

The Direct Electoral Connection in the European Union

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Abstract

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The European Union is often criticized for having a democratic deficit, and most often cited are the shortcomings in citizen inputs. The complex institutional structure, in particular the dual channel of representation (supranational and intergovernmental), contributes to these concerns. This thesis thus examines what impacts the linkage between citizens and their elected representatives in the direct channel of representation. I refer to this linkage as the “electoral connection” and outline three related input criteria:

- 1) *Competent Citizens*: Citizens can competently assign policy responsibility and hold their representatives to account;
- 2) *Meaningful Choices*: Citizens have meaningful choices at election time; and
- 3) *Substantive Representation*: Elected officials are representative of their constituents.

The theoretical framework of the electoral connection is based in substantive representation, and focuses on the mandate conception of representation but also includes a discussion of accountability. I utilize European Election Studies (EES) voter, media, and candidate studies from 2009, EES voter and candidate studies from 1994, and a novel expert survey on EU responsibility (2010). The analyses of responsibility attributions and vote choice are conducted using multilevel modeling to assess individual- and contextual-level determinants.

I test the effect that information and political attitudes, specifically extreme attitudes have on the first two criteria of the direct electoral connection. The role of information is tested at the individual level through political sophistication, and at the contextual level through the politicization of the EU issue. The first criterion is tested by comparing citizen and expert attributions of responsibility. For the second criterion, two chapters which examine perceived party positions and issue-cross pressure assess how this impacts the electoral connection. The final empirical chapter is a descriptive analysis of congruence on policy priorities and preference for governmental responsibility to assess substantive representation. If there is some understanding of responsibility, and citizens have selected parties that align with their preferred policy positions, then we should expect government to be representative of its constituents.

One contribution is defining an expanded definition of the electoral connection. In addition I show that political sophistication and issue politicization have a positive impact on the electoral connection, while attitude extremity generally has a negative impact. Furthermore, the European Parliament is quite representative of its constituents. Concerns about democratic deficit and lack of representation in the European Union are overstated.

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1

Introduction

- 1. The functioning of the Union shall be founded on representative democracy.*
- 2. Citizens are directly represented at Union level in the European Parliament. Member States are represented in the European Council by their Heads of State or Government and in the Council by their governments, themselves democratically accountable either to their national Parliaments, or to their citizens.*
- 3. Every citizen shall have the right to participate in the democratic life of the Union. Decisions shall be taken as openly and as closely as possible to the citizen.*
- 4. Political parties at European level contribute to forming European political awareness and to expressing the will of citizens of the Union.*

Treaty of Lisbon
Article 8 A

The Treaty of Lisbon clearly defines the standard for electoral democracy in the European Union (EU): That it is a representative democracy with citizens being directly represented by European Parliament (EP) and indirectly through their national governments, that every citizen has the opportunity to participate in the EU's democracy, and that political parties at the European level express the will of European citizens, with decisions being made openly and as close to the citizen as possible. This is quite a high bar to achieve for any government, but particularly for such a complex governance structure as the EU. The Preamble summarizes the objectives of the Lisbon Treaty as: "enhancing the efficiency

and democratic legitimacy of the Union and to improving the coherence of its action”. The renewed focus on the direct channel of representation as a means of increasing democratic legitimacy of the EU motivates the overarching research question of this thesis: *what impacts the direct electoral connection in the European Union?*

To address this question, I specify a model of the electoral connection as a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for democratic legitimacy. I then test a number of propositions about what impacts the direct electoral connection, focusing on the mandate perspective of substantive representation. The empirical chapters will answer the following sub-questions: Under what conditions are European citizens able to correctly differentiate responsibility between levels of national and supranational government? Does the electoral supply match the electorate demand in European elections, and how do voters choose when it does not? Finally, how well do European Parliament elites represent their constituents? This introductory chapter will put the research question in the context of the possible democratic deficit in the EU and end of the permissive consensus, define the electoral connection, and highlight the contributions made by this thesis.

Multilevel Governance and the Democratic Deficit in the EU

The European Union, as an evolving intergovernmental and supranational institution, adds a level of governance and policy complexity above national governments. The EU has become more like a federal government system, sharing responsibility for policy areas between the European and national levels. A goal of federalism is to increase democratic representation by dividing policy-making power between levels of government; issues most relevant to everyday life are often handled by a sub-national government located closer to the citizen so that their preferences are best

represented. The European Union, however, was not created as a federal system but rather as an economic community. Over time, it has evolved into a federal-like system as it has gained increasing levels of power. Unlike typical federal governments, rather than shifting policy-making responsibility closer to the citizen, in the EU responsibility is moved to a layer farther above the citizen at the same time it is shared among Member States. Therefore the European Union's policy responsibilities and European Parliament (EP) are often seen by citizens as far removed from and irrelevant to their daily lives.

Nevertheless, the European Union represents over 500 million people in 28 member countries. In the EU, citizens are doubly represented. First, they are represented indirectly by officials and leaders from their national governments, acting in the European Council, which is comprised of each country's head of state or government, and the Council of the European Union, made up of national ministers. This is referred to as the intergovernmental channel. These national officials acting at the European level are accountable to their citizens through regular national elections. Second, citizens are directly represented through a supranational channel by the European Parliament.

Since 1979, direct elections to European Parliament have taken place every five years through universal adult suffrage. Each country's allocation of seats is based on a system of digressive proportionality as set out in the European treaties, which differs from strict proportionality in that smaller member states have more representatives than they would otherwise. Member states must structure their elections in line with common rules around the voting system, which are currently that:

- the elections take place during the same period of time across the EU, although individual countries may select the day(s) within this timeframe
- elections are made through proportional representation, but the methods used may differ (for example, open or closed party list, single transferable vote)

- the constituency unit may be at a regional or national level so long as this does not affect the proportional nature of the election
- an election threshold at the national level must not exceed five percent of the vote

These regulations help to ensure a similar process in each country, and that the results are representative of the voters. While there have been direct elections to the European Parliament for over 30 years, European integration began as elite-driven process, and for most of its history the public had little interest in its seemingly technical and irrelevant proceedings (Inglehart, 1971). Dubbed “the permissive consensus”, public opinion was generally positive or neutral towards the European project, and leaders were free to pursue unification. As integration proceeded more rapidly following the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 and launch of the Single Market on 1 January 1993, we have witnessed increasing contention over European integration, signaling the end of the permissive consensus (Hooghe and Marks, 2009; Carrubba, 2001). Citizens desire more say into European policy making and wish for their views to be represented at both the national and European levels. Indeed, individuals’ attitudes towards and preferences about European have been shown to impact party choice in national elections (de Vries, 2007).

At the same time the permissive consensus has declined, concerns about a democratic deficit in the EU have arisen. One of the major arguments in European politics is about the democratic legitimacy of the European Union, in particular whether or not a democratic deficit exists (Follesdal and Hix, 2006; Majone, 1998; Moravcsik, 2002; Bellamy, 2010). The debate about a potential democratic deficit is often framed in

systems theory¹, focusing on trust in institutions, including *inputs* (citizen participation, or “government *by* the people”), *outputs* (policy outcomes, or “government *for* the people”) (Scharpf, 1997, 2003), and more recently, “throughputs” (policy-making process) (Schmidt, 2013). A weakness in one area does not necessarily ruin an institution’s legitimacy; another area may make up for it to improve legitimacy and decrease any potential democratic deficit. Those who argue that the EU does not face a democratic deficit often cite its policy outputs which serve the general good of the European people, or compare the technocratic proceedings of the EU with those taken by non-democratic national institutions to argue for the existence of output legitimacy (Majone, 1998; Moravcsik, 2002),

Where the European Union is most often criticized for its deficiencies is in input-oriented structures. Indeed some have argued that the EU in its present state cannot be democratically legitimate because it is lacking in majoritarian institutions as well as a collective European identity (Scharpf, 1999; Bellamy, 2010). Furthermore, the low levels of turnout in EP elections are frequently cited as evidence of a democratic deficit, and other input deficiencies are “obvious enough” (Scharpf, 1997, p.19):

there are as yet no European political parties, no European political leaders and no European-wide media of political communication. As a consequence, we also have no European-wide public controversies and debates on political issues and policy choices, and we have no European-wide competition for government offices that could assure democratic accountability.

¹ Easton (1965) popularized the use of systems analysis in political science. Systems theory refers to the conceptual framework used to investigate the interrelationships and overlap between separate disciplines (Bertalanffy, 1968). While originally applied to problems within the natural sciences, the terminology and framework are often used for investigating complexities in the social sciences as well. A simple system theory contains an input, throughput, and output with a feedback loop, all situated within an environment.

The Treaty of Lisbon has sought to increase the EU's democratic credentials in particular by focusing on the input aspect and granting more responsibility to the only directly-elected European body, the European Parliament, as well as increased rights and powers to national parliaments (Mayoral, 2011). While European elections result in the formation of a parliament where parties are seated according to their political grouping, rather than nationality, the EP differs from national parliamentary systems in several important ways. The EP does not form a government, and the institutional setup would seem to give MEPs little incentive to be responsive to voters. In particular, these aspects of the European Union do not lend themselves to traditional forms of democratic accountability, as mentioned in the quote above and often assumed to be a prerequisite for democratic legitimacy. Specifically, the Commission is not a government formed by the parliament, therefore the citizens' representatives, or MEPs, do not determine the makeup of the executive branch. Second, while the European Parliament has authority to be a co-legislator and decision maker with the Council of the European Union on a majority of issues, in some cases it is granted only a consultative role. Third, the EP is not empowered to initiate legislation; however it can review the Commission's annual program of work and ask the Commission to present certain legislative proposals. Due to shared policy-making responsibility with other EU institutions, there is little threat of electoral sanction in the European Parliament based on MEP actions.

While it is commonly argued that this separation of government and parliament in the EU creates a democratic deficit, recent work has argued that this division actually allows for more "robust" representation as the EP can serve as an independent scrutinizing agency on the Commission and focus on representing European citizens. "This present situation may be seen as a blessing in disguise, in that it offers no incentive to the Commission to seek to control the majority in Parliament and it gives the

parliamentary groups ample leeway to focus on the task of representing the European people.” (Mair and Thomassen, 2010, p31). Furthermore, while it is true that political parties do not organize themselves at the European level, but rather at the national, this does not necessarily indicate an input deficit or that the EP cannot represent European citizens appropriately. The end of the permissive consensus and concerns about potential input deficits have put into question the democratic legitimacy of the European Union. However, amidst all the institutional and multi-country complexity of the EU, there is an electoral connection between citizens and their elected representatives. Moreover, this electoral connection exists at both the national and supranational level. Analyzing what factors positively or negatively impact the direct electoral connection will contribute to ongoing debate about democratic legitimacy in the EU.

What is the Electoral Connection?

The term “electoral connection” in political science is most often viewed in terms of candidate-centered politics in places such as the United States, where legislators may be considered “single-minded seekers of reelection” (Mayhew, 1974; 2004). Mayhew’s conception of the electoral connection has four conditions (Carson and Jenkin 2011): ambition, autonomy, responsiveness, and accountability which focus on the representative’s individualistic actions to ensure their own re-election. The party-centered politics of most European countries, in contrast, limits the personal vote seeking behavior of candidates and incumbents, and Mayhew’s framework of the electoral connection is not the most appropriate one to use. In limited situations where it has been utilized to analyze the European Parliament, it has been argued that:

The connection between MEPs and their voters is extraordinarily weak. It is well documented that elections to the European Parliament are not run

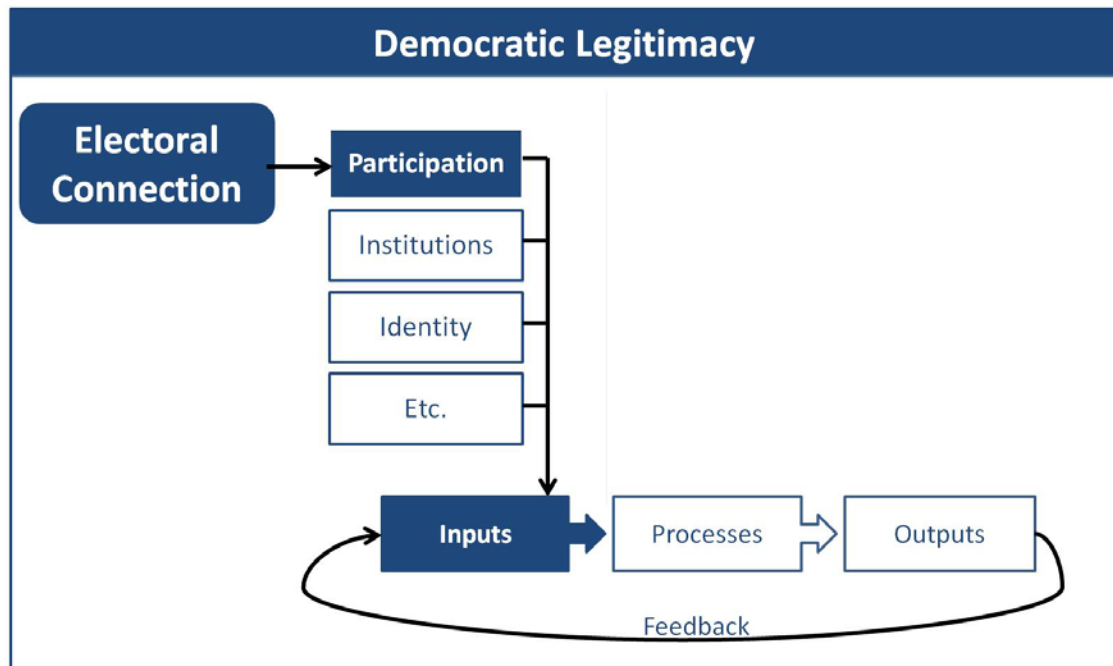
on the basis of European issues but are best interpreted as classic ‘second-order elections’ ... Knowledge of the activity of political groups and their members is negligible among the citizenry of Europe... election-centered legislative behavior is clearly not an optimal assumption for legislative scholars in the EP. (McElroy, 2006, p.177)

Viewed in this way, yes, it would seem that the electoral connection in the European Union is weak. However, this conception of an electoral connection is too narrow. Carrubba (2001) takes a slightly more positive view of the electoral connection in his analysis of how elite positions are influenced by electoral pressure. In contrast to these previous studies, in this thesis I do not utilize the candidate-centered framework, but rather return to the core concept of an “electoral connection”, a definition that could pertain to any representative government:

The electoral connection is the linkage between citizens and their elected representatives and is at the heart of representative democracy.

This definition is intentionally general, because there are many ways that an electoral connection could exist between citizens and elected officials. Recall from above that democratic legitimacy can be viewed in terms of inputs, processes, and outputs. The electoral connection is associated with democratic “inputs” and is therefore a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for democratic legitimacy. A simplified representation of its situation in relation to democratic legitimacy is in Figure 1.1. This figure is basic and is meant to help visually situate the role of the electoral connection as a system input, one of many contributions toward democratic legitimacy.

Figure 1.1: The Role of the Electoral Connection in Democratic Legitimacy

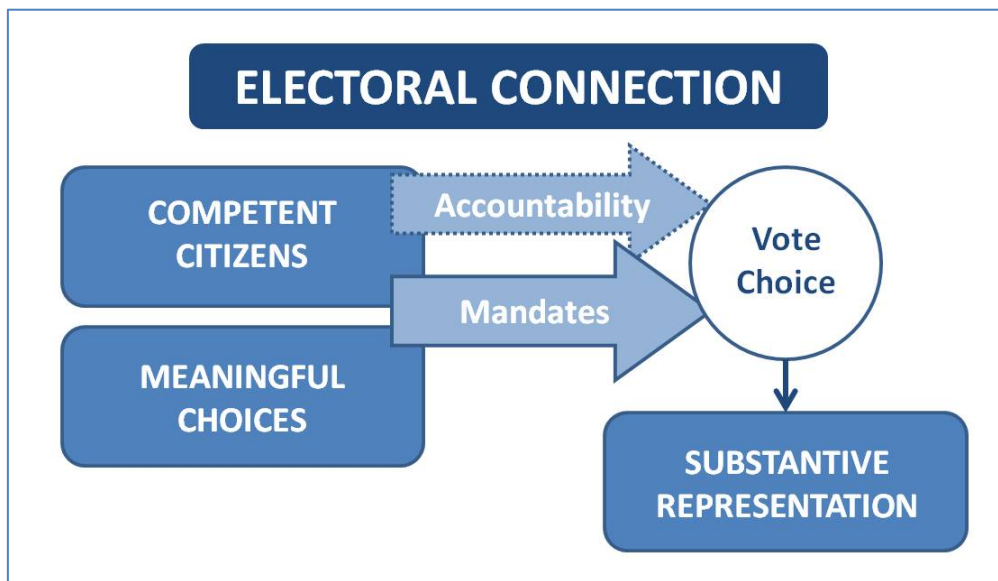


Note: Dark boxes represent the link between the electoral connection and democratic legitimacy.

The electoral connection relates to participation and is a system input. Now let us examine more closely what makes up the electoral connection. I define three interrelated institutional inputs which together contribute to linking citizens and their elected representatives, as shown in Figure 1.2:

- 1) **Competent Citizens:** Citizens can competently assign policy responsibility and hold their representatives to account;
- 2) **Meaningful Choices:** Citizens have meaningful choices at election time; and
- 3) **Substantive Representation:** Elected officials are representative of their constituents.

Figure 1.2: The Electoral Connection



Note: The electoral connection has both an accountability and mandate link that influence vote choice, which then leads to possible substantive representation. Please see the text for a detailed overview.

Each criterion of citizen competence, meaningful choices, and substantive representation is one aspect of the electoral connection, and the more that are fulfilled, the stronger the link between citizens and their representatives. Again, the electoral connection is one set of system inputs related to citizen participation. Other potential inputs include, but are not limited to, the system of political communication, media debate, and collective identity. These latter inputs will not be examined in the thesis and as already stated, they are generally seen to be lacking at the European level and this contributes to concerns about a democratic deficit. However, I argue that while these other inputs may enhance the electoral connection, they are not required. There can still be an electoral connection even if there are not, for example, European parties or demos per se.

The challenge and opportunity in European Union politics is that there are two channels of representation through which an electoral connection may exist: direct

(supranational) and indirect (intergovernmental) as discussed above. It is important that an electoral connection is present through both channels for the European institutions to be viewed as legitimate.

It cannot be ignored that the electoral connection via the intergovernmental channel is necessary for democratic legitimacy in the European Union. One must keep in mind that European integration may impact national parliaments and vice versa, and that national actors may be held accountable for their positions on European integration or for their performance in the European arena (Winzen, 2010; de Vries, 2007, 2010). As the permissive consensus declines and public contestation over European issues increases, the indirect channel of representation in the EU becomes ever more significant to ensure that citizens' preferences are reflected by national actors at the European level. Furthermore, national parliaments have received increased rights and powers through the Treaty of Lisbon, in particular the right to request information directly from EU institutions, the right to raise objections to EU proposals for reasons of subsidiarity, and additional participation rights (Mayoral, 2011).² In addition, each member state's national parliament has a European Affairs Committees which ensures further democratic scrutiny of EU policy. Thus there are many opportunities for the EU's indirect electoral connection between citizens and their national governments. While appreciating this aspect, I also acknowledge that any research program must necessarily set boundaries of inquiry. I now set it aside the issue of the indirect link and focus on the supranational channel of representation in the EU to analyze factors impacting the direct electoral connection in the European Union.

² These rights are documented as follows: subsidiarity (art. 5 and Protocol 2), and participation rights (article 12 TEU and Protocol no. 1 on the role of national parliaments in the EU and Protocol no. 2 on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality) (Mayoral, 2011, p7).

I choose to concentrate on the supranational aspect of the electoral connection as it is important to advance our understanding of democratic legitimacy in the European Union. Many of the arguments supporting the existence of a democratic deficit in the EU cite as evidence shortcomings in input-oriented aspects of the direct channel of representation. Therefore, it is crucial to select and examine key inputs to have a better understanding of what impacts the electoral connection in the European Union. Throughout this thesis I will often refer to the electoral connection through the direct channel of representation in the European Union simply as “the electoral connection”. This is to keep the term succinct; however, it must be kept in mind that just as there are dual channels of representation in the EU, there are dual electoral connections possible. What I refer to throughout as “the” electoral connection is one possibility for an electoral connection in the EU.

The next chapter will develop the theoretical framework of the electoral connection and identify the key variables that will be tested. Specifically, I will focus on the role of political sophistication, attitude extremity, and issue politicization as important factors influencing the electoral connection. In the remainder of this chapter I will outline contributions of this thesis and preview the research questions and findings from each chapter. This thesis represents an ambitious attempt to assess how certain factors enhance or diminish the direct electoral connection in the EU by examining each of the above criteria in turn. Linking broad literatures on electoral democracy, European elections, and representation, the empirical analyses unpack individual-level attitudes and behavior while taking into account country-level factors to assess how they impact the direct electoral connection in the EU.

It is important to keep in mind that each of the three criteria of the electoral connection could be operationalized in a number of ways. For each, I must necessarily

specify one aspect to analyze. Of course, there are different research questions, levels of analysis, and methods that could be used to assess each input: individual voters and representatives, party systems, national aggregates, party manifestos, etc. However, I have chosen to focus on electoral behavior at the individual level and preferences at the aggregate level to analyze these questions. I believe this approach and the research sub-questions that I will now define are a fruitful way to combine and move forward different aspects of the literature, and to have a more holistic understanding of the direct electoral connection and representation in the EU.

While the goal of this thesis is not to explicitly measure or assess the quality of the electoral connection, it is still appropriate to ask how could the electoral connection through the direct channel of representation in the European Union be assessed. As discussed above, there are many debates about the democratic legitimacy and potential deficits in the European Union. The EU is held to a high standard, but is the bar too high? The EU, while lofty in its goals and ideals, should be held to a democratic standard, but not one that is higher than well-functioning national governments. Therefore any attempt to assess the quality of EU democratic institutions could consider, as a first step, what is expected and accepted from national governments.

Contributions and Overview of the Thesis

One contribution of this thesis is to redefine the electoral connection in its most basic terms, moving from the candidate-centered individualistic legislative politics that it is frequently associated with, back to the term's core definition as "the linkage between citizens and their representatives". Doing so has a number of beneficial outcomes: first, rather than focusing solely on representative behavior, it expands the definition of electoral connection to include both citizens and representatives. Viewed from a systems

theory perspective, incorporating both citizens and representatives is important because these are the key inputs into democratic legitimacy. Thus, it is not just the outcomes, including actions or policy positions of elected officials that matter, but also the knowledge and behavior of citizens, as well as the political context, that link citizens and elites. These inputs are associated with mandate aspects of substantive representation, and after analyzing certain factors that impact the direct electoral connection through these three criteria, I will be able to address concerns about the state of representative democracy in the EU. These same criteria could be refined and applied to examine the electoral connection in any system of representative democracy.

Next, I briefly summarize the motivating questions, findings, and contributions from each aspect of the electoral connection. This is just a summary; Chapter 2 provides the theoretical framework that ties the diverse chapters together, and specifies the model of electoral behavior assumed by this thesis. Each empirical section has a distinct research question and methodology to assess one democratic input which is part of the electoral connection.

Competent Citizens

The first condition of electoral connection, that citizens can attribute responsibility for policy outcomes, motivates the research question in Chapter 3: *Are European citizens able to correctly differentiate responsibility between levels of national and supranational government? What factors enable citizens to acquire the information that facilitate competent allocations of policy responsibility?* I argue that in order for citizens to first give a mandate on the types of policy outcomes they prefer, and second to hold their representatives to account through their vote, they must have some sense of what the EU is responsible for. Thus, I will start by analyzing citizens' attributions of

responsibility in a system of multilevel governance. The approach I take examines under what conditions citizens can competently assign policy-making responsibility to European Union. The literature has generally portrayed motivating factors as improving citizen competence, however, in Chapter 3 I demonstrate that motivations can instead serve to decrease competence as they bias information processing and result in less accurate attributions of policy responsibility. These attributions of responsibility are important because they may serve as the mechanism by which voters hold their governments to account. As a step towards democratic accountability it is crucial to know how European voters understand the division of responsibility between the national government and EU. If citizens do not know who is responsible, they do not know who to hold accountable. In addition, since accountability is difficult to achieve through the direct channel of representation in the EU, understanding policy responsibility is crucial for citizens to be able to give a mandate on the types of policies they would like to see pursued.

Meaningful Choices

The next step to assessing the factors that impact the electoral connection in the EU is to examine voting behavior in European Parliament elections in relation to the quality of party choices on offer. It is true that elections to the European Parliament (EP) are widely seen as second-order elections (SOE) with three main characteristics: lower levels of turnout than national elections, defection from governing parties, and electoral success for small parties (Reif and Schmitt, 1980, Hix and Marsh, 2011). European elections are often considered to be contested on domestic, rather than European, issues. However, most of the issues dealt with in the EP's legislative agenda fall along the traditional left-right cleavage, with a second, less-important cleavage being along

European integration preferences (Hix et al., 2006; Hix et al., 2007). Therefore, if people were voting purely on the basis of European integration concerns, their elected officials would not represent their policy preferences on the majority of issues the EP legislates on.

The second criterion for the electoral connection is that individuals have meaningful choices in EP elections. The research questions motivating Chapter 4 are: *Are voters cross-pressured in European elections, and if so, how do they reconcile their issue preferences to choose a party? Under which conditions do citizens vote for the party closest on traditional left-right issues or vote for the party closest on European integration concerns?* To answer these questions, Chapter 4 attempts to move beyond the “second order election” versus “Europe matters” debates to analyze the role of issue cross pressure in party choice. Contrary to the bulk of the literature on European party choice, I argue that the ideal vote in EP elections is not for the party with the most similar stance on European integration issues, but for the party that reconciles the left-right and European integration dimensions, thus allowing citizens to give a mandate on both of these issue dimensions. However, the left-right and European integration dimensions are not necessarily correlated (Hooghe et al., 2002) so voters may have to choose between their left-right and European integration preferences when selecting a party. How many European voters face this issue cross pressure, feeling closer to one party on the left-right dimension and another party on European integration concerns? Which one takes precedence in EP elections? If voters have to make a choice, better that they choose left-right because this is the dimension relevant to most legislation in the EP. If a large proportion of voters choose a party that reconciles these two dimensions, or vote on the basis of left-right issues over European integration concerns, this could indicate a consolidation of European politics. This would be promising finding for the state of electoral democracy in the EU, and lead to better representation in the European

Parliament.

Chapter 4 therefore makes two different contributions to the extant research: first, by outlining an argument that both left-right and EU issue dimensions matter in European elections. Doing so allows a better examination of the party supply to see if citizens are able to give a mandate to their elected representatives on both issue dimensions. Second, the role of issue cross-pressure has not been previously examined in European elections, therefore this research fills a gap in the literature both by demonstrating that EU versus left-right issue cross-pressure does not result in higher levels of abstention, as is usually the case with cross-pressure, and also shows how citizens deal with cross-pressure when they are faced with it.

Chapter 5 builds upon this to examine the effect of using different measures of cross-pressure and incorporates additional methods of voting behavior to further explore the state of the electoral market in European elections. It asks, *are individuals able to vote their preferences in European elections? Does the electoral supply match the electorate demand?* The issue of European integration cross-cuts traditional cleavages (Evans, 1999) and therefore voters may have difficulty identifying a party that represents their issue positions on both the left-right and EU issue dimensions. Voters may also have different motivations when selecting a party – choosing a party that is closest, that will pull policy in a certain direction, or one that is simply on the same side of the issue. Their ability to do this will be influenced by the supply of parties with different issue positions. The main contribution from Chapter 5 is the definition and testing of various methodologies to define and calculate cross-pressure.

Substantive Representation

If citizens are knowledgeable about EU policy responsibility and select a party

whose issue positions they agree with, they both have the opportunity to hold their representatives to account and have given a mandate for the types of policies that should be pursued. Thus, the research question motivating Chapter 6 is: *How representative is the European Parliament of its constituents?* This final empirical chapter shifts away from assessing factors that impact the electoral connection to instead focus on the outcome – substantive representation. It should be noted that I do not explicitly test the effect of the first two criteria of the electoral connection on substantive representation. Rather, I will adopt a policy congruence approach to analyze representation in the European Parliament at three levels: European representation, ideological representation, and national representation. In addition, I will compare European and national representation at two time points to see if it has improved or declined. While previous studies on issue congruence have often focused on left-right positions of voters and parties, the present research takes a novel perspective by focusing on issue priorities and preferred level of governmental responsibility. In the context of increasing European powers and end of the permissive consensus, it is crucial to know how well citizen and elite preferences align on important matters.

Summary of Findings

This thesis sets out three criteria for an electoral connection and applies them to the direct channel of representation in the European Union. An electoral connection requires that citizens behave competently, including some understanding of policy responsibility in order to give a mandate on their preferred policies, and eventually, to hold their elected representatives to account. In addition, voters need to be presented with meaningful party choices so that they have the ability to express their preferences and give a mandate on the types of policy outcomes that should be pursued. Finally, the

electoral connection can be demonstrated when elected officials represent their constituents' preferences. A shortfall of democratic inputs is most often cited as evidence of a democratic deficit in the EU. The electoral connection forms an important part of the input aspect of democratic legitimacy, so this thesis sets out to analyze how three different aspects of the direct electoral connection may be enhanced or diminished. As outlined above, each chapter has specific research questions to analyze the impact that specific factors have on the electoral connection.

A final contribution from the thesis overall is a better understanding of what individual and contextual level factors may impact the electoral connection. If these are better understood, then they can be taken into consideration when developing solutions to improve the inputs into EU democracy. This will be explored in the concluding chapter. Consolidating the findings from each chapter shows how attitude extremity, political sophistication, and the political context impact the electoral connection. They also suggest that concerns about representation and a democratic deficit are overstated. Yet, there is room for improvement. The findings are summarized below:

- There are implications for citizens with extreme political attitudes on the left-right and EU spectrum (i.e., far right, far left, extreme pro- or anti-EU integration). Attitude extremity can impact the electoral connection because those with extreme attitudes:
 - are less accurate in their attributions of policy responsibility, as they process information in a biased way. (*Ch 3*)
 - are more likely to be cross-pressured (*Ch 4 and 5*)
 - are more likely to prioritize the left-right dimension when choosing a party in EP elections if they have extreme left or right attitudes (*Ch 4 and 5*)

- Are more likely to prioritize the EU dimension when choosing a party in EP elections if they have extreme pro-EU attitudes, but not if they have extreme anti-EU attitudes. (*Ch 4 and 5*)
- Individuals with high levels of political sophistication:
 - are more likely to correctly assign policy responsibility to the EU and national governments (*Ch 3*)
 - are no more or less likely to be cross pressured, but if they are cross-pressured, they are more likely to vote on the basis of the left-right issue dimension in EP elections (*Ch 4 and 5*)
- Politicization of the EU issue results in more information being available to the public. In countries where the EU is more politicized:
 - citizens are more likely to correctly attribute responsibility to the European Union (*Ch 3*)
 - voters are more likely to prioritize this dimension in EP elections – this is true for polarization of parties on the LR or EU dimension. (*Ch 4 and 5*)
- Between forty and seventy-four percent of citizens are cross-pressured in EP elections, depending on how it is measured. Of those citizens who are cross-pressured, most will choose a party based on left-right rather than EU concerns. This is a positive finding for the electoral connection as the majority of issues dealt with by the European Parliament fall along the left-right dimension. (*Ch 4 and 5*)
- European citizens are well-represented by European Parliament elites at the European, ideological, and to a lesser extent, national level. They are highly similar in their issue priorities and preference for governmental responsibility,

with elites often slightly more likely to want to see issues handled at the EU-level compared to citizens. (*Ch 6*)

Now that I have defined the electoral connection and situated it in the context of democratic legitimacy in the European Union, the next chapter will provide the theoretical model and literature review for the individual and contextual level expectations to be tested.

2

A Theory of the Direct Electoral Connection in the European Union

The introductory chapter gave an overview of the electoral connection and outlined the three types of inputs that contribute to linking citizens and representatives. In addition, it situated the importance of an electoral connection in terms of the democratic deficit in the European Union, and as a contribution toward democratic legitimacy. As the end goal of the electoral connection is a democratically-elected government that represents its citizens, this chapter will lay out a theoretical framework of representation and the assumptions made about electoral behavior which underlie each of the empirical chapters. The bulk of this thesis focuses on individual-level political behavior to assess different aspects that may impact the direct electoral connection in the European Union, with the final empirical chapter examining representation to see how effectively citizens' priorities and preferences are reflected in substantive representation. Each section contains its own background and methodology sections, so the objective of the present chapter is to provide an overarching framework to tie the diverse chapters together. This is based in a model of substantive representation that focuses on mandates but also discusses accountability. I conclude with a brief summary of the data sources and methods to be used in the remainder of the thesis.

The Electoral Connection

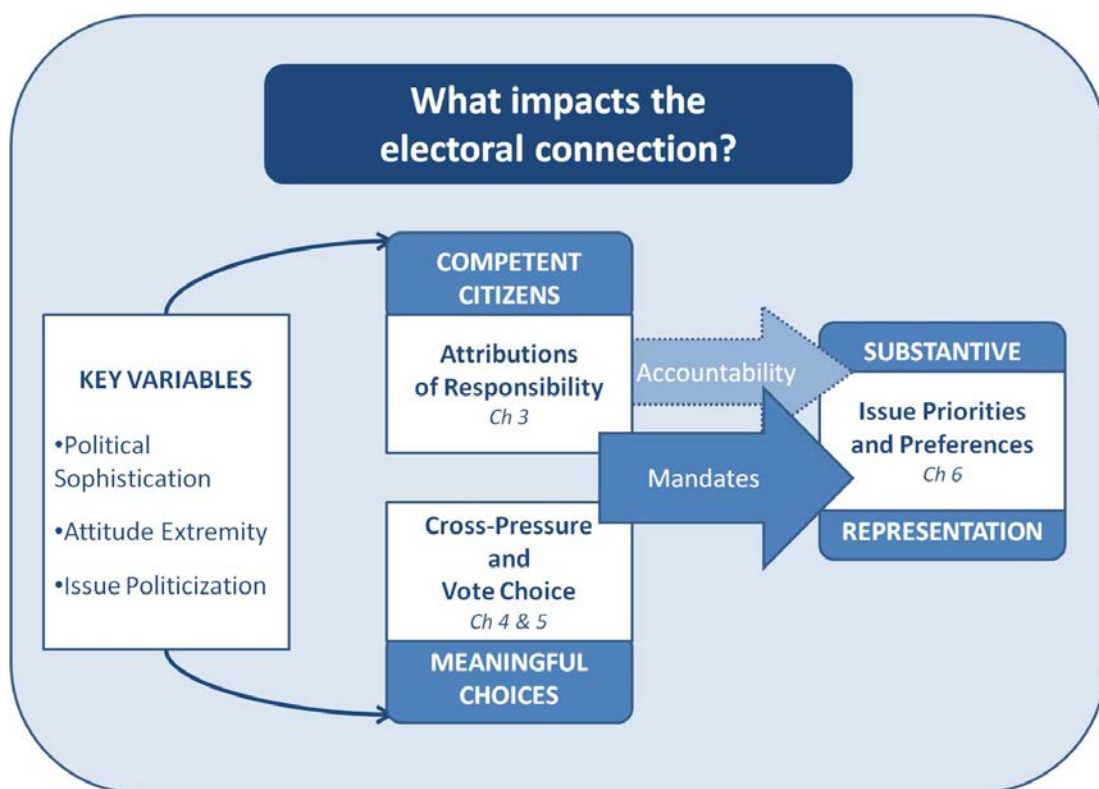
Let us return to the three criteria outlined in the introductory chapter, and place them in context of the representation literature. Recall from the previous chapter that the electoral connection is the link between citizens and their elected representatives, and is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for democratic institutions to be considered legitimate. As democratic legitimacy is often analyzed in terms of systems theory, in this thesis I analyze the “input” side of democratic legitimacy, concentrating on electoral participation and its resulting representation. I set out three criteria for an electoral connection:

- 1) **Competent Citizens:** Citizens can competently assign policy responsibility and hold their representatives to account;
- 2) **Meaningful Choices:** Citizens have meaningful choices at election time; and
- 3) **Substantive Representation:** Elected officials are representative of their constituents.

These are basic requirements that hold for any type of representative democracy: parliamentary, federal, national, or supranational. In the sections below I will discuss these conditions in the context of representation, but first they are summarized here. The first of these criteria relates to both accountability and mandates: the mediating factor in holding representatives to account is the ability to correctly attribute responsibility. Furthermore, in order for citizens to give a mandate, they must first have some understanding of what policy areas their government has responsibility for. The second criterion relates more specifically to mandates. If voters have meaningful choices between parties with varying platforms, then by electing their preferred party they signal

to that party the types of policies to pursue in office. Finally, the third criterion relates to how well elected officials represent their constituents. If citizens have some idea about governmental responsibility, and they have selected parties that align with their preferred policy positions, then we should expect government to be representative of its constituents. An overview of how the theoretical framework is applied in the thesis is depicted in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: What Impacts the Direct Electoral Connection in the EU?



Note: Solid arrows represent direct impacts, while dashed arrow represents potential influence.

The three key variables that will be tested in chapters 3, 4, and 5 - political sophistication, attitude extremity, and contextual issue politicization - are listed in the first box. These variables impact the first two criteria of the electoral connection – citizen

competence and meaningful party choices – highlighted in the rounded rectangles. Specifically, I will analyze the impact of these key variables on attributions of responsibility and cross-pressure/vote choice. These are the criteria I have chosen as important inputs to the electoral connection. Citizen competence may be related to both accountability and mandates, shown by the arrows, while meaningful choices are linked to mandates. Note that accountability is a dashed arrow, indicating that it can be linked to attributions of responsibility and citizen competence, but I do not expect to find this aspect of the connection in the EU. The first two criteria of the electoral connection influence the third criterion – substantive representation – which is a result of signaling policy preferences to parties through elections.

If the first two criteria of the electoral connection are fulfilled, I argue this will make the third criterion, substantive representation, more likely. In the sections below, I start with a discussion of political representation and work backwards through the model to specify the expectations and arguments presented throughout this thesis.

Political Representation

While there are many different models of democratic governance (see Held, 2009 for in-depth coverage) the cornerstone of electoral democracy is political representation. In any large democratic society, representation is generally considered necessary as direct democracy would be too unwieldy. Pitkin (1967) famously, and simply, defined representation as “to make present again”. She classified four types of representation, including formal, descriptive, symbolic, and substantive, which allow the interests and preferences of citizens to be “present” in the policy-making process. *Formal representation* takes place through the electoral process – giving citizens the opportunity to elect representatives at regular intervals, and assess their performance to decide if they

want to elect them again. In the context of the EU, this would be the institutional arrangement for elections to European Parliament every five years, and the opportunity voters have to retain the incumbent parties or vote for challengers. *Descriptive representation* means that the elected representatives reflect the composition of the electorate; that the elected assembly “should be in miniature an exact portrait of the people at large” (Adams, 1776). *Symbolic representation* is less definite and can refer to how a representative “stands for” their constituents, or to symbols, such as a national flag, which build upon shared values and attitudes to represent things and people. Finally, *substantive representation* occurs when the elected officials act to advance the electorate’s (or a group’s) policy preferences. I will focus on substantive representation and argue that its presence indicates an electoral connection between citizens and their elected officials.

If substantive representation is acting in the best interest of the public, (Pitkin, 1967; Manin et al., 1999), exactly how the public’s “best interests” are defined and pursued can be a matter of debate. Who should the elected official represent, how, and to what motivation? These three criteria are often framed in the trustee versus delegate model of representation. A “trustee” is one who acts in the best interest of the whole, rather than a particular subset, of the population, using their own judgment to make decisions. Conversely, a “delegate” should represent the preferences and interests of his or her electoral constituents and make decisions based on constituent opinions rather than his own judgment. Delegates want to ensure that constituent wishes are carried out to avoid electoral sanctioning, whereas trustees are less concerned about sanctions.

So which model is more appropriate for MEPs: trustee or delegate? I argue that the distinction is not necessary for the research at hand. First, it has been argued that representatives must be able to act in both ways: to uphold the wishes of their constituents

and be held accountable, yet exercise independent judgment where warranted (Pitkin, 1967). It is unrealistic to assume that a representative always behaves purely as one or the other. In this way, there are many different ways that an elected official could be representative:

Indeed, if each of these three separate distinctions points at two directions (the whole vs. a part; the judgment of the representative decision maker vs. the judgment of others; behavior that is more or less responsive to sanction) and any combination of these three is possible, then there are eight possible ideal types (2x2x2). The use of the binary distinction "trustee" and "delegate" thus obscures ... how each variable may vary, and makes normative and empirical analysis more difficult and imprecise. (Rehfield, 2009 p.211)

Following substantive representation, representatives should work to advance the interests of their constituency but also have the freedom to independently make decisions. As people vote for a specific party which has stated preferences and policy goals, the winning parties are given a mandate to pursue those policies once in office. In this way, they serve as delegates of their electors. Yet, current events may warrant a change in policy position or perhaps the dominant preferences are not in the best interests of the public. In this case, representatives (or parties) must be able to exercise their own judgment. In either case, representatives face re-election at which time their constituents can review the incumbents' actions and decide to keep them or elect a new party. Thus a responsible representative must at times act as a delegate, and at others, as a trustee.

The necessity of this dual role can be seen through further refinement of substantive representation, specifically in the mandate and accountability perspectives of

representation, which highlight the relationship between interests and outcomes (Manin et al., 1999):

1. Between mandates and policies, which Downs called “reliability” (1957) but here I will simply refer to as “mandates” – voters choose a preferred platform by their vote choice at election time, and government implements the policies it set out during the campaign;
2. Between outcomes and sanctions, i.e. “accountability” – elected officials are held to account for their past performance through the vote.

When assessing the factors that influence the direct electoral connection in the European Union, this thesis will focus primarily on the mandate perspective of substantive representation. Furthermore, I would argue that because of the complex institutional structure and multiple layers of representation in the European Union, the link between outcomes and sanctions, that is, accountability, is a factor to assess and to aspire, but is not necessary for an electoral connection to exist as substantive representation can be possible through the mandate link. Mandates drive the electoral connection and make substantive representation possible. If voters are able to elect representatives who share policy priorities and preferences, then they have a better chance of being well-represented.

As already discussed, I envision that citizen competence has a dual role of accountability and mandates. In a system of multilevel governance, in order for voters to select a party whose program they would like to see implemented, they must first understand what policy areas that level of government has responsibility for. Thus, while accountability is generally discussed after mandating, in this thesis I start with the discussion of citizen competence as it is a precondition to vote choice, which has a

mandate and accountability link. Furthermore, the electoral system is cyclical – there are already parties in office that, at the next election, will be assessed for their performance at the same time that citizens choose which party platform they prefer. Therefore, one does not really come before the other.

Citizen Competence and Electoral Accountability

In the classic tradition of democratic theory, elected officials are responsible for their actions and accountable to citizens. Elections thus serve as a sanctioning device in which voters reward or punish incumbents on the basis of past performance (Fiorina, 1981; Key et al., 1966; Powell, 2000). This retrospective theory of voting assumes that voters will consider the outcomes of policies implemented during the previous term, and if they are satisfied, re-elect their incumbents. If they are dissatisfied, they can “throw the rascals out” by electing the challenger. In a simplified version of retrospective voting, voters consider one question – “am I better off now than I was before?” (pocketbook theory of voting) or “is the economy (or society) better off now than it was before?” (sociotropic theory of voting). This assumes that voters need not know about all the various policies and changes that have (or have not) occurred, but instead relies on voters’ perceptions of their own economic situation, or that of society as a whole, to determine whether or not the incumbent deserves to be re-elected.

In order for accountability to function, this sanctioning model of the electoral process relies on the critical assumption that voters are able to assign responsibility for policy outcomes. Responsibility judgments are therefore the principal mechanism by which citizens hold representatives to account for their actions, since it is those judgments that intervene between evaluations of policy outcomes, be it the economy or other policy, and voting behavior. Thus the accountability link in the electoral connection has two

components: first, that citizens can correctly attribute responsibility for policy, and second, that voters reward or sanction incumbents for past performance at election time.

Understanding what the EU is responsible for is a critical first step in holding the government to account, thus Chapter 3 assesses under which conditions are citizens motivated and able to competently assign policy responsibility to the European Union. However, democracy in the European Union does not function in the same way as any national government system. Citizens are doubly represented, indirectly by their national governments acting through the European Council (heads of state) and Council of European Union (ministers of each Member State), and directly through their elected representatives acting in the European Parliament. This makes it more difficult to hold MEPs or the EU accountable because both policy and representation are diffuse and complex. Therefore, while it is important to analyze when and how citizens are able to correctly attribute responsibility to the EU as a first step in European accountability, “accountability is not sufficient to induce representation when voters have incomplete information” (Manin et al., 1999 p.44), nor is it necessarily required for effective representation.

Ideally, citizens would understand what policies each level of government is responsible for. Then they must make a value judgment on policy outcomes. By knowing who is responsible for policy performance, voters could either (1) hold their elected officials accountable by voting to retain them for satisfactory policy performance, and electing a new representative when dissatisfied with the outcome, or (2) give a mandate by voting for parties that they believe will implement their preferred policies. Hence knowledge about policy responsibility is important for both accountability and for mandating policy. Therefore this thesis will analyze what factors enable citizens to competently assign policy responsibility, as this competency may lead to either the ability

to hold representatives to account, or to an understanding of policy responsibility that enables voters to better mandate their preferences.

Meaningful Choices and Mandate Representation

The mandate perspective of substantive representation requires that parties offer distinct policy platforms during the electoral campaign. Elections thus give voters the opportunity to give a policy “mandate” by voting for the party whose platform they prefer. The party is then expected to pursue those policies once in office. In this way, parties are representing the preferences and interests of their constituents, and substantive representation can occur. The success of this depends on citizens having meaningful choices during election time. If parties are indistinguishable on important issues, or a significant portion of the electorate is unable to identify party positions that resemble their own, then the eventual policies pursued by governing parties may not align with the public’s preferences.

In the case of the EU or other systems of governance where lines of responsibility are blurred and it is difficult to attribute responsibility for policy, what matters even more than electoral accountability is that citizens have distinct choices in the party offer and can select a party that closely aligns with their preferences. In this way, substantive representation may be achieved when voters give a mandate to a party to pursue a particular policy agenda. One such method of ensuring substantive representation is if the interests of elected representatives and voters are congruent. (Thomassen, 1994; Manin et al., 1999;). This has been elucidated by Thomassen in the “responsible party model” which sets out a few key requirements, including: that voters have a choice between parties with different policy platforms, that parties are cohesive enough to implement their proposed policies, that voters have policy preferences and see differences in party

platforms, and that voters vote for the party that most closely matches their preferences. While subsequent studies have found these requirements to be too stringent, in particular that voters do not always have policy preferences or necessarily know party positions (Schmitt and Thomassen, 1999), this model provides a useful starting point for assessing substantive representation in the European Union.

While the empirical chapters in this thesis will not assess party cohesion nor explicitly test that voters distinguish between party platforms, it will test if voters are able to choose a party that aligns with their EU and left-right issue preferences, and thus indirectly examine the supply of party choices on offer. In this way, citizens give a mandate on the types of policies to be pursued and representatives then have the opportunity to advocate for their constituents' preferences. There are different ways of conceiving which party would be the best match for a mandate, and in Chapters 4 and 5 I will argue that the inability of many parties to align the EU integration issue into existing policy preferences results in issue cross-pressure for many European citizens. This may negatively impact the electoral connection as cross-pressured citizens are unable to give a mandate on both EU and left-right policy preferences. Different methodologies of measuring issue cross-pressure, including variations of proximity and directional voting, will be defined and tested.

At this point let us pause to briefly consider what the situation might look like if the three criteria of the electoral connection were not met. First, citizen competence has two parts: understanding policy responsibility, and holding representatives to account. It could be argued that there are many circumstances where citizens do not demonstrate these political competencies. As will be discussed below, individuals often rely on a variety of proxies or other cues to make up for information shortfalls. However, if

citizens were completely incompetent in allocating responsibility or holding politicians or parties to account, then there would be no threat of electoral sanction, reducing the incentive for elected officials to behave responsibly.

A lack of meaningful choices would indicate that voters do not have a choice of parties with distinct party programs, either because parties' stances do not diverge, or they do not make this information known to the voter. Individuals would therefore be less likely to identify a party that shares their policy priorities. The result of both these scenarios is that the elected officials are less likely to represent their constituents in a substantive manner. Even if they have their constituents' best interests in mind when legislating, the public was unable to mandate what types of policies they would like implemented. In brief, if the criteria of the electoral connection were unfulfilled, there would cease to be a link between citizens and representatives. Electoral democracy depends on voters being able to make informed decisions (however they become informed, or make the decision) from distinct policy options. Voters are not perfect, but they do they have to be, to obtain substantive representation.

Now that I have outlined the overarching theory of substantive representation and how it relates to the direct electoral connection in the EU, I turn now to the assumptions made at the individual level, specifically bounded rationality as a model of individual electoral behavior. Then I will expand upon the key variables listed in Figure 2.1 above which are used to test the arguments in each empirical chapter about what impacts the electoral connection.

Electoral Behavior

Bounded Rationality

The model of electoral behavior that I put forth is inspired the theory of bounded rationality (Simon, 1957, 1997; Bendor et al., 2011). Because rationality has its limits, the term “‘bounded rationality’ is used to designate rational choice that takes into account the cognitive limitations of the decision maker – limitations of both knowledge and computational capacity” (Simon, 1997, p.291). This is in contrast to the “rational man” which in rational choice theory is assumed to have full knowledge of the situation and the alternatives, clear preferences, unlimited ability, and does not make mistakes. The “rational choice” that the individual is predicted to make is the one that maximizes utility for the individual.

Applying this to electoral behavior and in line with rational choice theory, voters want to maximize their utility when selecting a party. A utility function may be based on proximity to parties or a desire to pull policy in a certain direction, and these will be elaborated in chapters 4 and 5. However, because rationality is bounded, people will deviate from these utility functions. We cannot necessarily know what considerations individuals use when deviating from a given utility function. “If the problem were simply to discover which items were in people's utility functions, [we] would just ask what items are valued and what are the relative valuation weights... But, if the problem is bounded rationality, we need some other information, i.e., what cues the consideration of item A in one case and item B in another” (Schmid, 1996). For different individuals, different issues become salient and are weighted more heavily in the utility function as a result of their attitudes and political motivations. Individuals have different motivations, different priorities, and different boundaries to their rationality.

Furthermore, individuals do not have the ability and resources to obtain perfect information; even if they had perfect information, they would not be able to process it. Instead they “satisfice” – they use any number of heuristics or shortcuts to simplify the choices available or to process information, and seek a satisfactory, rather than optimal, outcome. Their mental capabilities impact their ability to gather and process political information and affect their vote calculus. Finally, the amount of information available is not merely a constraint, but rather we must be mindful that individuals select certain pieces of information and ignore others from the information environment. How and why individuals select certain messages over others will be discussed further below.

In line with bounded rationality, I argue that voters have differing levels of cognitive ability, diverse attitudes and motivations, and varying levels of information available to them. Now I will discuss how this impacts their electoral behavior, and ultimately, the electoral connection.

Political Sophistication: Facilitating Competent Behavior

First, rather than assume that citizens have perfect information and actively seek to update their views, I assume that voters have imperfect information (Alvarez, 1997) and may or may not be motivated to update it. This is not just an assumption but reality – citizens themselves declare they do not feel well informed about the European Union or European political affairs (Eurobarometer, 2008) and tests of factual knowledge about the EU reveal less than perfectly informed citizens (EES, 2009c). However, uninformed voters can use heuristics or shortcuts to inform their vote choices and this has been shown to help individuals vote competently, that is, make decisions as if they were perfectly informed (Popkin, 1991; Lupia, 1994, 2001, 2006; Lau and Redlawsk, 1997). Yet, these heuristics, while helpful, are not a substitute for actual information. For example,

uninformed voters in US presidential elections did “significantly better than they would by chance, but significantly less well than they would with complete information, despite the availability of cues and shortcuts” (Bartels, 1996, p. 217).

Due to bounded rationality, a perfectly informed citizenry is not possible, and while it is not necessary for the existence of an electoral connection, well-informed, or politically sophisticated voters *are* better able to gather new information and to identify choices that align with their own interests. This is consistent with Zaller’s popular Receive-Accept-Sample (RAS) Model (Zaller, 1992). More politically aware people, as measured by political knowledge, receive more political communications than less informed individuals. They are able to filter the information they receive and accept information that is in line with their values or political beliefs. Therefore the information that high sophisticates have “stored” in their heads is generally consistent with their predispositions. The opposite is true of less sophisticated individuals: they receive fewer messages and are less able to accept or reject communications that are consistent (or not) with their prior beliefs. Therefore high sophisticates are more likely first to have political opinions, and second, to hold opinions that are ideologically consistent with one another. The RAS model focuses on how opinions are formed, but not how factual information is gathered and retained. What can be borrowed from this model is that politically aware individuals are more likely to receive political information, and to identify information that aligns with their preferences. Therefore I argue that a more politically sophisticated electorate generally improves the electoral connection, and this will be tested in chapters 3, 4, and 5.

Previous research into political sophistication argues that knowledge about political issues is a function of ability, motivation, and opportunity (Luskin, 1990; Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996; Gordon and Segura, 1997). Individuals vary considerably in

their cognitive ability to understand political information, their motivation to seek it out, and the opportunities they have to obtain this knowledge. A higher cognitive ability facilitates the consumption and systematic processing of complex political information (Luskin, 1990), resulting in higher levels of political sophistication. High sophisticates are also more competent in converting political information from news stories into stored knowledge (Zaller, 1991; Price and Zaller, 1993). As political sophisticates are better able to understand complex government structures and have the cognitive ability to process political information, I will argue that they should be more able to correctly attribute responsibility to the European Union, which is a first step in holding the EU to account.

Furthermore, the politically sophisticated should be better able to navigate complex institutional structures and identify a party that most closely aligns with their preferred policy positions. In the European Parliament, parties vote primarily along left-right lines, not on national matters or European integration concerns. Indeed, most legislation from the EP deals with policy that can be defined along the left-right dimension, with a second, less important dimension incorporating government-opposition conflicts and European integration preferences (Hix et al., 2006; Hix et al., 2007). Therefore we should neither expect citizens to vote for the same party as they did in national elections nor to vote purely on the basis of European integration issues. Highly sophisticated voters should be most able to recognize this and therefore either be able to identify a party that reconciles these two dimensions, or be more likely to prioritize the left-right issue dimension in EP elections.

Political Attitudes: Motivating Electoral Behavior

While past research highlights the role of political interest in motivating citizens to seek out information (Luskin, 1990; Eveland, 2004), this thesis goes beyond

motivating factors to argue that political attitudes influence information processing due to motivated reasoning (Kunda, 1990; Taber et al., 2009). Thus the question is not *if* citizens are motivated by their political attitudes, but *how* do political attitudes motivate citizens to process political information. In particular, strong attitudes are more likely to bias information processing and judgments, as well as influence behavior, than weak attitudes (Petty and Krosnick, 1995). One dimension of attitude strength is *extremity*, which is defined as the deviation from the midpoint on a scale (Abelson, 1995), with individuals consistently holding mostly positive or negative views towards the same attitude object. Alternatively, ambivalence occurs when an individual holds centrist views or a mixture of favorable and unfavorable opinions, and is measured by the sum of positive and negative evaluations (Thompson et al., 1995).

Individuals are not perfectly rational, their rationality is bounded and thus attitude extremity influences electoral behavior in two ways: first, it affects information processing, and second, strong attitudes increase the salience of that attitude object. Therefore I argue that extreme attitudes, specifically, those related to left-right socioeconomic positions and EU integration, will influence individual behavior with the potential to negatively affect the electoral connection.

Let us first examine the impact that political attitudes may have on information processing. Individuals with strong prior attitudes are often biased information processors, motivated by their extreme attitudes to discount information they find contrary to their prior beliefs, and indiscriminately accept information in line with their attitudes (Taber and Lodge, 2006; Taber et al., 2009). In addition, rather than seeking to update information in a neutral way, they may instead actively seek out information that confirms their prior attitudes. This is well-established in the literature on voting behavior: Campbell et al. (1960) asserted that individuals are prone to interpret political items

through a partisan bias, in other words, that political attitudes distort information processing. This has been confirmed in many studies since then (Redlawsk, 2002; Bartels, 2002): political beliefs affect the way individuals engage in political decision-making and information processing (Rahn 1993; Bartels 2000), perceptions of the economy (Evans and Anderson, 2006; Evans and Pickup, 2010; Gerber and Huber, 2010) and attributions of responsibility (Tilley and Hobolt, 2011; Rudolph 2003, 2006). While different terminology for attitudes has been used in various studies the findings are consistent: strong attitudes bias information processing. This, I will argue in Chapter 3, results in less competent attributions of responsibility, which may negatively impact the electoral connection.

Second, political attitudes motivate vote choices because extreme attitudes are more likely to be salient. As will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 4, in elections to the European Parliament, voters have to reconcile their left-right socioeconomic position with their preferences on European integration, and these two dimensions are not highly correlated in parties (Hooghe et al., 2002) or voters. Thus, extreme attitudes play a dual role in motivating electoral behavior. First, an individual with extreme attitudes on either the left-right or EU issue dimension is likely to be farther away from parties on that dimension, which increases the likelihood that the voter will be cross-pressured. If many voters face issue cross-pressure and unable to vote for a party that aligns with both their left-right and EU preferences, this could negatively impact the electoral connection. Second, because attitude extremity increases salience, cross-pressured individuals with extreme issue attitudes may be likely to weight this dimension more heavily when choosing which party to vote for. If more cross-pressured individuals choose the EU dimension over left-right, this may negatively impact the electoral connection as the bulk

of issues dealt with by the EP fall along traditional left-right ideological lines, rather than policies about European integration.

In chapters three through five, cognitive ability, measured by political sophistication, and political attitudes, measured by attitude extremity on the EU and left-right issue dimensions, play a critical role in competent allocations of responsibility to the EU and in party choice in European Parliament elections. In short, I argue that cognitive ability facilitates, while political attitudes motivate information processing about European politics.

Political Context: Politicization of the EU

With the end of the permissive consensus, discussed in the introductory chapter, also comes the politicization of the European integration issue. EU politicization refers to the increasing contentiousness of decision making in the process of European integration (Schmitter, 1969), and this has changed both the content and the process of decision making in the EU (Hooghe and Marks, 2009, p. 8). This politicization is evidenced by increasing public contention over European matters in referendums, party competition and media reporting (de Vreese, 2003; Tillman, 2004; de Vries, 2007; Kriesi et al., 2008; Hobolt, 2009; Hooghe and Marks, 2009). Furthermore, studies of vote choice in referendums and elections have shown that arena-specific voting - so-called “EU issue voting” - is more pronounced when the European issue is politicized in the domestic sphere (Tillman, 2004; de Vries, 2007; Hobolt, 2009; de Vries et al., 2011). Importantly, the level of politicization of European issues varies considerably across countries.

Politicization of an issue can create a more information-rich environment and increase the saliency of that issue. The political context can motivate, provide information, and help even low informed citizens to gain knowledge (Kuklinski et al.,

2001). The knowledge gap between low and high sophisticates shrinks when more information is provided in the political context (Nicholson, 2003; Iyengar et al., 2010; Jerit and Barabas, 2006). One way to measure the amount of politicization of an issue is to determine the level of party polarization along that dimension. Issue salience to the public increases when political parties are polarized on an issue, and salience decreases when parties' stances converge (Milazzo et al., 2012). Parties may be polarized along EU or LR dimensions, which could increase the salience of or information about these dimensions. Politicization and polarization could indicate more choices available to the electorate as well. Thus, I argue that the increased levels of salience and available information provide an opportunity for all citizens to acquire information about the politicized issue, whether it be information about EU responsibility or party positions on the EU or left-right dimension. In non-politicized contexts, we would not expect to see the same level of salience or increased availability of information. Politicized contexts therefore provide an opportunity to learn from the information-rich environment and individuals are motivated to do so because of the perceived salience of the topic. Both of these outcomes indicate that contextual politicization has the potential for improving the electoral connection by increasing citizen competence and offering more information and choices to voters.

Now that the theory and relevant variables have been identified, let us turn to the methodology and data sources to be used throughout the thesis.

Methodology

This thesis will primarily use quantitative analyses to test the hypotheses described in each chapter. Multilevel models will be used to analyze contextual and individual level data on all 27 EU member nations from the voter survey and media

study. A multilevel, or hierarchical, model allows for estimating the variance between individuals within the same country as well as the variance between countries to specifically account for both individual-level and country-level effects. In addition, multilevel modeling, compared to pooled regression, estimates correct standard errors and is generally accepted as best practice for analyzing data clustered in groups (Snijders and Bosker, 1999). Multilevel models will be used in the first three empirical chapters, while the final empirical chapter will take a descriptive approach to analyze representation. Analyses were run using Stata 12 and Stata 13.

Data Sources and their Context

This research project utilizes a variety of data sources, including citizen surveys, a media study, elite surveys, and a novel expert survey. Most of the data used in this thesis are from 2009 (except Chapter 6 includes 1994-2009). There are several reasons for using the 2009 EES data. It provides a comprehensive survey of eligible voters of the (then) 27 member states. It is the first comprehensive EU-wide voter survey following the 2004 and 2007 rounds of enlargement, which saw the EU expand from 15 to eventually 27 member states. This allows for a complete picture of the link between citizens and representatives across the EU in both “old” and “new” member states. Finally, 2009 was the first time that citizens were asked about their attributions of responsibility to their national governments and the European Union. These questions provide an important starting point for the analysis of the direct electoral connection in the European Union. Where comparative data was available for previous years, I have expanded the analysis to include 1994-2009 (i.e. candidate and voter studies utilized in Chapter 6).

As most data were collected in 2009, it is important to keep in mind the political and economic context from this time. Europe was in the midst of a global financial and

economic crisis. The worsening economy was a salient factor for many individuals, unemployment rates were going up, and many people were affected by a job loss in the family or by a close friend/relative. The European Commission had begun to introduce a series of measures aimed to ensure stability and restore confidence in markets, such as the European Economic Recovery Plan (EERP) which injected a fiscal stimulus of 5% of European GDP. However, the European debt crisis had not yet taken hold, and concerns were just starting to mount about budget deficits in a few EU member countries. As a consequence, the economy and the European Union were potentially more salient to respondents than before the financial crisis, but member states were not yet instituting austerity measures.

Data from the 2009 European Election Studies (EES) are used in each chapter, with additional datasets used in chapters 3 and 6. Each data source and key variables are briefly described below. The EES data was collected by the collaborative project on “Providing an Infrastructure for Research on Electoral Democracy in the European Union” (PIREDEU). Funded by the EU under the Seventh Framework Programme, the objective of the three-year project was to upgrade the European Election Study in order to provide an infrastructure for research into citizenship, political participation, and electoral democracy in the EU. The pilot study included a voter study, a candidate study, a media study, a manifestos study, and a contextual data study for the 2009 elections to European Parliament (www.piredeu.eu). All data sources are now available from GESIS (<http://www.gesis.org/en/services/data-analysis/survey-data/european-election-studies/>).

European Election Studies Voter Survey

The bulk of the thesis research will utilize the 2009 European Election Studies voter survey (EES, 2009c; van Egmond et al., 2010). It provides an opportunity to assess

citizens' perceptions of responsibility and competence as it is the first Europe-wide survey that asks how voters attribute responsibility in a system of multilevel governance. The voter survey is a representative sample of citizens from all 27 EU member states. In the four weeks following the June 2009 European Parliament elections, 1000 people in each country were surveyed in person or via computer assisted telephone interview (CATI), depending on the most appropriate method for the country (representative phone sampling was not feasible in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia, therefore 70 percent of interviews were conducted face-to-face with the remaining done by telephone). The total sample size is approximately 27,000.

The survey included an ESRC co-funded module of questions on attributions of responsibility through the "Perceptions of Power" project (Hobolt et al., 2011). These data are used in Chapter 3 and informed the expert survey (discussed below).

Attribution of responsibility questions:

"First, thinking about the economy, how responsible is the (country) government for economic conditions in (country)? Please indicate your views using any number on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means 'no responsibility' and 10 means 'full responsibility.'"

"And what about the European Union, how responsible is the EU for economic conditions in (country)?"

These questions are repeated, substituting the following policy areas:

- standard of health care
- levels of immigration
- setting interest rates
- dealing with climate change

In addition, the EES surveys from 1994 (Schmitt et al., 1997), 1999 (van der Eijk et al., 1999), 2004 (Schmitt et al., 2009), and 2009 (van Egmond et al., 2010) will be analyzed in Chapter 6. Each includes questions about the “most important problem” (MIP) which will be analyzed in Chapter 6. From 1999 onwards, this question was worded as:

“What do you think is the most important problem facing [COUNTRY] today?”

“As of today, is (MIP) mainly dealt with at the regional, national, or European level? And who do you think would be the most appropriate level to deal with (MIP): regional, national, or European political authorities?”

2009 European Election Studies Media Study

A media study in all 27 member states was conducted as part of the 2009 EES (EES, 2009b; Schuck et al. 2010). The media study includes coding of newspapers and television news for any story relating to European Union or European Parliament election campaign during the three weeks prior to EP elections from two broadsheets and one tabloid as well as the main evening news broadcasts in each EU country. In total, 52,009 television and newspaper stories were coded. From this dataset, contextual-level variables can be created such as tone of the media on EU-related news stories and linked to the voter study.

Elite Surveys

For Chapter 6, elite surveys will be analyzed to assess European representation. Each of these surveys includes questions that mirror the voter surveys about the most important problem and preferred level of authority for handling that problem.

The European Candidate Study 1994: “European Political Representation” (De Winter et al., 1999) was carried out by mail questionnaire in ten of then twelve member states in the weeks approaching the 1994 EP elections, and in the weeks preceding the 1995 EP elections in new member state Sweden. Participating countries included Belgium, Britain, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden. Overall, 1726 candidates responded, with a response rate of 35%. The return rate varied by country, from a low of 4% in Spain (74 respondents) to 86% in Sweden (514 respondents).

The EES Candidate Survey 2009 (Giebler et al., 2010; EES, 2009a) was conducted using a dual mode – both mail questionnaire and online survey – and candidates could choose which method they used. Over 6500 candidates were contacted, with 1576 respondents. The mean response rate was 22%, ranging from 4% in Bulgaria to 43% in Sweden.

Expert Survey on Functional Responsibility 2010

The European Election Studies voter survey asked citizens to gage the level of responsibility the EU and their national governments have for five policy areas. These new data provide a great resource for researchers, but it is difficult to establish the “right” answers. Therefore, in collaboration with Sara Hobolt, James Tilley, and Susan Banducci we designed a web-based survey to measure expert opinion, which provides a measure against which citizens’ responses can be compared.

In February 2010, 175 experts on EU institutions, integration, policy, and law were sent a link to take the online expert survey. Most names were drawn from the UACES “Expert on Europe” online database (www.expertoneurope.com). There were 119 individuals who started the survey for a 68% response rate. Of the 119 respondents, 109 completed the survey, for a 62% completion rate. The experts were asked the same responsibility and influence questions as the voters plus five questions about which institutions within the EU are responsible for the policy-making process. There were at least two respondents per country.

Applying the Theory

The four empirical chapters analyze different aspects of the electoral connection in the European Union. The next chapter looks first at citizens’ abilities to competently assign policy responsibility to the European Union, and the factors that improve or diminish their competence. The subsequent two chapters assess issue cross-pressure in EP elections to understand if citizens are able to cast a vote in line with their preferred policy positions on left-right and EU in order to give a mandate on these issue dimensions, The final empirical chapter evaluates congruence in issue priorities and preference for governmental responsibility between citizens and European Parliament elites to see at what level, if any, citizens are best represented by the EP. Together these four chapters will provide a better understanding of what impacts the electoral connection and how well citizens are represented. This will contribute to the larger debate about EU “inputs” and a perceived democratic deficit in the European Union.

3

Allocating Responsibility in Multilevel Government Systems: Voter and Expert Attributions in the European Union

A version of this chapter has been co-authored with Sara B. Hobolt and accepted for publication in the *Journal of Politics*, forthcoming in 2015.

In general, it is irrational to be politically well-informed because the low returns from data simply do not justify their cost in time and other scarce resources.

Downs (1957, p.259)

Anthony Downs proposed that it is rational for most citizens to remain ignorant about political affairs due to the low marginal benefits of acquiring relevant political information, and the lack of political knowledge among citizens is well-documented (see e.g. Converse, 1964; Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1991). Indeed, the level of citizen ignorance about politics have led some scholars to suggest that “the low level of political knowledge and the absence of ideological reasoning have lent credence to the charge that popular control of the government is illusory” (Iyengar, 1987, p.816).

Citizens living in systems of multi-level governance, such as the European Union (EU), face a greater challenge when it comes to holding their representatives to account,

since they have the additional task of differentiating between multiple levels of government when deciding whom to credit and blame for policy outcomes (Arceneaux, 2006; Cutler, 2004, 2008; de Vries et al., 2011; Johns, 2011). Yet, if popular control is to be more than an illusion, then it is crucial that citizens have at least a basic understanding of the different levels of government responsibility and are able to assess their government's performance. The very notion of elections as a means of holding governments to account assumes that citizens are able to assign responsibility for policy outcomes (Key, 1966; Fiorina, 1981; Rudolph, 2003). Since attribution of responsibility is not a matter of preferences or policy positions, citizens cannot easily rely on proxies or shortcuts to help them distinguish governmental responsibility (Lupia, 1994; Sniderman, 2000). This raises the question of whether European citizens are able to correctly differentiate responsibility between levels of national and supranational government. More fundamentally, it begs the question of what factors enable citizens to acquire the information that enable them to competently allocate responsibility.

To assess how certain factors impact the first criteria of the electoral connection, citizen competence, this chapter examines individuals' ability to attribute policy responsibility to the European Union. Attributions of responsibility to the EU are important for two reasons: first, because they enable citizens to hold their governments accountable for policy outcomes. Second, understanding what policies the different levels of government are responsible for enables citizens to select parties that will pursue their preferred types of policy, thus giving a mandate for legislative activity. To be able to assess the degree of competence in citizens' responsibility judgments, we compare citizen evaluations to expert judgments. The theoretical framework highlights the key factors at both the individual level and contextual level that enable individuals to distinguish between the responsibilities of different levels of government. Specifically, we theorize

that learning about governmental responsibility will depend on three key elements: individual-level knowledge and political attitudes, as well as an information-rich political environment. Previous studies of how citizens cope with multilevel governance systems have only examined single countries, such as the US, Canada, or Spain. Given the multinational and multi-level nature of the European Union, the EU thus provides an ideal test case not only for expanding the research utilizing a more complex system, but also for explicitly testing contextual level variables that single-country studies can only speculate about. Specifically, it provides an ideal situation for examining both how individual-level factors and very different political contexts shape citizens' ability to assign responsibility, and for comparing these effects across twenty-seven different countries.

This study thus contributes to the literature in three important ways. First, we examine attribution of responsibility in the context of the EU which, unlike previous single-country studies of citizens' ability to assign responsibility in a federal system, enables us to make use of three unique cross-national datasets: a survey of citizens in all EU member states at that time (27 members in 2009), a study of the media contexts, and a survey of experts in EU policy making. Second, our findings, based on multilevel analysis of these data, show that even within the European Union there are significant differences in the information provided by the political environment. This in turn provides varying opportunities for learning and shapes citizens' ability to assign responsibility. Finally, we demonstrate a non-intuitive finding that while political attitudes may serve as a motivating factor, they do not increase voter competence, since citizens with strong attitudes are more likely to be biased information processors as a result of motivated reasoning (Kunda, 1990). These findings have important implications for our understanding of citizen competence and democracy in complex systems.

Attributing Responsibility in Multilevel Government Systems

In the classic tradition of democratic theory, elections are a sanctioning device in which voters reward or punish incumbents on the basis of past performance (Fiorina, 1981; Key, 1966; Powell, 2000). This model of the electoral process relies on the critical assumption that voters are able to assign responsibility for policy outcomes. Responsibility judgments are thus the principal mechanism by which citizens hold representatives to account for their actions, since it is those judgments that intervene between evaluations of policy outcomes and voting behavior. For a number of reasons, multiple levels of government make it more difficult for individuals to correctly assign responsibility (Arceneaux, 2006; Cutler, 2004, 2008; Johns, 2011; León, 2011). When policy responsibilities are divided between multiple levels of government, and often overlapping, citizens may not know which level of government is more responsible for a particular policy. In addition, politicians do not have incentives to make the system more clear. Complexity allows them to claim credit for successful policies and engage in blame shifting for undesirable outcomes.

Recent developments in the economic voting literature have illustrated the importance of attribution of responsibility as a moderator of voting behavior. According to the simple reward-punishment model, individuals vote for the incumbent when the economy is good, and for the opponent when times are bad (Fiorina, 1981; Lewis-Beck, 1988). However, this model has been shown not to work in all contexts, so scholars have shifted their attention to issues of governmental responsibility for policy performance. An influential article by Powell and Whitten (1993) demonstrated that elections in countries where responsibility is most easily focused on a single government party are more likely to follow the reward-punishment model. Other studies also using cross-national data have supported the more general claim that economic voting is less prevalent when

governments are weak and divided (e.g. minority and coalition governments) and legislatures are strong (e.g. strong committees and bicameral opposition) (Anderson, 2000; Hellwig and Samuels, 2008; Nadeau et al., 2002; Whitten and Palmer, 1999). Most of these aggregate-level studies have focused on ‘horizontal’ institutional structures, such as coalition and divided government, and they have not directly examined voters’ views of who is responsible.

Recently more attention has turned to the ‘vertical’ institutional structures of federal government, mainly in the context of the federal systems of Canada and the US (Anderson, 2000; Arceneaux, 2006; Gomez and Wilson, 2003; Cutler, 2004, 2008; Johns, 2011). These studies suggest that multiple levels of government make it challenging for voters to assign responsibility for policy outcomes as they find it difficult to know which level of government is responsible. Collectively, this work has sought to understand to what extent 1) citizens attribute different amounts of responsibility to different levels of government; 2) these attributions are correct; and 3) voters cast their ballot based on these perceptions of responsibility and assignment of credit or blame. Yet, the studies provide mixed evidence about the ability of citizens to make distinctions between the responsibilities of different levels of government. Some studies suggest that citizens are able to hold elected representatives to account for their performance at the more appropriate level of government (Atkeson and Partin, 1995), whereas others suggest that citizens have difficulty distinguishing between different levels of government and do not differentiate responsibility (Cutler, 2008) and that even when they are able to correctly distinguish it is unclear if this translates into greater accountability (Arceneaux, 2006; Cutler, 2004; Johns, 2011). While it is unclear from this work if accurate responsibility judgments improve electoral accountability in federal systems, as discussed above it does seem to increase electoral sanctioning in systems with higher clarity of governmental

responsibility, Furthermore this work leaves open the question of what enables citizens to correctly assign responsibility to different levels of government.

To answer this question, we first need to address the issue of what we mean by “responsibility” and “correct” responsibility assignments. In the context of multilevel government, “responsibility” has been considered primarily in two ways: functional responsibility or causal responsibility (see Hart, 1968 for a discussion on the types of responsibility). Functional responsibility refers to the role and tasks for which the government is responsible, in other words, the areas over which it has policy-making duties. For example, the European Union can be said to have functional responsible for monetary policy in the Eurozone. Causal responsibility refers to the influence an actor has on bringing about a specific outcome, which can lead to attributions of credit for positive outcomes and blame for negative results. In this chapter, we focus our analysis on functional responsibility by analyzing if and how individuals understand the degree of responsibility the EU has for various policy areas. We do not assess here individual perceptions of whether the EU has had a positive or a negative influence on policy outcomes.

Specifically, we are interested in assessing the degree of competence in citizens’ responsibility evaluations. But how do we know when citizens are making “correct” attributions of responsibility, especially in light of the above discussion that multilevel government systems are complex and that frequently responsibilities overlap between different levels? The literature on voting behavior defines competent voting as voters choosing the same way as they would have done if perfect information were available (see Lupia, 1994; 2001; 2006; Lau and Redlawsk, 1997). Similarly, we define competent attribution of responsibility as individual assessments that are similar to those that would have been made with perfect information. The best way of measuring “perfect

information” is to obtain expert opinions on actual divisions of responsibility in the EU. Similar to the approach used by Cutler (2008), who conducted an expert survey on Federal versus provincial responsibility in the Canadian context, we have conducted a survey of scholars specializing in European Union policy-making and averaged across expert evaluations to establish a baseline assessment of EU responsibility.³ By comparing citizen evaluations of responsibility to expert judgments, we can determine how close citizen evaluations are to fully-informed assessments. The next section presents our theoretical propositions about when and why individuals are capable of reaching attribution judgments of expert quality.

Ability and Motivated Reasoning

There is no doubt that it is difficult for individuals to attribute responsibility in federal or multilevel government systems. As discussed above, previous work has shown that sometimes citizens are able to differentiate governmental responsibility at various levels, and other times they are not able to. However, this prior work lacks a theory to explain when and why individuals are able to attribute responsibility in systems of multilevel governance. To address this question, we build on previous research which argues that knowledge about political issues is a function of ability, motivation, and opportunity (Luskin, 1990; Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996; Gordon and Segura, 1997). Individuals vary considerably in their cognitive ability to understand political

³ The expert survey was carried out online in February 2010. This is after the EES voter survey in June 2009, but before the onset of the Eurozone crisis with the first bailout of Greece in May 2010 and the Irish bailout in November 2010. Most of the names of the experts surveyed were drawn from the UACES Expert on Europe database, although this was supplemented for some countries in order to be able to send out at least four survey invitations per country. The goal was not to obtain a perfect distribution of experts across countries, in particular since EU experts are not represented equally throughout the Member States, but rather to have enough variation to be able to average the responses to obtain an “expert evaluation” of European Union policy responsibility.

information, their motivation to seek it out, and the opportunities they have to obtain this knowledge. This past research highlights the role that motivating factors play in encouraging citizens to seek out information, finding that the intrinsic factor of political interest is positively correlated with political knowledge. We go beyond motivating factors to explore the role of motivated reasoning: how do political attitudes influence information processing? Thus we do not ask *if* citizens are motivated by their political attitudes, but *how* are they motivated to process EU-related information. We theorize that cognitive ability facilitates, while political attitudes motivate information processing about the EU's responsibilities. This will be expanded in the ensuing sections.

Responsibility Judgments Facilitated by Cognitive Ability

Some individuals have a higher cognitive ability, which manifests itself in higher levels of political sophistication and facilitates the consumption and systematic processing of complex political information (Luskin, 1990). Indeed, high knowledge citizens are better able to understand institutional complexity and divided lines of responsibility. Highly sophisticated voters are more capable of recognizing that responsibility is divided among multiple levels and of making diffuse responsibility attributions, whereas low sophisticates generally focus on one political actor (Cutler, 2004; Gomez and Wilson, 2003; 2008). High sophisticates are also more competent in processing political information and news stories, and in converting this information into stored knowledge (Zaller, 1991). Moreover, an individual's level of general political knowledge is a reliable predictor of news story recall, implying that there is general audience receptive to news stories (Price and Zaller, 1993). Some individuals are generally interested in and more knowledgeable about a variety of political topics. In addition, highly informed citizens are more likely to perceive objective facts (Blais,

2010). As political sophisticates are better able to understand complex government structures, divided responsibility, and have the cognitive ability to process political news, we expect high political sophisticates to also be more knowledgeable about the European Union's responsibility. This brings us to our first hypothesis:

H1: Political sophisticates will make more correct responsibility assignments.

Responsibility Judgments Motivated by Political Attitudes

Even if we do expect individuals with higher levels of political sophistication to more correctly allocate responsibility, it is generally costly and thus irrational for most citizens to be politically informed (Downs, 1957). Indeed, we would not expect all individuals, even those of equal cognitive ability, to be equally competent at assigning responsibility. While individual cognitive ability facilitates information processing, political attitudes motivate information processing. The literature generally portrays motivating factors as something that generate *more* competent behavior and higher levels of knowledge (Luskin, 1990; Eveland, 2004). However, following the literature on motivated reasoning (Kunda, 1990; Taber et al., 2009), we argue that political attitudes, specifically, attitudes about European integration, may influence how individuals process information in a very different way, resulting instead in *less* competent behavior. People hold a variety of politically-related attitudes, some of them strong and stable, others are weak and variable. For this chapter, we are interested in the impact of strong attitudes because they are more likely to bias information processing and judgments, as well as influence behavior, than weak attitudes (Petty and Krosnick, 1995). There are multiple dimensions of attitude strength including attitude extremity and the inversely correlated attribute of ambivalence. Attitude extremity is defined as the deviation from the midpoint on a scale (Abelson, 1995), with individuals consistently holding mostly positive or

negative views towards the same attitude object. Ambivalence occurs when an individual holds a mixture of favorable and unfavorable views, and is measured by the sum of positive and negative evaluations (Thompson et al., 1995).

Attitude extremity and ambivalence influence information processing: individuals with extreme attitudes are more often motivated by directional goals, whereas ambivalent citizens are motivated by accuracy goals. Citizens with strong prior attitudes are often biased information processors, motivated by (dis)confirmation biases (Taber and Lodge, 2006; Taber et al., 2009). These individuals are more likely to discount information that is contrary to their prior beliefs, and indiscriminately accept information that is in line with their attitudes. In addition, they may actively seek out information that confirms their prior attitudes. This is well-established in the literature on voting behavior. Over fifty years ago, Campbell et al. (1960) asserted that individuals are prone to interpret political items through a partisan bias, in other words, that political attitudes distort information processing. This has been confirmed in many studies since then (Redlawsk, 2002; Bartels, 2002). An individual's political beliefs affect the way they engage in political decision-making and information processing (Rahn, 1993; Bartels, 2000). Partisan predispositions affect perceptions of the economy (Evans and Anderson, 2006; Evans and Pickup, 2010; Gerber and Huber, 2010) and attributions of responsibility (Tilley and Hobolt, 2011; Rudolph, 2003; 2006). While different terminology for attitudes has been used in various studies (partisanship, affect, predispositions, attachment, stereotypes, etc.) the findings are very consistent: strong attitudes bias perceptions and beliefs.

Conversely, individuals with high levels of ambivalence are more likely to process information in a systematic way (Rudolph and Popp, 2007; Lavine, Johnston and Steenbergen, 2012). There is evidence of the "greater aptitude of ambivalent citizens as compared to non-ambivalent citizens to make more balanced or accurate political

judgments” (Meffert et al., 2004, p. 64). When individuals undertake reasoning driven by accuracy goals, they spend more time and effort in evaluating the information and are much less reliant on several types of bias and heuristic shortcuts (Kunda, 1990). Individuals who engage in a search for information with the goal of forming accurate impressions are much more likely to report correct information or impressions than individuals who do not have an accuracy goal (Huang and Price, 2001; Biesanz and Human, 2010).

Recent research suggests that EU attitudes are often ambivalent (de Vries and Steenbergen, 2013; Stoeckel, 2013). Both extreme and ambivalent attitudes towards the European Union can motivate individuals to seek out information about the EU’s responsibilities. But while it seems reasonable that individuals with extreme pro- or anti-EU attitudes will be motivated to acquire EU-related information, we also expect that they are more likely to select information that is in line with their prior beliefs and to process new information in a biased manner. Therefore, strong EU supporters and Euroskeptics may not process information in a neutral way, leading to less accurate responsibility assignments and understanding of the EU’s policy-making role. Ambivalent individuals, and those without strong predispositions for or against the European Union, whom we refer to as “centrists”, are more likely to process information in a non-biased way and thus better able to allocate responsibility. *Centrists* is a diverse group that can include people who are ambivalent about the EU or who have moderate views on European integration. For this research, the heterogeneity of this group is not a concern as the theoretical focus is individuals with extreme attitudes compared to those with moderate attitudes.

H2: Individuals with extreme positive or negative attitudes about European integration are less able to correctly assign responsibility compared to centrists.

Contextual Information and the Politicization of European Integration

Moving beyond determinants at the individual level, we now turn to the role of the information context. Citizens do not acquire information in a vacuum; they are affected by the type of information available in the environment and the saliency of a given issue. The political context can motivate, provide information, and help even low informed citizens to gain knowledge (Kuklinski et al., 2001). Previous studies have shown that the knowledge gap between low and high sophisticates can shrink when more information is provided in the political context (Nicholson, 2003; Iyengar et al., 2010; Jerit and Barabas, 2006). But what type of political environment provides the opportunity to acquire information about complex structures of governance and motivates citizens to pay attention to this information?

We argue that that the politicization of the European issue plays an important role in determining not only the availability of information but also the salience of the issue to individual citizens. Recent work on political behavior in Europe has argued that the issue of European integration is becoming increasingly politicized as we are witnessing public contention over European matters in referendums, party competition and media reporting (de Vreese, 2003; Tillman, 2004; de Vries, 2007; Kriesi et al., 2008; Hobolt, 2009; Hooghe and Marks, 2009). EU politicization refers to the increasing contentiousness of decision making in the process of European integration (Schmitter, 1969). Hooghe and Marks posit that this politicization has changed both the content and the process of

decision making in the EU (2009, p. 8). Importantly, however, the level of politicization of European issues varies considerably across countries. We know from studies of vote choice in referendums and elections that arena-specific voting - so-called “EU issue voting” - is more pronounced when the European issue is politicized in the domestic sphere (Tillman, 2004; de Vries, 2007; Hobolt, 2009; de Vries et al., 2011). Equally, we would expect that the level of politicization of the European Union in a country affects the acquisition of information about the European Union’s responsibilities by increasing the amount of information available about the EU and making it a salient issue to more citizens. In turn, the increased salience and available information provides an opportunity for all citizens to acquire information about EU responsibilities.

It is important to note that a *lack* of politicization in the field of EU studies has been associated with elite (and media) consensus in favor of European integration, and generally little public debate (Hooghe et al., 2002; Hobolt et al., 2009). Consequently, politicization mostly implies that actors more critical of the EU are given a voice, creating debate and increasing the amount of negativity surrounding European integration. We therefore focus on two key indicators of politicization: the negativity of media coverage of the European Union and perceived party polarization on the EU issue. Firstly, learning can occur in negative media contexts through two mechanisms: by the increased availability and attention to information, and by increasing the salience of the issue. Studies have uncovered a negativity bias whereby negative information stands out above positive information (Rozin and Royzman, 2001). One reason for this is that negative stories are more likely to capture an individual’s attention through physiological arousal. Negative arousal in particular is associated with retaining more information (Reeves et al., 1991; Lang et al., 1996). As individuals pay the most attention to negative stories, we expect that the EU becomes salient in countries with more negative coverage of EU news.

Second, we would expect the EU to be salient in contexts where parties are polarized on the European integration dimension. Issue salience to the public increases when political parties are polarized on an issue, and salience decreases when parties' stances converge (Milazzo et al., 2012). In contexts where parties' positions on European integration are polarized, the EU becomes a more salient topic and there are higher levels of EU-related information available than in contexts with little party polarization. We theorize that politicized contexts provide an opportunity to learn from the information-rich environment and individuals are motivated to do so because of the perceived salience of the topic.

H3: The more negative the media tone is on stories about the European Union, the more correctly individuals will attribute responsibility.

H4: Individuals in contexts where parties are polarized along the European dimension will more correctly allocate responsibility.

Data

To test our hypotheses of responsibility attributions, we rely on three separate datasets: the 2009 European Election Study Voter Survey (EES, 2009c; van Egmond et al., 2010) which included a module of responsibility questions, the EES Media Study (EES, 2009b; Schuck et al., 2010) and a novel survey of experts on EU policy making conducted by Sara Hobolt, James Tilley, Susan Banducci and myself. The voter survey was fielded during the four weeks immediately following the June 2009 European Parliament elections, with randomly-drawn samples of at least 1,000 respondents in each of the EU's 27 Member States. The Media Study includes content analysis of news stories from two broadsheets and one tabloid as well as the main evening news broadcasts from each EU country. In total, 52,009 television and newspaper stories were coded. Finally, to

ascertain “correct” evaluations of European Union responsibility, we designed a survey of experts on European Union policy making. One hundred seventy-five potential expert respondents were sent a link to complete the survey online in February 2010 and the survey included the same responsibility questions as in the EES voter survey. We obtained at least two expert respondents per EU Member State and a total of 117 individuals responded (67% response rate). The goal was not to obtain a perfect distribution across countries, in particular since EU experts are not represented equally throughout the Member States, but rather to have enough variation to be able to average the responses to obtain an expert evaluation of European Union policy responsibility.⁴

The question modules on attributions of responsibility in both voter and expert surveys probed respondents for their responsibility judgments in five policy areas. The questions were worded as:

How responsible is the (country) government for economic conditions in (country)? Please indicate your views using any number on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means “no responsibility” and 10 means “full responsibility.”

And what about the European Union, how responsible is the EU for economic conditions in (country)?

These questions are repeated, substituting the following policy areas:

⁴ While there is an objective reality of EU responsibility for policy areas and outcomes, there is no straightforward single measure of that can be applied. Therefore, we have conducted an expert survey and use experts’ attribution of responsibility as a measure of this latent variable. We believe that an expert survey is the best, and indeed only, method to establish a baseline of divisions of responsibility, particularly in a governance structure as complex as the European Union. Other studies have demonstrated the validity and reliability of expert judgments when measuring similar political constructs such as party and policy positions in comparative politics (Steenbergen and Marks, 2007; Whitefield, Vachudova et al., 2007; Hooghe, Bakker et al., 2010). Experts, while highly sophisticated, are not merely “high sophisticate” citizens. They possess specialized knowledge that, when averaged across experts, enables estimation of a “true” allocation of responsibility.

- standard of health care
- levels of immigration
- setting interest rates
- dealing with climate change

A possible critique is that these questions do not specify which institution within the European Union – European Parliament, Commission, Central Bank, etc. is responsible. However, most citizens tend not distinguish between the myriad of European institutions (Karp et al., 2003) and rather consider the EU as an entity so the lack of institutional-specification should not pose a problem when measuring citizen perceptions of EU responsibility.

Table 3.1 provides a summary of expert and citizen attributions of functional responsibility to national governments and the European Union across five policy areas. Table 3.1 gives the mean and standard deviation for each group. Note that citizens and experts are further divided into Eurozone/non-Eurozone groups for the interest rate questions: citizens in Eurozone countries are compared to experts in Eurozone countries, while individuals in non-Eurozone countries are assessed against experts in non-Eurozone countries. To be able to assess the extent to which citizens assign responsibility correctly, we compare the scores given by individuals in our voter survey with the scores of experts. It is noteworthy that citizens and experts rank order the responsibility of the EU across policy areas similarly, with EU assigned the highest level of responsibility for interest rates (within the Eurozone) and the lowest responsibility for health care. On average, however, citizens attribute higher levels of responsibility to the European Union (EU) than do experts in all areas except one: Eurozone citizens attribute less responsibility than the experts do to the EU for interest rates.

Table 3.1: Expert and Citizen Attributions of Responsibility, 2009*

Policy Area	Experts		Citizens	
	Mean	(SD)	Mean	(SD)
National Government Responsibility				
Economy	5.88	(1.84)	7.19	(2.72)
Health Care	8.13	(1.77)	7.80	(2.70)
Immigration	6.69	(2.09)	7.23	(2.81)
Interest Rates - Non EZ	4.53	(3.35)	6.80	(3.22)
Interest Rates - Eurozone	2.38	(2.55)	5.96	(3.08)
Climate Change	5.83	(2.16)	6.25	(3.10)
European Union Responsibility				
Economy	4.48	(1.86)	5.70	(2.70)
Health Care	2.28	(1.96)	4.72	(3.00)
Immigration	4.18	(2.28)	6.00	(3.03)
Interest Rates - Non EZ	3.04	(3.32)	5.26	(3.26)
Interest Rates - Eurozone	7.95	(2.10)	6.29	(2.88)
Climate Change	5.50	(2.12)	6.22	(3.03)
<i>n</i>	117		27069	

* *Two-group mean comparison tests confirm there is a significant difference between citizens and experts for each policy area at $p < .01$.*

Note: Cell entries are the mean attribution of responsibility on a 10 point scale, with higher values indicating more responsibility.

Source: European Election Study Voter Survey 2009 and Expert Survey 2010.

The standard deviations are generally much smaller for the experts, showing that while there is some variation in expert opinion, there is less disagreement among experts than there is among citizens. We turn now to the multivariate analysis of the individual-level and contextual-level factors to test our hypotheses about the role of ability, motivation, and politicization in correctly allocating responsibility to the European Union.

Methodology

The goal of this empirical study is to compare citizen and expert attributions of responsibility to the EU to examine the individual-level characteristics and contextual factors that help citizens correctly allocate responsibility. The outcome variable is a measure of how close a citizen's assignment of responsibility is to the expert evaluation. To create our outcome variable, *closeness to the expert evaluation*, we first calculated the mean expert attribution of responsibility for each issue area.⁵ Next, we subtracted an individual's attribution of responsibility from the expert mean and took the absolute value to find the distance from expert evaluation. Finally, we averaged across the five policy areas to create the outcome variable of closeness to expert evaluation. Note that attributions to national governments and to the EU are included in the outcome variable. As these questions were asked sequentially and are inherently linked, both should be considered.⁶ Similar to how a multi-item scale can correct for measurement error, by using the average across all policy areas, we obtain a more accurate picture of individual's general understanding of EU responsibility.

The individual-level model estimates the importance of ability and attitudes in making competent responsibility judgments. To test the hypotheses that cognitive ability facilitates correct responsibility attributions, *political knowledge* is included as an explanatory variable. Political knowledge is a summated scale created from factual political knowledge questions (Zaller, 1992).⁷ We also theorized that attitudes towards

⁵ While there was less variation in the experts' attributions of responsibility than the citizens' attributions, the experts were not in complete agreement. To ensure the robustness of the findings, we also calculated the dependent variable using 1) separately, the lower and upper bounds of the expert confidence interval as the mean expert scores and 2) distance between citizens and their country experts (i.e. a citizen from the UK is compared to the UK experts). The substantive conclusions remain the same.

⁶ Results are the same when the dependent variable includes only attributions to the EU, and when the dependent variable is the relative responsibility of the EU compared to national governments. These model estimations can be found in the appendix.

⁷ Question wording given in the appendix. Scale has an alpha score of .67. While no measure is perfect, factual true/false questions are generally considered the best measure of political knowledge (Zaller, 1992).

the European Union would motivate individuals to preferentially seek information in line with their EU attitudes, resulting in biased information processing and less accurate allocations of responsibility among individuals with strong pro- or anti-EU sentiment, and more accurate judgments from ambivalent citizens. *EU attitudes* is a standardized summated rating scale, with positive values being most supportive of the European Union.⁸ Importantly, since we do not anticipate that there is a linear relationship between EU attitudes and responsibility judgments, we also include *EU attitudes squared* to capture the curvilinear effect. In addition, we include age, gender, occupation, and education as control variables as these have been associated with political knowledge (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996; Luskin, 1990).

To test our hypotheses on the direct effects of politicization of the EU issue, two contextual-level variables are included. The first, *negative media tone*, is a measure of the tone of news stories about EU-related topics in television broadcasts and newspapers.⁹ Higher values of this variable correspond to more negative tone in the media stories on EU issues. Second, *party polarization* is a measure of the political party system on the issue of European integration. Since we argue that polarization increases saliency and the amount of information available, it is crucial that voters perceive party differences. Therefore, this measure uses citizens' subjective placement of the parties in the EES voter

⁸ EU attitudes is a standardized item scale created from four equally weighted questions with an alpha score of .71. Please see online appendix for question wording. These items were chosen for the scale of EU attitudes as they were highly correlated with each other and meet the monotone homogeneity assumption in item-rest tests. In addition, we model it as a one-dimensional construct, as we found strong unidimensionality in the responses. Furthermore Euroskepticism is normally modelled unidimensionally in the literature (see e.g. Hooghe & Marks, 2005).

⁹ This is a measure from coding how news stories evaluated the European Union, European Parliament, and potential enlargement. Coders were instructed to identify all explicit EU evaluations and code them as: negative (-2), rather negative (-1), balanced/mixed (0), rather positive (+1), positive (+2). Reliability of tone measure is .65 (Krippendorff's Alpha) (Schuck et al., 2011).

survey and is calculated as the standard deviation of the mean party positions in each political system.¹⁰ Finally, we control for length of EU membership at the second level.

Multilevel analysis is used to model both the individual-level and contextual-level variation in closeness to expert evaluations. A multilevel, or hierarchical, model allows for estimating the variance between individuals as well as the variance between countries to specifically correct for the clustered nature of the data and to obtain correct standard errors (Snijders and Bosker, 1999).

Results

The model estimation results are shown in Table 3.2. The first column shows the random effects ANOVA, or null model, which allows us to partition the variance between the individual-level and country-level. Based on the variance estimates, the intra-class correlation is measured at .10, meaning that 10% of the variation in correct attributions of responsibility is due to between-country differences, while 90% is due to individual-level differences. This is in line with the cross-level variation found in other comparative studies of attitudes in Europe (such as Crepez and Damron, 2008; McLaren, 2007). The second column in Table 3.2 provides the results for a baseline model including only the substantive variables, and the final column includes the control measures.

¹⁰ Our findings are robust when we instead use the range of the parties' positions in each system with the EES data

Table 3.2: Multilevel Model of Correct Attributions of Responsibility

	Null		Baseline		Full	
	<i>Coef</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Coef</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Coef</i>	<i>SE</i>
Political Knowledge			0.07	(.00) **	0.06	(.00) **
EU Attitudes			0.09	(.01) **	0.07	(.01) **
EU Attitudes ²			-0.16	(.01) **	-0.15	(.01) **
<i>Control Variables</i>						
Education					0.05	(.00) **
Age					-0.002	(.00) **
Female					-0.05	(.01) **
<i>Occupation (Base=Upper Service)</i>						
Lower Service					-0.00	(.03)
Petty Bourgeois					-0.05	(.02) *
Routine Non-Manual					-0.08	(.03) **
Skilled					-0.13	(.02) **
Non-Skilled					-0.12	(.02) **
Still in Education					0.03	(.03)
Other					-0.03	(.02)
<i>Level 2 Variables</i>						
Negative Media Tone			0.19	(.07) **	0.14	(.06) *
Party Polarization			0.38	(.10) **	0.30	(.09) **
Membership Length					0.005	(.00) **
Intercept	-2.76	(.06) **	-3.42	(.12) **	-3.38	(.11) **
Variance	0.1	(.03)	0.05	(.01)	0.03	(.01)
Number of individuals	26662		26653		25596	
Number of contexts	28		28		28	

*Note: Significance levels ** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$, two-tailed test. The dependent variable is closeness to expert evaluation. Source: European Election Study 2009 and Expert Survey 2010*

At the individual level, we proposed that cognitive ability would facilitate while EU attitudes would motivate information processing. First, we theorized that citizens with high levels of political knowledge are generally more aware of and able to process political topics and would therefore make attributions closer to expert evaluations. We find this hypothesis is supported: political knowledge is strongly associated with correct

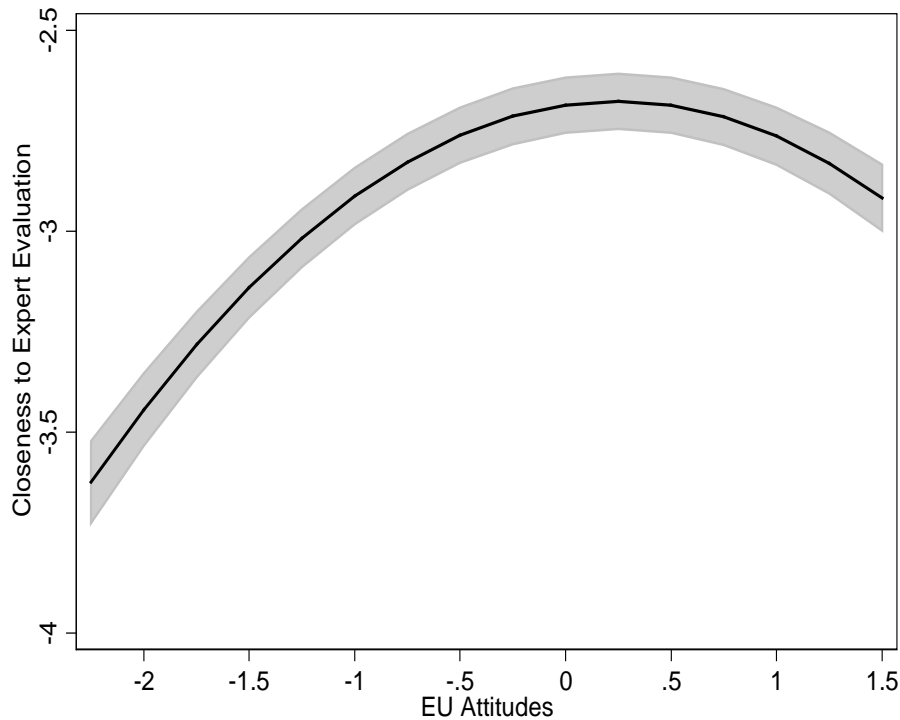
responsibility attributions.¹¹ For a one-unit increase in political knowledge, a respondent will be .06 points closer to expert evaluations, holding all other variables constant. The most politically sophisticated individuals will be, on average, .42 points closer to expert judgments. This finding is not surprising, but it could not be assumed. Citizens usually have limited knowledge about the European Union governance, so it is important to confirm that cognitive ability, measured by political sophistication, facilitates correct attributions of responsibility.

For the second individual-level covariate, we examine how political attitudes motivate information processing. We theorized that individuals with extreme attitudes – strong EU supporters and Euroskeptics – may select and process European Union-related information in a biased way. Therefore, they will make responsibility judgments that are less accurate. On the other hand, individuals with centrist or ambivalent attitudes towards the EU are much less likely to suffer from a perceptual bias and therefore are better able to acquire factual content about the European Union. This hypothesis was strongly supported: both Euroskeptics and EU supporters make less accurate responsibility judgments than do the people with centrist attitudes. This is demonstrated in Figure 1, which shows the predicted responsibility judgments across levels of EU attitudes and the associated 95% confidence intervals, holding all other variables at their mean. The figure clearly shows a curvilinear relationship between EU attitudes and correct assignment of responsibility. The most Euroskeptical individuals are a full point less accurate than centrists, while EU supporters are .4 points less accurate than those individuals with moderate or ambivalent EU attitudes. While individuals with extreme attitudes on both

¹¹ The knowledge items from the survey included questions about the EU and national governments. In models testing the EU and national items separately, both EU and national government knowledge had a strong and significant positive association with correct responsibility attributions.

ends of the spectrum suffer from biased information processing, the effect is stronger for those with negative attitudes.

Figure 3.1: Marginal Effect of EU Attitudes on Responsibility Judgments



Note: Predicted effect of EU attitudes on respondents' closeness to expert attributions of EU policy responsibility; 95% confidence intervals in gray. EU attitudes is a standardized summated rating scale of four questions from the 2009 EES Voter Survey and ranges from extreme negative to extreme positive. Compared with individuals holding moderate or ambivalent EU attitudes, the most Euroskeptical individuals are a full point less accurate in their attributions of governmental responsibility, while EU supporters are .4 points less accurate.

At the country-level, we proposed that politicization creates an opportunity for citizens to learn from the information-rich environment, resulting in more correct assignments of responsibility across levels of government. In contexts where the EU is highly politicized, the European issue becomes more salient and more accessible for people to learn about it. We tested this theory with two different contextual-level variables: negative media tone and party polarization. We find support for the direct

effects of media negativity. The EU issue is more salient to individuals in countries where the news stories about the EU are primarily negative, enabling citizens to make more accurate responsibility judgments. Austria, Flemish Belgium, and the United Kingdom had the media outlets with the most negative tone, while Malta and Bulgaria had the most positive media tone. Austrians were .5 points closer to expert evaluations than Maltese respondents, holding all other effects constant.

Similarly, there are strong direct effects of party polarization on accurate responsibility judgments. Individuals living in countries where political parties are perceived to be highly polarized on the European integration dimension, such as Sweden and Luxembourg, are able to make more accurate responsibility evaluations than citizens in countries who perceive the least polarization, including Estonia and Latvia.¹² While holding all other variables constant, citizens in the most polarized context are .59 points closer to expert evaluations of responsibility than citizens in the least polarized country. The politicization indicators of media tone and party polarization both support the theory that increased politicization creates an environment where individuals have access to information and improves correct attributions of responsibility. This suggests that while both predictors are measures of politicization and have similar effects on correct attributions of responsibility, they are tapping into slightly different processes. This is supported by their low correlation (.16), and lends further credence to the claim that

¹² An alternative measure of politicization of the EU issue could be the incidence of holding referendums on European integration. When included as a second-level variable instead of EU party polarization, this has a strong and significant relationship with attributions: citizens in countries who have had an EU referendum are closer to the expert judgments. However, this measure is highly correlated with party polarization at .51. Since the direction of causality is unclear – referendums could lead to party polarization or vice versa – we have chosen to focus on party polarization.

politicization, in various forms, increases the amount of information available to citizens.¹³

Conclusion

Citizens generally are uninformed about political affairs and are lacking in political knowledge. It is especially difficult for them to understand allocations of responsibility in complex institutional structures. Indeed, some scholars have argued that it is irrational for voters to spend the necessary time and energy to become well-informed about politics. Yet it is crucial for democratic accountability that citizens have at least a basic understanding of governmental responsibility. To that end, this chapter sought to answer if European citizens can competently allocate responsibility to the European Union. In addition, if becoming informed is costly, under what conditions can citizens make responsibility judgments that approach expert quality?

The empirical analysis provided support for our theoretical model which highlighted cognitive ability, political attitudes, and politicization of the European issue as key factors in allocations of responsibility to the EU. At the individual level, we posited that cognitive ability facilitates the acquisition and consumption of information, with high political sophisticates more likely to correctly allocate responsibility than their less sophisticated counterparts. Moreover, while attitudes towards European integration may motivate individuals to acquire information, attitude extremity promotes biased information processing which leads to less accurate responsibility judgments compared to those with ambivalent or moderate attitudes. This was demonstrated with a curvilinear

¹³ These substantive interpretations are from the baseline model. When controlling for membership length, comparing the most and least politicized contexts, the effect of media tone is .37 and party polarization is .47. A citizen in a founding member country is, on average, .27 points closer to the experts than citizens from member states who joined the EU in 2007.

relationship between EU attitudes and correct attributions of responsibility. At the contextual level, we theorized that politicization on the European issue would provide an opportunity to easily acquire information about the EU through increased salience and amount of information available. We demonstrated that two different types of politicization resulted in more correct responsibility attributions: negative media tone on EU stories and party polarization on European integration.

These findings have important implications for our understanding of what enables citizen competence in learning about complex political matters, and how this impacts the electoral connection. Political sophistication improves the electoral connection by increasing correct allocations of responsibility. While cognitive ability is important, it is only one factor that facilitates political learning; attitudes and the political context are also crucial. Extreme political attitudes as well as greater politicization can make the issue salient and motivate individuals to seek out information. However, because they are liable to suffer from (dis)confirmation biases which influence their information processing, individuals with extreme attitudes are the least likely to make correct responsibility judgments, thus negatively impacting the electoral connection.

Yet the story is reversed when we move from the individual to the contextual level. In the political context, higher levels of politicization result in increased information supply and more accurate political judgments. This greater amount of available information is accessible for anyone, so no matter how moderate or extreme an individual's attitudes are, he is more likely to form accurate impressions than a citizen with similar attitudes in a context with low levels of politicization. This is reassuring news for those who worry about increasing political contentiousness and the potential negative impacts this has on democratic outcomes. In the context of the European Union, we find that increased politicization improves citizens' knowledge of complex

governance structures, which can have a positive influence on democratic legitimacy and governance.

Thus the evidence is mixed in fulfilling the first criterion of the electoral connection: some individuals are able to competently allocate responsibility to the EU, while others must overcome their predisposed attitudes to do so. The average European citizen still feels under-informed about EU responsibilities, but as the European issue becomes more politicized, there is more information available in the political context. Thus we should expect citizens to become more competent at attributing responsibility overtime, unless attitudes towards Europe become more extreme. Citizen competence can improve the electoral connection through two routes: understanding functional responsibility gives citizens the opportunity to identify parties whose policies they want to see implemented, in other words, citizens can give a mandate on policies to pursue by electing specific parties. In addition, knowledge of governmental responsibility can serve as the moderating factor in holding representatives and governments to account. While this second aspect is less likely in the EU due to its complex institutional structure, accountability should be a goal of any democratic institution.

The next chapter will continue assessing the impact of attitude extremity, political sophistication, and issue politicization on the electoral connection by investigating cross-pressure and vote choice in European Parliament elections.

4

Cross-Pressured Voters? Beyond “Second-Order” and “Europe Matters” in European Parliament Elections

It is a fact that electoral outcomes are different between national and European elections. To explain this, the literature on vote choice in European Parliament (EP) elections largely falls into two camps: the “second order” arguments which state that European elections are fought over domestic matters, and those who argue that under certain conditions, “Europe matters” and citizens will vote on the basis of European integration concerns (Hobolt et al., 2009; de Vries et al., 2011). However, Members of European Parliament (MEPs) deal with a variety of issues, some of which relate to European integration, but many more which can be defined along the traditional left-right ideological spectrum (Hix et al., 2007). While European elections should be contested solely on domestic considerations, citizens ought not to base their vote purely on their European preferences either. We should expect to see changes between national and European elections because each level of government has different policy responsibilities. These changes in electoral outcomes may, in addition to SOE and Europe matters theories, also be due to citizens reconciling their left-right and EU issue preferences. This chapter contributes to the literature by moving beyond the SOE and Europe matters frameworks to contribute a further refinement of European election models, namely that the ideal vote choice in EP elections is for the party that reconciles an individual’s left-

right and European integration preferences.

Thus, this chapter and the next will examine the second criterion of the electoral connection: meaningful choices, using aspects of “responsible party model” (Thomassen, 1994). The key requirements from the responsible party model that inform this research include: that voters have a choice between parties with different policy platforms, that voters have policy preferences and see differences in party platforms, and that voters vote for the party that most closely matches their preferences. If the party supply offers choices that allow voters to give a mandate on both left-right and EU concerns, this would strengthen the electoral connection in the EU.¹⁴

The responsible party model furthermore suggests that voter preferences and party platforms be constrained to a single ideological dimension. However, left-right preferences are often not highly correlated with European integration preferences. In the 2009 EES voter study, left-right and EU integration self-placements were correlated at just .01 (EES, 2009c; van Egmond et al., 2010). Large, centrist parties tend to be fairly supportive of European integration, while smaller parties vary widely on their EU preferences (Hooghe et al., 2002). Euro-supportive and Euroskeptic parties, and individuals, are found on the left and right. Indeed, the issue of Europe cross-cuts the traditional left-right cleavage and can serve as a realigning influence (Evans, 1999). Most parties have been unable to integrate their European integration position into the dominant left-right dimension. Therefore, in European elections, the party offer may not match voters’ preferences on these two dimensions, resulting in cross-pressured voters who are forced to choose between voting for the party with the most similar stance on left-right ideology or the party closest on European integration issues.

¹⁴ Aspects of the responsible party model that are not investigated here include: that parties are sufficiently cohesive to implement their platforms, and that the winning party or coalition takes control of the government (as this is not possible in the European Union).

The potential implications of being cross-pressured are non-trivial, particularly in light of arguments about the democratic legitimacy of the European Union. First, a major finding from previous research is that cross-pressured individuals are more likely to abstain from voting (Lazarsfield et al., 1948; Berelson et al., 1954; Campbell et al., 1960; Worre, 1987; Nilson, 2002). It is well known that turnout is lower in European elections compared to national elections, and this is often cited as evidence of a democratic deficit. Statements by well-known politicians serve to increase the public's perception of a disconnect between the EU and citizens, for example, this one by Jack Straw, British MP and former Foreign Secretary: "I am now clear that there is a major democratic deficit within the EU... [A]s the European Parliament has been given more powers it has become less, not more, legitimate and that is shown by the drop in the average turnout across Europe" (Straw, quoted in Wintour, 2012). Second, when cross-pressured individuals vote, they must prioritize one issue over another. In the context of multilevel governance, this could lead to a voter choosing a party that does not represent him on most legislative issues. If this occurs widely, there is a risk that the European Parliament is not representative of its constituents.

To explore if citizens have meaningful choices at election time, I ask: are voters cross-pressured in European elections, and if so, under what conditions do they vote for the party with the most similar stance on traditional left-right issues and when do they vote for a party based on European integration concerns? These questions are important for the electoral connection because a lack of meaningful party choices, demonstrated by a high number of cross-pressured voters, can negatively impact the electoral connection. The factors influencing the prioritization, or weighting, of one dimension over the other may also affect the electoral connection.

In the sections below, first is an overview of the literature on elections to the European Parliament, cross-pressure, and spatial voting assumptions. From this I develop theoretical expectations about when citizens are more likely to be cross-pressured and how they will then “weight” each dimension to choose a party with the most utility. The hypotheses to be tested focus on the saliency of and information about the two dimensions. Specifically, that attitude extremity will increase the salience of one dimension over the other. In addition, individual- and contextual-level information increases the likelihood of citizens to vote along a particular dimension, with party system polarization along the European and left-right dimensions augmenting the amount of information available to voters. The role of political information may be conditioned by the level of party system polarization. I test these hypotheses with a series of multilevel logistic models and interpret the findings in subsequent sections.

European Parliament Elections

While EP elections are Europe-wide elections taking place during the same time period, the “Europeanness” of these elections is always a matter of debate. The elections are contested by national parties, often on issues of national, rather than European concern, and it is argued that voters use these elections as a referendum on the current government. The literature on European Parliament elections frequently classifies them as second-order elections (SOE) that are less important than national elections, as there is no government formation (Reif and Schmitt, 1980; Hix and Marsh, 2011). Three main characteristics define SOE: defection from governing parties, lower levels of turnout than in national elections, and greater success for small parties. It is often argued that domestic concerns prevail in European elections, with citizens voting on the basis of their (dis)satisfaction with the national government or politics in general. Another explanation

for the change in party fortunes between national and European elections is that citizens can vote “sincerely” in EP elections since government formation is not at stake (Marsh, 1998). However, most studies have taken a macro-approach to EP elections, and so it has been impossible to disentangle the individual motivations behind the change in voting behavior, and thus electoral outcomes, from national to European elections. This leads to a problem of observational equivalence: the electoral gains made by opposition or smaller parties could reflect frustration with domestic issues, be sincere voting, or signal concerns over European integration, as governing or mainstream parties are often more supportive of European integration than the general public.

Recently, the research emphasis has shifted to individual-level models of voting behavior in European elections to deal with these inconsistencies. This literature has focused on the similarities and differences in voting behavior at national and European elections, and the motivations behind these changes. Some studies have sought to classify the types of voters by comparing their behavior between national and European elections (Polk and Bakker, 2012; Weber, 2011), while others seek to understand the motivations behind changes in voting behavior (Hobolt and Spoon, 2012). The perceived distance between the voter and party on left-right issues and European integration is one reason for party switching or abstention. Following that that EP elections give voters the opportunity to vote “sincerely” could result in two observed behaviors. Since “less is at stake” citizens can vote for the party closest to themselves ideologically; parties that they would not vote for in national elections as they do not stand a chance of forming a government. Alternatively, sincere voting could result in EU-issue voting, with citizens choosing a party based on European integration concerns (Hobolt and Spoon, 2012). Some voters, particularly those with extreme pro or anti-EU attitudes, may see European elections as a chance to voice their feelings about European integration.

However, the policies handled by and the voting patterns within the EP fall primarily along the classic left-right socio-economic dimension, not on national matters or European integration concerns. While being on the “left” in the one country may not indicate the same issue position as “left” in another country, the *types* of issues that fall along this dimension are the same. Thus work exploring cleavages in the EP find that legislation voted on falls primarily along the left-right issue dimension of European politics, with a second, less important dimension incorporating government-opposition conflicts and European integration preferences (Hix et al., 2004; Hix et al., 2007). Furthermore, parties organize themselves at the European level on an ideological basis, not by national grouping. Therefore European policy-making does not fall neatly into a dichotomy of domestic issues versus European integration, and we should neither expect citizens to vote for the same party as they did in national elections nor to vote purely on the basis of European integration preferences.

Thus another reason for the second-order attributes that are seen in EP elections, namely abstention, governing parties losing seat share, and small parties gaining seats, is that European elections make the European issue salient, and voters must attempt to reconcile their position on left-right with EU integration when deciding which party to vote for. Importantly, voters have different motivations when choosing a party, and they may be cross-pressured between traditional left-right and European integration preferences. While previous studies have used the absolute distance between voters and their chosen parties to analyze issue similarity and vote choice, they did not consider the *relative* distance. In other words, is there another party *closer* to the voter on either the left-right or EU dimension than the one voted for? If so, that voter had to make a choice between two parties that were closest on different dimensions. This represents an issue cross-pressure that has not been examined in voting behavior in EP elections.

Cross-Pressure

Cross-pressure is generally defined as competing influences on political preferences. Most research in this area examines political participation, with individuals who are cross-pressured being less likely to participate. Early studies of cross-pressure examined the role that social identity plays in political participation and asserted that individuals who experience conflicting, rather than reinforcing, pressures from the various social groups to which they belong were less likely to participate in politics (Lazarsfield et al., 1948; Berelson et al., 1954; Campbell et al., 1960). These studies found that cross-pressured individuals were less interested in campaigns, delayed their voting decisions, and were more likely to abstain. More recent work seeks to uncover the causal mechanisms which link cross-pressure with participation, distinguishing between the *social* cross-pressures identified by early studies, and *issue* cross-pressures, which occur when an individual's "policy preferences cut across traditional ideological lines" (Therriault et al., 2011). Indeed, citizens whose policy preferences were at odds with their preferred candidate were more likely to abstain in American elections.

Turning to European politics, the number of studies on cross-pressure is limited, and the focus has been more on "issue" cross-pressure rather than social. In the European case, issue cross-pressure refers to an individual disagreeing with his preferred party on an issue of importance. For example, Danish voters who disagree with their party's stance on European integration are more likely to abstain in European elections (Worre, 1987). Cross-pressured Norwegian voters are more likely to abstain in EC referenda when parties apply hard pressure to vote a certain way, and more likely to turn out and vote their personal preference when parties apply soft pressure (Nilson, 2002).

While the emphasis of previous studies of cross-pressure has been on abstention as a result of conflicting preferences, the puzzle we are left with is that cross-pressured

citizens do vote, but for whom? Whether resulting from social or issue pressure, no studies to our knowledge have yet examined how cross-pressured voters either reconcile or prioritize these competing considerations to choose a party. Indeed, we must first ask the question if cross-pressure is pervasive across electorates, or something experienced by a minority of voters. This seems a particularly important inquiry for European elections, where citizens must balance their socio-economic ideological position with their stance on European integration. As left-right and EU positions are not necessarily correlated, it almost seems a *fait accompli* that a portion of the European electorate must have preferences that conflict with their party.

Proximity Model of Party Choice

In line with the afore-mentioned research on European Parliament voting behavior, a proximity model of party choice is used to determine who is cross-pressured. In brief, voters and parties are positioned in a multidimensional Euclidean issue space, voters have a preferred policy position in that space, and they will choose the party that is closest to their own position; or, in other words, voters have the greatest “utility” for the nearest party (Downs, 1957). To disentangle the conditions under which voters choose parties based on left-right versus European dimensions, the proximity model of party choice can be defined as:

$$U_{ij} = -\|v_i - c_{ij}\|/\beta \circ w_i + c_{ij} + e_{ij} \quad (1)$$

Where U_{ij} represents the utility that individual i receives from voting for party j , $v_i - c_{ij}$ represents the perceived distance between the voter and party on each dimension (here the left-right and EU issue dimensions), β is the importance the average voter places on the issue dimension, and w_i is a vector of weights the voter assigns to each of these

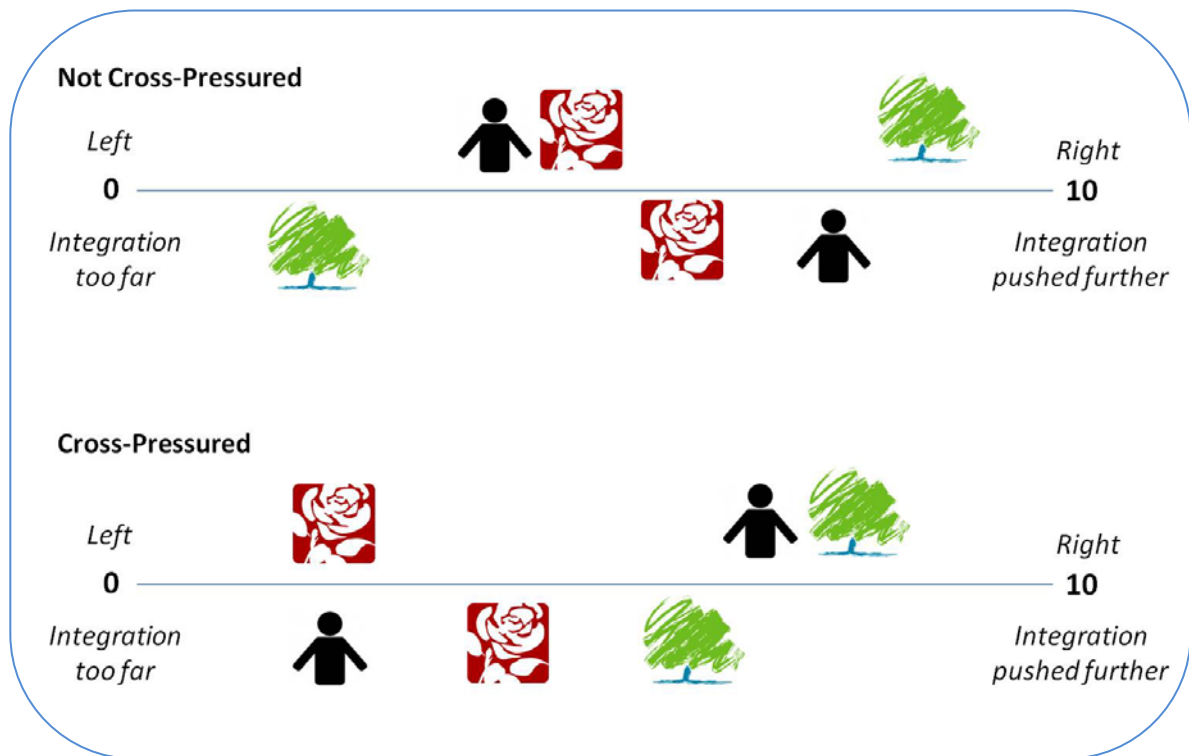
dimensions (Grynaviski and Corrigan, 2006). Voters will naturally have other considerations, c_{ij} , and an error term e_{ij} . In the literature it is often assumed that individuals will all use the same weights on the various dimensions, hence it is the distance that affects the utility of a given party. In contrast, I assume most individuals will assign different, unknown weights to each dimension, resulting in a deviation from the standard utility model measured by proximity. Recall from Chapter 2 that I do not anticipate that individuals will behave in line with rational choice expectations. Voters' rationality is bounded: they have different motivations when weighting issue dimensions, they do not have perfect information and they are biased information processors. It's not simply a matter of asking individuals which items are valued in the utility function, because different considerations are made salient depending on the context and the individual's predispositions. Furthermore, voters will process the available information in different ways depending on their political attitudes. For these reasons it is not really possible to estimate the parameters of the utility function. Instead, I use the utility function to inform the creation of two novel dependent variables which take into account bounded rationality. The first is a dichotomous measure of cross-pressure, and the second is a dichotomous variable of whether cross-pressured voters prioritize the left-right or the EU dimension in selecting a party. This is explained in further detail in the Data and Measurement section. First, I will give an illustration of cross-pressure in EP elections and outline the hypotheses to be tested.

When one party minimizes the distance on each dimension, voters are not cross-pressured and are not forced to choose between European or left-right ideologies when casting their vote in EP elections. However, if a voter is close to one party on the left-right dimension, but a different party on the European dimension, then this voter is cross-pressured, as there is not a single party that is most proximate on both dimensions. The

weight a voter assigns to each dimension determines which one to prioritize when selecting a party. A simple illustration of a British voter in Figure 4.1 will demonstrate two potential scenarios. In the first example, the voter is closest to the Labour Party on the left-right dimension and the European integration dimension. There is one party that minimizes the distance on both dimensions, so this voter is not considered to be cross-pressured. While there is some distance between the voter and party, one party is the closest.¹⁵

¹⁵ I utilize a city block distance in the calculation of distances between self and party. In the literature distances are measured in either city block or Euclidean distances. There is generally little difference in outcomes between the two (Lewis and King, 1999) or the city block is a slightly better fit (Grynaviski and Corrigan, 2006).

Figure 4.1: Issue Cross-Pressure on the Left-Right and EU Dimensions



Note: Example of two individual's perceived self and party positions, using UK Labour (rose) and Conservative (tree) parties as an example. The person at the top is not cross-pressured, and the second example faces issue cross-pressure.

Compare this to a second situation where the voter is close to two different parties, the Conservative Party on left-right, and the Labour Party on EU integration. This voter faces cross-pressure as his European integration preferences are not matched by the party he feels closest to on LR issues. In both examples, there is distance between the voter and the parties. This is important because several previous studies have analyzed the distance between voter and party on the European integration dimension to assess its impact on voting behavior, suggesting that attitudes about European integration may play a role in both European and national elections (Evans, 1999; de Vries, 2007; Hobolt and Wittrock, 2011; Hobolt, Spoon and Tilley, 2009). Recent work predicts voters' utilities for parties placed at different positions along the LR and EU dimensions (Dinas and

Pardos-Prado, 2012). What this chapter analyzes is not the distance between the voter and their chosen party on the EU integration or left-right dimension, but is another party closer on either dimension than the one they voted for? Thus, are voters able to select a party that is a “good enough” match on both dimensions? If not, how do cross-pressured individuals then assign a weight to determine which dimension will take precedence at the ballot box?

These research questions motivating this chapter require that voters are willing and able to place themselves and some of the parties on the left-right and EU integration issue dimensions. Without these placements, we cannot determine if an individual is cross-pressured or not. Yet, as previously discussed, many citizens are lacking in knowledge about EU affairs, and may not know where they, or parties, stand on the EU issue. Therefore the analysis is necessarily limited to those citizens who were able to make self and party placements on both the left-right and EU issue dimension. While not ideal, this can still give a better understanding of the factors affecting cross-pressure and vote choice. If a voter is unable to place themselves and/or parties, then necessarily they cannot feel cross-pressure between left-right and EU, so it is reasonable for them to be excluded from the analysis. A better understanding of these excluded individuals and their electoral behavior is important, but must necessarily be saved for future work.

I envision a parallel process by which the same variables influence the probability that an individual is more likely to be cross-pressured and also the relative weights s/he assigns to each dimension. The relative *salience* of and the amount of *information* about each dimension will determine the weight that voters assign it. Voters then will have a higher utility to vote for one party over another.

Individuals hold a variety of beliefs and attitudes which may or may not matter in their political decision making, but an extreme attitude is more likely to be a salient

attitude (Abelson, 1995). First, an individual with extreme attitudes on the left-right or EU dimension is likely to be farther away from parties, increasing the probability that she will be cross-pressured. Second, individuals with extreme issue attitudes are more likely to weight this dimension more heavily when choosing which party to vote for.

Cross-Pressure Hypotheses:

H1a: Voters with extreme pro or anti EU attitudes are more likely than moderates to be cross-pressured.

H1b: Voters with extreme left or right attitudes are more likely than moderates to be cross-pressured.

Weighting Hypotheses:

H1c: Voters with extreme pro or anti EU attitudes are more likely than moderates to vote for the party closest to themselves on the EU dimension.

H1d: Voters with extreme left or right attitudes are more likely than moderates to vote for the party closest to themselves on the left-right dimension.

If attitude extremity increases the salience of a given dimension, political sophistication enables voters to select the closest party. On one hand, political sophisticates may be more likely to be cross-pressured than low-knowledge individuals because they can better understand where parties are positioned in relation to their own issue preferences, and recognize that they feel close to different parties on different issue dimensions. On the other hand, political sophisticates may be more able to reconcile their LR and EU preferences, and identify a party that is closest on both dimensions. Due to this heterogeneity, I do not anticipate a direct relationship between political sophistication and being cross-pressured.

However, I do predict that cross-pressured political sophisticates will be more likely to vote for the party closest on the LR dimension, rather than EU. As discussed above, the EP is primarily responsible for policy making that falls on the traditional left-right dimension, not EU integration issues. Politically sophisticated voters should be the most able to understand this and therefore understand that a vote in European elections should be based more on left-right issues than the EU issue. Indeed, this expectation is supported by the previous chapter which demonstrated that political sophisticates are more likely to correctly assign policy responsibility to the European Union than are low sophisticates. I acknowledge that there may be a problem of observational equivalence in this situation: citizens could choose to vote the basis of left-right concerns rather than EU due to habitual or partisan voting, or because they understand that the EP does not deal solely with European integration issues. However, controlling for partisanship will relieve some of this potential ambiguity.

Weighting Hypothesis:

H2: Cross-pressured political sophisticates will be less likely to vote on the basis of the EU dimension.

Moving beyond the individual-level predictions, I turn now to the impact of the political context. Research examining individual-level participation and vote choice has highlighted the important role that the political context plays (Hobolt, 2005). In particular, “EU-issue voting” is more pronounced in party systems polarized along the EU dimension (de Vries et al., 2011). Party divergence on issues creates more choice for voters, and results in more information being available in the political environment. Party positions and options vary widely across the 27 member states, so citizens in some countries will have more information available to them than others. Party systems that are

polarized on either the LR or EU dimensions are more likely to offer citizens more information. First, the increased information about party positions will increase the probability that citizens will identify different parties on the LR and EU dimension, making them cross-pressured. Second, highly polarized contexts increase an issue's salience, and therefore likelihood that voters will weight that dimension more heavily. I make the following predictions about the direct effects of party polarization:

Cross Pressure Hypotheses:

H3a: As LR party polarization increases, so too will the probability that individuals are cross-pressured.

H3b: As EU party polarization increases, so too will the probability that individuals are cross-pressured.

Weighting Hypotheses:

H3c: Voters in countries polarized along the left-right dimension will be more likely to vote for the party closest on the LR scale.

H3d: Voters in countries polarized along the EU dimension will be more likely to vote for the party closest on the EU scale.

Finally, I expect the political context to moderate the impact of political sophistication. If polarized environments increase the amount of information available to voters, then even politically unsophisticated citizens have the opportunity to learn about the issue space. Indeed, increased information has been found to enable low-knowledge citizens to perform as though they were well-informed (Kuklinski et al., 2001).

H4: The impact of party polarization will be stronger for politically unsophisticated citizens than for political sophisticates.

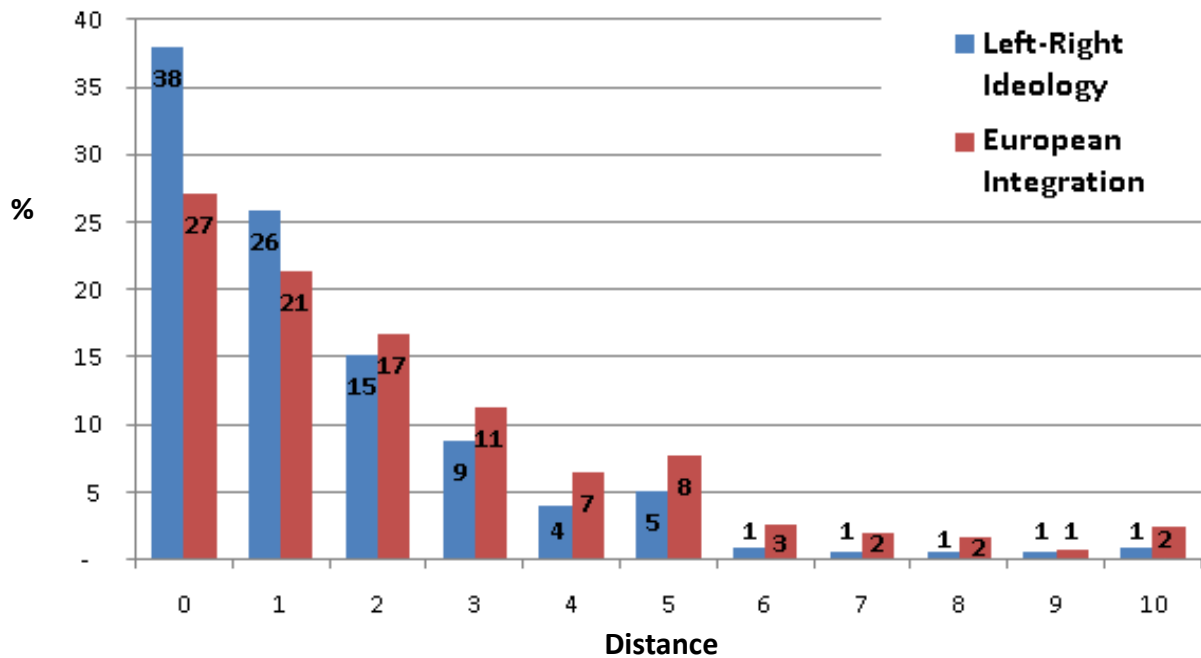
Data and Measurement

To test the hypotheses, I utilize the 2009 European Election Study Voter Survey (EES 2009c; van Egmond et al., 2010). The survey was fielded during the four weeks immediately following the June 2009 European Parliament elections, with randomly-drawn samples resulting in at least 1,000 respondents in each of the EU's 27 Member States. Respondents were asked to place themselves and several political parties on a scale from 0 to 10, where zero is extreme left and 10 is extreme right. I refer to this as their left-right (LR) placement. They were also asked to place themselves and the same parties on a scale of European integration, where 0 means "European unification has already gone too far" and 10 is "unification should be pushed further" (EU placement). I measured the absolute distance between the voters' self placement and their placement of each of the parties. For example, if a voter placed himself at 6, and a party at 8, the distance would be 2.

It is often assumed that when given the opportunity to subjectively place themselves and political parties on a scale, most individuals will minimize the distance between themselves and their chosen party. This "projection effect" has been documented in various countries, with individuals placing their preferred parties closest to themselves and overstating the distance between themselves and other parties (Merrill et al., 2001). In the EES 2009 Voter Survey, the self and party placement questions were asked sequentially, therefore it would be easy for voters to remember how they positioned themselves and perhaps be subject to projection effects and place their preferred party at a similar location. To examine if this occurred, Figure 4.2 shows the distance between voters and their chosen parties in the 2009 European elections. This chart shows that 38% of voters placed themselves and their party at the same position on the left-right scale, while 27% of voters placed themselves and their party at the same position on the

European integration scale. This suggests that voters are not simply placing themselves and their chosen party at the exact same location.¹⁶

Figure 4.2: Distance to Chosen Party in 2009 EP Elections



Note: Perceived distance between individual and the party they voted for in the 2009 EP elections. Percentages given at the top of each bar.

Moreover, I am interested not only in the distance to the individual’s chosen party, but if there was another party that was *closer* to the voter on either scale. Table 4.1, Section A summarizes how many individuals were “cross-pressured” – that is, closer to different parties on the European and LR dimensions – whether or not they voted in the EP election. If a respondent is equally close to two different parties on both dimensions, I do not consider them to be cross-pressured. However, if a second party is closer on a

¹⁶ However, perhaps there is still a projection effect occurring, and respondents are placing other parties farther away. As an additional check, distances between self and preferred party were measured using the mean party placement, rather than the individual’s perceived party placement. These robustness checks are detailed in Appendix VII, and indicate that while there may be a small projection effect, there is meaningful response given for self and party placements.

dimension but only by one point, should the respondent be considered cross-pressured? The table below shows the breakdown using a strict proximity definition, and one allowing for another party to be closer by one point. Note that only individuals who gave self and at least some party placements can be categorized as “cross-pressured” or “not cross-pressured”. Those unable or unwilling to give placements are in a third “don’t know” category. For the vast majority of individuals who know where they, and the main political parties, stand on European integration, there is not a conflict between their left-right socioeconomic preferences and stance on European integration. They may not completely agree with their chosen party on one issue or the other, but they perceive that one party that is closer to themselves on both issue dimensions than any other parties.

Table 4.1: Issue Cross-Pressure in 2009 EP Elections

	A. All Respondents						B. Voters Only
	Strict Proximity			Proximity w/in 1 pt			Proximity
	n	%	% Voted	n	%	% Voted	%
Cross-Pressured	8,435	31	75	4,262	16	75	17
Not Cross-Pressured	9,631	36	75	13,804	51	75	54
DK EU or LR	9,003	33	63	9,003	33	63	29
n	27,069			27,069			19,111

C. Cross-Pressured Voters: Which Dimension?

	%
Left-Right	37
EU	15
Neither	49
n	3,181

Note: Sections A and B show the percentage of voters who faced issue-cross pressure and at what rate they participated in EP elections. Section C shows which dimension cross-pressured voters prioritized in the elections. Source: 2009 EES Voter Survey

Section A in Table 4.1 also shows the percentage of each group that voted. There is no difference in participation rates between cross-pressured or not voters, but a higher percentage of citizens in the DK group abstained compared to the other categories.¹⁷

The rest of the table, and this chapter, utilizes the more generous definition of cross pressure. In multi-party systems, a one-point difference is quite minimal, and a more accurate representation of citizens facing competing influences would be one that allows for small differences. Section B illustrates the categorization of voters in the 2009 European elections. The right-hand column shows that 54% of voters were not cross pressured and voted for a party that was closest on both the LR and EU dimensions, 17% of voters were cross-pressured, and 29% could not be classified as they did not provide self and/or party placements. In Section C, the cross-pressured voters are broken down by party choice: did they vote for the party closest on the LR dimension, EU dimension, or neither? Or, returning to the utility function, which dimension did they “weight” more heavily? Individuals in the LR category, 37% of cross-pressured voters, chose to vote for the party closest to themselves on the left-right scale, meaning that a different party had a smaller distance on the EU scale. The opposite is true for the 15% of cross-pressured voters in the EU category: they voted for the party closest on the EU dimension, while eschewing a different party which was closer on the LR scale. Surprisingly, nearly half of voters selected a party that was not the closest to them on either the LR or EU dimension.

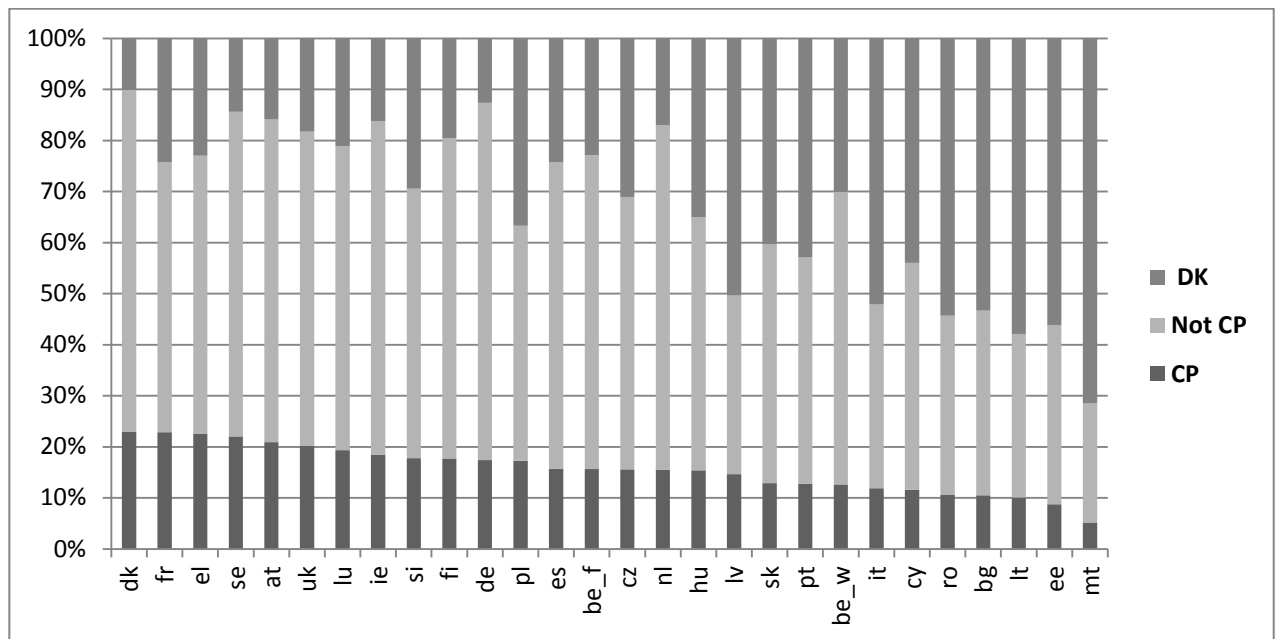
While it is discouraging that one third of respondents could not be classified because they lacked the ability or willingness to place themselves or parties on one or

¹⁷ Appendix VIII shows the percentage of cross-pressured citizens using distances calculated from the mean party position. The proportions are similar, but with a higher number of cross-pressured citizens, as would be expected. The limitation of the mean party position method is that individuals may not know they are “cross-pressured” – if a voter places different parties closest to themselves on different dimensions, he likely perceives conflicting preferences. If a voter is by definition cross-pressured using the mean party placement method, he may not perceive the conflict as he did not place the parties at those relative locations. Therefore, the analysis in this paper will utilize perceived party positions.

both dimensions, there is also surprisingly good news in Table 4.1. Only sixteen percent of respondents are cross-pressured, that is, closer to one party on the left-right dimension and another party on the EU dimension. Over half the European electorate is able to place themselves and at least some parties on both the left-right and European integration scales, and feels closest to the same party on both dimensions. Furthermore, being cross-pressured does not seem to impact electoral participation: individuals who perceived themselves to be cross-pressured were equally likely to vote in EP elections as those who did not perceive cross-pressure.

As shown in Figure 4.3, there is variation between countries in the percentage of cross-pressured respondents and those who are unable to make self or party placements. Generally, the countries with the smallest proportion of cross-pressured citizens are also the countries with the largest proportion of respondents unable or unwilling to place themselves or parties. For example, only 5% of Maltese are cross-pressured, but this is likely due to 72% being unable to place at least one party on either dimension. Estonia does slightly better, with 56% being unable to place parties and 9% facing cross-pressure. If an individual does not know where at least some parties stand in relation to their own preferences, then they cannot be cross-pressured. Denmark, France, and Greece all have the highest percentage of cross-pressured respondents at 23%.

Figure 4.3: Categorization of Respondents by Country



Note: Percentage of respondents in each country (two letter country abbreviation) who were cross-pressured (dark bar at the bottom), not cross-pressured, or unable to make self or party placements. Source: 2009 EES.

Model Specification

Recall that in this chapter two sets of parallel hypotheses will be tested: the first set to analyze the conditions under which an individual will be cross-pressured, and a second set to examine when cross-pressured individuals will weight the EU dimension more heavily than LR. I anticipate that increased salience of one dimension or the other will increase the likelihood of being cross-pressured, and then of weighting the salient dimension more heavily in party choice. To capture the effect of salience, I utilize measures of EU and LR attitudes. The variable EU Attitude ranges from 0 to 10, with 0 being “integration has gone too far” and 10 “integration should be pushed further”.¹⁸ LR Attitude ranges from 0 to 10, and is the respondent’s self placement where 0 is extreme

¹⁸ The results were substantively similar when I substituted for EU attitudes a standardized item scale created from four equally weighted questions: q79, q80, q83, and q81; alpha score of .71. Please see Appendix X for a discussion and results.

left and 10 is extreme right. To test the hypothesis that extreme attitudes have a non-linear effect, quadratic terms of EU and LR attitudes are also included.

At the country-level, I include two covariates which measure the level of party polarization on the left-right and EU scales. EU Party Polarization and LR Party Polarization are from the 2009 EES voter survey, and are measured as the standard deviation of respondents' placements of political parties on the LR and European integration scale. Utilizing voters' perceptions of party location allows analysis of the amount of choice individuals have in the electoral arena. It is this perception and the amount of dispersion of parties relative to voters that matters more than expert placement of parties in space. To address potential concerns about cross-national differences in scale interpretation and party dispersion relative to voters, separate models were run utilizing *compactness of parties* in the LR and EU issue space (Alvarez and Nagler, 2004)¹⁹ which standardizes perceived party polarization by voters' self placements. Finally, a cross-level interaction of each polarization measure with political sophistication is included to test our moderating hypothesis. To measure the impact of information, Political Sophistication is a summated scale created from the political knowledge questions.²⁰

Included as control variables are age, party attachment, and social class. Age is a continuous variable measuring how many years old the respondent is. Government Approval is an indicator variable, taking a value of 1 if the respondent approves of the national government's record, 0 if he disapproves. Party Attachment is also an indicator variable with a value of 1 if the respondent "feels close" to a political party. Individuals with party attachments will be more likely to support their party in EP elections and be

¹⁹ Using the measure of party compactness in the issue space leads to the same substantive results for both the direct effect and interaction. However, it is more intuitive to interpret party polarization therefore we have not included the compactness measure in the results and discussion.

²⁰ Question wording given in the appendix. Scale has an alpha score of .67. While no measure is perfect, factual true/false questions are the best measure of political knowledge (Zaller 1992).

habitual voters. Large parties rely on their identifiers to turn out and vote for them, and they direct their campaigns at party supporters. The confluence of party attachment, habit, and party pressure makes it more likely that partisans will give less thought to the European integration dimension, so it is important to control for this. Social class is a series of 8 dummy variables, categorized based on the Goldthorpe class schema with “upper service” as the reference category (Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1992). Survey question wording for all included variables is available in Appendix I.

Results

The results of the multilevel binary logistic regressions are shown below in Table 4.2. Column A shows the output of the cross-pressure model, while Column B is the party choice model which compares cross-pressured individuals who voted for the party closest on the EU dimension with those who voted for the party closest on LR as the base category. For both sets, I include the same covariates at the individual and country level and run first a model with direct, or unconditional effects only, and then a second model which includes the cross-level interaction. Recall that the coefficients are given in log-odds units, so are not directly interpretable. To ease interpretation of the results, I will examine the direct and linear effects by estimating changes in predicted probabilities. Graphs of the marginal effects will help to interpret the coefficients on the non-linear and interactive variables.

Table 4.2: Multilevel Model of Cross Pressure in European Politics

	A. Cross Pressure vs. Not CP				B. Party Choice: EU vs. LR Dimension			
	Direct		Conditional		Direct		Conditional	
<i>Individual Level</i>								
EU Attitude	-0.311 ***		-0.311 ***		0.071		0.074	
	(.02)		(.02)		(.07)		(.07)	
EU Attitude ^2	0.019 ***		0.019 ***		0.019 **		0.019 ***	
	(.00)		(.00)		(.01)		(.01)	
LR Attitude	-0.183 ***		-0.183 ***		0.495 ***		0.493 ***	
	(.02)		(.02)		(.07)		(.07)	
LR Attitude^2	0.019 ***		0.019 ***		-0.061 ***		-0.061 ***	
	(.00)		(.00)		(.01)		(.00)	
Knowledge	-0.008		-0.115 **		-0.109 **		-0.250 +	
	(.01)		(.04)		(.04)		(.15)	
Party Attachment	0.094 **		0.094 **		-0.244		-0.247	
	(.04)		(.04)		(.15)		(.16)	
Education	0.004		0.004		-0.033		-0.034	
	(.02)		(.02)		(.05)		(.06)	
Age	0.002		0.002		0.003		0.003	
	(.00)		(.00)		(.00)		(.00)	
Female	0.067 +		0.067 +		0.067		0.062	
	(.04)		(.04)		(.14)		(.14)	
<i>Country Level Predictors</i>								
Intercept	-0.376 *		0.049		-1.162 *		-0.592	
	(.18)		(.24)		(.58)		(.83)	
EU Pty Polarization	0.146 *		0.143 +		0.118		0.117	
	(.07)		(.08)		(.18)		(.19)	
LR Pty Polarization	0.025		-0.189 *		-0.455 ***		-0.739 *	
	(.05)		(.09)		(.14)		(.33)	
<i>Cross-Level Interaction</i>								
Knowledge*LR	-							
Party Polarization			0.054 **		-		0.071	
			(.02)				(.07)	
<i>Random Effects</i>								
Variance	0.016		0.017		0.024		0.03	
	(.01)		(.01)		(.04)		(.04)	
n Groups	28		28		28		28	
n Individuals	17341		17341		1567		1567	

Note: Multilevel binary logistic model. In Column A, "Cross Pressured" is the dependent variable, with "Not Cross Pressured" as base category. In Column B, voters who were cross pressured and chose the party closest on the "EU dimension" is the dependent variable, with those who chose the party closest on the "LR dimension" as the base category. Coefficients are log odds with standard errors in parentheses. Output of social class withheld for space considerations, as no category was significant in the models.

*Source: 2009 European Election Studies Voter Survey +p<.1 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001*

Cross-Pressured Citizens?

Let us begin by discussing the results from the first model to highlight the conditions under which citizens are more likely to be cross-pressured. Table 4.2, Column A compares citizens who are cross-pressured with those who are not, using the respondent's perceived party position to calculate cross pressure.²¹ The first hypothesis was that citizens with extreme attitudes would be more likely to be cross-pressured. A strong effect is found for the EU and LR attitudinal variables. Due to the non-linear relationship anticipated between attitudes and cross-pressure, the effects have been graphed in Figures 4.4 and 4.5 for ease of interpretation. A "U" shape relationship for both EU and LR attitudes was hypothesized, but this is found only for LR.

²¹ As a robustness check, the same models were also run using the mean party position. The results are substantively the same and are included in the appendix.

Figure 4.4: Effect of EU Attitudes on Cross-Pressure

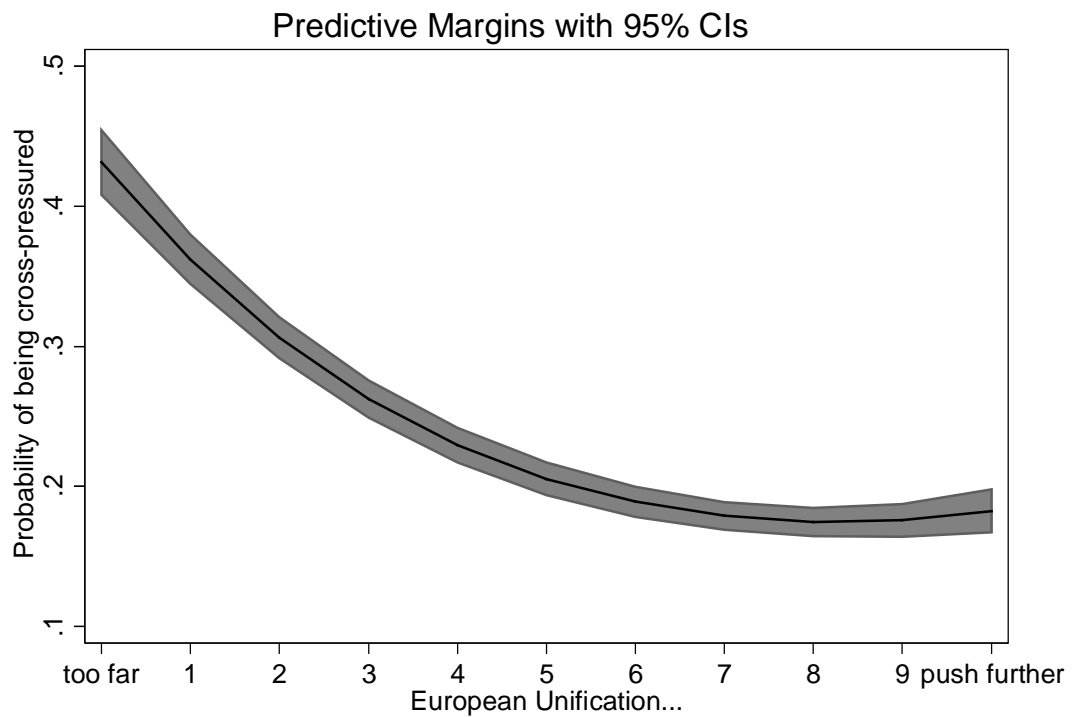
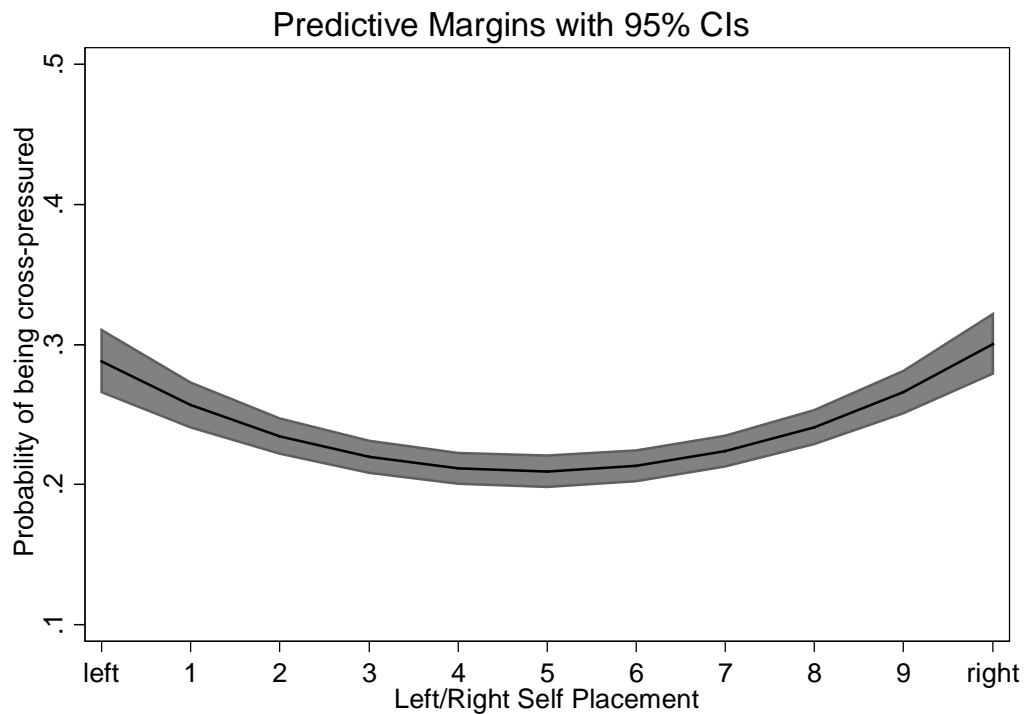


Figure 4.5: Effect of LR Attitudes on Cross-Pressure



Note: Marginal effects of EU (4.4) and LR (4.5) attitudes on likelihood of being cross-pressured. 95% confidence intervals in grey. The effect of attitudes is strongest for those with extreme negative EU integration attitudes, and for those with extreme left or right attitudes.

Figure 4.4 illustrates that individuals who believe integration has “gone too far” are about 20 percentage points more likely to be cross pressured compared to those in the middle and opposite end. As attitudes become moderate to positive towards EU integration, the marginal effect of EU attitudes diminishes. Why is this? Most likely because there are anti-EU parties, whom voters perceive to be on the far left of the EU dimension, but there are few extreme pro-EU parties. Therefore, there is more likely to be a party that is close to individual with extreme anti-EU integration attitudes, than there is to a person with extreme pro-EU attitudes. However, because these single issue parties are often also perceived as far right on the left-right spectrum, the same individual may feel closest to another, less extreme party on socio-economic issues and hence be cross-pressured.

Turning to the left-right dimension, Figure 4.5 shows that moderates on the LR ideology spectrum are much less likely than individuals with extreme left or right self-placements to be cross-pressured. This matches our expectation that individuals with extreme left or right ideologies will be less likely to identify with the same party on both left-right and EU dimensions.

Looking now at political sophistication, no relationship was expected between political sophistication and cross-pressure, political sophistication could result in the ability to locate a preferred party who was close on both dimensions, or to perceive that different parties are closest on each dimension. Due to the heterogeneity of political sophisticates’ self and party positioning, the data support this expectation and no significant relationship was found. Furthermore, the control variable of party attachment, while statistically significant in the results, does not have a substantive impact on being cross-pressured or not. By estimating the predicted probabilities, having a party attachment increases the likelihood of being cross-pressured by two percentage points,

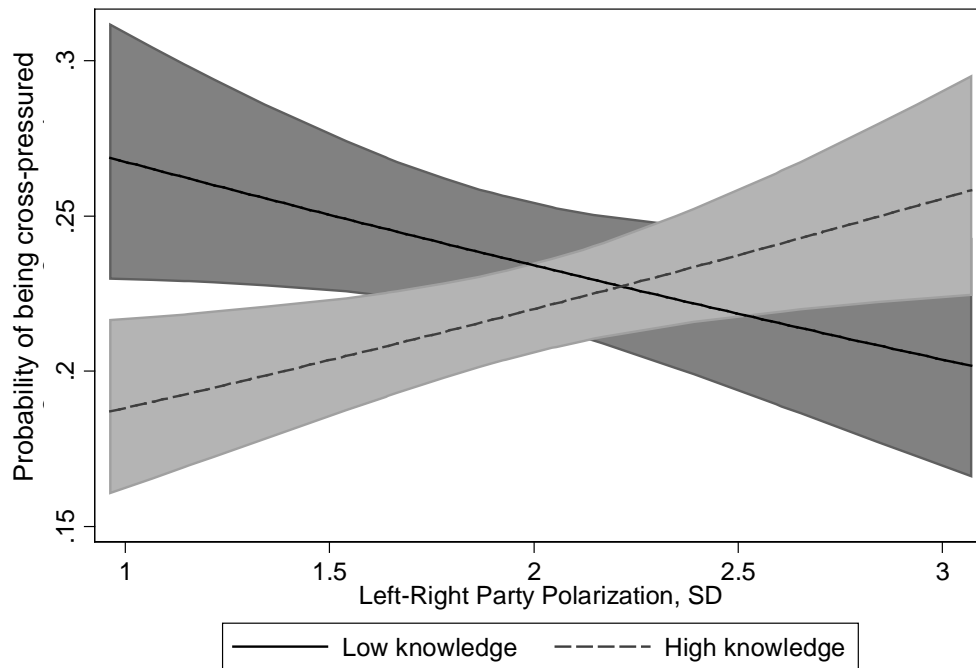
but the confidence intervals overlap. This indicates that partisanship is not associated with being cross-pressured (or not).

Hypothesis 3, that individuals in polarized environments are more likely to be cross-pressured, is supported only for EU polarization. To understand the magnitude of its effect I computed the change in predicted probability moving from the minimum to the maximum value of EU party polarization with all other covariates held constant at their mean (95% confidence intervals in parentheses). Moving from low to high increases the probability of being cross-pressured (compared to not) from 0.22 (0.20, 0.23) to 0.26 (0.23, 0.28), or 4 percentage points. In contexts highly polarized on the EU dimension, individuals are slightly more likely to be cross-pressured. While this finding is statistically significant, the magnitude is not large. There is not a significant relationship for the direct effects of LR party polarization on being cross-pressured or not.

However, for the moderation hypothesis, I find strong support that left-right party polarization conditions the effect of political sophistication. The interaction of EU party polarization with political sophistication was not substantively or statistically significant, so it has been removed from the final model shown in Table 4.2. In general, the effect of LR party polarization is stronger on low sophisticates than on high sophisticates. Figure 4.6 demonstrates how party polarization, by increasing the amount of information available in the political context, helps low knowledge voters to behave as though they were politically sophisticated. In environments with less information, that is, where there is little party polarization in the LR issue space, low knowledge voters are much more likely to be cross-pressured. This probability decreases as LR polarization increases, and low sophisticates become indistinguishable from the high sophisticates in the most polarized environments. When there is low party polarization signaling less information available, political sophisticates are better able to navigate the issue space and find parties

closest to themselves on both the EU and LR scales, whereas the unsophisticated are less able to do so. This supports the claim that party polarization increases saliency and the amount of information available to voters.

Figure 4.6: LR Party Polarization and Political Sophistication



Note: Interaction between political sophistication and LR party polarization, 95% confidence intervals in grey. In environments with less information, that is, where there is little party polarization in the LR issue space, low knowledge voters are more likely to be cross-pressured. This probability decreases as LR polarization increases, and low sophisticates become indistinguishable from the high sophisticates in the most polarized environments.

Why does EU party polarization have direct effects on being cross-pressured, while left-right polarization is significant in the moderation model? Recall that the theory indicated party polarization would increase the amount of information available in the political context, and could be associated with increased salience of a particular attitude. Party polarization also indicates a larger spread of party positions, which suggests more choice for the voter. The European integration issue is not a main political cleavage, so

having a high level of party polarization along this dimension brings this issue, particularly during elections to European Parliament, to the forefront. Individuals may otherwise give less consideration to the EU dimension. Highly polarized political contexts make it more likely that citizens are aware of and identify with one party on EU issues and another party on left-right.

While party polarization may increase the salience of the EU dimension, the left-right dimension is already the dominant cleavage in electoral politics and generally is separate from the EU issue. It therefore makes sense that increased left-right party polarization does not have a direct effect on the population as a whole for being cross-pressured or not in European elections. However, as polarization increases, certain segments of the population may be more likely to benefit from the increased information supply. High sophisticates are generally familiar with left-right party issues, whereas low sophisticates may not be, and thus low-knowledge voters are more likely to profit from and gain knowledge in polarized environments. Conversely, since the EU is not a dominant dimension, party polarization is more likely to affect both high and low sophisticates, resulting in the significance of direct effects only.

To summarize this section, whether or not an individual is cross-pressured is strongly associated with his/her political attitudes on both the LR and EU dimensions and the level of party polarization. This would indicate that being cross-pressured is a function of the electoral supply and is symptomatic of the lack congruence between EU and LR in party positions.

Left-Right or EU?

Looking only at citizens who are cross-pressured, when do they vote for the party closest on the EU dimension, and when do they choose the party closest on left-right?

The estimation results, shown above in Table 4.2, Column B, show that the same variables play a role in whether or not a person cross-pressured, and then how they vote on EU versus LR.

Recall that the dependent variable is choosing the party closest on the EU dimension, with the base of voting for the party closest on LR. First, we will look at the effects of EU and LR attitudes on voting for a party closest on the EU dimension. Figures 4.7 and 4.8 show the non-linear effect of EU and LR attitudes. Figure 4.7 illustrates that as cross-pressured individuals become more positive towards European unification, the likelihood that they will vote for the party closest on the EU dimension (compared to LR) will increase. The marginal effect of EU attitudes is quite weak for voters with negative to moderate views, but becomes quite strong: moving from the midpoint at 5 to the extreme at 10 increases the probability of voting for the party closest on EU integration (compared to LR) by nearly forty percentage points. For the effect of left-right attitudes, those with extreme attitudes on this dimension are more likely to vote on the basis of the left-right dimension compared with centrists. Those on the right are approximately 30 percentage points more likely than centrists to vote for the party closest on the left-right dimension rather than the party closest on the EU dimension. Those on the left are about 15 percentage points more likely than centrists to choose the left-right dimension over EU.

Figure 4.7: Effect of EU Attitudes on Issue-Dimension Prioritization

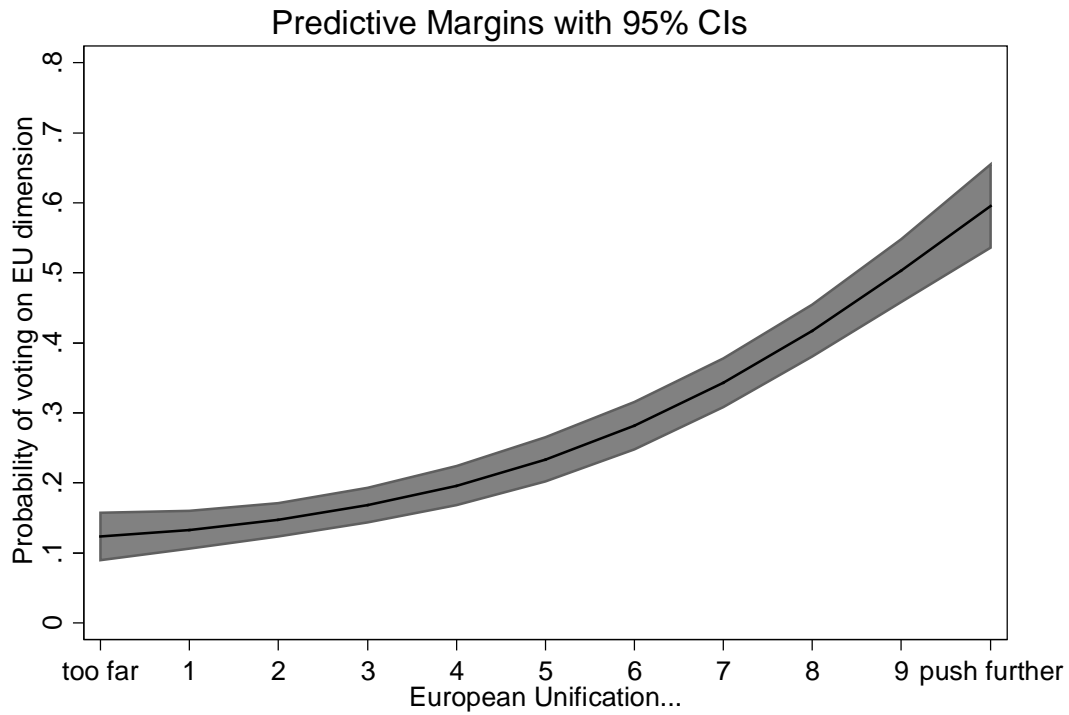
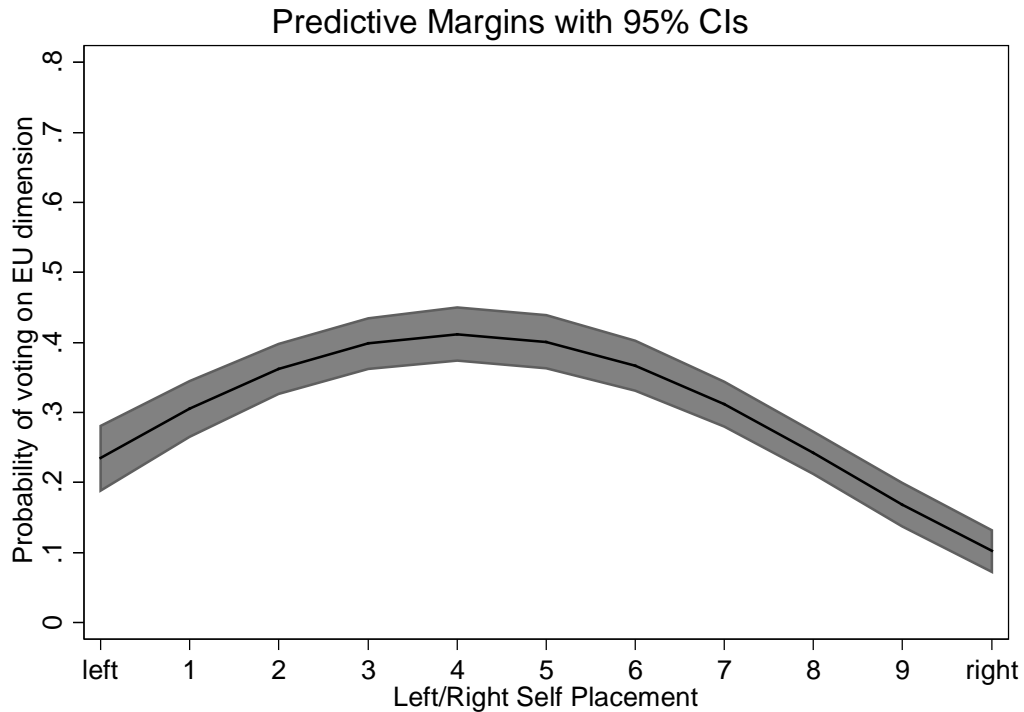


Figure 4.8: Effect of LR Attitudes on Issue-Dimension Prioritization



Note: Marginal effects of EU (4.7) and LR (4.8) attitudes on likelihood voting for party closest on EU dimension, rather than party closest on LR. 95% confidence intervals in grey. The effect of attitudes is strongest for those with extreme positive EU integration attitudes. Those with extreme LR attitudes are more likely to vote on basis of LR compared to centrists.

Next, we will look at predicted probabilities for the significant covariates in the direct effects model. These were computed moving from the minimum to maximum value of the independent variable. At the individual level, political sophistication has a strong effect. As political sophistication increases from low to high, the probability of voting for the party closest on the EU dimension decreases from 0.36 (0.29, 0.42) to 0.24 (0.20, 0.28). The most politically sophisticated are twelve percentage points more likely to vote for the party closest on LR than the unsophisticated. This provides support for Hypothesis 2, that cross-pressured politically sophisticated citizens are more likely to weight the LR over the EU dimension. Turning to Hypothesis 3, a similar effect exists for LR party polarization: as LR polarization increases, voters have a higher probability of voting for the party closest on LR (the probability of voting on EU decreases from 0.36 (0.30, 0.41) to 0.22 (0.18, 0.26), fourteen percentage points). There is no significant relationship between EU party polarization and choosing EU vs LR.

While the hypotheses have been summarized individually and graphed where useful in the above, Table 4.3 consolidates the findings for ease of review.

Table 4.3: Summary of Findings from Chapter 4

Cross Pressure Hypotheses:

H1a: Extreme pro or anti-EU attitudes more likely to be CP	Only anti-EU more likely to be CP
H1b: Extreme L or R attitudes more likely to be CP	Yes
H3a: LR party polarization increases CP	No
H3b: EU party polarization increases CP	Yes
H4: Impact of party polarization stronger for low knowledge citizens	Only for LR party polarization

Weighting Hypotheses (which dimension did CP voters choose):

H1c: Extreme pro or anti-EU attitudes more likely to vote on EU dimension	Only pro-EU more likely
H1d: Extreme L or R attitudes more likely to vote on LR dimension	Yes but stronger for Left
H2: Political sophisticates more likely to vote on LR dimension	Yes
H3c: LR party polarization increases likelihood to vote on LR dimension	Yes
H3d: EU party polarization increases likelihood to vote on EU dimension	No
H4: Impact of party polarization stronger for low knowledge citizens	No

Discussion and Conclusion

The literature often portrays elections to European Parliament as either second-order affairs or a chance to voice opinions on European integration. This chapter sought to add another perspective beyond these two literatures by arguing that changes in party fortunes between national and EP elections may also be due to voters trying to reconcile their left-right and EU integration preferences. We should not expect citizens to have the same voting behavior in national and European elections; the ideal vote choice is for the party that reconciles left-right and European integration preferences. However, because

the issue of European integration does not fit neatly into the preexisting left-right ideological dimension, many voters may find themselves feeling closer to different parties on the European versus left-right dimensions. This issue cross-pressure could pose a threat to the electoral connection in the EU if it affects many citizens, if cross-pressured citizens abstain, or if it represents a lack of meaningful party choice and representation.

One goal of this chapter was to assess the frequency with which voters' EU and LR preferences are not compatible with the platform of a single party, in other words, how many are cross-pressured. For half of citizens, there is a single party to which they are closest on the European and left-right issues dimensions. These are the individuals I have identified as not cross-pressured because there is not another party that is closer on either dimension.²² It is a positive sign for the electoral connection that a majority of citizens feel there is one party that represents their left-right and EU preferences.

Second, the descriptive statistics demonstrated that cross-pressured individuals vote at the same rate as those who are not cross-pressured. This signals that issue cross-pressure is not the driving force behind lower participation rates in EP elections compared to national elections. However, citizens who were unable to place themselves or parties on either dimension were more likely to abstain. This supports the narrative being told by citizens that they are less likely to vote when they feel they don't have enough information about the EU (Eurobarometer 69.2, 2008) and indicates a need for citizens to feel more knowledgeable about the European Union in order to improve turn out in EP elections.

²² It is important to note here a limitation in this methodology: even if one party was closest on both dimensions, it does not necessarily mean that it was at the same position as the voter. Indeed, there could be a small or large distance between the individual and closest party. This could leave room for cross pressure if parties were to change their positions, or a new party was to enter the system and have a stance that was more similar to the voter. Future studies could compare the distances to parties for cross-pressured and not cross-pressured voters, or test a directional model of vote choice. Perhaps in situations where a voter chose a party closest on one dimension but not the other, he was motivated by a desire to move policy in a certain direction, rather than maintaining the status quo with the closest party.

Slightly more than half of voters chose the party that was closest on LR and EU dimensions. For the cross-pressured voters, I conceptualized a utility function whereby voters would select the party closest on the left-right and EU issue dimensions. However, voters may deviate from this when they “weight” left-right or EU concerns more heavily. They are more likely to do this when one dimension is more salient than the other, as indicated by attitude extremity, or when the environment gives more information about one.

One of the most interesting findings from this chapter highlights the positive impact on the electoral connection from the conditioning of party polarization. In countries where parties are polarized along the left-right dimension, low knowledge individuals are able to gain more information from the political context, and are less likely to be cross-pressured. Indeed, they become indistinguishable from political sophisticates in highly polarized contexts. The same conditioning effect was not found for parties polarized along the EU dimension. However, EU party polarization did have significant direct effects, with individuals in countries where the EU is politicized are more likely to be cross-pressured.

A further positive impact on the electoral connection found in this analysis is that a minority of cross-pressured citizens are weighting the EU dimension more heavily, and choosing to vote for the party closest on EU rather than LR ideology. In addition, contrary to conventional wisdom, it is more likely to be Euro-positive individuals, rather than Euroskeptics, who behave this way. That such a small fraction vote on their EU preferences compared to LR is actually quite promising to the European project, as it could signal a consolidation of European politics. As the EU deals with primarily with issues that fall along the traditional left-right cleavage, either reconciling LR and EU preferences, or voting for the party closest on left-right ideology, results in the selection

of representatives with similar ideologies to their voters. Chapter 6 will examine if this leads to better citizen representation within the European Parliament.

The analyses in this chapter were conducted assuming a proximity model of vote choice; that individuals will maximize their utility by selecting the party closest to themselves on the left-right and EU dimensions. While it seems to explain a great deal about cross-pressure and selecting EU versus LR dimensions in European elections, a potential weakness in this method is that citizens might not operate on a proximity basis. Some voters may have alternative strategies in selecting a party. The next chapter will define and analyze different theories of cross-pressure and party choice, including a policy pull model and a combination of policy pull and proximity voting, to compare outcomes using different models.

5

The Electoral Market Supply versus Demand: Comparing Methodologies for Vote Choice

One goal of the previous chapter was to further refine models of voting behavior in European elections by arguing that citizens have reason to consider both left-right and EU integration preferences when voting in European Parliament elections. The criteria set out for the “meaningful choices” aspect of the electoral connection suggests that voters should be able to give a mandate on both socioeconomic and European issues. Are individuals able to vote their preferences in European elections? Does the electoral supply match the electorate demand? For those individuals who are cross-pressured, the answer is no. The analyses in the previous chapter demonstrated that between one third and one half of voters are cross-pressured and feel close to different parties on the EU and left-right policy dimensions. There is not a party that is aligned with both their left-right and EU preferences. This finding implies that the party supply does not match the electoral demand, thus weakening the electoral connection.

Could we even go so far as to say there is an “electoral market failure” in EP elections? It has been suggested that an electoral market failure occurs when “a significant number of individuals are left dissatisfied by the partisan choices available to

them” (Lago and Martinez, 2011, p7), which could be the case for individuals facing issue cross-pressure in European elections. Lago and Martinez identify two mechanisms behind this: first, incongruence between citizens’ preferences and parties platforms, and second, the ideological foundation of parties that make it difficult for them to change quickly. However, over the past three decades we have witnessed a decline in voter loyalties to political parties in many Western democracies, which is well documented in cross-national research. Depending on the context, parties may need to concern themselves with different types of electoral change (see Mair et al., 2004; or Dalton, 2008 for a thorough discussion). These include:

- social structural change
- structural dealignment
- decline in party identification
- changes in value orientations
- issue competition
- fluctuations between government and opposition parties
- crisis of party

These electoral changes have coincided with the end of the permissive consensus. Whereas European integration was once a non-issue, the public has developed preferences about the speed, depth, and breadth of the European integration project. Many political parties have been unable to incorporate this issue dimension into their party ideologies as it cuts across traditional cleavages (Evans, 1999) which in any case have been shifting and re-aligning.

The results from the preceding chapter would support the assertion that supply does not match demand in the electoral market. However, the findings relied on a

proximity model of party choice in European elections to determine whether or not Europeans are cross-pressured, and how cross-pressured voters choose between the party closest on left-right versus the party closest on EU issues. If the definition of cross-pressure is refined using different utility functions, rather than proximity, does the answer remain the same? This chapter sets out three additional theories to define cross-pressure to have a complete picture of cross-pressure in European elections. These theories are informed by the directional model (Rabinowitz and Macdonald, 1989; Kedar, 2005) which suggests that voters will not choose the closest party, but rather the party that will move policy in the voter's preferred direction. Perhaps it is not *proximity* that matters, but the ability of parties to *pull policy* in one direction or the other. It is true that voters have different motivations when selecting a party in European elections, and it only seems reasonable that some will pursue directional strategies while others operate on a proximity basis when voting. In empirical analyses of national elections, Merrill and Grofman (1999) find evidence that both proximity and directional models help to explain vote choice in multiparty systems; in elections where a few major issues dominate, voters are more likely to vote for parties who will take policy in a preferred direction, while in intermediate elections they are more likely to vote for the party that is closest to their issue position.

The aims of this chapter are twofold: first, to compare different theories of cross-pressure and party choice to determine the state of the electoral market in European elections. Second, in doing so, provide evidence for a new methodology to measure and test party choice. The next section will briefly review the methodology used in previous studies of party choice. Then, I will define and compare three additional theories to identify cross-pressured voters, including policy pull, combined, and same side theories. The empirical analysis will examine what factors impact a voter's decision to prioritize

left-right or EU issue dimensions. The final section will place the findings in context of the European electoral market.

Previous Studies of Party Choice

While many past studies do not identify European issues as an important factors in elections (such as van der Brug et al., 2007), there have been several studies that suggest attitudes about European integration play a role in both European and national elections (Evans, 1999; de Vries, 2007; Hobolt and Wittrock, 2011; Hobolt, Spoon and Tilley, 2009). While it has not been the aim of most studies to explicitly compare EU and left-right attitudes and their effect on vote choice, those that do often utilize a stacked data matrix. This allows use of a conditional logit model to analyze the factors leading to a party receiving a vote or not (such as de Vries, 2007). The stacked data matrix can also be used to analyze electoral utilities by regressing on propensity to vote (PTV) scores²³ (van der Eijk et. al., 2006; Dinas and Pardos-Prado, 2012). Both methods take into account the distance between the voter and each party on different issue areas, the utility, and may include variables at the party level (in a multi-level model). It has been argued that utilizing PTV scores is a preferable method to vote choice because it is a measure of the party's utility rather than a probabilistic estimation as in discrete choice models, and there is no need to eliminate small parties or any cases at all as is the case with conditional logit (van der Eijk et al., 2006). However, while highly correlated with actual vote choice, PTV is not identical to vote choice. Individuals may assign the same PTV to two different parties, or, for any number of reasons, they may vote for a party that they did not assign the highest PTV score. We cannot know what type of election the respondent had in mind

²³ In the EES voter survey, this question is worded, "How likely is it that you will ever vote for the following parties..."

when answering a question about how likely they are to vote for a party: the most recent national or European election, the next national election, or just any electoral contest in general?

Furthermore, people may behave differently in European elections than they do in national elections (Hobolt and Spoon, 2012). If we want to know what influences vote choice in European elections then we must look at actual vote choice, not PTV. While many people did vote for the same party in the previous national election as the 2009 European election (about 35%), about 14% switched parties between the two elections, while 17% voted in national elections but abstained in EP elections. The rest either abstained in both elections (8%), voted in EP but abstained in national election (3%) or refused to say how they behaved (EES, 2009c; van Egmond et al., 2010).

Using PTV scores, Elias and Pardos-Prado (2012) identify the predicted party utility for different party positions along the LR and EU dimension. They argue that voters' utility for parties along the LR dimension matches with the proximity spatial theory, while EU preferences match a directional theory, with parties placed at the extreme pro-EU position having the most utility for voters. This is an interesting finding, but as it uses PTV scores, it begs the question of which party actually receives the vote? If there is one party closest to the voter on each dimension, yet perhaps not one that is more extreme than the voter, then how does the voter reconcile LR versus EU to select a party?

The method presented here of defining cross-pressure and analyzing party choice shares the benefit of using the oft-preferred method of a stacked data matrix in that it takes into account the perceived distance to party on both the left-right and EU integration dimensions. However, rather than including it as an independent variable, it is figured into the construction of the dependent variable to explicitly compare and contrast

different potential scenarios. It also takes into account actual party choice, which PTV models do not do, without the need to exclude any parties, a major problem associated with conditional logit models.

Different Theories to Define Cross Pressure

In the previous chapter, an individual was defined as cross-pressured using a proximity model to determine if he felt close to two different parties on the left-right and EU dimensions. However, if we examine individual and perceived party positions using different models of party utility and voting behavior, we may come to different conclusions. In this chapter I identify three additional ways to define cross-pressure when looking at the left-right and EU integration dimensions. These three methods take into account different motivations voters may have when selecting a party. Voters were not specifically asked why they chose a particular party in EP elections, so we cannot disentangle the exact process that drove their electoral choice. However, these three models measure the position of parties relative to the voter to determine if there is one party that meets the criteria of three different types of voting considerations so that we can identify which citizens may feel cross-pressured between left-right and EU under different motivations. These models are briefly summarized here with a utility statement and defining question. They are explained in detail in the following sections.

1. Policy Pull Theory: Voters maximize their utility by choosing a party that can move policy in their preferred direction. Is there a party pulling policy in citizen's preferred direction on both EU and LR dimensions; in other words, is there a party that is more extreme on both scales?
2. Combined Theory: Voters maximize their utility by voting for a party that shares the same or more extreme issue positions. This theory combines policy pull and

proximity models. Is there a party at the same position as or more extreme than the voter on both dimensions?

3. Same Side Theory: Voters maximize their utility by selecting a party located on the same side of an issue. Is there a party on the same side as the voter on each issue spectrum?

If the answer to any of these questions is “no”, then the individual is cross-pressured under that definition. These three theories are informed by previous research, in particular Rabinowitz and Macdonald (1989) and Kedar (2005). With these three models, I do not replicate their works, but rather both build upon and break down their theories into revised models to test their appropriateness and compatibility with a cross-pressure model in European elections. Rabinowitz and Macdonald’s directional theory (1989) states that the utility for a given party will be determined, on an issue-by-issue basis, by the “directional compatibility” of a party and the voter (in other words, are they on the “same side” of an issue) and the intensity levels of the party and voter. Here, intensity is defined as the deviation from the neutral point on the scale. For each dimension, the directional effect is calculated by:

$$(respondent\ position - neutral\ position) \times (pty\ position - neutral\ position)$$

This product term takes into account both side of issue and distance. A party on the same side of the issue as the voter has some utility, and a more extreme party on the same side has even more utility for the voter. The most extreme party on the same side of the issue as the voter receives the highest score. The higher the product term, the more value an individual has in voting for that party, as it is the party most likely to move

policy in that direction. If an individual or a party is placed at the neutral position, then the product term will be zero, as this directional method assumes that a neutral position on an issue means that issue has no intensity (importance) for the voter. To account for all issue areas, the directional effect for each issue is summed, resulting in the scalar product which is the total utility of voting for a given party. Both a strength and weakness of this theory is that by combining the side of an issue with intensity, it conflates three different theories: directional, proximity, and same side. In this way, it is less useful for identifying cross-pressured individuals. As the goal of this chapter is to understand different motivations in prioritizing left-right over EU issues by comparing theories of cross-pressure, these three models are separated to analyze each potential scenario separately.

Policy Pull Theory

While the directional theory, as discussed above, gives weight to party extremity, this aspect can easily get lost in the product term of direction and intensity. Kedar (2005) refined the directional theory to specify a “compensation model”: that often voters prefer more extreme parties because they will pull policy in their preferred direction. It is not enough to simply be proximate or on the same side, as party’s policy intentions usually do not match policy implementation once in government and inter-party bargaining and compromises have taken place. This results in watered down policy change. Voters must then compensate for this and in order to ensure policy will move in their preferred direction, voters are better off choosing a party that is more extreme than they are. This is dependent on the institutional context, and is most necessary in highly consensual systems of power sharing, whereas in majoritarian systems there is less need to compensate as parties can implement their preferred policies. These findings are based on analysis of national governments, not the European Parliament, and an obvious difference

is that the EP does not form a government. However, the policy pull theory is still applicable to European elections voting behavior because citizens are expressing policy preferences when they vote, and the EP has power as co-legislator to influence policy. Indeed, it is reasonable to expect some individuals to compensate for the lack of government formation or perceived lower influence of the EP by choosing more extreme parties in European elections.

To determine whether or not an individual is cross-pressured, the policy pull theory assesses whether there is one party that pulls policy in the preferred direction for each dimension. This also corrects for very extreme parties: a critique of the directional theory as defined by Rabinowitz and Macdonald is that it places too much emphasis on the most extreme parties. Depending on the type and extremity of the party, many voters may not even consider voting for an extreme party even if the directional effect product term is the highest, because they may feel the party's chance of forming a government is low (Merrill and Grofman, 1999). In the policy pull theory, the party has to be more extreme than the voter, but it does not give additional weight for increasing extremity. One potential issue with this theory is what to do about individuals who place themselves at 0 or 10, the minimum or maximum of the scale? It is impossible to place a party as more extreme in this situation. To resolve this, if a respondent placed themselves and a party at the most extreme position, this counts as having a policy pull effect. Finally, what about individuals who place themselves at the neutral position? They give no indication of the direction they would like to see policy move towards. The directional theory states that there is no intensity at a neutral position, so voters who placed themselves and parties at neutral also would not count as being cross-pressured under Rabinowitz and Macdonald's directional model. However, I interpret that a neutral position could be a

statement of policy preference, so if an individual and party are both at the neutral position, they are not automatically considered cross-pressured.

In summary, to determine whether or not someone is cross-pressured using policy pull theory, I assess whether there is one party that fulfills one of the following criteria on both left-right and EU dimensions:

- The party and voter are on the same side of the issue, with the party being more extreme, specifically:
 - For left-right:
 - Left-side voter, party more left
 - Right-side voter, party more right
 - For EU integration:
 - Less EU integration-side voter, party more so
 - More EU integration-side voter, party more so
- Voter and party are both at minimum or maximum value (0 or 10)
- Voter and party are both at the neutral position (5)

For example, if an individual places herself at 4 on the left, and 3 on the less EU side, and there was one party was more extreme than her on these two positions, she would not be cross-pressured. If a voter places himself at 10 on the left-right scale and 7 on the EU dimension, and there is one party that is placed at 10 on LR and 8 or higher on EU, he would not be considered cross-pressured under the policy pull theory. Using this method, 26% of individuals who can place themselves and some parties on both dimensions are not cross-pressured: there is one party that is more extreme than they are on *both* the LR and EU dimension. Seventy-four percent of Europeans could be

considered cross-pressured as there is not a single party to pull policy in their preferred direction on each dimension.

Combined Theory

Even though we resolved several problems when defining the policy pull model of cross-pressure compared with the directional model, one issue still remains. As the policy pull model of cross-pressure stands, individuals who place themselves and parties at the same location may be considered cross-pressured. However, perhaps the individual is content with the status quo and content to vote for a party sharing the same issue space. Perhaps they do not want policy change. There is no way to know. Therefore, a second model combines the policy pull and proximity models to define cross-pressure as when there is no party at the same or more extreme position as the individual on both LR and EU dimensions. Using this method, the percentage of cross-pressured respondents drops from 74% to 61%.

Same Side Theory

Finally, a third way of thinking about cross-pressure is if there is a party on the same *side* of the issue for both dimensions. This is particularly important question for a topic such as European integration where LR and EU party positions do not correlate highly, either among voters or in party platforms. Voters might not have a party immediately close to them, or in a more extreme position, but can they at least identify a party on the same side of the LR and EU issues as they are? To determine this, individuals were categorized into which side of an issue they identified with: left, center, right; or less integration, center, more integration. Due to the large percentage of individuals who place themselves at the centerpoint of the scale, and because there is no

indication what “side” of the issue they may be on, they form a separate category. The breakdown is as follows:

Table 5.1: On What Side of Each Dimension Do Voters Place Themselves?

Left-Right Dimension		EU Integration Dimension	
Left	30%	Less integration	33%
Center	29%	Middle	23%
Right	41%	More integration	44%
<i>n</i>	23647		24693

Note: Cell entries are percentage of respondents who place themselves on each “side” of the left-right and EU integration dimensions. Those who placed themselves at “5” on a 0-10 point scale are “center” or “middle”. Source: 2009 EES.

Party placements were also assigned to these categories, and then I determined if there was at least one party on the same “side” as the individual on both dimensions. Using this categorization, sixty percent of respondents are not cross-pressured, while forty percent of respondents are cross-pressured as they do not have one party that is on the same side of both the LR and EU issues as they are. Table 5.2 summarizes the percentage of cross-pressured individuals in each of the four categories: proximity (from preceding chapter)²⁴, policy pull, combined, and same side theories. Note that there are two sections to the table: the top section, which excludes individuals who could not place themselves and/or at least some parties on the left-right and EU dimensions, and the bottom section which includes them. One third of respondents fall into this “don’t know” category, so we cannot say if they are cross-pressured or not.

²⁴ To make the models most comparable, I use the strict definition of proximity when defining cross-pressure (a citizen is not cross-pressured if there is one party that minimizes the distance on both left-right and EU).

Table 5.2: Different Methods to Measure Cross-Pressure in 2009 EP Elections

	Proximity		Policy Pull		Combined		Same Side	
	CP	Voted	CP	Voted	CP	Voted	CP	Voted
Excluding Don't Knows								
Cross-Pressured	47%	75%	74%	75%	61%	75%	40%	73%
Not Cross-Pressured	53%	75%	26%	75%	39%	76%	60%	77%
<i>n</i>	18065							
Including Don't Knows								
Cross-Pressured	31%	75%	49%	75%	41%	75%	27%	73%
Not Cross-Pressured	36%	75%	17%	75%	26%	76%	40%	77%
Don't Know	33%	63%	33%	63%	33%	63%	33%	63%
<i>n</i>	27069							

Note: cell entries are percentages. Using four different methods to measure and define cross-pressure, in the CP column is the percent of voters who are cross-pressured or not under that definition. The Voted column shows the percentage of each who voted in 2009 EP elections, Source: 2009 European Election Study Voter Survey

As shown in Table 5.2 above, the same-side model returns the lowest percentage of cross-pressured citizens, as would be expected since it is the most inclusive. However, the proximity model identifies a smaller percentage of cross-pressured individuals than the combined model, which at first glance may seem surprising. Recall that the proximity model does not take into account policy direction. An individual could place herself at 4 with the closest party at 6 on both dimensions, and even though the person and party are not on the same “side” of the issue, because there is one party minimizing the distance she is not considered to be cross-pressured under the proximity model. She would be classified as cross-pressured under the combined model because the party is not located at the same or more extreme position on the same side of the issue.

Note that Table 5.2 also includes a column showing the percentage of people who voted in each category. For the proximity model, there is no difference in turnout between

cross-pressured or not voters: both groups turn out to vote at a rate of 75%. The same is true for the policy pull and combined methods. The only method that shows a small difference in turn out is the same-side theory, which reports slightly lower turnout for individuals who are cross-pressured (73% compared to 77% participation rates).

Finally, Table 5.2 demonstrates that the percentage of cross-pressured individuals varies greatly, from 40% to 74%, depending on what method of defining cross pressure is used. What this comes down to is a potential critique of the electoral marketplace. Due to the fact that EU and LR positions are not highly correlated in people or parties, there are many combinations of individual preferences that do not find a match in any party platform, as perceived by the voter. The situation is bleakest if viewed from a policy pull perspective: 74% of individuals do not perceive any party to be more extreme than themselves on both EU and LR. If they wish to use their vote as a way to move policy in their preferred direction, they must choose which dimension to prioritize. Looking at the same side perspective, 60% of voters can identify a party on the same side as themselves of both the EU and LR issues. While they may not be able to vote for a party that will pull policy, at least there is one sharing a similar issue space. The next section will analyze what influences a cross-pressured voter's decision to vote for a party on LR or EU considerations.

EU versus Left-Right ?

This section will further break down the three models of cross-pressure to analyze which dimension cross-pressured voters chose: left-right or EU. To determine this, the party's position, relative to the voter, was analyzed and classified into 3 categories on each dimension. This grouping applies to the policy pull and combined theories:

- Policy Pull: The party voted for is on the same side as the voter but is more extreme
- Proximity: The party voted for is located at the same position as the voter
- Neither: The voter is left(right) but the party is located to the right(left) of the voter

Table 5.3: Voting Behavior in 2009 EP Elections

A. Detailed breakdown of voting behavior by dimension

Policy Pull Both	4
Proximity Both	11
Policy Pull LR only	11
Policy Pull EU only	5
Proximity LR only	21
Proximity EU only	10
Policy Pull LR, Proximity EU	5
Policy Pull EU, Proximity LR	5
Neither	26
<i>n</i>	10,610

Note: Cell entries are percentages, referring to what dimension the voter prioritized in EP elections. See text for description of Policy Pull and Proximity models. “Both” indicates the party meets the specified criteria for proximity or policy pull on LR and EU dimensions.

Source: 2009 EES.

B. Summary of voting behavior by method: Which dimension did voter choose?

	<u>Proximity</u>	<u>Combined</u>	<u>Same-side</u>
Both	30	26	42
LR	27	33	29
EU	19	16	15
Neither	23	26	14
<i>n</i>	10610		

Note: Cell entries are percentages, referring to what dimension the voter prioritized in EP elections. See text for description of models. “Both” refers to both LR and EU dimensions.

Source: 2009 EES.

Table 5.3A gives the most detail for how individuals voted, while Table 5.3B collapses the categories and compares the three different theories of defining cross-pressure. The first column in 5.3B refers to the proximity model used in the previous chapter. Thirty percent of voters chose the party that was closest to themselves on both the LR and EU dimensions – no other party was closer on either dimension. Twenty-seven percent selected a party that was closest on the LR dimension but a different party was closer on EU, while nineteen percent weighted the EU dimension more heavily and voted for the party closest on that dimension instead of the party closest on LR. The next column, “Combined” theory, shows that 26% of voters chose a party that was either located at the same or more extreme position than they were on both dimensions. Thirty-three percent voted for the party that was at the same or more extreme position on LR, but there was a different party at the same or more extreme position on EU, while the converse is true for sixteen percent of voters. Hence, they had to prioritize one dimension over the other. Finally, 26% voted for a party that did not meet the criteria of being at the same or more extreme position on *either* dimension. The final column gives the breakdown of voter behavior using the same-side theory. Forty-two percent of voters chose a party that was on the same side as themselves on both the EU and LR dimensions, twenty-nine percent prioritized left-right over EU issues, fifteen percent chose EU considerations over left-right, and only fourteen percent voted for party that was not on the same side for either dimension.

Looking across the three columns in Table 5.3B, it is remarkable how similar the results are using three different definitions of cross-pressure. The biggest difference is between the proximity/combined models and the same side model. With the same side theory, a much larger percentage of voters are able to vote on the basis of LR and EU, because there is one party that is on the same side of the issue as is the voter. However, as

mentioned before, this also means the party might be more moderate than the voter, which would indicate the party would not be able to take policy in the voter’s preferred direction. The next section will test the hypotheses from the previous chapter to assess whether the method of defining cross-pressure changes our understanding of how and when individuals prioritize their left-right over EU preferences. Here is a summary of the hypotheses to be tested:

Table 5.4: Summary of Hypotheses from Chapter 4

Weighting Hypotheses: Which dimension did cross-pressured voters choose?

H1a: Extreme pro or anti-EU attitudes more likely to vote on EU dimension
H1b: Extreme L or R attitudes more likely to vote on LR dimension
H2: Political sophisticates more likely to vote on LR dimension
H3a: LR party polarization increases likelihood to vote on LR dimension
H3b: EU party polarization increases likelihood to vote on EU dimension
H4: Impact of party polarization stronger for low knowledge citizens

Data and Measurement

To test and compare the different cross-pressure theories, I utilize the same data as in the previous chapter: the 2009 European Election Study Voter Survey (EES 2009c; van Egmond et al., 2010). The EES Voter Survey was run during the four weeks following the June 2009 European Parliament elections, with randomly-drawn samples of at least 1,000 respondents in each of the EU’s 27 Member States. Respondents were asked to place themselves and several political parties on a scale from 0 to 10, where zero is extreme left and 10 is extreme right. This is their left-right (LR) placement. Respondents

were also asked to place themselves and the same parties on a scale of European integration, where 0 means “European unification has already gone too far” and 10 is “unification should be pushed further” (EU placement). To capture any potential curvilinear effects of EU and LR attitudes, the quadratic terms are also included for each covariate. To test for the effects of political sophistication, political knowledge, a 7 point scale created from summing the number of correct answers to a series of questions about the EU and national government, is included.

At the contextual level, two variables are included to measure the level of party polarization on the left-right and EU scales. EU Party Polarization and LR Party Polarization are from the 2009 EES voter survey, and are measured as the standard deviation of respondents’ placements of political parties on the LR and European integration scale.

Finally, I include the following control variables: age, government approval, party attachment, and social class. Age is a continuous variable measuring how many years old the respondent is. Government Approval is an indicator variable, taking a value of 1 if the respondent approves of the national government’s record, 0 if he disapproves. Party Attachment is also an indicator variable with a value of 1 if the respondent “feels close” to a political party. Social class is a series of 8 dummy variables, categorized based on the Goldthorpe class schema with “upper service” as the reference category (Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1992). Question wording for all variables is available in Appendix I.

Results and Discussion

The results of the multilevel model estimations are shown below in Table 5.5. The same basic model as in the previous chapter was run to allow comparisons between this chapter and the last, and between the different theories. Column A gives the results for

the Combined theory. Here, the dependent variable includes only those individuals who were identified as cross-pressured under the combined theory (there is no one party at the same location or more extreme on both EU and LR dimensions). The dependent variable takes on a value of 1 for cross-pressured individuals who voted for the party on EU considerations (the party was at the same or more extreme position on the EU dimension only) while the base category includes individuals who prioritized a party on LR considerations. The dependent variable in Column B, Same Side, takes a 1 for individuals who voted for the party that was on the same side of the EU issue as they were, and 0 for individuals who chose the party on the same side of the LR dimension. The interaction terms between party polarization (both EU and LR) and knowledge were not significant in either model, so they have been excluded from the final analyses presented here.

Looking at Table 5.5, the results appear to be similar, though not identical, comparing the Combined theory with the Same Side theory. EU and LR attitudes are significant in both models, as are EU and LR party polarization. However, to understand and compare the model estimates, I will now present graphs of the quadratic covariates in Figure 5.1, and interpret the remaining significant covariates using predicted probabilities in Table 5.5 below.

Table 5.5: Multilevel Models of Voting for Party on EU dimension vs. LR

	A. Combined Theory			B. Same Side		
	Coef	SE		Coef	SE	
EU Self Placement	0.44	(.04)	**	-0.29	(.04)	**
EU Self Placement^2	-0.02	(.00)	**	0.06	(.00)	**
LR Self Placement	0.01	(.04)		0.92	(.05)	**
LR Self Placement^2	-0.01	(.00)	*	-0.10	(.01)	**
Political Knowledge	-0.01	(.02)		-0.07	(.03)	**
<i>Control Variables</i>						
Party Attachment	-0.12	(.07)		-0.24	(.08)	**
Education	-0.02	(.03)		-0.02	(.03)	
Age	0.00	(.00)		0.01	(.00)	+
Female	0.01	(.07)		-0.01	(.08)	
<i>Occupation (Base=Upper Service)</i>						
Lower Service	-0.06	(.14)		-0.10	(.17)	
Petty Bourgeois	0.00	(.10)		0.04	(.12)	
Routine NM	0.14	(.13)		0.02	(.16)	
Skilled	0.10	(.13)		0.04	(.16)	
Non-Skilled	0.10	(.13)		0.19	(.15)	
Still in Education	-0.23	(.19)		-0.22	(.22)	
Other	0.26	(.14)		0.20	(.17)	
<i>Level 2 Variables</i>						
EU Party Polarization	0.31	(.12)	**	0.24	(.12)	*
LR Party Polarization	-0.40	(.09)	**	-0.47	(.09)	**
Intercept	-1.40	(.31)	**	-1.59	(.35)	**
Variance	0.03	(.02)		0.02	(.01)	
Number of individuals	4940			4508		
Number of contexts	28			28		

**p<.01 *p<.05 +p<.10

Note: Multilevel binary logistic model. The dependent variable is cross-pressured voters choosing a party on EU considerations; base category is left-right dimension. Column A shows the results defining cross-pressure using the Combined Theory, while column B identifies cross-pressured individuals using the Same Side method. Coefficients are log odds with standard errors in parentheses.

Source: European Election Study 2009

Figure 5.1 shows the marginal effects of EU and LR attitudes, with Model A (Combined Theory) in the top row, and Model B (Same Side Theory) in the bottom row. Looking at the effect of EU attitudes in the first figure, we see that individuals from the

midpoint onwards towards more unification side of the scale have the highest probability of voting for a party on EU considerations compared to left-right, but the marginal effect of this variable is practically nonexistent at this level. The biggest change is from 0 – unification has gone too far – to the midpoint – when the probability of voting for a party at the same or more extreme position on the EU dimension increases by about 25 percentage points. In summary, as a voter becomes more pro-EU integration, the probability that they will select a party that can EU pull policy in their preferred direction, compared to left-right policy, increases. The effect of left-right attitudes, in contrast, is quite weak. Being on the extreme left increases the probability of voting for a party on EU considerations by ten percentage points compared to the extreme right. There is no marginal effect for the left end of the spectrum, and the effect is quite weak from the center-left to the extreme right.

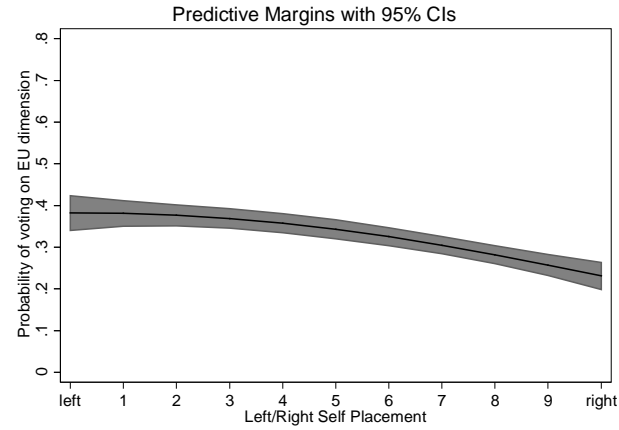
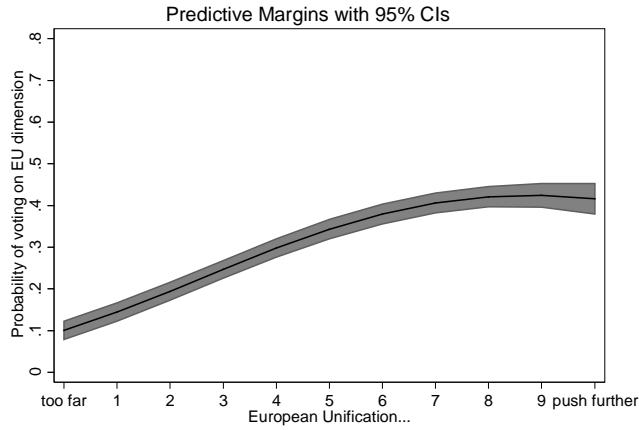
Looking at row B, Same Side Theory, it is clear that these results largely mirror those from Chapter 4 (Figures 4.7 and 4.8) using the proximity theory to define cross-pressure. The first figure in Row B illustrates that as cross-pressured individuals become more positive towards European unification, the likelihood that they will vote for the party that is on the same side of the EU dimension (compared to LR) will increase. The marginal effect of EU attitudes is quite weak for voters with negative to moderate views, but becomes quite strong. Moving from about 4 near the midpoint to the extreme at 10 increases the probability of voting for a party on the same side of the EU integration issue (compared to LR) by over fifty percentage points. For left-right attitudes, those who are on the left are slightly more likely than those on the right to vote on the basis of EU dimension, and that this likelihood increases for respondents in the center and center-left. In other words, those with extreme left-right attitudes are more likely to vote for a party that is on the same side of the left-right dimension than they are for a party on the same

side as themselves on the EU dimension. This is the only area in which we see the expected U-shaped effect, indicating that extreme attitudes on either end of the spectrum make a difference.

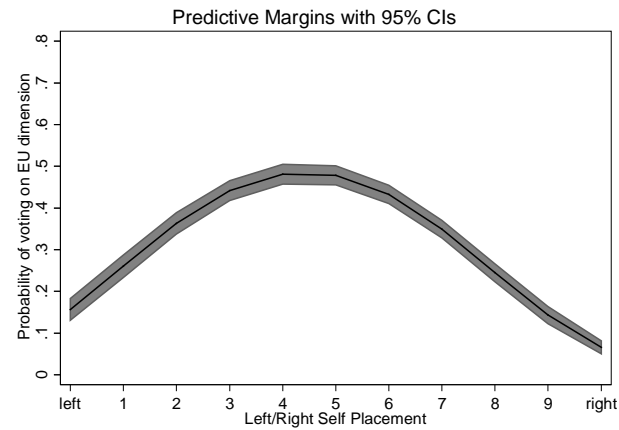
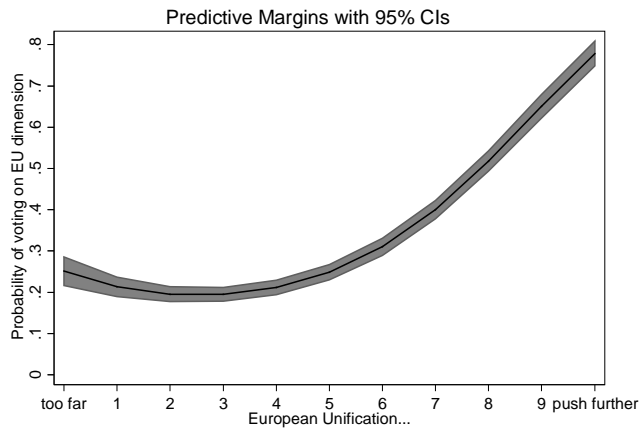
While the effect of EU and left-right attitudes on voting for EU versus LR dimension is not identical between the Combined theory and Same Side theory, they are quite similar. In both, pro-EU integration voters are more likely to vote for a party on this basis, rather than left-right, and those with anti-EU integration preferences are more likely to vote for the party on the same side or more extreme on left-right. This result could be due to, in part, the party supply. Parties are, on average, more pro-integration than they are anti-integration, so anti-EU integration voters may not have a party to choose, depending on the party supply in their country.

Figure 5.1: Effects of EU and LR Attitudes on Probability of Voting on EU Dimension

A. Combined Theory



B. Same Side Theory



Note: Marginal effects of EU and LR attitudes on likelihood voting for party closest on EU dimension, rather than party closest on LR. 95% confidence intervals in grey. The effects are strongest under the Same Side theory, in particular the effect of attitudes is strongest for those with extreme positive EU integration attitudes. Those with extreme LR attitudes are less likely to vote on the basis of the EU dimension.

Next, we turn to the predicted probabilities to assess the effects of the remaining covariates. Table 5.6 below shows the predicted probability of voting for the party on EU basis, rather than left-right, moving from the minimum to maximum value of each covariate with all others held constant at the mean. Political sophistication was not significant in the combined theory model, but it did have an effect in the same side model. The most politically sophisticated citizens are seven percentage points more likely than the least sophisticated to vote for a party on the basis of LR, rather than EU, issues. At the country level, both EU and left-right party polarization have significant and substantive effects. Supporting hypothesis three, individuals in context polarized on one dimension are more likely to weight that issue more heavily.

Table 5.6: Predicted Probabilities of Voting for Party on EU Basis

	Min	(95% CI)	Max	(95% CI)	Change in PP
A. Combined Theory					
Political Knowledge					NS
Party Attachment					NS
EU Party Polarization	0.28	(.25, .32)	0.38	(.34, .42)	0.10
LR Party Polarization	0.41	(.36, .44)	0.25	(.22, .29)	-0.14
B. Same Side Theory					
Political Knowledge	0.40	(.36, .44)	0.31	(.29, .34)	-0.09
Party Attachment	0.37	(.34, .39)	0.33	(.31, .34)	-0.04
EU Party Polarization	0.31	(.29, .34)	0.37	(.34, .41)	0.06
LR Party Polarization	0.42	(.38, .45)	0.27	(.24, .30)	-0.15

Note: Predicted probabilities computed moving from minimum to maximum value, holding all other variables at their mean. Change in PP shows the percentage point increase (decrease) in likelihood of cross-pressured voters choosing the party on an EU basis under (A) the Combined theory and (B) Same Side theory.

When exploring the factors that impact which dimension cross-pressured voters choose, the three models – proximity, combined, and same side – returned remarkably similar results. Because these findings are substantively similar to those discussed in Chapter 4, I will not repeat the detailed results discussion here as the conclusions about when cross-pressured voters prioritize EU versus left-right are the same. Instead let us return to the discussion of electoral market failure, and how the different theories of defining cross-pressure relate to this.

Meaningful Choices?

The methods presented in this chapter and the preceding one – proximity, policy pull, combined, and same side – are useful tools to better understand the electoral marketplace and the perceived (mis)match citizens have between their own positions and party positions on various issues. Depending on the method used, the number of citizens facing issue cross-pressure in European elections ranged from forty to seventy-four percent. This is quite a large range – from a minority to a significant majority of individuals. Interestingly, however, when this was further dissected to examine which dimension these cross-pressured voters chose – left-right or EU – there was very little difference in the proportions of what side they weighted more heavily, or in significance of factors involved, between the different methods. This suggests two main points: first, that depending on a voter’s motivation and desired outcome of their party choice, they are more or less likely to be satisfied with the electoral market place; and second, that no matter how cross-pressure is defined and measured, the same factors drive voters’ prioritization of issue dimension and therefore party choice.

Starting with the first point: if an individual wishes to give a mandate for policy movement in a certain direction on *both* the left-right and EU integration dimensions, it

will be more difficult for him to find a party that meets this requirement. However, if he is happy to vote for a party that shares a similar position in the issue space, there is a decent chance of finding this. This begs the question: What is the “cutoff” for electoral market failure – must a certain percentage of citizens be cross-pressured? Unfortunately, we cannot know what a voter’s ultimate goal is when casting a vote, we can only make assumptions about this. In an ideal world, citizens would be able to vote for a party that represents policy movement on as many issues as possible, or at a minimum, is proximate to their own issue positions.

Issue priorities shift over time, as do party positions (albeit more slowly) so we should not expect to find that all voters can identify a party that meets their requirements on every issue. Furthermore, the EU may not be salient enough for some individuals to have preferences about it, or to care if their EU preferences are represented by parties. It is only in the past 15-20 years or so, and in particular since the 2004 enlargement, that the issue of European integration has become contentious. Because it cuts across the traditional left-right cleavage, it has not been straightforward for parties to integrate and align this issue into their existing platforms, especially during the same period that they are struggling to retain voter loyalty. This has resulted in issue cross-pressure – a mismatch between party and citizen preferences – for a number of individuals. At present, some individuals are able to find a party that suits their needs on both EU and left-right issues, and for those who cannot, many prioritize their left-right preferences over EU when selecting a party in European elections. If citizens must choose between one or the other, it is better for the electoral connection that they choose the left-right socioeconomic dimension as this is the dimension of most EP legislation, not the EU issue dimension.

Yet, in all scenarios, there were a significant number of individuals who voted for a party that did not meet the specified criteria for either dimension (see Table 5.3B). For

example, using the combined theory, twenty-six percent of voters chose a party that was not at the same or more extreme position on either dimension. Even using the more relaxed same side theory, fourteen percent of voters chose a party that was not on the same side as themselves on either dimension. The reasons for this are beyond the scope of this chapter, but because these categorizations are based on respondents' own perceptions of self and party placements, it seems a safe assumption that either they voted on the basis of another issue, or hoped to achieve something other than moving policy or same-side representation on the left-right and EU integration issues. Since elections form the basis of representative government, in a European electoral contest voters should ideally be able to give a mandate on both left-right and EU integration issues. As citizens are generally able to give a mandate on the primary dimension, "electoral market failure" may be too strong of a term for the party market supply. However, there is room for parties to align their LR and EU issue dimensions in new ways to more closely match voter preferences.

Whether or not this will happen is uncertain, particularly because the parties that contest European elections are national political parties whose priorities are winning national elections. Thus, national conditions affect European elections not just through the second-order election framework, discussed in the previous chapter, but also through the party supply. While undoubtedly citizens' sentiments about the government, economy, or some other salient national factor may influence vote choices, European elections are not just about showing dissatisfaction with governing parties or voting sincerely based on EU preferences. The changes witnessed between national and European elections may be a result of issue cross-pressure because voters must incorporate another dimension, the EU issue dimension, into their existing preferences. In national contests, the EU-issue generally has low salience so voters had different

considerations when choosing a party at the national elections (although the possibility of the EU-issue to become a re-aligning influence in national party competition exists, it has not yet actualized, see Evans, 1999; de Vries, 2007; van der Eijk and Franklin, 2004).

Even though considerations may be different at EP elections than national, voters have the same party choices available to them in national and European elections. There are a few exceptions to this, with some anti-EU parties, such as Denmark's People's Movement Against the EU, only participating in EP elections. In this work the level of party polarization on the left-right and EU-issue dimensions was used to analyze the information in the environment and I argued that polarization also increased salience of a given dimension. Importantly, however, party polarization also reflects the party supply on offer and this is a reflection of the national party system. It is the national parties, not European political parties (Europarties),²⁵ that nominate candidates to EP elections, and national parties set their own election manifestos which may or may not align with those of the Europarties. So what are the implications of this on the electoral connection in the European Union?

Based on the afore-mentioned findings that legislative voting takes place along ideological, rather than national, lines and most policy issues fall along the traditional left-right issue dimension, this is not necessarily a problem. National parties join up with ideologically-similar parties to form transnational political groups within the EP, and these political groups have a relatively high level of cohesion. This cohesion occasionally breaks down when there is a conflict between national party and European political

²⁵ European political parties are made up of national political parties from multiple member states of the EU. They are meant to "contribute to forming European political awareness and to expressing the will of citizens of the Union" (Treaty of Lisbon, Article 8 A). National parties are not required to join a Europarty. In addition, Europarties and national parties make up the seven political groups in the European Parliament, with a few European and national parties remaining non-attached, either by choice or because they do not meet the minimum requirements to form their own political grouping.

group, particularly when the national electoral institutions have a strong influence on political appointments, including closed lists and small district magnitudes (Hix, 2004; Lindberg et al., 2008).

A potential concern with the dominance of national, rather than European, parties in EP elections is that the party offer differs by country. Party polarization indicates more choice is available to voters, so in theory, citizens living in polarized contexts have more ideologically diverse options than those in less polarized environments. Indeed, the finding that high levels of EU party polarization slightly increases the likelihood of being cross-pressured indicates that voters perceive differences in party platforms, and feel closer to one party on the EU-issue than on left-right. Thus there is a party that more closely reflects their EU preferences, unfortunately, this is not aligned with parties left-right positions. At this stage in the EU's development, the fact that citizens are represented in the EU by their national parties strengthens the electoral connection. The national parties reflect the national context and the people living there, so perhaps it is more appropriate that they are locally diverse. This way, the representatives best reflect the preferences and priorities of their constituents.

Conclusion

In this chapter and the previous, I have examined the left-right and EU issue dimensions, but the methods – proximity, policy pull, combined, and same side – could be applied to any issue area for which individual and party positions are known. The definition and comparison of these different methodologies to assess issue cross-pressure and by extension the state of the electoral market in European elections forms one main contribution from this chapter. A second contribution was finding that no matter what method used, the same factors influence prioritization of EU versus left-right issue

dimensions. Future studies might utilize these methods, but analyze different issue areas, to assess whether they will return similar results as in the case here, or to find that certain variables have differing impacts depending on the method chosen. For example, a particular variable could become more important in a policy-pull definition versus same side. This chapter has suggested that while a significant number of individuals are either not able to vote for parties that will move policy in their preferred direction, or are unfamiliar with party positions in the first place, an electoral “market failure” is perhaps too strong of a term. In the future, however, if parties remain unable to integrate the EU dimension into their existing policy platform and more voters continue to be cross-pressured, this would continue to negatively impact the electoral connection. Meaningful party choices are necessary to ensure voters can give a mandate on their preferred policy outcomes to ensure representation within the European Parliament.

6

Representation in the European Parliament: Policy Priorities and Governmental Responsibility

If the represented and their representatives prioritize national problems differently, then representation cannot occur. It may not occur even where such correspondence exists... [b]ut congruence between the public and the governmental agendas is an unavoidable precondition without which representation cannot be said to occur.

Jones and Baumgartner, 2004, p.7

The previous empirical chapters have assessed the impact of political sophistication, attitude extremity, and issue politicization on different aspects of the direct electoral connection. Chapter 3 argued that in order to properly give a policy mandate and eventually be able to hold the EU accountable, citizens must first understand what policy responsibility is held by the European Union. Chapters 4 and 5 examined the electoral connection from the mandating perspective, arguing that the party choices available to most citizens result in issue cross-pressure, with many voters forced to choose which issue dimension to prioritize when they select a party in European elections. If citizens have some knowledge of EU policy responsibility and are able to elect representatives that share their issue preferences to give a mandate on the types of policy outcomes to pursue, then this should lead to substantive representation within the European

Parliament. This final empirical chapter will examine how representative the European Parliament is, on what substantive basis, and how this has changed over time.

Assessing substantive representation as part of the electoral connection in the European Union is important, because the EU is often criticized for having a democratic deficit (Follesdal and Hix, 2006; Majone, 1998; Moravcsik, 2002; Bellamy, 2010). Effective representation would be an argument against a democratic deficit and improve the EU's democratic legitimacy. However, there are many different types of representation possible, and different methods to analyze it, so which is most relevant to the EU? Moreover, as discussed in the introductory chapter, there are multiple channels of representation in the EU, where citizens are represented indirectly by their national governments through the European Council and the Council of the European Union, and directly through the European Parliament. As citizens specifically vote for MEPs to represent their interests at the European level, and this thesis is on the direct electoral connection, I will focus on representation in the European Parliament. This chapter will briefly compare different types of representation, and then detail the congruence in policy priorities and preference for governmental responsibility approach to be used in the analysis. Next I will describe the data to be used, the levels of representation to be assessed, and then conduct the descriptive analyses looking at two different time points. The concluding section will discuss how well citizens are represented in the EP.

Which Type of Representation?

The literature on legislative representation generally focuses on either dyadic or collective representation. Dyadic representation generally analyzes the link between individuals' opinions and their representatives' roll-call votes to determine how responsive the politician is to constituent preferences (Miller and Stokes, 1963;

Weissberg, 1978). This is not the ideal method for testing representation of the European Parliament for a few key reasons: first, we do not have representative data available at the constituent level for all member states. Moreover, roll call votes are not taken on every issue, and it has been suggested that there is some bias in the type of votes that are selected for roll call (Carrubba et al., 2006) which would result in an incomplete or distorted picture of parliamentary behavior. Finally, in multi-party systems where legislators follow party lines rather than courting a personal vote, such as in the European Parliament, it is more appropriate to study collective representation, which takes a systemic, rather than individual-level view of representation. This chapter is therefore situated within the literature on collective representation.

A limit of previous empirical research on European Parliament legitimacy and representation often does not directly compare citizen with elites, instead, it has looked at the behavior of just one group or the other to form a judgment. Many studies focus on citizen perceptions of and affect towards the EP to make a claim about European legitimacy (Niedermayer and Sinnott, 1995; Blondel et al., 1998, Thomassen, 2009), while others analyze EP roll call voting to assess dimensions of party competition (Hix, 2002; Hix et al., 2006; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2009). A few scholars have compared citizen and elite perceptions to analyze policy congruence in the EU, showing a high level of congruence between European elites and citizens on left-right ideology positions (Thomassen and Schmitt, 1997). Furthermore, for specific policies dominated along ideological lines, there is a large amount of congruence between citizens and their representatives, but much less for issues of European integration (Schmitt and Thomassen, 1999).

As in these latter two studies, it is not uncommon for representation research to compare policy positions on a numerical scale between citizens and elected

representatives, termed *positional policy congruence*, with the idea that the better that citizen and representative positions match, then the more representative the government is of the public. While in the previous two chapters I utilized voter and party position on the left-right and EU dimensions to assess cross-pressure and which dimension takes precedence, in this chapter I shift to policy *priorities* rather than *position*. The primary reason for this change is that the positional policy congruence approach has a number of limitations. First, as discussed in the previous chapter, citizens might not necessarily want policy makers to be located at the same position in the issue-space. Policy outcomes are diluted because of inter-party bargaining and concessions that must inevitably occur in a multi-party system, so citizens desirous of policy change might prefer their representatives to be more extreme than themselves. Furthermore, the positional approach ignores issue importance: citizens and representatives may agree strongly or diverge completely on a specific issue, but if that issue is of little importance to the public, then it is unlikely that the public will desire any policy outcome (Jones and Baumgartner, 2004). Therefore, comparing issue *positions* is not necessarily the best method to assess representation.

As alluded to in the introductory quote, issue *priorities* are a necessary precondition to any government action. Recently, more attention has turned to how well governing institutions represent citizens' issue priorities using the "Most Important Problem" survey question, arguing that this should precede the study of policy positions or outcomes (Jones & Baumgartner, 2004; Jones et al., 2009; Bonafont and Palau, 2011; Lindeboom, 2012; Bevan and Jennings, 2014; Hobolt and Klemmensen, 2008) though there has been no such assessment of the European Union. Following Jones and Baumgartner (2004) and Jones et al. (2009) this chapter will examine the *congruence of policy priorities* between citizens and elites in the European Parliament to assess

representation. I define congruence as *the level of similarity between public and elite opinions*. Due to the multi-level structure of European governance, I argue that in addition to policy priorities, preferences for governmental responsibility are also important indicators of representation. Similar to policy priorities, mass-elite congruence in preference for level of governmental responsibility must also precede policy outcomes to ensure the public's wishes are being represented.

Static Representation: Citizen and Elite Priorities and Preferences

Assuming that similar priorities and preferences will lead to better representation, it is useful to analyze the congruence between mass and elite opinions at the same point in time. Previous research has demonstrated three types of linkages: first, that public opinions influence elite opinions; second, that elite preferences shape public preferences; and third, a “reciprocal influence process where elites and the mass public share policy preferences” (Hill and Hinton-Andersson, 1995 p925). There is strong evidence for the linkage of shared policy preferences and for a significant role of parties where preferences match most closely between co-partisans. In addition, depending on the type of issue, degree of saliency, and the political context, the causal arrow may switch directions from time to time. Looking at single time points, it is not possible to determine the causal direction of who influences whom. In the analysis I assume there is some degree of “reciprocal influence process” which would lead to elites and citizens potentially sharing policy preferences at the same time point, rather than a time lag between citizens and elites.

The first step in the analysis will be to measure congruence in policy priorities between citizens and elites at single time points, then to analyze congruence in preference for governmental responsibility, and finally to compare the results over time. An

examination of preferences for governmental responsibility has been done previously in very limited ways. Two different single time-point studies have examined the public's preference for governmental responsibility, but have not compared this with elite preferences (De Winter and Swyngedouw, 1999; De Winter et al., 2009). Hooghe (2003) finds that elites and citizens diverge in the types of issues they want to be Europeanized, with citizens more supportive of EU social policies while elites favor transferring authority to the EU in areas of high politics.

However, these studies did not take into account policy priorities, nor are they very recent. Much has happened in the intervening 10-15 years: authority has been shifted to the European level through subsequent treaties, the European Monetary Union has entered into force, and the Union has enlarged from twelve to twenty-seven member states. The European Union does not have remit over any policy area it chooses; it must respect subsidiarity²⁶, so there is a limit to how much decision-making power can be transferred to the European level. Therefore citizens could either continue wanting more issues handled at the European level, or there may be a thermostatic response (Wlezien, 1995) to the increase of powers at the EU, resulting in citizens "turning down" their preferences for more responsibility at the EU level and preferring that responsibility for certain issues be handled at the national or regional level.

More recently, a multi-country project (IntUne) has examined policy congruence between European elites and voters (Müller et al., 2012), finding high levels of congruence in areas that are already Europeanized, but a gap between the public and

²⁶ "Under the principle of subsidiarity, in areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence, the Union shall act only if and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States, either at central level or at regional and local level, but can rather, by reason of the scale or effects of the proposed action, be better achieved at Union level." Article 5(3) of the Treaty on European Union

elites regarding further Europeanization of new policy areas such as a European army or common tax system. This project used survey data from 2007, and included the survey responses only from MPs belonging to the governing party. Therefore, while a useful indication of citizen-elite compatibility, there are likely differences between government and opposition preferences, as well as between national MPs and MEPs. Furthermore, we still do not have a sense of how preference may have changed over time.

After testing congruence of preferences for governmental responsibility, the final step is to look at changes over time to determine if representation has improved or declined in the EU. The theory of dynamic representation (Stimson et al., 1995) suggests that policy is shaped either directly by politicians responding to public opinion, or indirectly through the election of representatives who share voter preferences. Another dynamic model, Wlezien's (1995) "thermostatic model", posits that citizens "turn up" or "turn down" their preferences for more or less policy in response to policy decreases or increases, and that politicians in turn are responsive to public preferences. However, multilevel governance makes responsiveness more challenging because it is "more difficult for the public to gauge and react to government policy change, and thus dampens public responsiveness" (Soroka and Wlezien, 2010 p49).

The nature of EU policy making and data limitations make time-series analyses of public opinion and policy output difficult. There simply does not exist, to my knowledge, the issue-specific survey questions that can be matched to policy area output. The closest approximation compares public opinion on European integration with the volume of important legislation to argue that support for the EU causes legislative output until the mid-90s (Toshkov, 2011). However, this work is not policy-specific so we are still left wondering about the existence of issue congruence between citizens and elites. Due to data limitations, neither of these dynamic theories will be assessed empirically in the

present chapter. However, I will analyze static congruence at two time points and draw in the lessons from dynamic and thermostatic representation in the discussion of any changes that may have occurred.

Data and Methodology

Previous European Election Studies have gauged similar aspects of European public opinion over time through the “most important problem” question, which has been asked in a comparable manner in four consecutive EES surveys: 1994, 1999, 2004, and 2009. This question is ideal for a study of policy priorities because it asks respondents to identify the most **important** problem and therefore gives an indication of what the public believes government should prioritize. Also, as pointed out by Jones et al. (2009, p. 280): “MIP has certain advantages. It measures priorities as importance and does not confuse importance with issue salience (Wlezien 2005). An issue can be highly salient in the current discourse and still not be very important to the public.” The question from the EES survey was worded as: “What do you think is the most important problem facing [COUNTRY] today?” Respondents gave open-ended answers which were recorded verbatim, and then coded into approximately 100 different categories.²⁷ I have collapsed the answers into ten categories for ease of interpretation, and included seven categories in the analysis.²⁸

²⁷ In 1994, instead of offering an open-ended question, citizens were presented with 11 different issues they could choose from. In addition, four topics were country-specific. I have coded these into the same categories as the open-ended response from subsequent years.

²⁸ Note that foreign policy and agriculture have been dropped from the analysis because of insufficient response. These issues were named by fewer than 2% of respondents as MIP. There is simply not enough data for meaningful comparison between citizens and elites, nor to break this down even further into preference for government responsibility. In addition, the “other” category was dropped because of the heterogeneity of responses that fell into this category – a bit like comparing apples with oranges.

The EES surveys of candidates for European Parliament in 1994 and 2009 have included the same questions which will be compared with citizen responses. For empirical and theoretical reasons, I have chosen to include all candidates who participated in the survey, not just those who were successful in their bids to become MEPs. To justify this choice, I compared the level of similarity between elected and non-elected MEP candidates first by conducting a two-sample test of proportions. In 9/10 issue areas, the test statistic confirmed the null hypothesis that the groups have equal proportions. I also compared preference for governmental responsibility, and there was no significant difference between winning and losing candidates on their preferred level of government responsibility. Furthermore, some countries did not have enough winning candidates participate in the survey to be able to assess congruence meaningfully. Finally, in order to conduct the second step of the analysis, which is congruence in preference for government responsibility, there were simply not enough responses with only successful MEPs to make any substantive comparisons. While I could not find any previous studies that examined attitudinal differences between winning and losing MEP candidates, Norris and Franklin (1997) demonstrated that resources and motivations are the primary determinants of winning in European Parliament elections. Therefore I have chosen to include all MEP candidates because they have similar preferences to elected MEPs, there is no reason to expect large differences in their priorities and preferences, and because it was necessary to have a larger number of observations to make reliable comparisons between citizens and elites.

Of specific interest for this research is the follow-on question about which level of government citizens prefer to handle the most important problem (MIP): "And who do you think would be the most appropriate level to deal with (MIP): regional, national, or European political authorities?" This is particularly important for the EU, because while

parties are generally representative of their constituents in terms of left-right ideology, there is much less congruence on the European integration issue area. As shown in previous chapters, these two dimensions do not integrate neatly. These two indicators, MIP and preferred level of responsibility, thus provide an opportunity to analyze representation through congruence of policy priorities and preferences for governmental responsibility. The level of congruence will be assessed by comparing the rank order of the MIP, the global preference for governmental responsibility, and issue-specific preference for governmental responsibility. By *global preferences* I mean a general attitudinal preference for which level of government handles policy, and *issue-specific preferences* are just that – specific to a certain issue. Citizens and elites may generally prefer that the EU take more or less policy responsibility, or they may differentiate between specific issues, preferring instead that the regional or national government handle some areas, while the EU handles others. Finally, responses from 1994 will be compared to 2009 to see how representation has changed over time.²⁹

Analyzing Representation with Congruence

In 2009, the EU encompassed 27 Member States, 750 MEPs, and nearly 500 million citizens. Between whom should we expect congruence? The analysis will focus on policy priorities and preferences for governmental responsibility to assess representation at three levels: the EU as a whole, by European party family, and by country. By 2009, especially in light of the financial crisis, it is not straightforward to distinguish between national and European issues. However, the analysis looks at *preference* for which level of government *should* handle a particular issue. Thus, I am not

²⁹ Note that the ideological representation will be analyzed only for 2009, as the data from 1994 did not include European party family.

defining certain issues as Europeanized or national, but rather comparing the public's issue priorities and preferences for governmental level of responsibility with that of elites. Table 6.1 summarizes the three types of representation that this chapter will assess.

Table 6.1 Types of Representation in European Parliament

Classification	Expected Congruence
1. European	Citizens and elites at European level
2. Ideological	Citizens and elites at level of European party family
3. National	Citizens and elites at national level

It can be argued that any of these three types of representation are appropriate for the European Union. From a normative perspective, the European Parliament should represent the European people as a whole. There is some evidence of a “European mood” (Hix and Marsh, 2011) which suggests that citizens in various countries have similar concerns. Furthermore, studies of EP elections post-2004 enlargement demonstrate that the same factors and the left-right dimension structure voter and party behavior across Europe, suggesting the possibility of one European electorate (van der Brug et al., 2009). Therefore, at the highest level we are looking for agreement between mass and elite policy priorities at the European level.

Alternatively, ideological preferences may be strongest, with preferences matching most highly between European party families and their supporters. It may seem a glaring omission to focus on European party families but not include national party, or partisan, representation. This has not been included for a few reasons. First, I am limited by the data available in the EES surveys. For example, in 2009, there are 231 national

parties represented, but the average number of respondents per party is 6.8, while the median is just 4. This is not a large enough n to draw meaningful conclusions about the level of congruence between national parties and voters. Furthermore, even if there was a larger n available, national party representation is not the most interesting or appropriate question for this research. Many previous studies have examined the level of representation or responsiveness of parties in different countries, and the general consensus is that parties represent their partisans well (Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012). Finally, national parties form the larger European party families, and while national parties do occasionally stray from European party lines (Klüver and Spoon, 2013), the ideal set out by the Lisbon Treaty is that “[p]olitical parties at European level contribute to forming European political awareness and to expressing the will of citizens of the Union” (Article 8 A, 4) so it is crucial to test how well European party families are fulfilling this duty.

Finally, the EU is both a supranational and intergovernmental polity, and as such, national concerns may triumph over European-wide matters. It may be more realistic to anticipate congruence in policy priorities between citizens and elites of the same country.

European Representation

Starting at the level of European representation, Table 6.2 compares citizen and elite responses to the “most important problem” (MIP) facing their country, and which level of government they would prefer handle that problem. First, a brief overview of how to read the table. In the “%” column is the percentage of respondents who indicated that issue area was most important, for example, in 1994 fifty-two percent of Europeans indicated that unemployment/jobs policy was the MIP, while forty-six percent of elites answered the same. Of the respondents who indicated unemployment was the MIP,

seventeen percent would prefer it handled at the regional level, forty-eight percent at the national level, and thirty-five percent at the European level. This is the issue-specific preference. The top row of the table, “Europe”, shows the overall percentage of respondents who preferred the regional, national, or European authorities deal with the MIP, or global preference for governmental responsibility. While there exist elite data for only 1994 and 2009, data for citizens is included for 1999 and 2004 to show how priorities and preferences varied during this time.

Table 6.2: European Representation: European Citizen and Elite Priorities and Preferences, 1994, 2009

	1994								1999				2004				2009							
	Citizens				Elites				Citizens				Citizens				Citizens				Elites			
	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur
Europe		16	48	36		7	39	54		24	41	35		23	55	22		16	49	35		6	45	49
Unemployment	52	17	48	35	46	5	37	58	49	29	40	32	36	26	54	20	33	22	49	29	19	9	50	41
Economy	13	13	57	30	10	2	77	21	10	13	51	36	10	15	65	20	35	11	43	46	37	5	33	62
Gov't/Politics	5	8	44	49	15	10	26	64	8	15	46	38	11	15	68	17	10	14	64	22	17	5	66	29
Social Policy	13	18	55	27	6	4	54	41	13	31	40	29	22	30	56	14	6	20	58	22	6	10	53	37
Immigration	3	12	48	40	3	3	63	34	4	12	43	45	6	16	59	25	5	13	53	34	6	7	65	28
Crime	9	10	37	54	5	13	35	51	6	19	52	29	10	17	53	29	3	25	51	24	2	18	73	9
Environment	4	13	19	67	14	5	9	86	2	13	23	64	1	19	14	67	2	17	23	60	5	0	0	100
n	13007				1120				12426				23281				25662				1464			

Source: European Election Studies 1994 - 2009. Cell entries are percentages, except in "n" rows.

Citizen responses are weighted by country population; Elites weighted by the number of MEPs/country.

Table 6.3: European Representation: Congruence in Preference for Government Responsibility

Year	# of Congruent Issues	%	Non-congruent issues	Who wants more power at European level?
1994	6	86	Unemployment	Elites
2009	7	100		

Note: Summary of issue areas in which the largest percentage of both citizens and elites desire policy making to be at the same level (i.e. European or national).

There is stronger congruence on policy priorities between citizens and elites in 2009 compared to 1994, with economic conditions, unemployment, and issues of government and politics being the top three categories. In 1994, citizens and MEPs agreed that unemployment and economy were the top two priorities, but social policy was the third most cited concern for citizens, while issues of government and politics was the third most frequently cited priority for MEPs. These data indicate that there is a general consensus between citizens and elites at the aggregate European level about the most important problems, and that this consensus has improved over time.

Beyond the most important problem, the level of policy-making authority preferred by citizens and elites gives another clue about representation. As shown above in Table 6.2, in 1994, sixteen percent of Europeans believed the regional government should handle the most important problem; forty-eight percent preferred the national government be responsible for the MIP; and thirty-six percent of citizens believed the EU should handle the MIP. These proportions are nearly identical for 2009, after quite a bit of fluctuation in 1994 and 2004. Elites have similar levels of preference for policy at the national level, but prefer more responsibility be shifted to the European level at the expense of regional decision-making power. Elites' preferred level of governmental responsibility is more congruent with citizens in 2009 compared to 1994. If we assume a global view of governmental responsibility, with citizens and elites having a general preference that transcends issue areas, then it would appear that the EP has become more representative of Europeans as a whole over time.

However, we cannot be certain that individuals have a global preference, perhaps they are responding to issue-specific preferences for governmental responsibility. The top row of Table 6.2 may hide heterogeneity between issue areas and systematic differences between elites and citizens depending on the type of issue. In addition, the priorities

identified by respondents may change from year to year, so the aggregation may also hide variations in policy preferences. To analyze specific, rather than global, preferences for governmental responsibility, the subsequent rows break down these data.

Comparing 1994 and 2009, citizens and elites again have become more congruent in their preferences for which level of government handle different policy areas. In 1994, there are three areas where the largest percentage of citizens preferred that Europe handle that issue: government/politics, crime, and environment. A majority of elites preferred the EU handle these same policy areas, plus unemployment. In 2009, the largest group of both citizens and elites preferred the EU handle economy and environment. In the other issue areas, both citizens and elites prefer that the national government handle the problems.

From 1994 to 2009, the preferences for governmental responsibility have become more similar between elites and citizens and show a decrease in the number of issue areas that should be handled by the EU. This is not unexpected. If citizens have even minimal information about European integration, they should be aware that the European Union has more policy authority now compared to 15 years ago. In line with “thermostatic responsiveness” we would expect a decline in the number of citizens who want policy handled at the European level. In policy areas where international cooperation is paramount, such as environment/climate change, and the economy (especially in light of the Eurozone crisis) citizens may wish to see more action at the European level. In terms of issue priorities and level of governmental responsibility, the European Parliament represents European citizens well.

Ideological Representation

The next step in analyzing representation in the European Parliament is to examine the congruence between citizens and elites in the same party family. How well are European party families doing at representing citizen preferences? Table 6.4 provides a descriptive study of ideological representation by comparing citizen and elite preferences by party family. It is important to keep in mind that the ideological representation analysis necessarily includes only those individuals who named which party they voted for in EP elections. This table contains a large amount of data. First, it is broken down by party family. The top line of each shows the proportion of respondents that belong to that party family, and then the global preference for governmental responsibility, that is, the percentage of respondents in that party family who want the MIP to be handled at the regional, national, or European level. For example, 7% of citizens belong to the ecologists party family, and 15% of them want the MIP handled at the regional level, 37% at the national level, and 49% at the European level. Underneath this line, the proportions are broken down into issue area, with 22% of ecologists naming the economy as the MIP. Of the ecologists who responded that the economy was the MIP, 24% want it handled at the regional level, 37% at the national level, and 39% at the European level.

Table 6.4: Ideological Representation: Priorities and Preferences by Party Family, 2009

	Citizens				Elites			
	%	Region	Nation	Europe	%	Region	Nation	Europe
Ecologists	7	15	37	49	11	4	25	71
Unemployment	22	24	37	39	7	10	50	40
Economy	36	8	34	58	21	0	25	75
Gov't/Politics	6	11	63	26	5	0	50	50
Social Policy	7	19	51	29	6	14	43	43
Immigration	4	23	33	44	4	0	25	75
Crime	2	22	39	39	1	100	0	0
Environment	14	12	22	66	44	2	9	89
n	979				137			
Far Left	5	17	51	32	7	5	51	44
Unemployment	32	24	49	27	35	4	52	44
Economy	26	8	46	47	33	4	41	56
Gov't/Politics	11	20	54	27	7	0	67	33
Social Policy	11	16	63	21	12	0	78	22
Immigration	3	33	43	24	2	0	50	50
Crime	5	14	62	24	0			
Environment	3	11	33	56	2	0	0	100
n	684				81			
Socialist	29	14	50	35	21	8	36	56
Unemployment	27	19	51	30	25	14	38	48
Economy	38	9	47	43	35	5	23	72
Gov't/Politics	7	14	66	20	8	0	74	26
Social Policy	7	20	60	19	10	4	54	42
Immigration	5	12	40	49	3	0	50	50
Crime	3	20	56	24	2	50	50	0
Environment	3	9	34	57	7	0	0	100
n	3930				260			
Liberals	19	16	56	28	17	8	40	52
Unemployment	26	21	59	20	9	7	50	43
Economy	33	11	50	39	52	5	36	58
Gov't/Politics	13	14	68	18	12	8	54	38
Social Policy	8	22	60	19	6	27	36	36
Immigration	5	8	60	32	5	22	44	33
Crime	3	16	64	20	1	50	50	0
Environment	2	8	21	71	4	0	0	100
n	2578				205			

Table continues on next page.

Table 6.4: Ideological Representation: Priorities and Preferences by Party Family, 2009, continued

	Citizens				Elites			
	%	Region	Nation	Europe	%	Region	Nation	Europe
Conservatives and Christian Dems	28	13	52	36	21	6	44	50
Unemployment	29	18	54	28	17	11	58	32
Economy	40	7	48	44	43	1	32	67
Gov't/Politics	9	15	65	20	14	13	52	35
Social Policy	5	14	56	30	5	8	17	75
Immigration	6	7	46	47	4	18	64	18
Crime	3	19	57	25	5	0	85	15
Environment	2	11	35	54	4	0	10	90
n	3771				259			
Nationalists	5	16	55	29	10	0	76	24
Unemployment	14	25	46	29	6	0	50	50
Economy	25	9	55	36	15	0	47	53
Gov't/Politics	8	17	54	29	17	0	76	24
Social Policy	5	12	76	12	2	0	100	0
Immigration	10	11	60	29	40	0	83	17
Crime	4	29	54	18	7	0	100	0
Environment	1	20	0	80	2	0	0	100
n	707				124			
Agrarian	2	18	59	23	4	4	41	55
Unemployment	30	24	56	21	16	13	75	13
Economy	28	7	68	25	35	6	35	59
Gov't/Politics	10	30	55	15	4	0	100	0
Social Policy	9	25	70	5	8	0	100	0
Immigration	6	14	43	43	2	0	100	0
Crime	2	25	75	0	4	0	50	50
Environment	5	20	20	60	29	0	0	100
n	220				49			
Regional/Ethnic	4	18	53	29	9	12	61	27
Unemployment	28	21	56	23	16	6	71	24
Economy	29	14	46	41	30	18	39	43
Gov't/Politics	11	17	63	20	28	3	87	10
Social Policy	7	27	50	23	3	67	33	0
Immigration	8	13	59	28	5	17	83	0
Crime	5	30	63	7	7	14	57	29
Environment	3	22	33	44	5	20	0	80
n	566				116			

Source: European Election Studies 2009. Cell entries are percentages, except in "n" rows.

Above each line is the percent of respondents in that party family, then the preference for global responsibility. Underneath the line preferences are broken down by issue area. Please see text for detailed description of table contents.

Let us first examine the aggregate results. In terms of proportion of respondents, there are roughly similar levels of ideological identification between citizens and elites. While smaller party families are slightly over-represented by elites, they do match up fairly well. The top ideological groupings (socialist, conservatives and Christian democrats, liberals, and ecologists) are in the same rank order of proportion for citizens and elites.

Next, if we examine the preferred level of governmental responsibility from a global perspective, a majority of citizens in all party families, except ecologists, desire for the national government to handle the most important problem, while half of the party families have a majority of elites who feel the same. This means that in terms of global preference for governmental responsibility, citizens and elites in four party families (ecologists, far left, nationalists, and regional/ethnic parties) have the same order preference for governmental responsibility. In the other cases, the elites want more power at the European level compared to national or regional level than do the citizens.

Regarding issue priorities, employment and economic concerns generally prevail among both citizens and elites of most party families. There are many expected patterns found in citizens and elites when examining policy priority by party ideology: ecologists name environmental concerns more frequently than other groups, nationalists are concerned with immigration, and the left is concerned with social policy. However, the ecologist, nationalists, and regional/ethnic parties tend to be less congruent with their co-partisans in terms of issue prioritization. For these groupings, while citizens name the economy or employment as the MIP, the issue most cited by party elites is instead related to their party type: 44% of ecologist party elites name the environment as MIP, 40% of nationalist party elites respond that matters relating to immigration and national way are the most important, and 28% of regional/ethnic parties elites cite government/political

issues as MIP. Nevertheless, this does make sense from a representation viewpoint and ties in with the policy-pull theory introduced in the previous chapter. While an individual may cite the economy as the MIP, s/he could feel that the environment is the top issue for European Parliament, and therefore votes for a Green party anticipating that if they win a seat, they will strongly promote environmental issues within the EP resulting in policies that are slightly more pro-environment than they would have been absent the Green party representation. Based on the policy-pull theory, we should expect that elites of issue-specific party families (compared to traditional parties who focus on the left-right socioeconomic issue areas) are more extreme in their issue preferences than are the citizens. In this way, both mainstream and smaller parties seem to do a decent job of representing their co-partisans' preferences.

Finally, let us examine issue-specific preferences for governmental responsibility. To analyze congruence between citizens and elites, I determined if the largest proportion of citizens and elites wanted the same level of government to handle each issue area. For example, referring back to the socialists party family in Table 6.4: The largest percentage of citizens (51%) want the national government to handle unemployment, while the largest proportion of elites (48%) want the European level to handle it. For this issue area, citizens and elites are not congruent.³⁰ Table 6.5 shows the number of issue areas where citizens and elites are congruent (out of seven issue areas).

³⁰ If there was a 2 percentage point or less gap between the top two preferred levels, they were considered equal. For example, 37% of ecologists who name unemployment as MIP want unemployment it handled national government, and 39% by the European government. For elites 50% want it handled at the national level. Due to the small difference between national and European level for citizens, I consider citizens and elites congruent in this case. This happened in just one other instance: CDC for immigration/national way.

Table 6.5: Ideological Congruence in Preference for Government Responsibility

Party Family	# of Congruent		Non-congruent issues	Who wants more power at European level?	Notes
	Issues	%			
Ecologists	6	86	Crime	Citizens	
Far Left	6	100			No elites data for Crime
Socialist	5	71	Unemployment and economy	Elites	
Liberals	6	86	Economy	Elites	
CDC	5	71	Economy and social policy	Elites	
Nationalists	6	86	Economy	Elites	
Agrarian	6	86	Economy	Elites	
Regional	5	71	Economy and social policy	Elites; for social policy citizens want national while elites prefer regional.	

Note: Summary of issue areas in which the largest percentage of both citizens and elites desire policy making to be at the same level (i.e. European or national).

It is remarkable that while half of the party families, representing $\frac{3}{4}$ of citizens, did not share between citizens and elites a global preference for which level of government take responsibility for the MIP, when broken down by issue area, in every party family there is congruence for at least five of seven issues, or 71%. This suggests that ideological representation is strong in the European Parliament. As shown in Table 6.5 above, the most common difference is in preference for who handles the economy. For the six party families where this issue area was not congruent, citizens wanted the national level to handle the economy, while elites preferred that it be handled by the European level.

National Representation

This section will analyze congruence at the national level – are preferences of citizens and elites from the same country congruent? Due the complexity in showing and analyzing the country level tables for priority and preferences, I include in this section a summary measure of convergence scores. A detailed breakdown of issue priorities and

responsibility preferences by country in the same style as Table 6.4 is available in Appendix X. The left half of the table gives the results from 1994, while the right half shows 2009. As shown in Appendix X, the policy priority most frequently cited by citizens and elites in both years is largely congruent. In 1999, the number one response from citizens in all countries was unemployment, and most elites agreed. The only countries where the largest proportion of elites named a different MIP were Denmark (environment), Ireland (government/politics), and Portugal (economy). However, the order is largely similar between citizens and elites overall. In 2009, economic matters or unemployment/jobs policy are cited by citizens as the most important problem in 26 of 27 EU Member States and by elites in 18 Member States. Elites in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, and Romania gave responses related to government/politics, but none of these are close to a majority. In these countries, government/politics is the third most cited problem by citizens. In Malta, elites cited the MIP as immigration/national way issues, and this was the second MIP for citizens. In Cyprus, elites and citizens both named the division of Cyprus (falling under the “other” category – which has been excluded from the tables) as the issue priority. It is clear that throughout Europe, economic and employment concerns are important in every country. At both time points, 1994 and 2009, the MIP given by citizens and elites is largely similar at the country level. Between-country variations in what is considered most important are generally shared by citizens and elites alike.

Table 6.6 below provides a summary of the convergence scores between citizen and elite preferences in 1994 and 2009. This is a summary measure of how similar the profiles of citizens and elites are. I adapt this method from Sigelman and Buell (2004) who used it to compare what percentage of attention candidates give a particular topic to better understand where they overlap and diverge. Here, convergence is measured as:

$$100 - (\sum_{i=1}^n |P_c - P_e|)/2$$

where P_c and P_e are the percentages of citizens (c) and elites (e) that named a particular issue as most important, and the absolute differences of them are summed over the n potential MIPs. This sum is divided by 2 so that the measure falls between 0 and 100, and is then subtracted from 100 so that it is a measure of similarity rather than dissimilarity (see Sigelman and Buell, 2004 for a detailed discussion of this methodology). Here is an example using France in 2009 (this is from the detailed breakdown of national issue priorities and preferences available in Appendix X):

Most Important Issue	Citizens	Elites	 P_c - P_e
Unemployment	34%	32%	2
Economy	43%	29%	14
Gov't/Politics	6%	8%	2
Social Policy	5%	11%	6
Immigration	1%	9%	8
Crime	2%	1%	1
Environment	6%	6%	0
Sum			33

The sum of 33 is then divided by 2 and subtracted from 100 for a similarity score of 84 (rounded up from 83.5). This indicates that citizens and elites in France share 84% of top issue priorities. Table 6.6 shows the similarity measure for citizens and elites in each member state for 1994 and 2009. Issue priorities refers to the Most Important Problem, while level of responsibility refers to global preferences for responsibility.

The main difference between Table 6.6 below and the descriptive summary above which referred to Appendix X is that the descriptive summary compared rank order of MIP between citizens and elites, while the convergence scores compare the percentages of citizens and elites naming each issue as a priority. Using the rank order method results in a higher level of congruence than using convergence scores. The convergence scores

range from a low of 37 in Luxembourg and Bulgaria to a high of 88 in Cyprus and Italy, and 93 in Poland. The average is 66 with a median score of 69.

**Table 6.6: National Representation:
Convergence of Priorities and Preferences, 1994-2009**

	1994		2009	
	Issue Priorities	Level of Responsibility	Issue Priorities	Level of Responsibility
Austria			83	92
Belgium	85	81	51	78
Bulgaria			37	95
Cyprus			88	84
Czech Republic			77	77
Denmark	73	84	79	89
Estonia			57	89
Finland			78	78
France	83	81	84	86
Germany	72	91	63	72
Greece			57	88
Hungary			68	97
Ireland	46	99	70	61
Italy	77	77	88	84
Latvia			65	81
Lithuania			66	95
Luxembourg	80	80	37	93
Malta			42	74
Netherlands	79	99	54	99
Poland			93	66
Portugal	46	97	46	89
Romania			47	84
Slovak Republic			69	88
Slovenia			76	87
Spain	77	85	74	83
Sweden			77	89
United Kingdom	70	61	69	80

Source: European Election Studies voter survey and candidate study 1994 and 2009.

Cell entries are convergence scores which may range from 0 to 100. Please see text for calculation method.

How about the congruence at the national level between the public and elites in their preferences for governmental responsibility? In 1994 we can compare global preferences for responsibility for 11 countries and in 2009 for all 27 Member States again by two methods: comparing the preference of the largest proportion of citizens to elites

applying a descriptive method to the table in Appendix X – does the largest group of respondents want the MIP handled by national or European governments?³¹ Secondly, we can compare preferences using the convergence scores between citizens and elites. First, using the descriptive method, in 1994 there is global congruence between elites and citizens in five countries (45% of the countries for which there are data). In three countries, the largest group citizens and elites want the MIP handled by the national government, and in two countries, the largest group prefer Europe handle the MIP. In the six countries where there is not congruence, more elites want the MIP handled at the European level, while citizens prefer the national level. In 2009, the percentage of EU Member States that are congruent increases to 70%: the largest proportion of citizens and elites in nineteen countries prefer the same level of government is responsible for MIP (six prefer European level, twelve prefer national government, and one “tie”). Similar to 1994, in seven out of eight countries where there is not congruence at the global level, the largest group of elites wants the European level to handle the MIP, while in just one country (Cyprus), over half of elites want the national government to handle MIP, while the majority of citizens prefer the European level to handle it. In the EU overall, global congruence in preference for governmental responsibility has increased at the national level.

Looking at the convergence scores from Table 6.6, there are generally high levels of similarity between citizens and elites on which level of government they prefer handle the most important problem. The scores range from a low of 61 in Ireland and 66 in Poland to 97 in Hungary and 99 in the Netherlands, with an average score of 84 and a

³¹ There is no data for elites from Greece in 1994.

median score of 86. This indicates a much higher level of congruence for global preferences in governmental responsibility than for issue priorities.

Is the situation different if we examine only the countries that were members in 1994 and 2009? There are three ways to test if representation has improved or worsened in each country over time: are global preferences congruent in both 1994 and 2009; are citizens and elites moving in the same direction with their preferences (Trend); and is the gap between citizens and elites for global preferences shrinking (Gap)? These are summarized in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7: Change in National Representation, 1994-2009

	Global Congruence		Trend	Gap
	1994	2009		
Belgium	N	Y	Y	Y
Denmark	N	Y	Y	Y
France	N	Y	Y	Y
Germany	Y	Y	Y	N
Ireland	Y	N	N	N
Italy	N	N	Y	Y
Luxembourg	Y	Y	N	Y
Netherlands	Y	Y	Y	Y
Portugal	Y	N	Y	N
Spain	N	Y	Y	Y
UK-Britain	N	Y	Y	Y
Total	5	9	9	8

Note: The table indicates if there was congruence between citizens and elites in global preference for responsibility in 1994 and 2009, if preferences of each group are moving in the same direction (Trend) and if the gap between the two is shrinking (Gap). Greece excluded because there are no elite data from 1994.

In 1994, five of eleven countries were congruent in their global preference for government responsibility, and this increased to nine in 2009. Eight of these countries

either maintained congruence between the two time points, or moved from incongruent to congruent. Looking at the Trend column, in nine countries both elites and citizens are moving in the same direction with regards to responsibility held at the European level. For example, in the UK, the proportion of citizens and elites wanting the MIP handled by Europe decreased from 1994 to 2009, while in Italy fewer citizens wanted the MIP handled by Europe in 2009 compared to 1994, while a larger portion of elites wanted Europe to be responsible. Finally, the Gap column summarizes if the gap between the proportion of citizens and elites who want the MIP handled at the European level has shrunk between 1994 and 2009, which it has done in eight countries. In Germany, citizens and elites are congruent in their global preferences, they are trending the same direction with increasing proportions of both wanting responsibility at the EU level, but the gap between citizens and elites has increased during this time. Overall, these results indicate using three different methods that national representation has improved from 1994 to 2009 in the “old” Member States.

Turning now to issue-specific congruence, Tables 6.8a and 6.8b summarize the issue areas where citizens and elites in the same country are congruent in which level of government they prefer handle the MIP for the top seven issue areas. Since there are not sufficient elites’ data for each issue area, the second column shows how many issues elites and citizens share the same preference for government responsibility, and the next column is a percentage of congruent issue areas for which there are data. For example, in 1994 in Ireland, there was no elites’ data for social policy or immigration. Therefore, Irish citizens and elites are congruent in three out of five issue areas, or 60%.

Table 6.8a: National Congruence in Preference for Government Responsibility, 1994

Country	# of Congruent Issues	%	Non-congruent issues	Who wants more power at European level?	Notes
Belgium	5	71	Govt/Politics and Soc Pol	Elites	
Denmark	4	57	Unemp, Econ, Crime	Elites, except Econ	
France	0	0	Unemp, Soc Pol, Imm, Environ	Elites, except Imm	No elites data for Econ, Crime
Germany	7	100			
Greece	n/a				No data for elites
Ireland	3	60	Unemp, Crime	Elites	No elites data for Soc Pol or Imm
Italy	4	67	Govt, Imm	Elites	No elites data for Soc Pol
Luxembourg	4	80	Econ	Citizens	No elites data for Imm, Crime
Netherlands	6	86	Crime	Citizens	
Portugal	3	75	Unemp	Elites	No elites data for Soc Pol, Imm, Crime
Spain	2	40	Unemp, Econ, Govt	Elites, except Govt*	No elites data for Imm, Environ
UK-Britain	4	80	Unemp	Elites	No elites data for Soc Pol, Imm

*For Govt/Pol, citizens want responsibility at the national level, while the majority of elites responding chose the regional level.

Note: Summary of issue areas in which the largest percentage of both citizens and elites desire policy making to be at the same level (i.e. European or national).

Table 6.8b: National Congruence in Preference for Government Responsibility, 2009

Country	# of Congruent Issues	%	Non-congruent issues	Who wants more power at European level?	Notes
Austria	6	100	Unemployment	Citizens	No elites data for Crime
Belgium	6	86	Unemployment and Govt/Pol	Elites	
Bulgaria	n/a				Not enough elites data for meaningful comparison
Cyprus	0	0	Govt	Elites	No elites data for other topics
Czech Republic	4	57	Economy, Imm, Environ	Elites	
Denmark	6	86	Unemp	Elites	
Estonia	5	71	Imm, Environ	Elites	
Finland	4	67	Econ, Environ	Elites	No elites data for Crime
France	4	71	Unemp, Govt/Pol, Imm	Citizens, except Unemp	
Germany	5	83	Soc Pol	Elites	No elites data for Crime
Greece	4	67	Soc Pol	Elites	No elites data for Unemp, Environ
Hungary	4	57	Econ, Soc Pol	Elites	No elites data for Environ
Ireland	2	50	Econ, Soc Pol	Elites	No elites data for Govt, Imm, Crime
Italy	3	43	Unemp, Soc Pol, Crime	Elites	No elites data for Environ
Latvia	5	71	Crime	Elites, except Crime	No elites data for Environ
Lithuania	3	75	Soc Pol	Elites	No elites data for Imm, Crime, Environ
Luxembourg	3	100			No elites data for Govt, Imm, Crime, Environ
Malta	3	75	Govt	Elites	No elites data for Unemp, Soc Pol, or Environ
Netherlands	5	71	Unemp, Imm	Citizens, except Unemp	
Poland	4	80	Imm	Elites	No elites data for Crime, Environ
Portugal	3	75	Govt	Elites	No elites data for Imm, Crime, Environ
Romania	3	75	Crime	Citizens	No elites data for Soc Pol, Imm, Environ
Slovak Republic	4	67	Crime, Environ	Citizens; Elites	No elites data for Soc Pol
Slovenia	2	67	Soc Pol	Elites	No elites data for Govt, Imm, Crime, Environ
Spain	4	67	Govt, Imm	Elites, except Imm	No elites data for Environ
Sweden	6	86	Econ	Elites	
UK-Britain	7	100			

Note: Summary of issue areas in which the largest percentage of both citizens and elites desire policy making to be at the same level (ie European or national).

Let us compare the results between 1994 and 2009 on national representation. Taking the EU as a whole, the average percentage of congruent issue areas increased slightly, but remains essentially the same from 1994 to 2009: 65% in 1994 and 71% in 2009. Examining the eleven countries for which there is data at both time points, five countries have increased the percentage of issues that are congruent between citizens and elites, and four have decreased in congruence. As shown in the tables, most instances of non-congruence occur when a larger proportion of elites want the issue area handled by the European government, compared with citizens who prefer it be handled at the national level. There are a few exceptions to this, but it is true in most cases. The issue areas where citizens and elites disagree about appropriate governmental responsibility vary across countries – it is not simply a matter of saying, for example, that elites prefer that Europe handle the economy while citizens prefer the national government, but rather the instances of non-congruence occur in different issue areas. This would indicate that there is variation in citizen and elite preferences between countries.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the analysis I argued that any of the three types of representation, European, ideological, or national, could be appropriate in the European Union. This final section will compare these three linkages to determine how citizens are best represented. The findings are quite positive – on issue-specific policy areas, citizens and elites are overwhelmingly congruent in both issue priority and in preference for government responsibility. In 2009, citizens and elites were congruent in preference for government responsibility in 88% of issue areas from a European representation standpoint, at least 71% but on average 82% of issue areas using an ideological representation approach, and on average 71% of issue areas using a national

representation analysis. This is convincing evidence that the EP serves its function of representing European citizens in the EU, and would argue against a democratic deficit.

While congruence is high between citizens and elites, it is not perfect. It is clear that elites generally want more power at the European level than do the citizens. It is to be expected that politicians would want to see their own power increase. Also, elites may be socialized into thinking about solving problems from a European perspective and therefore desirous of increasing the decision-making authority of the EU. However it is a positive sign that in most countries that have been members since 1994, the gap between citizens and elites in preference for EU-level responsibility has shrunk. From an accountability perspective, this could be a result of parties responding to citizen preferences and “turning down” their preference for European responsibility to ensure they are (re)-elected. From a mandating perspective, it could be that citizens choose candidates and parties that reflect their own preferences. While the static approach utilized in this chapter does not shine light on the causal mechanisms behind congruence, it demonstrates the end point of congruence on policy priorities and preferences between citizens and elites. It could be argued that whatever happens inside the “black box” of representation – whether it be due accountability and politicians anticipating mass preferences, to citizen mandates by voting for like-minded representatives, or something else altogether – the important matter is that citizens’ priorities and preferences are reflected in the European government, and the result is improved representation.

7

Impacting the Direct Electoral Connection

The most commonly heard buzz phrase circulating in Britain's soul-searching over our membership of the European Union is "democratic deficit". It is a phrase much-loved because a) it is alliterative, and b) only vaguely understandable, the "vaguely" being an advantage, as it allows anyone to use it to make it mean whatever they want.

Peter Millar, 2013

Concerns abound in the European Union about the democratic legitimacy of its institutions and policy-making process. Democratic legitimacy is often studied in terms of systems theory: inputs (participation), throughputs (processes), and outputs (policy outcomes) all contribute to its existence. Much scholarly research has gone into analyzing whether or not there is a democratic deficit in the EU, and politicians, media, and the average citizen often use the phrase to refer to any kind of perceived shortfall in democratic inputs - low turnout in EP elections, lack of power in the EP, low citizen knowledge or interest in European affairs, etc. Indeed those who argue that a democratic deficit exists usually cite deficiencies in democratic inputs rather than outputs. As the Treaty of Lisbon explicitly stated in its Preamble that one of the aims of the Treaty was to enhance the democratic legitimacy of the Union, and democratic inputs are the most contested source of concern about the EU's legitimacy, in this thesis I developed and

applied a model of the electoral connection to analyze some of the factors impacting the direct channel of representation.

The electoral connection refers to the linkage between citizens and their elected representatives and is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for democratic legitimacy. In the European Union a dual electoral connection is possible through two channels of representation: indirect (intergovernmental, or via national governments) and direct (supranational, or through the European Parliament). I chose to focus on the direct channel as this is the most frequently cited area for those concerned about the democratic deficit. As the end goal of the electoral connection is a representative government, the model I developed is based on substantive representation, and in particular, the mandate link, between citizens and their elected representatives. Using this model, I tested hypotheses of individual-level political behavior to analyze how certain factors impact the direct electoral connection in the EU, and conducted a descriptive study of EP representation using an issue priority congruence approach. Despite the doom and gloom we often hear about the state of representative democracy in the EU, **the results show that the European Parliament represents well the priorities and preferences of European citizens.** In this concluding chapter, I will summarize the findings from each chapter of what enhances or diminishes the direct electoral connection, highlight some of the contributions made to the literature, and give suggestions for ways in which the electoral connection might be strengthened. I will also discuss the limitations of the current research and discuss paths for future research.

At the beginning of this thesis, I defined three criteria to assess the electoral connection in the European Union:

- 1) **Competent Citizens:** Citizens can competently assign policy responsibility and hold their representatives to account;
- 2) **Meaningful Choices:** Citizens have meaningful choices at election time; and
- 3) **Substantive Representation:** Elected officials are representative of their constituents.

While each of these conditions is broad and there could be many different ways to approach them, I set out a model of the electoral connection that is based on substantive representation and focuses on the role of mandates, but also takes into account accountability (see Figure 2.1). In the empirical analyses, I focused on the role of political sophistication, attitude extremity, and issue politicization to test arguments made in each chapter. The findings contribute to the extant literature in a number of ways, and allow for a better understanding of what impacts the direct electoral connection in the EU. Let us now analyze the findings from each of these criteria in turn

Competent Citizens: Citizens can competently assign policy responsibility

To assess the first condition, I compared citizen and expert attributions of responsibility to national governments and the European Union using multilevel modeling to test individual and contextual-level hypotheses. In line with the assumption of bounded rationality, citizens do not have perfect information and this was clear from their divergence on the experts on allocating policy responsibility. However, citizens are able to approach expert-quality judgments if they are politically sophisticated, and if the political context provides information. An additional contribution is that the literature generally portrays motivating factors as improving citizen competence, however, in this chapter I demonstrated that individuals motivated by extreme political attitudes are

actually *less* competent in their responsibility judgments because these attitudes bias information processing and result in less accurate attributions of policy responsibility. A final contribution is that while polarized attitudes at the individual level result in less accurate judgments, polarization at the country-level results in more information being available in the environment and overall improved responsibility judgments.

This first criterion was linked to both the mandating and accountability aspects of substantive representation. While the chapter did not analyze if and when elected officials are held to account in the EU, it instead focused on the mediating factor of correctly attributing responsibility, a necessary pre-condition to accountability. Many, but not all, citizens are able to competently assign policy responsibility to the EU. This would likely be the case looking at any national context as well, so we should not hold the EU to a higher standard and expect that all citizens have expert ability to assign responsibility. What other factors then improve the electoral connection by increasing citizen competence?

First, it is promising that political sophistication and cognitive ability function similarly in the EU as in other political contexts by improving citizen competence. However, as EU integration has become more politicized and contentious, the repercussions are mixed for citizen competence. On the one hand, if the EU issue continues to become more politicized, it is more likely that citizens will develop strong attitudes about it. This decreases the likelihood that they will be neutral information-processors, and instead will seek out information that is in line with their preexisting beliefs. This may negatively impact the electoral connection as citizens will have less accurate understandings of policy responsibility. However, as parties become more polarized on the EU issue, this has a few different effects. First, it signals increased options for voters, resulting in more citizens having a party choice close to their own

preferences. Second, the issue becomes more salient, which has a dual role of making more information about the EU available, and increasing the chances that voters will want to learn more about EU policy making responsibility. Both of these thus serve to improve the electoral connection in the EU.

Meaningful Choices: Citizens have meaningful choices at election time

The second criterion is linked to mandates: if citizens have meaningful choices at election time, then the parties elected are more likely to represent the voters' interests and preferences. A long-running issue in the literature on vote choice in EP elections has pitted second-order elections theory against the "Europe matters" research agenda. One contribution here was to refine European election models: another reason for the differences seen between national and EP elections is because the EU-issue becomes more salient in European elections than national, yet the left-right issue is at least, if not more important, since the bulk of legislative activity falls along the traditional left-right spectrum. Thus voters are more likely to consider both dimensions in EP elections and ideally should be able to give a mandate on both. However, because the EU issue cross-cuts traditional cleavages, many voters feel close to different parties on each dimension. This results in issue cross-pressure. A second contribution from this section was to define and test different methodologies of cross-pressure which could be used with any issue dimensions for which citizen and party placements are known. In this case, I demonstrated that between forty and seventy-four percent of citizens potentially face cross-pressure in EP elections, depending on the methodology used. It would seem at first glance that this would negatively impact the electoral connection, as it indicates citizens are unable to identify a party with whom they agree on both left-right and EU issue dimensions, and are thus unable to mandate on both lines. An alternate possibility is that

cross-pressure strengthens the electoral connection because this is more likely in contexts with more diverse party offerings, indicating that citizens have more choice, but that there is not one party that meets their needs on both issue dimensions. As parties' and voters' preferences and positions evolve to incorporate the EU-issue into their ideological dimensions, we should perhaps expect that the presence of a large number of cross-pressured individuals is a necessary state to pass through. This will require additional research in the future.

The findings from Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 indicate that even though a large proportion of citizens may face cross-pressure, of those who do, many weight the left-right dimension more heavily and vote for a party on this basis. This could indicate that citizens understand that the majority of EP legislation falls along the traditional left-right lines. It could also indicate that protest voting is not as much of a concern as some have believed. Specifically, political sophistication and a context politicized along the left-right dimension improve the electoral connection by increasing the likelihood of voting for the party closest on the LR rather than European dimension. While attitude extremity on the LR dimension also increases this probability, I am hesitant to say that it enhances the electoral connection. While extreme attitudes make an issue more salient, they also bias information processing, as demonstrated in Chapter 3. This suggests that individuals with extreme attitudes are less likely to perceive objective facts. So in this case, while the outcome of voting on the basis of left-right over EU may be desirable, the means to that end has other implications which may serve to diminish the electoral connection.

While some citizens are not able to give a mandate on both dimensions, the majority of citizens do give a mandate on the dominant LR dimension. There is room to improve the link between citizens and parties, and thus improve the electoral connection. Looking at the supply side, it is clear that many citizens perceive that their issue

preferences do not match existing party platforms. There is perhaps space for parties to either realign or make clearer their EU integration positions to allow voters the chance to find a single party who represents them on both left-right and EU issue dimensions.

An additional opportunity to improve the second criterion of the electoral connection is to increase voters' knowledge of and confidence in their perceptions of self and party placements. In this way, more voters would be able to use their vote to give a mandate to parties in the EP. Of course, educating the electorate is more easily said than done. Voters often use any number of heuristics to make up for information shortcomings, as being informed is costly. However, popular new technologies such as vote advice websites, which ask voters a series of policy-related questions and show the individual where they are positioned in relation to political parties, may help inform the public. These do not demand much effort, are easily accessible, and may even be perceived as enjoyable, rather than a burden. There are countless other possibilities through the advent of social media, on-demand apps, and any other number of new devices, which will be the task of a future researcher entrepreneur to invent.

A limitation of this research into cross-pressure and vote choice is that many individuals could not be included in the analysis because they were unable or unwilling to give self or party positions on a dimension, and this was more likely to occur in some Member States than others. Not being able to place parties negatively affects the electoral connection – these individuals less likely to be able to mandate, because they do not know the platforms in the first place. Also, they are more likely to abstain in EP elections, further ensuring that they are not represented in the EP. However, at this point it is impossible to say which way the causal arrow flows – if they abstain because they do not know enough about party positions to make a choice, or if they do not care enough in the first place to learn about party platforms, and would have abstained anyway. Future work

could look specifically at these individuals to see what can be learned. Furthermore, in all methodologies used, a small but significant percentage of voters chose a party that was not the most appropriate on either dimension, so their motivations and choices need additional analysis.

Substantive Representation: Elected officials are representative of their constituents

The final empirical chapter examined how well citizens are represented in the European Parliament. This was perhaps the most challenging of the three criteria for a number of reasons. First, there are different types and levels of representation. What would be most appropriate for the EU? The Treaty of Lisbon sets out the expectation that European citizens are represented by the directly-elected European Parliament, so in a study of the electoral connection it makes sense to start with the popularly elected representative body. Furthermore, as the previous chapters focused on the division of responsibility between national governments and the EU, and on the salience of left-right versus EU integration preferences, the most relevant, and fruitful study would be to examine issue congruence on issue priorities and preferred level of government responsibility. Indeed, ensuring the public and elites are congruent in their issue priorities should precede any analysis of positional congruence, as what use is being at the same position if the public does not care about a certain issue? This study of issue priorities and preferences for responsibility fills a gap in the literature, as this type of study has not been done previously in the EP. Furthermore, using descriptive analyses, I demonstrated that citizens are best represented by European party families, then by European Parliament as a whole. The lowest level of congruence was found at the national level. This is again good news for the electoral connection in the EU: both issue salience and preference for

governmental responsibility are highly congruent between citizens and elites, suggesting that mandate representation is working well. Those citizens who did not vote or share a party preference are not left out or misrepresented: the high level of congruence at the European level indicates that the Parliament does an excellent job of representing the preferences of the European citizenry as a whole.

Chapter 6 necessarily has some limitations. While it has shown that congruence in issue salience and preference for government responsibility have improved over time by comparing 1994 with 2009, we do not have a sense of if or how responsive MEPs are to citizen preferences, which could be tested by assessing the opinion-policy nexus over time. The analysis was also descriptive, and while the theory of the electoral connection that I outlined indicates that citizen competence and meaningful choices should lead to better representation, this relationship is assumed rather than directly tested. This is one avenue for future research, as well as other impacts on the level of representation. Furthermore, there are many additional ways that representation or responsiveness could be tested, for example, by how well citizen preferences are reflected in policy outputs.

Substantive Representation without Accountability?

In this thesis I focused primarily on the mandate perspective of substantive representation, arguing that if citizens understand policy responsibility and can identify parties whose platforms align with their preferences, then this will lead to substantive representation. I argued that the European Parliament, at least in terms of policy priorities and preferences for responsibility, does effectively represent European citizens. What may appear to be a glaring omission, however, is the accountability aspect. While it is true that attributions of responsibility are the moderating factor in holding representatives

to account, the institutional complexity of the EU makes this difficult, and at this point electoral accountability of MEPs is more of an aspiration than actuality.

Returning to the introductory chapter and discussion of trustee versus delegate models of substantive representation, the delegate model assumes that representatives are given a mandate to follow a particular policy program, and are rewarded or sanctioned at election time for their performance. This ensures they remain “representative” of their constituents. This relationship is more likely to break down at the level of European Parliament because it is difficult for citizens to understand how MEPs have been performing. However, voters still have at their disposal other cues such as perceptions of the economy. In the context of 2009 EP elections, voters were dissatisfied with the economy and punished incumbent parties across Europe (although the overall composition of the EP didn’t change much). Whether acting as delegates or trustees, and I would argue representatives do both, to make their re-election more likely, it is in their best interests to pursue policies that align with the preferences and priorities of their partisans. The threat of electoral sanction helps to induce politicians to act in their constituents’ best interests, even if citizens are unable to make a direct link between MEP behavior and policy outcomes. This, combined with the mandate link, makes substantive representation possible.

Concluding Thoughts

A major contribution of this work has been tying together diverse literatures to take a new, expanded perspective on what impacts the direct electoral connection in the European Union. By doing so, it was necessary to select certain aspects to research at the expense of others, and this is a limitation of the present research. The theory of the electoral connection focused on individual-level attributions to the EU and voting

behavior in European Parliament and aggregate congruence between citizens and European elites. However, the general model is not limited to the direct channel of representation in the European Union, nor to just the EU: it is flexible enough to be applied to any system of representative government and each criteria can be specified in a variety of ways, depending on the case.

At this point, it is appropriate to return to the concept of a dual electoral connection in the European Union. As discussed, recently more attention has shifted towards the role of national parliaments in oversight of EU activities, holding national politicians to account for activity at the European level, and the potential for the EU-issue to influence national elections. Yet, many of the factors highlighted in this thesis that may strengthen or diminish the direct electoral connection, such as improving citizens' understanding of European responsibilities, increasing knowledge about their own and party placements, and augmenting the amount of information available in the political context, hold true for the indirect channel of representation as well. The reason that the indirect channel would also benefit from these improvements is that we have yet to see the ascendance of European parties at European election time. National parties, who contest both national and European elections, will need to and may benefit from integrating European issues into their existing party platforms. This may result in some realignment of traditional cleavages, or perhaps parties can find a way to convince their partisans (or vice versa) to adopt a particular stance on EU-issues. In terms of party politics, what improves the direct electoral connection will also improve the indirect link.

While each aspect of the direct electoral connection could be improved, citizens demonstrate competence in allocating responsibility, they have a variety of party choices to represent them in European Parliament, and there is a high level of congruence between elites and citizens. Despite the complexity and multiple layers of responsibility

and representation in the European Union, there is a direct link between citizens and their elected representatives which results in citizens' priorities and preferences being reflected by EU elites. While different factors have positive or negative impacts on the electoral connection, overall these inputs into democratic legitimacy are functioning and concerns about a democratic deficit through the direct channel of representation are overstated.

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Appendices

I. Question Wording from EES 2009 Voter Survey

- Q24. A lot of people abstained in the European Parliament elections of 4 June, while others voted. Did you cast your vote?
- Q25. Which party did you vote for?
- Q46. In political matters, people talk of ‘the left’ and ‘the right’. What is your position? Please indicate your views using any number on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means ‘left’ and 10 means ‘right’. Which number best describes your position? [*left-right attitude*] [used to create cross-pressure variable]
- Q47. And about where would you place the following parties on this scale? [used to create cross-pressure variable]
- Q80. Some say European Unification should be pushed further. Others say it already has gone too far. What is your opinion? Please indicate your views using a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means unification ‘has already gone too far’ and 10 means it ‘should be pushed further’. What number on this scale best describes your position? [*EU attitude*, ch 4 and 5] [used to create cross-pressure variable]
- Q81. And about where would you place the following parties on this scale? [used to create cross-pressure variables]
- Q89. Do you feel yourself a little closer to one of the political parties than others? [*Party attachment*]
- Q101. What is the highest level of education you have completed in your education? [*Education*]
- Q102. Are you male or female? [*Female*]
- Q103. What year were you born? [*Age*]
- Q113. Please pick one box for your current job. [*Social class*]

Political Sophistication Scale

For each of the following statements, could you please tell me whether you believe they are true or false? [*Political sophistication*]

- Q92. Switzerland is a member of the EU
- Q93. The European Union has 25 member states
- Q94. Every country in the EU elects the same number of representatives to the European Parliament.
- Q95. Every six months, a different Member State becomes president of the Council of the European Union
- Q96. The [Country] Minister of Education {or appropriate national title} is [Insert Name].
- Q97. Individuals must be 25 or older to stand as candidates in [Country] general elections.
- Q98. There are [actual number + 50%] members of the [Country] parliament.

EU Attitudes Summated Scale

- Q79. Generally speaking, do you think that [Country's] membership of the European Union is a good thing, bad thing, or neither good nor bad?
- Q80. Some say European Unification should be pushed further. Others say it already has gone too far. What is your opinion? Please indicate your views using a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means unification 'has already gone too far' and 10 means it 'should be pushed further'. What number on this scale best describes your position?
- Q83. In general, do you think that enlargement of the European Union would be a good thing, bad thing, or neither good nor bad?
- Q91. How much confidence do you have that decisions made by the European Union will be in the interest of (country)? A great deal of confidence, a fair amount, not very much, or no confidence at all.

II. Descriptive Summary of the Data: EES 2009

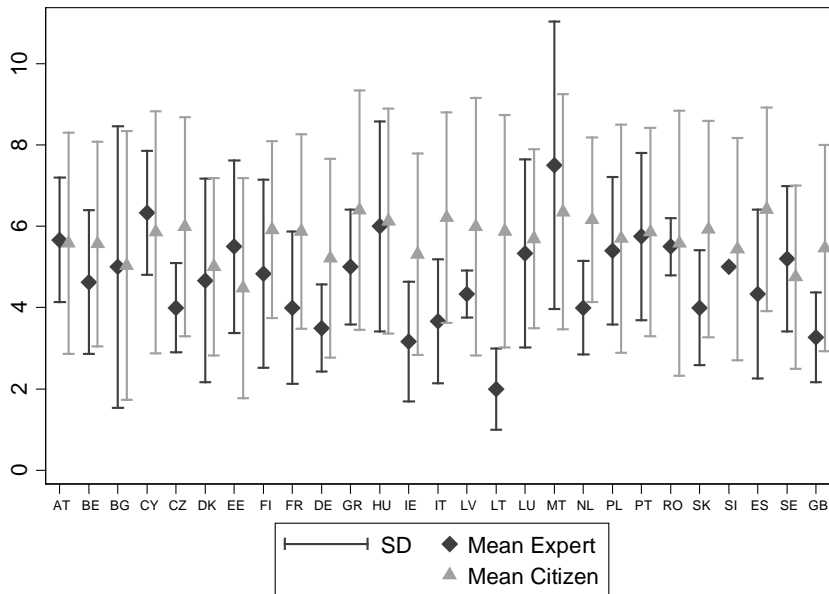
Below are descriptive statistics for the variables used in Chapter 3, 4, or 5.

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Individual-Level Variables				
Closeness to Expert Evaluation	-2.76	.98	-8.13	-0.12
Political Knowledge	3.90	1.87	0	7
EU Attitudes	-0.01	0.73	-2.30	1.44
EU Self-Placement	5.26	3.10	0	10
LR Self-Placement	5.33	2.72	0	10
Education	3.46	1.38	0	6
Age	50.3	16.9	18	99
Female	.56	.50	0	1
Party Attachment	.66	.47	0	1
Social Class				
Upper Service	.16	.36	0	1
Lower Service	.06	.24	0	1
Routine Non-Manual	.28	.45	0	1
Petty Bourgeois	.08	.27	0	1
Skilled	.11	.31	0	1
Non-Skilled	.16	.36	0	1
Still in Education	.04	.21	0	1
Other	.11	.31	0	1
Contextual-Level Variables				
Negative Tone in Media	0.16	0.59	-1.36	1.26
EU Party Polarization - SD	1.12	0.40	0.42	1.97
LR Party Polarization – SD	2.29	.65	.97	3.75
Length of Membership	22.94	20.93	2	57

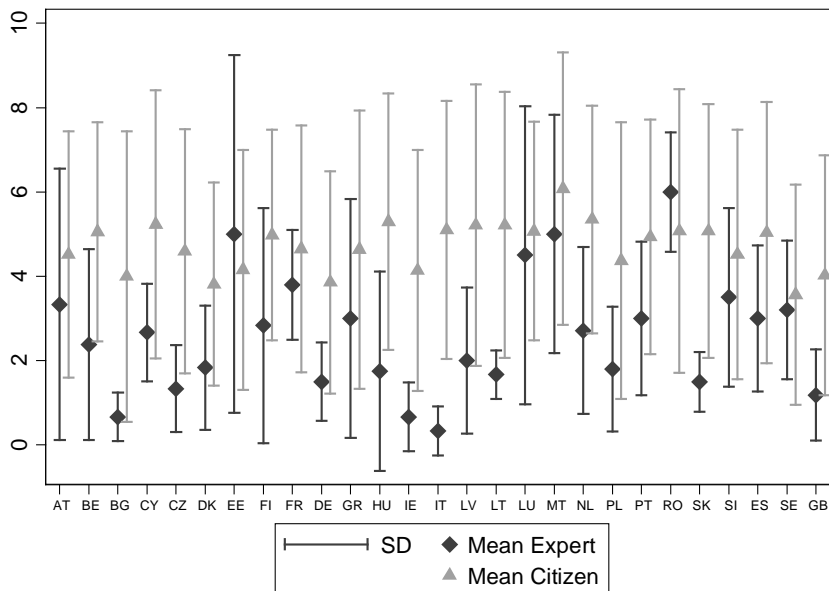
III. Country-Level Descriptive Data – Chapter 3

These figures show, for each policy area, the mean and standard deviation of expert and citizen attributions of responsibility to the EU by country.

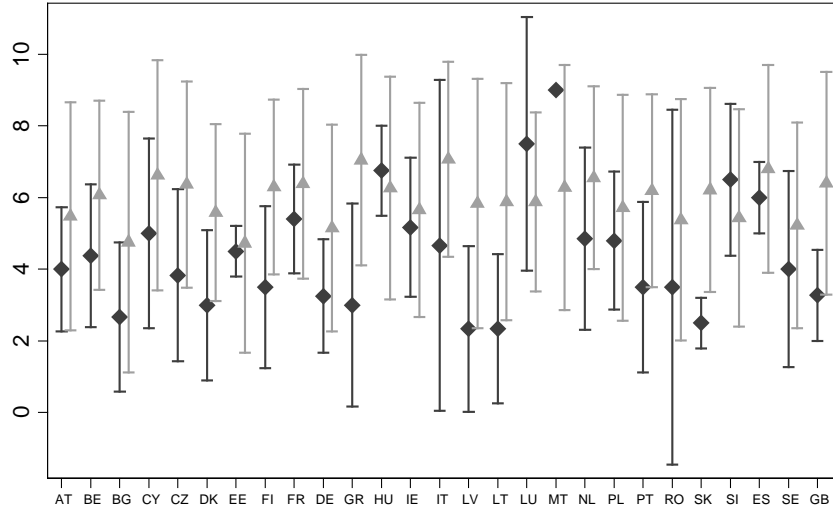
Economy



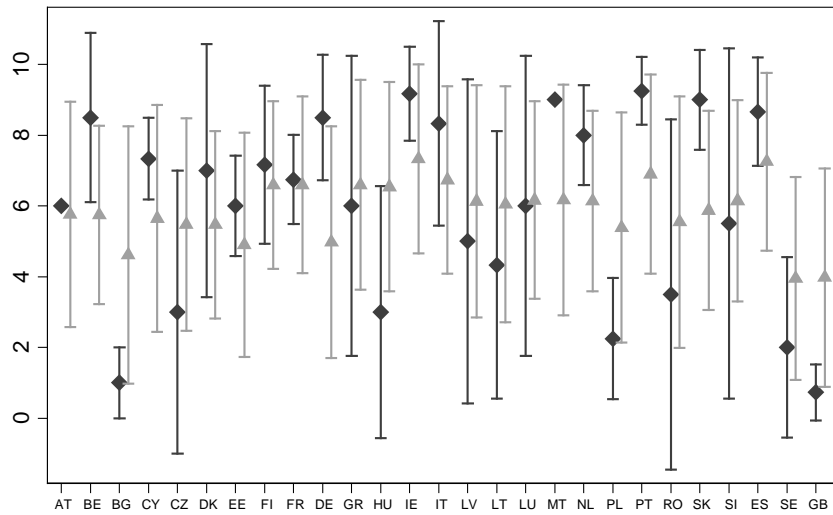
Health Care



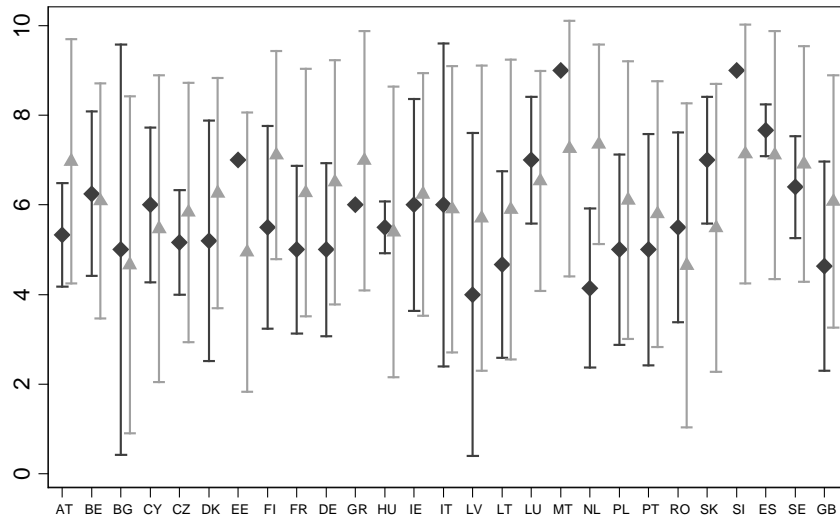
Immigration



Interest Rates



Climate Change



IV. Distance to Country Experts

Recall that in Chapter 3 the dependent variable looks at the closeness to average expert evaluation. As a robustness check, we created an alternative dependent variable by calculating the distance between an individual's attribution score and expert evaluations from his same country, rather than an overall average of all countries. For instance, a citizen from France is compared to the mean evaluation of experts from France. As the Table below shows, the results are substantively the same as in the original model (using grand mean expert evaluations). While there is between-country variation in expert and citizen judgments of responsibility, the results suggest that they are not systematic.

Table IV.1 Multilevel Model of Correct Attributions of Responsibility

	Empty		Baseline		Full	
	Coef	SE	Coef	SE	Coef	SE
Political Knowledge			0.09	(.00) *	0.07	(.00) *
EU Attitudes			0.08	(.01) *	0.06	(.01) *
EU Attitudes^2			-0.18	(.01) *	-0.17	(.01) *
<i>Control Variables</i>						
Education					0.05	(.00) *
Age					0	(.00) *
Female					-0.06	(.02) *
<i>Occupation (Base=Upper Service)</i>						
Lower Service					-0.04	(.04)
Petty Bourgeois					-0.09	(.03) *
Routine Non-Manual					-0.07	(.03) *
Skilled					-0.18	(.03) *
Non-Skilled					-0.19	(.03) *
Still in Education					-0.05	(.04)
Other					-0.09	(.03) *
<i>Level 2 Variables</i>						
Negative Media Tone			0.11	(.09)	0.05	(.07)
Party Polarization			0.54	(.14) *	0.57	(.13) *
Intercept	-2.87	(.08) *	-3.7	(.16) *	-3.7	(.16) *
Variance	0.16	(.04)	0.08	(.01)	0.08	(.01)
Number of individuals	26236		26228		25187	
Number of contexts	28		28		28	

*p<.05 , two-tailed test

The dependent variable is closeness to **country** expert evaluation.

Source: European Election Study 2009 and Expert Survey 2010

V. Attributions of Responsibility – EU Only

Recall that in Chapter 3 the dependent variable looks at the closeness to average expert evaluation combining attributions to national governments and to the EU. In the models below, the dependent variable look at closeness to expert average for the EU responsibility questions only. The model output is the same in substance and significance to those in the paper, highlighting the robustness of the results.

Table V.1 Multilevel Model of Correct Attributions of Responsibility: EU Only

	Null		Baseline		Full	
	<i>Coef</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Coef</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Coef</i>	<i>SE</i>
Political Knowledge			0.09	(.00) **	0.07	(.00) **
EU Attitudes			0.06	(.01) **	0.04	(.01) **
EU Attitudes^2			-0.20	(.01) **	-0.19	(.01) **
<i>Control Variables</i>						
Education					0.06	(.00) **
Age					-0.002	(.00) **
Female					-0.08	(.02) **
<i>Occupation (Base=Upper Service)</i>						
Lower Service					-0.02	(.04)
Petty Bourgeois					-0.07	(.02) **
Routine Non-Manual					-0.08	(.03) **
Skilled					-0.17	(.03) **
Non-Skilled					-0.18	(.03) **
Still in Education					-0.04	(.04)
Other					-0.06	(.03) *
<i>Level 2 Variables</i>						
Negative Media Tone			0.18	(.08) **	0.13	(.07) *
Party Polarization			0.28	(.12) **	0.21	(.10) **
Membership Length					0.004	(.00) **
Intercept	-2.82	(.06) *	-3.42	(.14) **	-3.37	(.13) **
Variance	0.1	(.03)	0.05	(.02)	0.04	(.01)
Number of individuals	26236		26228		25187	
Number of contexts	28		28		28	

**p<.05 *p<.10, two-tailed test

The dependent variable is closeness to expert evaluation.

Source: European Election Study 2009 and Expert Survey 2010

VI. Attributions of Responsibility: Relative Responsibility of the EU compared to National Government

In the 2009 EES Voter Survey, the questions asking respondents to assign responsibility to their national governments and the EU were asked sequentially; hence it is possible that citizens thought of their responses in terms of relative responsibility. To check of this would make a difference to the findings in Chapter 3, I conducted additional analyses using relative responsibility as a dependent variable. First, I calculated the relative responsibility of the EU compared to national governments by comparing the scores given to each level of government: is it more, less, or equally responsible for each policy area. Next, this was compared to expert judgments and citizens were given one point for each “correct” answer. The distribution of this variable is below.

Score	n	%
0	2,758	10
1	4,218	16
2	7,565	28
3	7,562	28
4	4,293	16
5	673	2

I estimated this multilevel model using both linear regression and ordinal logit. As shown in the table below, the results are substantively and significantly the same as the original models, highlighting the robustness of the results.

**Table VI.1 Multilevel Model of Correct Attributions of Responsibility:
Relative Responsibility of the EU**

	Linear Regression			Ordinal Logit Regression		
	<i>Coef</i>	<i>SE</i>		<i>Coef</i>	<i>SE</i>	
Political Knowledge	0.09	(.00)	**	0.13	(.01)	**
EU Attitudes	0.06	(.01)	**	0.09	(.02)	**
EU Attitudes^2	-0.03	(.01)	**	-0.05	(.02)	**
<i>Control Variables</i>						
Education	0.07	(.01)	**	0.11	(.01)	**
Age	-0.01	(.00)	**	-0.01	(.00)	**
Female	-0.06	(.00)	**	-0.08	(.02)	**
Occupation (<i>Base=Upper Service</i>)						
Lower Service	0.02	(.04)		0.02	(.05)	
Petty Bourgeois	0.00	(.02)		0.02	(.04)	
Routine Non-Manual						
Skilled	-0.01	(.03)		0.00	(.05)	
Non-Skilled	-0.05	(.03)		-0.08	(.05)	
Still in Education	-0.04	(.03)		-0.04	(.04)	
Other	-0.13	(.04)		-0.20	(.06)	**
Other	-0.11	(.03)		-0.16	(.05)	**
<i>Level 2 Variables</i>						
Negative Media Tone	0.22	(.11)	*	0.35	(.02)	**
Party Polarization	0.38	(.17)	*	0.44	(.03)	**
Membership Length	-0.01	(.00)		-0.01	(.00)	**
Constant	1.78	(.20)	**			
Cut 1				-1.70	(.08)	**
Cut 2				-0.50	(.08)	**
Cut 3				0.85	(.08)	**
Cut 4				2.34	(.08)	**
Cut 5				4.61	(.09)	**
Variance	0.12	(.03)		0.25	-(.01)	
Number of individuals	25970			25970		
Number of contexts	28			28		

**p<.01 *p<.05, two-tailed test

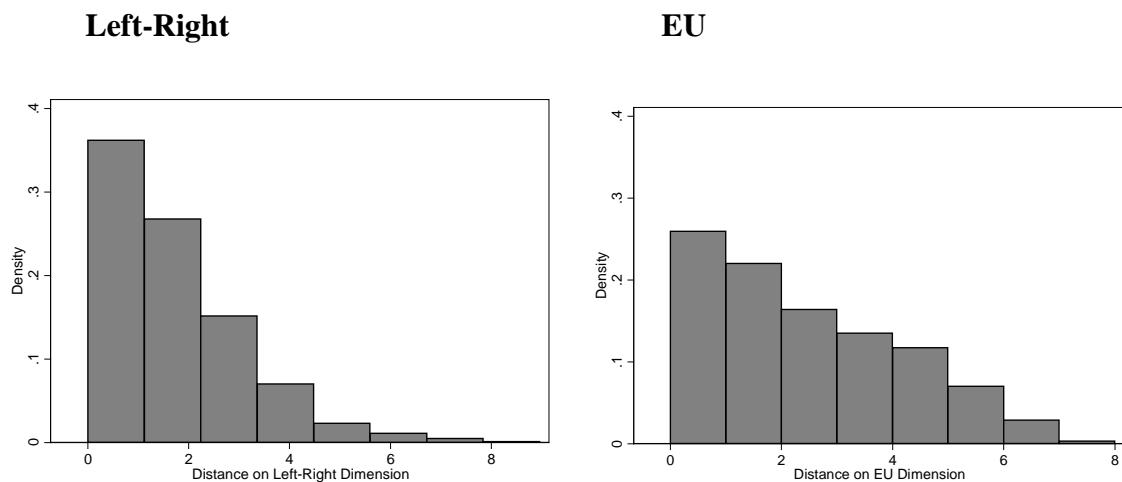
The dependent variable is the number of policy areas for which citizens correctly attributed relative responsibility.

Source: European Election Study 2009 and Expert Survey 2010

VII: Projection Effects, Chapter 4

Referring back to Figure 4.2, we see that most people do not place themselves and their preferred parties at the same location on the EU and LR dimensions. However, perhaps there is still a projection effect occurring, and they are placing other parties farther away. As a second check, distances between self and preferred party were measured using the mean party placement, rather than the individual's perceived party placement.³² The figures below illustrate these differences, and roughly mirror Figure 4.2, with a slightly more gradual dropoff. For example, if an individual placed herself at 2 and her party, the Greens, at 1, but the mean placement for the Greens was 4, then there would be a 2 point distance shown in the first figure.

Figures VII.1 and VII.2: Distance to Chosen Party, Mean Party Placement



These two figures show the difference between distance calculated on perceived self and party placements, and distance calculated from self and mean party placement. Back to our example of the Greens supporter, she perceived a 1 unit distance, but was 2

³² Mean party placement is the mean position given by all respondents in a country for a given party. For example, the mean of positions given by British voters for the Labour Party.

units away when using the mean party placement. Figures VII.3 and VII.4 below show that respondents are about equally likely to over and understate their proximity to the chosen party. Negative values indicate the respondent perceives she is closer to the party than she is based on mean party placement, while positive values indicate she perceives more distance than there is.

Figure VII.3: Left-Right

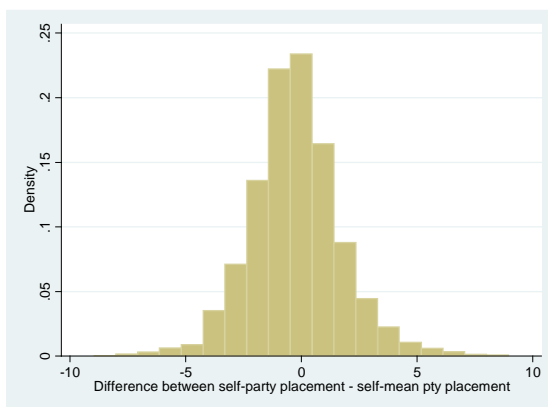
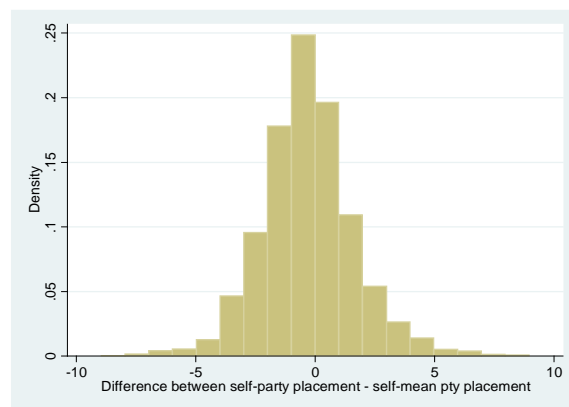


Figure VII.4: EU



A final concern may be that EU and LR self placements are correlated. In the context of answering a survey about the European Union, perhaps respondents were primed to consider their EU preferences. For example, a respondent who is anti-European integration may feel that this is a conservative position to take, and therefore place herself on the right end of the LR spectrum. A simple test reveals that the correlation between these scales is nearly nonexistent: LR and EU self placement is correlated at .01. Taken together, these checks indicate that there might be a small projection effect, but overall there is meaningful response to self and party placements given by respondents.

VIII. Descriptive Statistics and Data Analysis Using Mean Party Placement, Chapter 4

The table below shows the proportion of cross-pressured citizens calculated by distance between respondent and mean party position (rather than an individual's perceived party position). The benefit of this method is that it does not depend on respondents giving party placements; as long as they give self placements for LR and EU, we can determine if they were closest to the same party on LR and EU dimensions, or if they were cross-pressured and close to different parties on each scale. The proportions are similar those using the perceived party position in the paper, with the main changes resulting from moving citizens out of the "Don't Know" group. The limitation of this method is that individuals may not know they are "cross-pressured" – if a voter places different parties closest to themselves on different dimensions, he likely perceives conflicting preferences. If a voter is by definition cross-pressured using the mean party placement method, he may not perceive the conflict as he did not place the parties at those relative locations.

Table VIII.1 Cross-Pressure in 2009 EP Elections, Mean Party Position

	A. All Respondents			B. Voters Only	
	n	%	% Voted	n	%
Cross-Pressured	6,305	23	73	4,604	24
Not Cross-Pressured	16,035	59	74	11,784	61
DK EU or LR Placements	4,729	17	59	2,723	14
Total	27,069	100	71	19,111	100

C. Cross-Pressured Voters: Which Dimension?

	%
Left-Right	32
EU	15
Neither	54
<i>n</i>	3,558

Source: 2009 EES Voter Survey

IX: Analysis using mean party position method, Ch 4

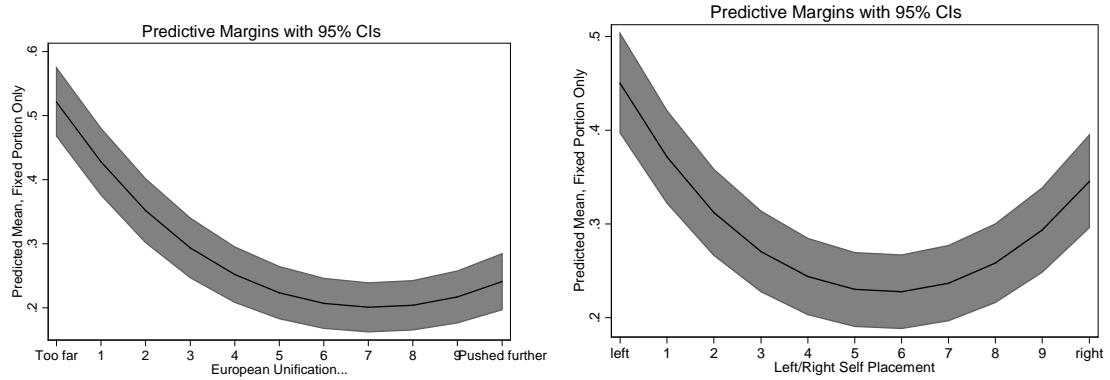
Table IX.1 Multilevel Model of Party Choice at the 2009 EP Elections

	A. Cross-Pressured vs Not				B. Party Choice: EU vs LR Dimension			
	Direct		Conditional		Direct		Conditional	
<i>Individual Level Predictors</i>								
EU Responsibility	-0.02	+	-0.02	+	0.12	**	0.12	**
	(.01)		(.01)		(.05)		(.05)	
EU Attitude	-0.47	***	-0.47	***	-0.039		-0.039	
	(.02)		(.02)		(.07)		(.07)	
EU Attitude ^2	0.03	***	0.03	***	0.025	***	0.025	***
	(.00)		(.00)		(.00)		(.00)	
LR Attitude	-0.428	***	-0.428	***	0.59	***	0.59	***
	(.02)		(.02)		(.08)		(.08)	
LR Attitude^2	0.038	***	0.038	***	-0.063	***	-0.063	***
	(.00)		(.00)		(.00)		(.00)	
Knowledge	0.013		0.12	***	-0.113	**	-0.09	
	(.01)		(.04)		(.04)		(.19)	
Gov Approval	-0.045		-0.43		-0.16		-0.16	
	(.04)		(.04)		(.15)		(.15)	
Party Attachment	0.034		0.034		-0.19		-0.19	
	(.04)		(.04)		(.16)		(.16)	
<i>Country Level Predictors</i>								
Intercept	-2.203	***	-2.62	***	-0.94		-1.04	
	(.52)		(.54)		(.85)		(1.15)	
EU Pty Polarization	1.58	***	0.158	***	0.48		0.48	
	(.31)		(.18)		(.41)		(.41)	
LR Pty Polarization	0.707	***	.906	***	-0.87	**	-0.82	+
	(.21)		(.23)		(.31)		(.48)	
<i>Cross-Level Interaction</i>								
Knowledge*LR								
Party Polarization			-0.05	**			-0.01	
			(.02)				(.09)	
<i>Random Effects</i>								
Variance	0.635		0.634		0.657		0.657	
	(.09)		(.09)		(.13)		(.13)	
N Groups	28		28		28		28	
N Individuals	20741		20741		1518		1518	

Multilevel binary logistic model. In Column A, "Cross Pressured" is the dependent variable, with "Not Cross Pressured" as base category. In Column B, "EU" is the dependent variable, with "LR" as base category. Coefficients are log odds with standard errors in parentheses. Output of social class withheld for space considerations, as no category was significant in the models. Source: 2009 European Election Studies Voter Survey +p<.1 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

It is striking that the results using mean party position are nearly identical as those using perceived party position: about the same proportion of citizens are cross-pressured using the two methods, and the model results have largely the same significant and substantive conclusions.

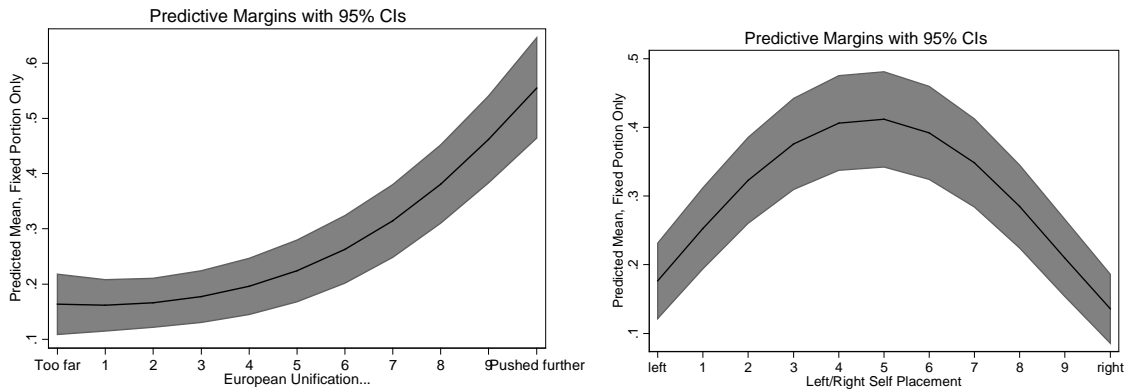
Cross Pressured (base not CP)



Predicted Probabilities of Direct Effects: Cross-Pressured vs Not

	Minimum	Maximum
EU Party Polarization	0.11 (0.07, 0.16)	0.50 (0.38, 0.61)
LR Party Polarization	0.16 (0.10, 0.23)	0.40 (0.30, 0.49)

Cross-Pressured Voters: Probability of Choosing EU dimension (base LR)



Predicted Probabilities of Direct Effects: EU vs LR

	Minimum	Maximum
Knowledge	0.37 (0.29, 0.46)	0.23 (0.17, 0.28)
LR Party Polarization	0.46 (0.32, 0.61)	0.17 (0.09, 0.24)

X: Comparing measures of EU attitudes

In Chapter 3, I tested the effects of attitude extremity and political sophistication on correct attributions of responsibility. To have a more holistic picture of attitude extremity, I used a summated item scale from four questions on European integration (see Chapter 3 and Appendix I for details). In Chapters 4 and 5, as in chapter 3, the theoretical focus is on those with extreme attitudes, rather than ambivalent attitudes. In these two chapters I test the effects of attitude extremity utilizing just one question on EU attitudes probing respondents for their feelings on European integration, rather than the summated scale that I used in Chapter 3. The European unification question which I refer to as EU self placement in the text³³, correlates highly with other questions related to attitudes about the EU in the 2009 EES data. More generally, the EU unification question captures latent generic attitudes towards European integration (Gabel, 1998).

In chapters 4 and 5 I use just the one question rather than the multi-item scale. The reasons for this are to remain consistent with the operationalization of the other attitudinal variable – left-right placements – and to enable comparisons between self and party placements. However, if I instead use the EU attitudes scale, the results are the same in significance, magnitude, and effect. To demonstrate this, I have graphed the marginal effects of each EU attitude variable. First is a graph of the effect of attitude extremity using the EU attitudes variable created from the summated scale. Below it is the graph from Chapter 4 which used the EU integration question to measure EU attitudes. As is apparent by comparing the two graphs, the results are effectively the same.

³³ Question wording: “Some say European unification should be pushed further. Others say it already has gone too far. What is your opinion? Please indicate your views using a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means unification ‘has already gone too far’ and 10 means it ‘should be pushed further’.

Figure X.1: Effect of EU Attitudes Scale on Being Cross-Pressured

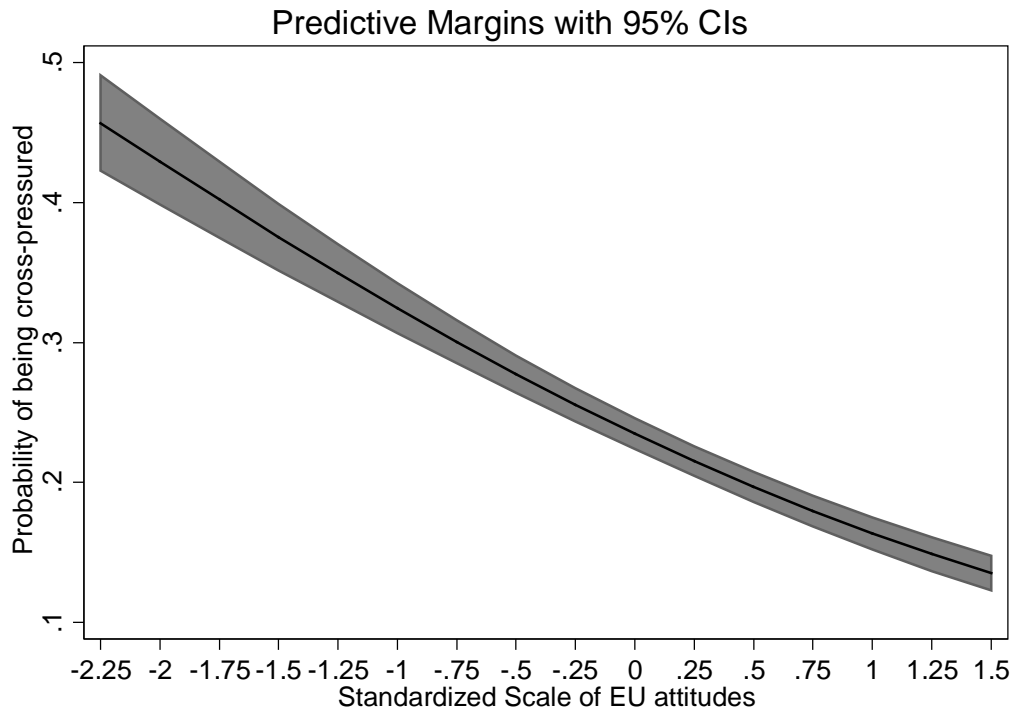
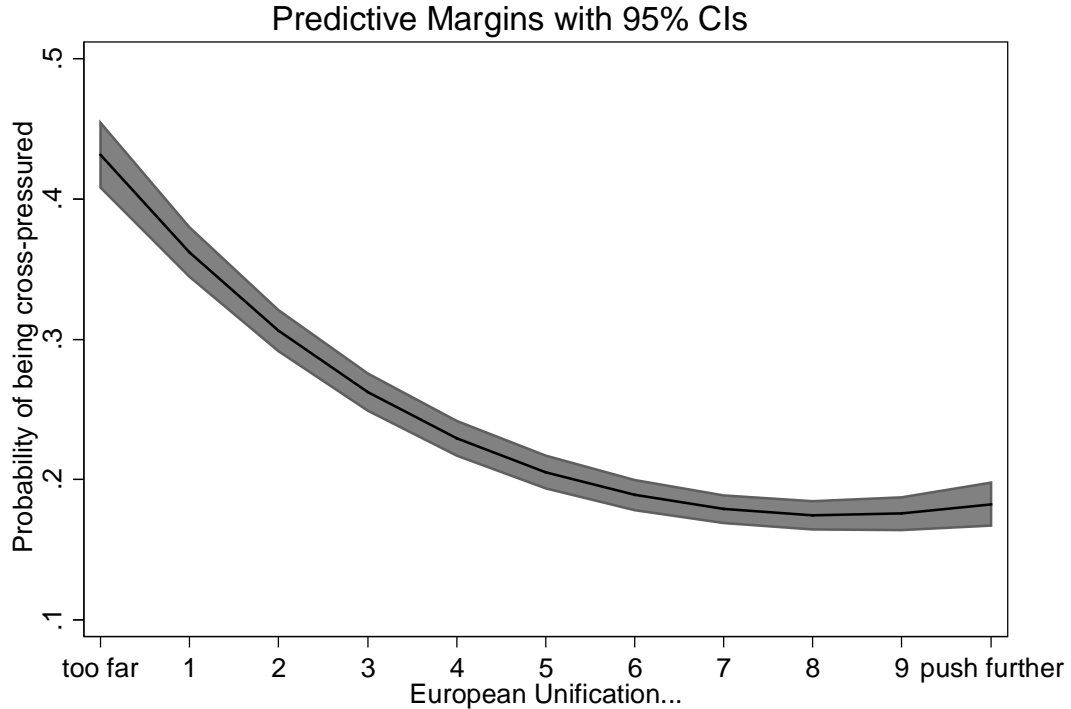


Figure 4.4: Effect of EU Attitudes on Being Cross-Pressured



Note: The top graph is from replacing the EU attitude variable used in Chapter 4 with the EU attitudes multi-item summated scale. The bottom graph is from Chapter 4 and uses the one question version of EU attitudes.

Figure X.2: Effect of EU Attitudes Scale on Prioritizing EU Dimension

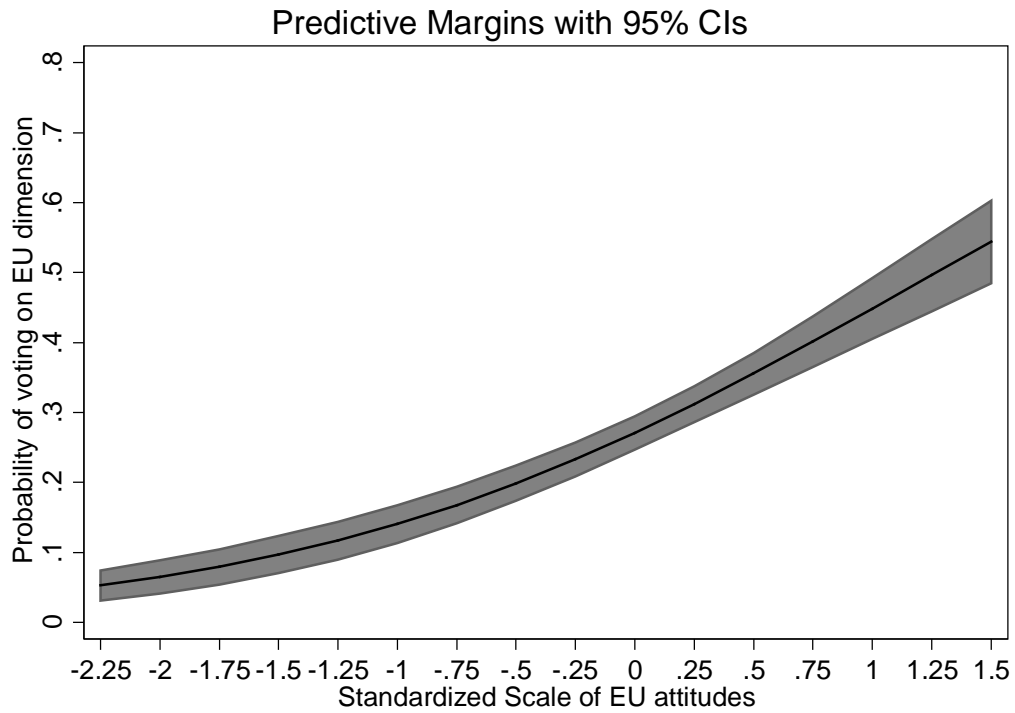
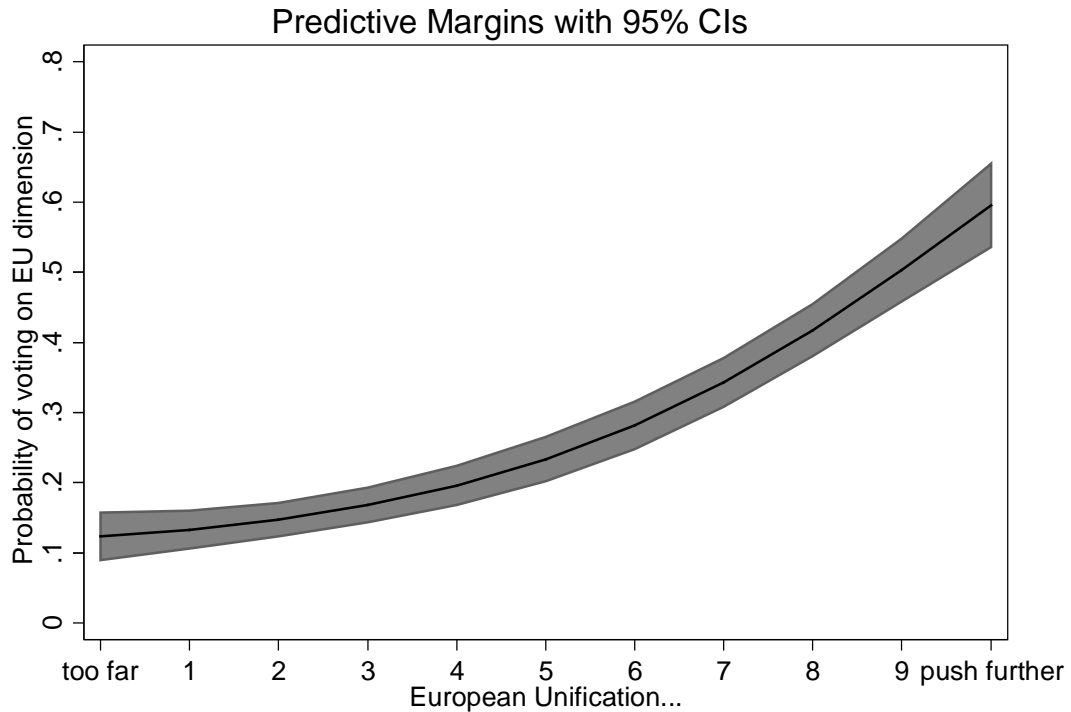


Figure 4.7: Effect of EU Attitudes on Prioritizing EU Dimension



Note: The top graph is from replacing the EU attitude variable used in Chapter 4 with the EU attitudes multi-item summated scale. The bottom graph is from Chapter 4 and uses the one question version of EU attitudes.

XI. National Representation: Priorities and Preferences

Table XI.1: National Representation: Priorities and Preferences by Country

	1994								2009								
	Citizens				Elites				Citizens				Elites				
	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	
Austria									16	33	51			4	37	59	
Unemployment									31	21	31	48		22	0	55	45
Economy									31	14	25	61		37	6	18	76
Gov't/Politics									7	17	47	37		6	0	100	0
Social Policy									4	3	44	53		6	0	50	50
Immigration									11	13	39	49		16	14	29	57
Crime									4	21	34	45		0			
Environment									0	0	0	100		8	0	33	67
n									875					46			
Belgium	10	47	43		17	21	62		16	45	40		9	29	62		
Unemployment	48	12	34	53	48	22	11	67	45	29	42	28		6	0	0	100
Economy	11	10	64	25	7	0	86	14	13	11	35	54		47	7	17	76
Gov't/Politics	18	4	69	27	17	6	38	56	5	22	64	14		2	0	0	100
Social Policy	9	8	63	28	3	0	33	67	3	18	45	36		6	0	50	50
Immigration	7	7	46	47	7	14	14	71	15	6	61	32		8	0	60	40
Crime	4	6	42	52	2	50	0	50	7	26	56	19		15	29	71	0
Environment	2	20	15	65	16	7	0	93	2	21	29	50		6	0	0	100
n	787				97				686					58			
Bulgaria									13	65	22			17	67	17	
Unemployment									26	18	67	15		0			
Economy									29	11	59	30		67			
Gov't/Politics									17	10	66	24		0			
Social Policy									14	10	69	21		0			
Immigration									2	10	90	0		0			
Crime									5	14	64	21		33			
Environment									1	25	75	0		0			
n									798					3			
Cyprus									11	30	59			0	57	43	
Unemployment									11	12	31	58		0			
Economy									3	16	37	46		0			
Gov't/Politics									6	10	42	48		14	0	100	0
Social Policy									1	33	33	33		0			
Immigration									2	22	22	56		0			
Crime									0	0	67	33		0			
Environment									0	33	0	67		0			
n									856					6			
Czech Republic									16	57	27			0	50	50	
Unemployment									24	14	55	31		4	0	100	0
Economy									27	12	48	41		24	0	20	80
Gov't/Politics									26	19	64	16		28	0	83	17
Social Policy									11	21	54	25		4	0	100	0
Immigration									4	22	63	16		4	0	0	100
Crime									6	16	65	19		12	0	100	0
Environment									0	50	50	0		8	0	0	100
n									797					20			

Table continues on next page.

Table XI.1: National Representation: Priorities and Preferences by Country, continued

	1994								2009							
	Citizens				Elites				Citizens				Elites			
	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur
Denmark		9	48	42		3	38	59		16	50	35		0	54	46
Unemployment	36	11	57	32	26	5	42	53	30	20	55	25	19	0	40	60
Economy	3	0	48	52	4	0	67	33	15	7	47	46	19	0	33	67
Gov't/Politics	8	9	40	51	18	8	42	50	3	10	71	19	10	0	100	0
Social Policy	16	9	62	29	7	20	40	40	12	33	59	8	6	0	100	0
Immigration	6	7	47	47	1	0	100	0	11	13	55	32	6	0	100	0
Crime	6	6	56	39	3	0	0	100	7	28	54	18	3	0	100	0
Environment	24	11	29	60	40	0	20	80	14	13	27	61	19	0	0	100
n	961				67				886				28			
Estonia										18	64	18		4	67	30
Unemployment									26	19	68	13	11	0	67	33
Economy									48	14	57	29	19	0	75	25
Gov't/Politics									12	24	60	17	26	14	86	0
Social Policy									7	23	59	18	19	0	50	50
Immigration									1	9	82	9	11	0	0	100
Crime									2	7	80	13	4	0	100	0
Environment									0	0	100	0	4	0	0	100
n									867				23			
Finland										18	60	22		10	46	44
Unemployment									30	22	63	15	30	18	73	9
Economy									35	8	60	32	18	0	29	71
Gov't/Politics									5	13	64	23	7	0	67	33
Social Policy									12	33	60	7	16	14	57	29
Immigration									3	19	44	37	7	0	100	0
Crime									1	25	67	8	0			
Environment									3	10	50	40	20	0	0	100
n									892				41			
France		21	41	38		2	41	57		20	34	46		3	37	60
Unemployment	69	20	42	38	56	2	41	57	34	28	38	34	32	3	31	67
Economy	1	0	33	67					43	10	30	60	29	3	13	83
Gov't/Politics	1	0	31	69	10	0	10	90	6	13	38	49	8	0	70	30
Social Policy	21	23	43	34	18	6	33	61	5	25	39	35	11	0	64	36
Immigration	4	23	37	40	9	0	89	11	1	20	40	40	9	9	91	0
Crime	1	11	44	44					2	36	43	21	1	0	100	0
Environment	2	44	19	38	4	0	0	100	6	18	21	61	6	0	0	100
n	912				96				889				111			
Germany		14	50	36		5	50	45		15	37	48		7	17	76
Unemployment	54	16	51	33	38	4	58	38	50	23	38	39	14	11	22	67
Economy	8	15	56	30	13	2	96	2	31	8	34	57	59	1	12	87
Gov't/Politics	3	8	22	70	16	0	11	89	5	11	50	39	7	29	14	57
Social Policy	20	14	63	23	11	3	86	11	5	21	51	28	10	17	33	50
Immigration	4	10	50	40	3	0	56	44	1	0	80	20	2	0	67	33
Crime	6	5	40	55	4	27	33	40	1	44	33	22	0			
Environment	6	8	18	74	16	9	17	74	1	11	11	78	2	0	0	100
n	1868				344				897				126			

Table continues on next page.

Table XI.1: National Representation: Priorities and Preferences by Country, continued

	1994								2009							
	Citizens				Elites				Citizens				Elites			
	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur
Greece		6	41	53					13	51	35		4	73	23	
Unemployment	37	7	42	52					42	24	40	35	0			
Economy	23	3	56	40					24	7	54	39	28	0	100	0
Gov't/Politics	1	22	0	78					14	11	64	25	44	0	88	13
Social Policy	15	4	33	64					7	15	57	28	6	0	0	100
Immigration	1	0	40	60					6	8	41	51	6	0	0	100
Crime	2	5	41	55					3	32	48	20	11	50	50	0
Environment	6	25	18	57					1	50	25	25	0			
n	903								915				18			
Hungary									13	67	20		12	65	23	
Unemployment									12	16	64	20	15	0	67	33
Economy									40	12	58	30	11	0	33	67
Gov't/Politics									12	8	72	21	30	0	75	25
Social Policy									13	14	73	13	7	50	0	50
Immigration									2	7	80	13	4	0	100	0
Crime									8	12	72	16	15	0	100	0
Environment									0	0	100	0	0			
n									894				25			
Ireland		12	53	35		8	58	33		14	61	25		0	38	67
Unemployment	56	14	52	35	17	0	0	100	37	18	61	21	25	0	100	0
Economy	21	8	60	32	8	0	100	0	40	8	65	26	50	0	25	75
Gov't/Politics	13	3	53	44	42	0	100	0	15	16	55	29	0			
Social Policy									4	22	47	31	13	0	0	100
Immigration	2	14	43	43					1	9	64	27	0			
Crime	6	28	56	16	8	100	0	0	1	33	50	17	0			
Environment	2	23	15	62	25	0	33	67	0	50	0	50	13	0	0	100
n	861				12				933				8			
Italy		16	45	40		5	33	63		15	50	36		6	42	52
Unemployment	49	17	40	43	44	4	28	68	24	18	50	32	27	6	44	50
Economy	36	15	52	33	22	4	65	31	41	10	44	47	40	4	41	56
Gov't/Politics	2	5	55	40	17	0	35	65	7	12	60	28	13	0	67	33
Social Policy									4	14	72	14	3	0	0	100
Immigration	2	7	64	29	2	0	0	100	10	8	35	56	3	50	0	50
Crime	9	16	37	47	3	0	0	100	8	18	57	25	3	0	0	100
Environment	2	17	35	48	10	0	0	100	1	33	67	0	0			
n	947				120				868				67			
Latvia									14	63	22		8	50	42	
Unemployment									36	19	60	21	8	0	67	33
Economy									30	12	65	24	42	17	58	25
Gov't/Politics									11	13	64	23	21	0	63	38
Social Policy									16	12	65	23	5	0	50	50
Immigration									1	17	67	17	8	0	50	50
Crime									0	25	75	0	3	100	0	0
Environment									0				0			
n									878				31			

Table continues on next page.

Table XI.1: National Representation: Priorities and Preferences by Country, continued

	1994								2009								
	Citizens				Elites				Citizens				Elites				
	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	
Lithuania									9	52	38			7	59	33	
Unemployment									42	11	54	35		9	0	100	0
Economy									33	7	48	46		46	15	54	31
Gov't/Politics									10	13	55	32		26	0	86	14
Social Policy									7	8	68	25		3	0	0	100
Immigration									1	0	83	17		3			
Crime									1	25	58	17		0			
Environment									0	0	25	75		0			
n									808					27			
Luxembourg		8	36	56		24	76		9	31	59		6	28	67		
Unemployment	59	8	37	55	42	17	83	57	14	35	50	5	0	0	100		
Economy	9	12	30	58	3	100	0	25	6	27	67	75	8	23	69		
Gov't/Politics	3	0	40	60	6	0	100	2	13	38	50	0					
Social Policy	10	6	52	42	10	100	0	5	4	49	47	20	0	50	50		
Immigration	2	0	43	57				4	11	43	46	0					
Crime	7	6	32	61				1	25	50	25	0					
Environment	9	12	19	69	3	0	100	2	19	25	56	0					
n	475				29			908					18				
Malta									6	50	45			29	71		
Unemployment									55	4	53	42		0			
Economy									11	7	54	39		29	50	50	
Gov't/Politics									3	22	65	13		21	33	67	
Social Policy									1	0	89	11		0			
Immigration									27	3	34	64		43	0	100	
Crime									0	0	67	33		7	100	0	
Environment									2	0	82	18		0			
n									825					14			
Netherlands		11	40	49		2	49	50		15	32	52		9	37	54	
Unemployment	33	10	51	39	35	0	51	49	49	24	47	29	3	0	0	100	
Economy	8	8	46	46	6	0	86	14	8	11	25	65	41	0	26	74	
Gov't/Politics	7	25	19	57	13	0	27	73	7	8	55	37	8	40	40	20	
Social Policy	20	15	55	31	2	0	100	0	3	20	53	27	1	0	100	0	
Immigration	7	5	31	65	7	14	43	43	12	26	31	44	15	22	56	22	
Crime	14	7	28	65	16	6	61	33	5	33	37	30	3	0	100	0	
Environment	11	5	11	84	21	0	15	85	3	7	23	70	9	0	0	100	
n	951				106				901				65				
Poland									19	69	11			11	43	46	
Unemployment									18	24	66	10		21	14	57	29
Economy									43	14	68	18		44	21	43	36
Gov't/Politics									21	17	75	8		15	0	67	33
Social Policy									7	16	74	11		3	0	100	0
Immigration									3	19	67	14		3	0	0	100
Crime									1	17	67	17		0			
Environment									0	0	0	100		0			
n									810					34			

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Table XI.1: National Representation: Priorities and Preferences by Country, continued

	1994								2009							
	Citizens				Elites				Citizens				Elites			
	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur
Portugal		9	52	38		4	61	35		10	47	42		13	33	53
Unemployment	50	11	50	40	20		33	67	23	10	45	45	76	18	27	55
Economy	22	8	53	39	60		78	22	47	10	37	52	6	0	0	100
Gov't/Politics	3	0	50	50	13		0	100	8	6	71	23	6	0	0	100
Social Policy	23	8	60	32					14	14	63	23	6	0	100	0
Immigration	0	0	0	100					0				0			
Crime	1	25	58	17					4	6	43	51	0			
Environment	1	8	25	67	7		0	100	0	0	0	100	0			
n	854				15				858				15			
Romania									18	52	30		4	60	36	
Unemployment									51	17	55	27	12	0	50	50
Economy									18	15	53	32	38	0	60	40
Gov't/Politics									14	21	46	33	42	0	64	36
Social Policy									9	23	61	17	0			
Immigration									3	23	50	27	0			
Crime									1	27	27	45	8	50	50	0
Environment									0	50	50	0	0			
n									794				25			
Slovak Republic									13	47	39		7	41	52	
Unemployment									39	19	48	33	17	25	50	25
Economy									38	7	45	47	47	0	17	83
Gov't/Politics									7	16	48	36	13	0	100	0
Social Policy									9	14	53	33	0			
Immigration									2	13	60	27	10	33	67	0
Crime									2	14	29	57	3	0	100	0
Environment									0	0	100	0	7	0	0	100
n									861				27			
Slovenia									10	75	14		6	67	28	
Unemployment									41	19	75	6	40	13	75	13
Economy									24	4	74	22	50	0	63	38
Gov't/Politics									10	10	81	8	0			
Social Policy									7	15	79	7	10	0	0	100
Immigration									1	13	75	13	0			
Crime									7	10	81	10	0			
Environment									1	33	42	25	0			
n									927				17			
Spain		9	52	39		18	28	54		17	41	42		6	34	59
Unemployment	55	12	55	33	69	7	27	66	40	22	48	30	21	0	54	46
Economy	1	0	88	13	1	0	0	100	48	12	32	55	39	13	21	67
Gov't/Politics	7	7	53	40	16	73	0	27	5	13	50	37	9	0	0	100
Social Policy	5	13	64	23	3	0	50	50	2	13	50	38	5	33	67	0
Immigration	1	0	40	60					1	10	40	50	2	0	100	0
Crime	30	4	45	51	11	0	63	38	3	14	54	32	18	0	50	50
Environment	2	16	16	68					0	0	0	100	2			
n	856				63				959				61			

Table continues on next page.

Table XI.1: National Representation: Priorities and Preferences by Country, continued

	1994								2009											
	Citizens				Elites				Citizens				Elites							
	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur	%	Reg	Nat	Eur				
Sweden									20	47	33						9	47	44	
Unemployment									17	29	58	13					25	17	71	12
Economy									32	16	58	26					16	0	35	65
Gov't/Politics									6	16	49	35					12	19	43	38
Social Policy									12	26	54	20					6	9	73	18
Immigration									3	28	48	24					10	6	71	24
Crime									2	29	43	29					4	0	86	14
Environment									24	9	22	68					23	5	3	92
n									896								166			
United Kingdom		23	55	22		7	32	61		17	70	13					3	64	33	
Unemployment	45	26	54	20	48	7	41	52	32	25	63	12					3	25	50	25
Economy	18	14	70	16	7	0	78	22	18	12	73	15					29	2	66	33
Gov't/Politics	8	7	45	48	12	0	25	75	20	15	78	7					21	2	76	22
Social Policy	8	37	56	7					4	29	65	6					2	33	50	17
Immigration	3	15	67	19					13	12	71	17					10	0	92	8
Crime	12	35	53	11	3	0	75	25	5	26	67	7					1	0	67	33
Environment	6	16	33	52	29	13	5	82	2	12	35	53					15	0	12	88
n	977				126				907								230			

Source: European Election Studies 1994 and 2009. Cell entries are percentages, except in "n" rows.

The n given is how many respondents identified MIP and preferred level of responsibility. In most cases, more citizens and elites gave a preferred level of governance than MIP, hence the n for global preference is larger.