* (0.003)	-45.8	0.451	0.526	0.075* (0.022)	16.5	0.382	0.324	-0.058* (0.016)	-15.2	0.120	0.125	0.005 (0.007)	4.0
<i>Affective Cues</i>																
EU Trust	0.044	0.024	-0.020* (0.003)	-44.7	0.497	0.443	-0.054* (0.008)	-10.8	0.246	0.467	0.221* (0.008)	89.8	0.213	0.065	-0.148* (0.005)	-69.4
EU attachment	0.038	0.031	-0.007* (0.003)	-19.0	0.495	0.477	-0.019* (0.008)	-3.7	0.310	0.397	-0.019* (0.008)	28.0	0.156	0.095	-0.061* (0.005)	-39.2

* p < 0.05: -1sd and +1sd: figures refer to predicted probabilities for a respondent to be in the respective categories when independent variable of interest is set to 1 standard deviation below its mean or 1 standard deviation above its mean and when all other variables are held at their means or reference categories; Δ and (SE): change in percentage points and standard error on this change in parentheses; Δ %: change in the predicted probabilities in percent (these figures are also shown in the rope ladder plots).

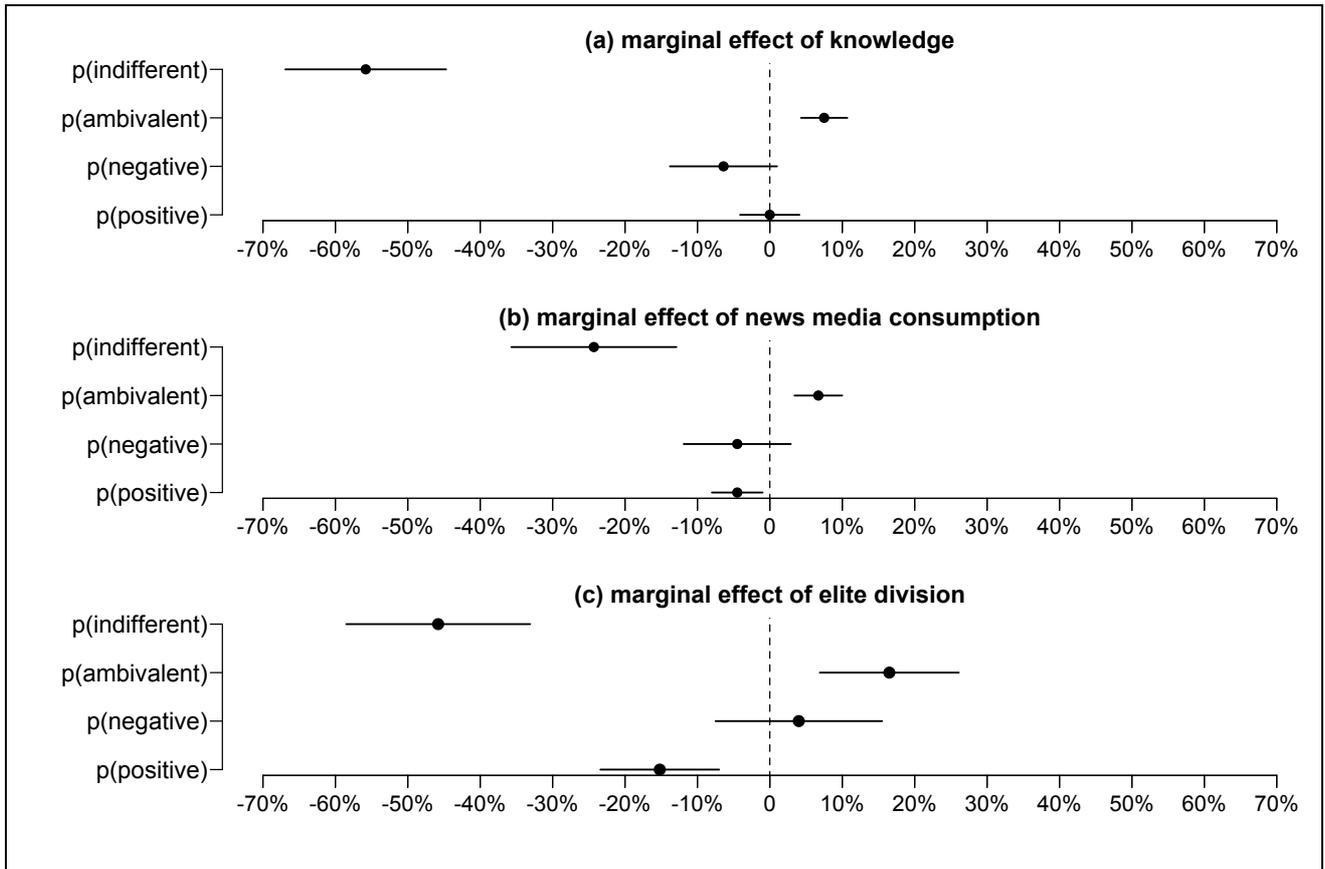


Figure 1. Effect of a change from one standard deviation below the mean to one standard deviation above the mean of three independent variables of interest on the predicted probabilities that a respondent is in each of the categories when all other variables are held at their means. The lines indicate the 95 % confidence interval.

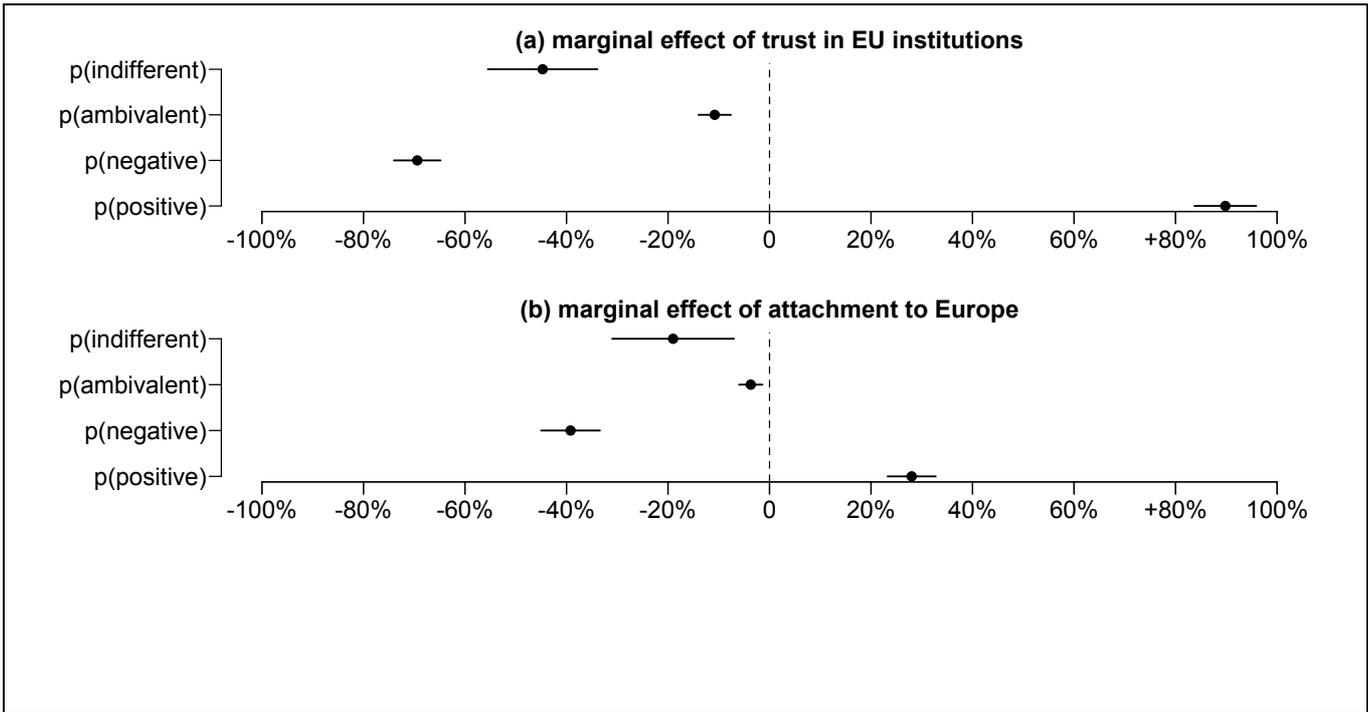


Figure 2. Effect of a change from one standard deviation below the mean to one standard deviation above the mean of two independent variables on the predicted probabilities that a respondent is in each of the categories when all other variables are held at their means. The lines indicate the 95 % confidence interval.

Web Appendix

Table A1. Distribution of respondents for EU meaning questions.

Meaning item	Mentioned by (total N= 24801)	in percent
Positive meanings:		
Freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the European Union	13,275	53.53
Peace	8789	35.44
Stronger say in the world	6779	27.33
Cultural diversity	6540	26.37
Economic Prosperity	5983	24.12
Democracy	5731	23.11
Social protection	3479	14.03
Negative meanings		
Bureaucracy	5772	23.27
Waste of money	4975	20.06
More crime	4899	19.75
Unemployment	4590	18.51
Not enough control at external frontiers	4537	18.29
Loss of our cultural identity	3215	12.96
Note: Respondents were free to choose as many meanings as they wanted. Presentation: most often mentioned meaning to least often mentioned one. Order was rotated for respondents during the telephone surveys.		

Table A2. Cross tabulation of the number of positive and negative meanings that the EU has for respondents of Eurobarometer 63.4.

		Number of negative meanings of EU to respondents							
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	<i>total</i>
Number of positive meanings of EU to respondents	0	5.7 (1410)	5.1 (1253)	4.5 (1108)	3.0 (748)	1.3 (314)	0.6 (146)	0.4 (87)	5066 20.4
	1	10.4 (2588)	5.9 (1460)	4.0 (980)	1.9 (469)	0.8 (204)	0.3 (82)	0.1 (32)	23.5 (5815)
	2	10.8 (2682)	6.0 (1491)	2.9 (709)	1.3 (330)	0.6 (157)	0.3 (70)	0.1 (26)	22.0 (5465)
	3	9.0 (2230)	3.5 (879)	1.7 (433)	0.9 (221)	0.4 (103)	0.3 (66)	0.1 (24)	16.0 (3956)
	4	4.3 (1055)	2.0 (504)	1.2 (291)	0.5 (136)	0.3 (74)	0.2 (47)	0.1 (13)	8.6 (2120)
	5	2.3 (574)	1.1 (271)	0.7 (186)	0.5 (129)	0.3 (70)	0.2 (41)	0.1 (13)	5.2 (1284)
	6	1.0 (246)	0.6 (138)	0.4 (106)	0.2 (48)	0.1 (37)	0.1 (21)	0.0 (6)	2.4 (602)
	7	0.8 (202)	0.4 (102)	0.3 (67)	0.2 (55)	0.1 (37)	0.1 (13)	0.1 (17)	2.0 (493)
<i>total</i>	44.3 (10987)	24.6 (6098)	15.6 (3880)	8.6 (2136)	4.0 (996)	2.0 (486)	0.9 (218)	100 24801	

Table A3. Means of key independent variables in the four categories of the dependent variable.

variable	Indifferent	Negative	Positive	Ambivalent
EU knowledge (1-4)	1.00 (1.11)	1.56 (1.14)	1.89 (1.17)	1.90 (1.15)
Education (1-10)	3.74 (2.87)	4.36 (2.78)	5.73 (3.04)	5.82 (2.94)
News media consumption (0-1)	.62 (.27)	.71 (.24)	.71 (.23)	.75 (.22)
Trust in EU institutions (0-8)	3.96 (2.52)	2.94 (2.90)	6.10 (2.46)	4.96 (2.83)
EU attachment (1-4)	2.50 (.98)	2.42 (.95)	2.98 (.83)	2.82 (.85)
Discuss politics (1-4)	3.10 (.97)	2.75 (1.00)	2.60 (.97)	2.59 (.96)
Pol. left-right orientation (1-10)	5.17 (2.19)	5.29 (2.23)	5.36 (2.17)	5.36 (2.04)
Age (15-97)	54.40 (20.03)	51.49 (17.76)	45.21 (18.54)	46.7 (17.31)
Possessions (0-6)	2.71 (1.80)	3.25 (1.85)	3.77 (1.86)	4.15 (1.76)

Table A4. Variable Descriptions

Variable	Construction and Source
<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
Attitude towards the EU	<p>Based on answers to the following question: What does the European Union mean to you personally? [Answer options read out to respondent; rotation from top to bottom/bottom to top, 7 positive items: peace, economic prosperity, democracy, social protection, freedom to travel, cultural diversity, stronger say in the world, 6 negative items: unemployment, bureaucracy, waste of money, loss of cultural identity, more crime, not enough control at external frontiers] (Source: EB 64.3 QA 12)</p> <p>Indifferent = EU has no meaning to respondent at all positive = EU has only positive meanings to respondent negative = EU has only negative meanings to respondent Ambivalent= EU has positive and negative meanings to respondent</p>
<i>Country level variables:</i>	
Elite division	<p>For each country, I calculate the standard deviation of the overall orientations of parties towards European integration. Then, I rescaled this variable to have a range from zero to one.</p> <p>(Source: Chapel Hill party expert survey 2006)</p>
Net fiscal transfer	<p>Net EU fiscal transfer: average of 2004 and 2005 and as percentage of Gross National Income (GNI), (Source: EU budget 2010 – Financial Report, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2011)</p>
EU membership length	EU membership length in decades
<i>Individual level variables:</i>	
EU knowledge	<p>For each of the following statements about the European Union could you please tell me whether you think it is true or false? (Source: EB 64.3 QA24)</p> <p>_1: The European Union currently consists of fifteen member states _2: The members of the European Parliament are directly elected by the citizens of the European Union _3: The European Union has its own anthem _4: The last European elections took place in June 2002 0= if no question was answered correctly, 5= if all questions were answered correctly</p>
Education	<p>How old were you when you stopped full-time education? (Source: EB 64.3 D8) Recoded: 1= 14 years, 9 = 22 years and older, 10= still studying</p>

News media consumption	Additive index based on the following three items: About how often do you...? [every day, several times a week, once or twice a week, less often, never, DK] (Source: EB 64.3 QA 17) _1: Watch television news programs _2: Read the news in daily newspapers _3: Listen to radio news programs
Attachment to Europe	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 Europe. (Source: EB 64.3 QA 35) Very attached, fairly attached, not very attached, not at all attached, DK (excluded)
Trust in EU institutions	Additive index based on the following three items: And, for each of them, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it? [tend to trust=2, tend not to trust=0, DK=1] (Source: QA23) _1: The European Parliament _2: The European Commission _3: The Council of the European Union _4: The Court of Justice of the European Communities
Frequency discuss politics	When you get together with friends, would you say you convince friends often, from time to time, rarely or never? (Source: EB 64.3 QA1)
Possessions	Which of the following goods do you have? (TV; DVD player; CD player; Computer; Internet access; a car; an apartment/house which you have finished paying for; an apartment/house which you are paying for; DK) (Source: EB 64.3 D46)
National econ. prospects	What are your expectations for the next twelve months: will the next twelve months be better, worse or the same, when it comes to the economic situation in (COUNTRY) ? [better=2, worse=0, the same=1] (Source: EB 64.3 QA4_2)
Personal prospects	What are your expectations for the next twelve months: will the next twelve months be better, worse or the same, when it comes to the financial situation of your household? [better=2, worse=0, the same=1](Source: EB 64.3 QA4_1)
Age	Age in years (Source: EB 64.3 D41)
Gender	Male = 0, Female = 1 (Source: EB 64.3 D10)
Occupation	Did you do any paid work in the past? What was your last occupation? (Self employed, managers, other white collar, house person, manual worker, unemployed, retired, students) (Source: EB 64.3 D15)
Political Orientation	In political matters people talk of "the left" and "the right". How would you place your views on this scale? 1=left, 10=right (Source EB 64.3 D1)

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Table A5. Summary Statistics

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	SD	N
<i>Dependent variable:</i>					
Attitude towards the EU	categorical variable, see Table 2 for distribution				
<i>Country level variables:</i>					
Elite division	0.5	2.42	1.55	0.50	22
Net fiscal transfer	-0.46	2.2	0.51	0.85	25
EU membership length	0	5	2.02	1.96	25
<i>Individual level variables:</i>					
EU knowledge	0	4	1.79	1.18	24801
Education	1	10	5.46	3.02	24801
News media consumption	1	5	2.11	0.94	24708
Attachment to Europe	1	4	2.81	0.89	24297
Trust in EU institutions	0	8	5.03	2.89	24801
Frequency discuss politics	1	4	2.64	0.98	24665
Possessions	0	6	3.80	1.86	24801
National econ. prospects	0	2	0.85	0.74	23373
Personal prospects	0	2	1.06	0.65	24192
Age	15	97	47.27	18.22	24791
Gender	0	1	0.56	0.50	24801
Occupation: self employed	0	1	0.75	0.26	24801
Occupation: managers	0	1	0.11	0.31	24801
Occupation: other white coll.	0	1	0.11	0.31	24801
Occupation: manual worker	0	1	0.19	0.39	24801
Occupation: house person	0	1	0.09	0.29	24801
Occupation: unemployed	0	1	0.06	0.24	24801
Occupation: retired	0	1	0.27	0.44	24801
Occupation: students	0	1	0.09	0.29	24801
Pol. Orientation (very left)	0	1	0.07	0.25	24801
Pol. Orientation (left)	0	1	0.18	0.38	24801
Pol. Orientation (middle)	0	1	0.35	0.48	24801
Pol. Orientation (right)	0	1	0.16	0.37	24801
Pol. Orientation (very right)	0	1	0.06	0.24	24801
Pol. Orientation (No Answer)	0	1	0.18	0.38	24801

Note: This table shows the range and summary statistics of the variables before they were hierarchically centered and standardized.

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Table A6. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) scores for individual level independent variables.

Variable	VIF
EU knowledge	1.10
Education	1.73
News media consumption	1.14
Attachment to Europe	1.11
Trust in EU institutions	1.16
Frequency discuss politics	1.08
Possessions	1.50
National econ. prospects	1.24
Personal prospects	1.09

Web Appendix. Table A7. Results of model with alternative coding: Respondents are coded as ambivalent only when they mention at least 2 positive and negative evaluations on the EU. Respondents who mention nothing or only one evaluation from each side are considered indifferent in this robustness check. All other respondents are coded as either positive about the EU or negative about the EU. The Table shows the effect of five independent variables on predicted probabilities as in Table 5.

	p(indifferent)				p(ambivalent)				p(positive)				p(negative)			
	-1sd	+1sd	Δ (SE)	Δ %	-1sd	+1sd	Δ (SE)	Δ %	-1sd	+1sd	Δ (SE)	Δ %	-1sd	+1sd	Δ (SE)	Δ %
<i>Cognitive Cues</i>																
Knowledge	.137	.095	-.042* (.005)	-30.5	.135	.156	.021* (.005)	15.8	.513	.543	.030* (.008)	5.8	.215	.206	-.009 (.006)	-4.2
News media consumption	0.123	0.106	-0.017* (0.005)	-13.7	.136	.155	.018* (.006)	13.5	.531	.527	-.004 (.008)	-7	.210	.212	.002 (.006)	1.1
Elite division	.094	.137	-.043* (.006)	-31.4	.119	.175	.056* (.026)	47.1	.545	.508	-.038* (.017)	-6.9	.198	.223	.025* (.009)	12.5
<i>Affective Cues</i>																
EU Trust	.137	.085	-.052* (.005)	-38.0	.150	.126	-.023* (.005)	-15.6	.372	.672	.300* (.015)	80.5	.341	.117	-.224* (.006)	-65.8
EU attachment	.124	.104	-.020* (.005)	-16.0	.144	.145	.001 (.005)	.9	.473	.583	.110* (.008)	23.3	.260	.168	-.092* (.006)	-35.3

* p < 0.05; -1sd and +1sd: figures refer to predicted probabilities for a respondent to be in the respective categories when independent variable of interest is set to 1 standard deviation below its mean or 1 standard deviation above its mean and when all other variables are held at their means or reference categories; Δ and (SE): change in percentage points and standard error on this change in parentheses; Δ%: change in the predicted probabilities in percent (these figures are also shown in the rope ladder plots).