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TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

Ph.D. in Political Science

Representing Europe's Citizens:
An Analysis of Political Representation in the
European Union

Candidate

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November 2013

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Summary

This project investigates how well the EU functions as an instrument of political representation. It addresses five separate but intrinsically linked research questions: are citizens' perceptions of representation important in building evaluations of support for the EU? What explains variance in policy congruence between parties and their voters in the EU? Do European legislators respond to changes in the attitudes of the electorate? Is the participation of female politicians in the EU important for the substantive representation of women's interests? Do the policy priorities of the public in the EU correspond with the priorities of the parties they vote for in EP elections?

The study's theoretical contribution lies in understanding that representation can be viewed from a variety of angles and that exploring representation from one vantage point only yields a limited picture of how well (or how poorly) the EU represents its citizens' interests. Chapter 2 understands representation as the degree to which citizens perceive their interests to be present in the EU and finds that voters who feel their voice is represented in the EU are more likely to maintain support for its institutions irrespective of their perceptions of the economy.

Chapter 3 measures representation as voter-party policy congruence and examines what predictors affect levels of mass-elite issue linkages. Here I find that citizens who vote in EP elections and who vote for the same party at both national and European levels are more congruent with the parties they support than those who do not vote or who switch party allegiances across elections. I also find that, although ideologically extreme parties are more congruent with their voters than are parties at the centre, such congruency varies across dimensions of conflict.

Chapter 4 argues that representation is as much about prioritisation of issues as it is about policy positions. This chapter introduces an interrelated typology of congruence that takes account of both the issue preferences and policy priorities of voters and parties. I find that while parties demonstrate reasonable positional

congruence with their voters, they vary considerably in the degree to which they prioritise those issues.

In chapter 5 representation is understood as the responsiveness of decision-makers to the aggregate preferences of the electorate and demonstrates that representation can be recast as a supply and demand relationship where attitudes of the electorate towards the EU signal a preference for 'more' or 'less' policy-making. Here I find that political elites respond to public attitudes towards EU membership by increasing (decreasing) levels of legislative activity over time.

Chapter 6 considers descriptive representation and asks whether or not female politicians in the EU are better placed to represent the interests of women in the population than male representatives are. I find some evidence of this, showing that men and women, on certain political issues, systematically differ in their preferences over policy and that these differences are replicated amongst male and female political elites. However, I find little evidence that female representatives are more congruent on women's policy issues with their female supporters than they are with their male ones.

The study contributes empirically by taking advantage of voter and party information on attitudes towards specific policy issues gathered by the European Election Study 2009, European Election Candidate Study 2009, Euro-barometer and Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2006. This allows for a study that moves beyond the analysis of the basic left-right ideological heuristic and towards a large-n examination of specific policy preferences. In addition, chapter 5 utilizes information, derived from the PreLex database (Kovats, 2010), on the volume of legislative activity in the EU from 1977 to 2008. Quantitative methods are employed throughout the dissertation. Chapters 2 and 3 take advantage of hierarchical modelling and use multi-level analysis to account for country level variation in the data. Chapter 5 follows a times series approach and uses a vector autoregression (VAR) model to assess changes in public attitudes and legislative activity over time. Chapter 5 is a descriptive analysis that constructs scores from survey data to measure voter-party congruence on both issue positions and policy priorities. Finally, chapter 6 employs ordered logistic regression to assess differences between male and female policy preferences.

Acknowledgements

As with life, a dissertation is about the journey and not the destination. I would like to dedicate this project to the many people who guided me along this road, supporting me when I felt I had lost my way and guiding me towards new paths to knowledge.

Above all, I would like to thank my supervisor Gail McElroy for taking a chance on a fledgling academic and teaching me how to approach the study of politics scientifically. From the beginning of this project Gail gave me the tools to be more than just a student but to be a scholar, pushing the boundaries of knowledge of political science and teaching me how to create academic work that is both conceptually clear and methodically strong. In addition, for championing my teaching and research skills as I navigated my way through the university landscape these past few years, I am indebted.

This project was only possible because of the financial support by the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS), the EUROCORES programme of the European Science Foundation (ESF) and scholarship funding provided by the Department of Political Science at Trinity College Dublin.

Throughout this dissertation I had the opportunity to be introduced to a wonderful research community who willingly offered sage advice on developing my work and contributed many useful comments on early drafts of my research. In particular, I would like to thank Zoe Lefkofridi, Nathalie Giger, Robert Rohrschneider, Simon Hug and Jonathan Slapin for their invaluable help and advice. I would also like to thank the faculty at the Department of Political Science, Trinity College Dublin for their input, in particular, William Phelan, Jacqueline Hayden, Michael Marsh, Christian Houle and Jeffrey Weber. I would further like to thank two anonymous referees from *Representation* for their comments on earlier drafts of chapter 3.

This dissertation could not have been completed without the steadfast support provided by my friends and colleagues on the PhD programme: Adriana Bunea,

Michael Courtney, Henrik Hermansson, Carolin Hübner, Raimondas Ibenskas, Natalie Novick, Carolina Plescia, Magda Staniek, Laura Schwirz and Patrick Theiner. For all the fun, laughter, lunchtime heart to hearts and (endless) supply of coffee, I am ever grateful.

A special thanks goes out to my parents, Irene and Peter, and to my sister Linda, who taught me the value of a good education and whose unwavering belief in my abilities gave me a reason to keep working, even when I thought I could push myself no further. Thank you for always being there and for always taking the time to listen, even on the darkest days.

Lastly, my eternal gratitude goes to Mark, my boyfriend and best friend. This dissertation would not exist but for your encouragement, assistance, patience, love and support. For always being in my corner: thank you.

Contents

1 Introduction	1
1.1 On Democracy and Representation	2
1.2 Representation in Europe – The Current State of the Empirical Literature.....	4
1.3 Operationalizing Representation.....	7
1.4 Representing Europe’s Citizens? The Plan for the Dissertation.....	10
2 Between Performance and Procedure: Representation and Citizen Support for the EU	
2.1 Introduction.....	14
2.2 Public Support for the EU: Existing Explanations	17
2.2.1 A Performance Model of Support.....	17
2.2.2 A Procedural Model of Support.....	18
2.3 A Theoretical Framework of Political Support.....	20
2.4 Research Hypotheses - Between Performance and Procedure	22
2.5 Data and Method.....	26
2.6 Results and Discussion	28
2.7 Conclusion	41
3 Unequal Representation in the EU: Analysing Voter-Party Congruence in European Parliament Elections	
3.1 Introduction.....	43
3.2 Policy Representation in the EU	45
3.3 Research Hypotheses	48
3.4 Data and Method.....	52
3.5 Results and Discussion	55
3.6 Conclusion	60
4 Attending to the Issues: Analysing the Link between Opinion Congruence and Priority Congruence in the EU	
4.1 Introduction.....	63
4.2 Issues, Saliency and Political Representation.....	66
4.3 Saliency and Policy Priorities in the EU	68

4.4 Opinion Congruence and the Congruence of Priorities	70
4.5 Data and Method.....	73
4.6 Results and Discussion	76
4.7 Conclusion	87
5 The Far Side of Representation: Policy Responsiveness to Public Opinion in the EU	
5.1 Introduction.....	90
5.2 Policy Mood and the Public Thermostat.....	93
5.3 Political Responsiveness.....	95
5.4 Data and Method.....	99
5.5 Results and Discussion	103
5.5.1 Robustness Checks.....	108
5.5.2 Multivariate Analysis – Economic Indicators.....	109
5.6 Conclusion	113
6 Does Descriptive Representation Matter? An Analysis of the Descriptive Representation of Women in the EU	
6.1 Introduction.....	116
6.2 Theorising the Descriptive Representation of Women.....	119
6.2.1 Women as an ‘Interest Group’	122
6.3 Representation of Women in the EU	124
6.4 Research Hypotheses	125
6.5 Data and Method.....	128
6.6 Results and Discussion	130
6.7 Conclusion	144
7 Conclusion	146
7.1 Summary of the Main Findings	148
7.2 Outlook	150
Appendix A	156
Appendix B	159
Appendix C	162
Appendix D	166
Appendix E	168

List of Figures

2.1 Affective Support for the EU where Utilitarian Support is Low	30
2.2 Predicted Probabilities of Utilitarian Support (single level logit model)	35
2.3 Predicted Probabilities of Affective Support (single level logit model).....	35
2.4 Predicted Probabilities of Utilitarian Support (multi-level model).....	40
3.1 Respondents' scores on the left-right dimension in European Election Study 2009 voter survey	49
3.2 Distributions of voter policy positions on three policy dimensions	56
4.1 Issue Priorities of voters and candidates.	77
4.2 Issue positions of voters and candidates across party groups	80
4.3 Opinion and Priority Congruence by Party Group	82
4.4 Opinion and Priority Congruence by National Party	83
4.5 Opinion and Priority Congruence of Parties on Civil Liberties issues	84
4.6 Opinion Congruence of Parties on Economic Policy where Voters Prioritise Civil Liberties Issues.....	86
5.1 Public Opinion towards EU Membership, Policy Outputs in the EU, Misery Index and Public Expectations Towards the Economy, 1977-2008	102
5.2 Normalised Plot of Opinion on EU Membership and Policy Output 1977-2008	103
5.3 Cross Correlation Function for Opinion on EU Membership and Policy Output.	104
5.4 Impulse Response Function from Public Opinion on EU membership to Policy Output	106

5.5 Impulse Response Function From Policy Output to Public Opinion on EU Membership	107
6.1 Percentage of women in national and European parliaments 2009	118
6.2 Voter Attitudes over Policy Issues.....	131
6.3 Candidate Attitudes over Policy Issues.....	132
6.4 Predicted Probabilities of Voters (Sweden, age=51, rural, high education).....	137
6.5 Predicted Probabilities of Voters (UK, age=51, rural, high education).....	138
6.6 Predicted Probabilities of Candidates (UK, age=51, rural, high education).....	141
6.7 Predicted probabilities of Voter-Party Congruence – Same Sex Marriage and Abortion Issues.	143

List of Tables

2.1 Hypothesised Relationship Between Economic Expectations, Political Representation and Support for the EU	22
2.2 Descriptive Statistics – Utilitarian and Affective Support for the EU	29
2.3 Logistic Regression Estimates for Utilitarian and Affective Support	31
2.4 Multi-level Regression Results	38
2.5 Predicted Probabilities of Utilitarian Support (multi-level model).....	40
3.1 Opinion Congruence between Voters and Parties	57
3.2 ANOVA Results	58
3.3 Multi-level Analysis of Congruence	59
4.1 Hypothesised Relationships between Policy and Priority Congruence	70
4.2 Issue Priorities of Voters and Candidates by Party Group	79
5.1 OLS Estimates for VAR(1) Model	105
5.2 Granger Causality Tests of Bivariate VAR(1) Model	105
5.3 OLS Estimates for Multivariate VAR (1) Model	112
5.4 Granger Causality Tests for Four Variable VAR (1) Model	113
6.1 Ordered Logit Regressions of Political Attitudes of Voters – Same Sex Marriage and Abortions Issues	134
6.2 Ordered Logit Regressions of Political Attitudes of Voters – Women and Paid Work and Welfare State Issues	135
6.3 Ordered Logit Regressions of Political Attitudes of EP Candidates – Same Sex Marriage and Abortions Issues	139
6.4 Ordered Logit Regressions of Political Attitudes of EP Candidates – Women and Paid Work and Welfare State Issues	140

6.5 Voter-Party Policy Congruence Regression Results – Same Sex Marriage and Abortion Issues.of EP candidates	142
C1 European Parties by Country.....	162
D1 Forecast Error Variance Decomposition for bivariate VAR(1) Models.....	166
D2 Unit Root and Co-Integration Tests.....	167

Chapter 1

Introduction

For nearly two decades the European Union has been said to suffer from a ‘crisis of democracy’. Much of the debate over this so-called ‘democratic deficit’ is fuelled by the assertion that the EU has failed as an instrument of political representation (e.g. Hix, 2008; Hix and Follesdal, 2006; Mair and Thomassen, 2010; Scharpf, 1999). Despite successive attempts to bring voters closer to the decision making process, for example through increasing the European Parliament’s legislative powers or through schemes such as the citizen’s initiative, individuals in member states have become more hostile towards the EU and more disengaged from the political process, with fewer than 43% of the electorate voting in the 2009 European Parliament elections.

Scholars argue that although the EU was instrumental in transforming Europe’s political landscape into a multi-level governance structure, political parties insufficiently reacted to these changes, thus failing to gain public trust and resulting in decreased political accountability (Andersen and Burns, 1996; Held, 1996; Greven, 2005). Further, researchers argue that EU institutions lack strong accountability structures connecting voters and decision makers in Brussels, which leads to a policy drift and creates a gap between public attitudes over policy and policy itself (Hix and Follesdal, 2006; Hix and Hoyland, 2011, chapter 6).

Of course not all scholars agree that the EU’s problems stem from a fundamental absence of political representation, instead claiming that the EU suffers from a crisis of credibility as opposed to one of democracy. Majone (2005) argues that the EU offers a form of mixed government that is defined by a representation of national and international interests. Here, for example, the Commission takes on a fiduciary role designed to protect the long-term interests of member states by acting as the ‘guardian

of the treaties'. Majone (1998) further holds that the non-majoritarian nature of the EU's institutions is legitimated because decision-making is largely regulatory. It is argued that regulatory policies, being efficiency oriented, aim to benefit the aggregate welfare of society and thus can be delegated to political elites who have the technical expertise to produce policy outputs compatible with the broader public preference without challenging the democratic legitimacy of the system (Moravcsik, 2002; Majone, 1998).

Yet empirical studies, which test these theoretical debates and explore how well (or indeed how poorly) citizens in member states are represented by the EU, are surprisingly rare. The purpose of this project then, is to build on these theoretical arguments and address a gap in the empirical literature by exploring whether, and to what extent, the EU represents the political interests of its citizens.

1.1 On Democracy and Representation

In modern European states, the term 'democracy' is virtually synonymous with representative democracy. In such a system, popular sovereignty is exercised through the agency of the political representative. In other words, the preferences of the public are made present through the delegation of power to political elites who convert the 'will of the people' into policy outputs and outcomes via the legislative process. Thus scholars argue that the legitimacy of the modern democratic system rests on three key dimensions – identity, representation and accountability, and government performance (Beetham and Lord, 1998; Thomassen, 2009). Since, the core basis of democracy is rule by the people, the first dimension suggests that their needs to be some understanding of who the people are and that a *demos* only exists where that group, under which the democratic state functions, shares a 'thick' collective identity.

With respect to the second and third dimensions, Dahl (1989, 95) notes that democracy is a means through which 'a majority of citizens can induce the government to do what they most want it to do and avoid doing what they most want it not to do'. Further, Huber and Powell (1994, 292) state that congruency between the preferences of the citizenry and the actions of policymakers is a key goal for

democratic systems. Therefore, the people are deemed to rule primarily by granting electoral authority to political representatives who are then required to exercise their mandate through legislative activity in government or risk being thrown out of office in subsequent elections. In other words, citizens are expected to make choices between the competing policy proposals offered by parties and the positions taken by these elected officials should not be at odds with those they represent (Downs, 1957; Pitkin, 1967). Similarly, in what is considered a seminal work in the political science canon, Almond and Verba (1963) in *The Civic Culture* argue that a politically aware and participatory public who are broadly supportive towards the institutions of representative government are essential for maintaining a stable democracy. Thus legitimacy is afforded to the democratic system when the institutional mechanisms allow for the effective conversion of public preferences into policy outcomes and when citizens are supportive of the institutions that fulfil this goal.

Recently, scholars assessing the extent to which modern democracies fulfil these criteria have debated whether or not western democracies are suffering from a 'crisis of legitimacy'. For example, some researchers have noticed a trend towards a declining public trust in political institutions and a move away from participation in electoral politics more generally (e.g. Dalton, 2004; Wattenberg, 2002). Further, the advance of globalisation has generated a debate over whether supranational institutions, such as the EU, constrain the ability of nation states to fully represent their people, eroding popular sovereignty over policy making (Stoker, 2006, 2). For example in a recent Euro-barometer¹, just 50% of respondents reported feeling that their voice counts in their own country while just over 31% reported feeling that their voice counts in the EU.

Indeed, at the heart of the EU's democratic deficit debate lies the question of whether or not the EU is a quasi-despotic bureaucracy that is unresponsive to the wishes of its people, or a new form of representative multi-level governance that is emerging from a rapidly shifting political landscape as a result of globalisation. Those who defend the EU's democratic credentials argue that popular sovereignty and the representative process are not necessarily eroded by EU integration. For example, Moravcsik,

¹ Eurobarometer 78, autumn 2012.

(2002) argues that policy making in the EU remains a largely intergovernmental process and that political decision making ultimately remains in the hands of member states. Further, Crombez (2003) contends that the EU's structure is essentially that of a bi-cameral legislature where the Council represents the interests of the member states and the EP represents that of the people, ensuring that policies do not move too far from the preference of the median voter. Moreover, the EU itself claims democratic credentials, as the Lisbon treaty confirms the EU's commitment to the principles of representative democracy.

One conclusion that, at the very least, may be drawn from this discussion is that while the democratic process at the national level may be irrevocably altered by developments in multi-level governance in Europe, challenges to our understanding of popular sovereignty are asserting themselves at the supranational level also and, therefore, the degree to which the EU is representative of citizens interests cannot be overlooked. This leaves open the question of the extent to which the EU's institutions satisfy the criteria necessary for democratic legitimacy. For example, scholars also note that policy making at the EU level increases the complexity of the legislative process and one might expect that this would have the effect of weakening the representative links between voters and parties (Hix and Follesdal, 2006). The goal of this project is to examine the 'representation' criterion of democratic legitimacy in more detail and explore the degree to which the EU functions in its representative role.

1.2 Representation in Europe – The Current State of the Empirical Literature

Much of the empirical research to date has focused, not on the question of how well the EU functions in the process of representing its citizens, but rather on whether or not the EU satisfies the structural requirements necessary to operate as an instrument of representation. These studies typically rely on the assumptions of the responsible party model as the litmus test for effective representation (APSA, 1950; Powell, 2004: 284) and find that European Parliament elections fulfil some, although not all, of its preconditions (Schmitt and Thomassen, 1999, 2000).

The model's assumptions require that, for representation in modern democracies to be considered 'good', first, voters must have clear preferences over a variety of policy issues. Second, parties must offer a range of policy choices on those issues and voters must have sufficient knowledge of the different issue positions that parties claim to represent. Finally, voters choose the party who best represents their own policy positions in competitive elections.

In respect of the first two conditions, the literature indicates that party competition in the EU is structured around two ideological dimensions, namely the classic left-right heuristic and a pro/anti EU integration scale (Hix and Lord, 1997; Hooghe and Marks, 2001; Marks and Steenbergen, 2004). The scholarship also reveals that, on these dimensions, parties are ideologically distinct (Schmitt and Thomassen, 1999) and that voters recognize such distinctions (Rosema and De Vries, 2011; Van der Eijk, et al. 1999).

However, the responsible party model also requires voters to have a high level of political knowledge in order to 'vote correctly' and some studies have called into question the ability of the average citizen to meet these standards in the EU space (Anderson, 1998; Hix and Hoyland, 2011, chapter 6; Rosema and De Vries, 2011). In particular, scholars have found that voters, in lacking specific knowledge about the EU, typically form attitudes towards its institutions based on their understanding of national politics and, further, that citizens may choose different parties in EP elections compared to those they vote for in national ones in order to 'punish' governing parties rather than voting for candidates who express shared policy beliefs (Anderson, 1998; Marsh and Hix, 2007; Reif and Schmitt, 1980). This research indicates that the EU may fail to satisfy the third condition of the model if voters do not choose parties that are closest to their own positions on European issues.

Yet there is some debate over this also since additional empirical work has suggested that a more complex interplay between perceptions of national and European politics exists in influencing vote choice. Carrubba and Timpone (2005), for example, argue that citizens may vote for different parties in different electoral arenas in order to balance policy outcomes, such that they may choose a party in EP elections that they

perceive as being best placed to deal with policy issues that are largely under EU control. Also, Rohrschneider and Clark (2009) find that perceptions of a party's performance at the EU level may influence voting decisions, while Hobolt et. al (2009) find evidence that a gap between a voter's level of Euro-scepticism and the EU integration position of the governing party they support influences their decision to defect in EP elections.

To summarise, this research suggests that the EU is structurally capable of representing the interests of its citizens in the sense that it satisfies the requirements of the responsible party model, but largely leaves open the question of the extent to which it actually does so and only a limited number of studies exist that attempt to address this issue. For example, research reporting the degree of policy congruence between voters and political elites in the EU indicates that parties are quite close to their voters on the traditional left-right ideology but that they are, on average, more supportive of EU integration than their followers (Costello, Thomassen and Rosema, 2012; Hooghe, 2003; Marks and Steenbergen, 2004; Mattila and Raunio, 2006; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2000). Further, some evidence suggests that smaller niche parties are more congruent with the policy preferences of their voters than larger ones (Lefkofridi and Casado-Asensio, 2013; Mattila and Raunio, 2006). In addition, there are some mixed but limited findings on whether or not EU citizens respond to changes in policy-making or vice versa (Franklin and Wlezien, 1997; Toshkov, 2011).

However, existing research has yielded surprisingly little information on how well voters are represented beyond the left-right dimension or explored the factors that determine the quality of representation in the EU, particularly at the individual level. This oversight in the existing scholarship is limiting not least because although the classic left-right ideological spectrum is considered to be a key dimension of political competition in the EU and is typically used to measure policy congruence between voters and European elites, recent developments in the literature have criticized the usefulness of the heuristic, noting, for example, a lack of consistency in the perceptual meaning of left and right across countries (McElroy and Kritzinger, 2010). Further, the ideological spectrum may no longer be sufficiently one-dimensional, at least with respect to voters, as the scholarship has noted the emergence of groups of citizens

who are economically left but culturally right (Kriesi et. al, 2006; van der Brug and van Spanje, 2009).

Thus, many questions relating to the quality of representation in the EU have remained unanswered or under explored. For example, do political elites represent certain subgroups of voters more than others? Are voters in EP elections better represented than those who abstain? Do parties in the EU prioritise the same issue areas as their voters? Beyond the basic left-right ideology scale, are the preferences of voters and political elites congruent across specific policy areas? Do female politicians better represent the policy preferences of female voters than male representatives do? Is there an association between public opinion and the level of legislative activity in the EU? Are citizens who feel their interests are represented in the EU more likely to support the system?

The aim of this project is to close some of the gaps in the literature by empirically attending to these research questions. In so doing, I aim to both deepen and expand current understandings of the EU's representation function and provide empirical evidence that addresses the criticism that the EU fails to be effective in its representative role. In this respect, the starting point for the dissertation arises from what I perceive to be a disconnect between the complexity of representation as a political concept and the current state of empirical research in the EU.

1.3 Operationalizing Representation

Implicit in the foregoing discussion is that representation is a multi-faceted concept and in order to deepen our understanding of the process of representation in the EU, a core claim of this dissertation is that it is necessary to examine a variety of angles from which representation can be achieved. For example, are European parties sufficiently representative if their policy positions are highly congruent but only on issues that are of low importance to their supporters? Is policy congruence the relevant standard for measuring representation in the EU or is it also important that policy makers respond to changes in the aggregate preference of the electorate?

The theoretical literature on political representation is rich with alternative conceptualisations of the term. Arguably, Pitkin (1967, p8) offers the most eloquent definition, stating that it is the activity of 'making present' the opinions and perspectives of citizens in the policy-making process. However, she goes on to note that such a definition may be unhelpful since its application varies depending on what is being made present or what it means to be considered present (p10). In other words, while representation may have one basic meaning, it can be approached from a variety of perspectives and studying representation from one viewpoint only yields a limited picture of how well (or how poorly) it operates in the political space.

Pitkin goes on to develop a four-fold typology of representation defining it as formal, symbolic, descriptive or substantive. Formalistic representation refers to the institutional arrangements and means by which the representative obtains her status or office. Symbolic representation refers to the way in which the representative 'stands for' or has a symbolic meaning for the represented. Descriptive representation on the other hand, means the extent to which the representative is a 'mirror image' of those they represent. Finally, the most common understanding of the term is substantive representation, which is the activity undertaken by representatives on behalf of and in the interests of the represented.

More recently, theoretical studies of democratic representation have been developed further. For example, Saward (2006) moves beyond representation solely in the context of elections and parties, and re-evaluates the concept as 'claims-making' where the representative in question claims to act or stand for the represented. Further, Mansbridge (2003), argues that in modern democracies representation may be promissory, where representatives are evaluated on the promises they make during electoral campaigns; anticipatory, where representatives are forward looking and take action based on what they expect voters will reward in the following election period; or gyroscopic, whereby representatives derive their actions based on their own experiences and ideologies.

Beyond these theoretical definitions, representation can also be understood on the basis of how it is measured. Wlezien and Soroka (2007, 802) note that empirical research on representation can take three distinct forms. *Consistency*, measures the

degree to which policy changes approximate public preferences for such change (e.g. Monroe, 1998). *Co-variation* assesses policy responsiveness and considers the extent to which changes in policy follow changes in public preferences over policy. Finally, *congruence* relates to the state of representation and is a measure of the proximity of citizens' issue positions to the expressed policy preferences of the representative.

By far the majority of empirical research in the EU to date has operationalized representation as being 'substantive' and has measured representation as the congruence of preferences between parties and the voters who support them on the left-right ideological dimension and the EU integration dimension. While these works yield important contributions to our understanding of the process of representation in the EU, I argue that they are also limited in the sense that they offer a narrow interpretation of what 'good' representation is and, typically, are restricted to reporting mass-elite linkages rather than examining factors that determine levels of congruence (although see Mattila and Raunio 2006 for an exception) or considering its consequences for the legitimacy of the system.

In the approach taken by this project, I aim to take a step towards broadening the empirical research on EU representation by exploring some of the alternative viewpoints discussed above. Consistent with the existing scholarship, the dissertation operationalizes representation as 'substantive' (although some consideration of descriptive representation will be introduced in chapter 6) but I aim to advance the current research by accounting for the fact that this interpretation raises many further questions, such as who is being represented, who is doing the representing and what is being represented? Also, is representation a static process, where the preferences of elites must match those of their voters (i.e. policy congruence), or a dynamic one, where decision-makers must respond to changes in public interests (i.e. policy responsiveness) (Wlezien and Soroka, 2007)?

1.4 Representing Europe's Citizens? – The Plan for the Dissertation.

The principal theoretical contributions of the dissertation lie in taking greater consideration of the different lenses through which representation can be viewed. In so doing, the project aims to broaden our understanding of how effectively the EU functions as a means through which voter preferences can be realised in the policy space.

Chapter 2 understands representation as the degree to which citizens perceive their interests to be present in the EU. This chapter reflects on an *a priori* issue and asks if representation is an important predictor of public support for the EU. In democratic theory it is often assumed that representation is important primarily because its absence compromises the legitimacy of (and support for) political institutions. However, it is often stated that citizens support the EU mainly for economic reasons and representation is rarely explored as a key predictor (e.g. Anderson and Reichart, 1996; Gabel, 1998, 2003, Hobolt, 2012; Rohrschneider, 2002). In this chapter, however, I find that citizens who feel their voice is represented in the EU are more likely to maintain support for its institutions irrespective of their perceptions of the economy.

Chapter 3 explores inequalities in policy congruence and examines the individual level and party level predictors that may affect the degree of representation within the EU. Here I argue that citizens' voting behaviour can effect congruency whereby those who vote in EP elections, and who support the same party at both national and European levels, are better represented by parties compared to citizens who don't vote or who switch party allegiances across elections. The chapter also considers party level factors and finds that while ideologically extreme parties are more congruent with their voters than parties at the centre, such congruency varies across dimensions of conflict.

Chapter 4 contends that a voter's policy preference comprises two interrelated elements, namely the position that they hold over a particular issue and the value that they attach to having that issue realised as a policy outcome. Here, I argue that the study of congruence is as much about policy priorities as it is about issue positions.

This chapter introduces an interrelated typology of congruence that takes account of both preferences and priorities. I find that while parties demonstrate reasonable positional congruence with their voters, they vary considerably in the degree to which they prioritise those issues.

Chapter 5 builds on representation studies in American politics and questions whether or not a macro polity approach can be applied to the EU case. Here representation is not about individual level congruence between voters and parties but about the responsiveness of decision-makers to the aggregate preferences of the electorate. This chapter demonstrates that representation in the EU can be recast as a supply and demand relationship where attitudes of the electorate towards the EU signal a preference for 'more' or 'less' policy-making and where political elites respond to public opinion by increasing (decreasing) levels of legislative activity.

Finally, chapter 6 turns to the issue of descriptive representation, meaning that for a political institution to be descriptively representative its composition needs to be a 'microcosm' of the population on whose behalf it acts. Here the chapter asks whether or not female politicians in the EU are better placed to represent the interests of women in the population than male representatives are, such that increasing the number of women in EU politics leads to a greater substantive representation of women's policy preferences. The main claim of the paper is that descriptive representation of women matters if three conditions are satisfied. First, men and women, at least on certain political issues, must systematically differ in their preferences over policy. Second gender differences in terms of these policy positions must be replicated between male and female political representatives. Third, where differences between men and women are shown to exist, female representatives should be more congruent with their female supporters than they are with their male ones. I find evidence that both the first and second conditions are satisfied in the EU case, but little evidence in support of the third condition.

Methodologically, the dissertation also contributes to the existing field of research. Key amongst these inputs is that the substantive chapters herein move beyond an analysis of left-right ideology towards a more in-depth examination of specific policy issues. Here, the dissertation takes its cue from an understanding that the left-right

dimension cannot be fully relied upon as a convenient heuristic against which voter-party policy congruence can be judged since evidence shows that voter preferences on this traditional ‘super’ issue are split across economic and socio-cultural dimensions (Kriesi et. al, 2006; van der Brug and van Spanje, 2009) and that cross-nationally citizens may lack the perceptual agreement on the substantive meaning of left-right necessary to conduct comparative research (Benoit and Laver, 2007; McElroy and Kritzinger, 2010).

Consequently, this project departs from using the classic ideological variable, which reports how voters place themselves on a left-right scale, and instead takes advantage of specific policy questions on socio-economic and socio-cultural issues put to respondents in recent surveys, namely the European Election Study 2009, European Election Candidate Study 2009, Euro-barometer and Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2006. As an example, items used to measure congruence in chapter 3 include attitudes to state intervention in the economy, the provision of public services, immigration and multi-culturalism, while chapter 6 explores policy preferences of men and women on abortion, welfare state and same-sex marriage issues.

Another important contribution of the project is that, where possible, hierarchical modelling is employed to account for national level variation in the data. Recent studies in comparative European politics argue that EU research needs to account for potential clustering of data across levels of analysis whereby individual variables are nested within contextual units (e.g. member states). For example, Steenbergen and Jones (2002) show how using OLS regression analysis that ignores the multi-level structure of the data in EU research can overestimate the significance of results as it assumes independence of observations whereas multi level analysis, by contrast, takes account of clustering across levels. Specifically, chapters 2 and 3 both use a multi-level regression approach in order to analyse the research questions herein.

More broadly, the dissertation also makes use of a variety of statistical techniques in order to examine political representation in the EU. In understanding representation as ‘responsiveness’, chapter 5 employs time series analysis and uses a vector auto-regression model to investigate if the volume of legislation produced in the EU varies with changes in public opinion over time. Further, chapter 6 makes use of ordered

logistic regressions to explore differences in the policy preferences of men and women in the EU. Finally, chapter 4 measures the policy priorities of voters and parties by using a duncan dissimilarity index to construct congruence scores.

Ultimately, the following five chapters build to an empirical account of political representation in the EU space that offers a more nuanced picture of how well the EU functions in making its citizens' interests 'present' in the policy making process. It aims to resolve limitations in the existing research by broadening the analysis of EU representation beyond reporting the levels of issue agreement between voters and parties and by examining representation from a variety of theoretical viewpoints.

Chapter 2

Between Performance and Procedure: Representation and Citizen Support for the EU.

Recent developments in the EU support literature confirm that citizen attitudes towards to the EU are shaped by both an input oriented procedural based component (e.g. representation) and an output oriented performance based component (e.g. economic benefits). This chapter builds on these works, hypothesizing that the procedural component can help foster support even where the performance component is weak. Using data from the 2008 Euro-barometer 69.2, I find that citizens who feel their voice is represented in the EU are more likely to maintain support for the EU irrespective of their perceptions of the economy. Conversely, citizens who feel unrepresented in the EU space are more likely to rely on economic perceptions in forming support attitudes.

2.1 Introduction

A core assumption of many political representation studies is that the effective representation of public interests is important in so far as it contributes to the legitimacy of democratic systems (Dahl, 1989; Easton, 1975). This chapter begins the substantive analysis of the dissertation by asking if political representation is an important predictor of support for the EU. Early studies on EU support were prompted by the end of the so called 'permissive consensus' where an ill-informed and disinterested public allowed political elites to pursue their own policy interests without negatively affecting public support (Carrubba, 2001). Following a dramatic decline in support in the early 1990's, scholars initially focused on a utilitarian output based approach to explain citizen's attitudes. Here, researchers argue that EU citizens lack the 'thick collective identity' required to form lasting attachments to the EU system (Scharpf, 2001) and thus support for the EU is largely based on cost-benefit calculations whereby citizens who economically benefit from EU membership, either directly or indirectly, are more likely to support the regime (e.g. Anderson and Reichart, 1996; Gabel, 1998, 2003). Further, building on a critique of the purely rational utilitarian model of support, later research offered a more procedural input

based approach. Here, the findings suggest that citizens attitudes towards the EU are driven by perceptions of national governments (Anderson, 1998; Sanchez-Cuenca, 2000) perceptions of the representativeness of EU institutions (Hobolt, 2012; Rohrschneider, 2002); perceived cultural threats (McLaren, 2002) religious intolerance (Hobolt, Spoon and Tilley, 2010); levels of political knowledge (Janssen, 1991; Karp, Banducci and Bowler, 2003); and postmaterialism (Inglehart, 1977, chapter 12).

However, criticisms have been levelled at both approaches for being unable to fully explain citizen attitudes towards the EU. This has prompted recent scholarship to suggest that attempts to seek the general validity of either approach can create an incomplete picture of how citizens form attitudes towards the EU and to argue that future research should consider the relative causal power of existing explanations rather than simply adding new ones (e.g. Ehin, 2008; Hooghe and Marks, 2004).

In this first substantive chapter, I build on this discussion and seek to address these gaps in the literature by examining the effects of two key predictors of EU support - citizens' perceptions of representation in the EU and citizens' economic expectations. In so doing the chapter builds upon research that theorizes support as being shaped by both a utilitarian performance component and an affective procedural component (e.g. Easton, 1975; Hobolt, 2012; Rohrschneider, 2002). The performance-based model rests on the assumption that support results from a citizen's perception that the regime delivers positive economic and policy benefits while the procedural-based model claims that, given that a political regime is unable to deliver benefits to all people all of the time, citizens may nevertheless continue to support the system if they perceive it as having the capacity to articulate their interests and thus maintaining the possibility of delivering future benefits. Therefore, this chapter first seeks to confirm and extend the findings of earlier works from scholars such as Rohrschneider (2002) who demonstrate that both procedure and performance predictors affect citizen attitudes about the EU (e.g. Anderson and Reichart, 1996; Gabel, 1998; Hobolt, 2012; Kritzinger, 2005; Rohrschneider, 2002). However, I also posit that there are theoretical reasons to expect that positive evaluations of representation in the EU have a more durable effect on regime support than economic indicators. In other words, I expect that citizens maintain higher levels of support for the EU irrespective of their

assessments of economic expectations where they evaluate institutions as representing their interests. Conversely, where citizens' perceptions of EU representation are low, I hypothesise that they rely more on economic assessments in forming attitudes towards the EU.

A further complication in the empirical EU support literature is a lack of conceptual clarity about the type of support citizens afford to the EU. In the theoretical literature support is identified as operating across a spectrum ranging from a utilitarian concept whereby citizens base their support on the benefits they receive from the system and an affective concept, which is a diffuse response to the ideals and processes embodied within the system (e.g. Easton, 1975; Lindberg and Scheingold, 1970, Norris, 1999). In the EU literature, however, support has often been understood by its utilitarian variant only and has been varyingly operationalized as support for membership, support for integration and satisfaction with EU democracy. This operationalization is, at least in part, driven by the frequent conceptualisation of EU integration as a primarily economic phenomenon (Gabel, 1998).

Yet, the EU is also a supranational polity with extensive influence over a wide range of legislative policy areas and more recent studies have relied on index measures of support designed to capture both affective and utilitarian components (e.g. Gabel, 1998; McLaren, 2002; Hobolt, 2012). Further, additional works focus on the affective variant of support, by exploring indicators that help to shape and foster EU identity (e.g. Kritzinger, 2005). Relatively few analyses, however, explicitly model different conceptualisations of support or consider whether or not key indicators affect support in a differential manner (e.g. Boomgaarden et al, 2011; Caldeira and Gibson, 1995).

In an effort to address the problem of the conceptual clarity of support, a secondary goal of the chapter is to explore whether or not performance and procedural based indicators affect variants of support in a differential manner, for example, are perceptions of representation more important than economic evaluations in building affective support? The chapter addresses these questions by analysing data taken from the Spring 2008 Euro-barometer 69.2 and using both single and multilevel logistic models to test theoretical expectations. The analysis proceeds as follows.

First, I review the existing literature on what shapes citizens attitudes towards the EU before presenting a theoretical framework of political support. Next, I consider both the performance and procedural based models of political support in the EU and introduce the main hypotheses. Thereafter I will introduce the data and method for the empirical analysis before presenting the results and will conclude with a discussion of the main findings.

2.2 Public Support for the EU: Existing Explanations.

Dahl (1989, chapter 2) notes that political representation contains both a substantive and a procedural component. To be fully represented, citizens must yield benefits from the political system at least some of the time, as they are otherwise unlikely to ever support it. However, because regimes are unlikely to be able to deliver benefits to all citizens all of the time, the system must also be perceived to be fair and to have the capacity to articulate interests. Similarly then, support for a political system can be explained as being the result of both performance and procedural indicators. In the EU, the literature offers several explanations as to how citizens form attitudes towards the EU.

2.2.1 A Performance Model of EU Support

The earliest and most dominant of these explanations has been a performance based one, which argues that citizens engage in a cost-benefit analysis of support for the EU where attitudes are shaped by evaluations of actual and perceived advantages associated with membership. The most prominent findings of this approach favour an economic explanation, and suggest that the level of both direct payments made by the EU to member states and individuals and indirect payments made through trade opportunities with EU members have a positive relationship with support for integration (Anderson and Reichart, 1996). Further, findings indicate that citizens experience differential costs and benefits associated with the liberalisation of EU markets, depending on their socio-economic status (Gabel and Palmer, 1995; Gabel, 1998).

Many of these early studies are premised on an assumption that because the EU lacks a single identifiable 'demos', EU legitimacy is based on the ability of the EU to

enhance a member states economic wellbeing (Eichenberg and Dalton, 1993; Gabel, 2003; Scharpf, 1999). However, the performance model may be neither limited to economic explanations nor even to a utilitarian understanding of support. Kritzinger (2005), for example, demonstrates that the affective dimension of citizen support, operationalized as European identity, can be shaped by citizen's expectations that policy preferences will be more efficiently met at the EU level.

While performance-based considerations are clearly an important predictor of citizen support for the EU, these explanations have been unable to fully account for public attitudes. For example, results for the effects of country level economic predictors (such as net fiscal transfers) on EU support have been mixed (e.g. Hobolt, 2012; Karp, Banducci and Bowler, 2003; Rohrschneider, 2002). Further, in the early 1990's during a period of stable economic growth and intensified integration efforts, citizen support for EU membership declined reaching record lows in 1996 (Luetgert, 2008; Hix and Hoyland, 2011, chapter 6). Moreover, the performance model typically rests on the assumption that citizens possess sufficient political sophistication to make accurate judgements about the EU in terms of expected outcomes but survey results have shown that citizens in the EU are generally uninformed about its processes and outputs (e.g. Duch and Palmer, 1999; Hix, 2008). The literature addresses these concerns by arguing that in the absence of specific knowledge of the EU, citizens utilise their understanding of national institutions as a proxy for evaluating the EU (e.g. Reif and Schmitt, 1980; Anderson, 1998) but as political knowledge of the EU increases, the more citizens rely on their understanding of EU institutions in forming support attitudes (e.g. Karp, Banducci and Bowler, 2003; Kaplan, 2001; Janssen, 1991).

2.2.2 A procedural model of EU support

Increasingly, research on public support for the EU demonstrates that utilitarian considerations alone have insufficient explanatory power and that the perception of fairness and the ability of the system to articulate interests also matters in shaping public attitudes. Rohrschneider (2002), for example, finds that citizens who feel that their interests are represented within the EU space will be more supportive of it. Further findings indicate that the degree to which citizens feel hostile to or threatened

by other national cultures impacts on levels of support (McLaren, 2002; deVreese and Boomgaarden, 2005). Similarly, evidence suggests that support for the EU is positively associated with voting in EU elections (e.g. Blondel, Sinnott and Svensson, 1997; Hobolt, 2012; Mattila, 2003) which may be partly explained by the finding that citizens who participate in the democratic process through voting are better represented than those who abstain, although the causal direction of these results are unclear (e.g. Griffin and Newman, 2005 and chapter 3 of this dissertation).

The procedural model also takes account of how the complexity of the EU's multi-level structure can impact on public attitudes. In a widely cited study Sanchez-Cuenca (2000) suggests that the public considers the opportunity cost of transferring sovereignty from their national political system to the EU, whereby citizens who perceive their national institutions as having a poor quality of governance will transfer their support to the EU level. Thus, the quality of national level politics operates as a benchmark for EU level evaluations. Research on satisfaction with EU democracy, however, runs counter to this finding and suggests that there is a positive spill-over effect from the national level, whereby citizens who demonstrate trust in national institutions and satisfaction with national level democracy, will also be more satisfied with democracy at the EU level (Anderson, 1998; Hobolt, 2012; Rohrschneider, 2002).

Taking both performance and procedural issues into account, Hooghe and Marks (2004) find that while economic considerations are important in forming attitudes, national identity has a more powerful effect in influencing support for the EU and that the direction of this effect differs across countries. They argue that in the same way that people may feel themselves to be both British and Welsh or Catalan and Spanish, national identity for some is inclusive, where a strong national identity also yields a strong European one. On the other hand, Euro-scepticism is often driven by fears of lost sovereignty and thus, for others, a strong national identity is exclusive, weakening support for the EU.

The findings outlined here confirm that there is both a performance and a procedural component to understanding support for the EU. In this chapter, I take my cue from Hooghe and Marks (2004) who argue that it is necessary to consider the relative

causal effect of predictors to gain a fuller understanding of EU support. The chapter thus focuses on two key predictors – namely perceptions of the economy and perceptions of representation, but also takes account of additional predictors outlined here. However, one difficulty with the literature summarized above, is that there is frequently a lack of conceptual clarity about how to operationalize support and so before proceeding with the empirical analysis, I consider the concept of political support at the EU level.

2.3. A Theoretical Framework of Political Support

In the extant literature, David Easton's (1975) classic theoretical framework remains the most influential typology of support for political systems. He describes support as the way in which a person orients themselves to a political object through attitudes and behaviour. This support exists as two distinct modes, specific and diffuse, which is directed at three objects in the political system, namely the political community, the regime and the authorities. Specific support refers to a person's attitudes towards an object based on the object's performance such that stronger levels of support are associated with the fulfilment of citizens' expectations over policy and action. Diffuse support is a more abstract concept and reflects an attitude towards what the object is and represents, rather than what it does. This type of support represents a 'reservoir of favourable attitudes' towards the political system, which expresses itself as a belief in the validity of the regime, identity with the political community and trust in political office. Consequently, diffuse support helps a citizen to tolerate unfavourable outcomes and is thus a more durable dimension of support than specific support.

Lindberg and Scheingold (1970) provide a similar typology of support for the European Community. They conceptualise a framework, whereby utilitarian support refers to attitudes based on perceived and concrete interests derived from the system and affective support describes an emotional response to the vague ideals of European unity. Thus, Easton's conceptualisation of specific and diffuse support approximates Lindberg and Scheingold's utilitarian and affective typology, but whilst they both have many similarities they also exhibit some key differences. For example, Easton's understanding of diffuse support is that it develops from personal assessments of political circumstances rather than solely from the effect of long-term socialisation,

whilst Lindberg and Scheingold's (1970) affective support places greater emphasis on the importance of identity and non-rational responses to the European system.

More recently, scholars have built on these early frameworks, to operationalize support as a spectrum ranging from affective to utilitarian attitudes. For example, Norris (1999) conceptualises a five-point spectrum of support ranging from support for the political community to support for political actors. Norris (1999) thus posits that political identity comprises the affective end of the scale; that trust and confidence in institutions and political actors comprises the utilitarian end; and that satisfaction with democracy acts as a middle ground. Further, in a study of original survey data, Boomgaarden et al (2011), indicate that public attitudes towards the EU encompass 5 distinct dimensions, namely performance of EU institutions, identity, negative affection (e.g. emotional responses towards the EU as a national threat), utilitarianism and strengthening of EU integration.

The literature outlined here indicates, therefore, that support for the EU can be understood as comprising both an affective component, for example having a sense of European identity, and a utilitarian component, for example believing that you have benefited from EU membership. Yet this is at odds with the early support literature that argues the EU only enjoys output based legitimacy since it lacks the collective 'demos' required for affective support (e.g. Scharpf, 1999; Gabel, 1998). Indeed, in a rare study of affective support in the EU, Caldeira and Gibson (1995) explored citizen attitudes towards the European Court of Justice concluding that affective support for the Court is weak. However, submitting that there are only low levels of affective support in the EU is a very different proposition than suggesting that the EU is incapable of experiencing input based legitimacy. Boomgaarden et. al (2011) find that although support dimensions such as utilitarianism and identity are unsurprisingly correlated, they are, nevertheless, sufficiently distinct to confirm that EU support is a multi-dimensional concept. Thus the present chapter operationalizes EU support as having both an affective and utilitarian component. For the sake of parsimony I follow two dimensions of support identified in recent research (Boomgaarden et al., 2011; Norris, 1999) namely EU identity and utilitarianism. Identity comprises the affective end of the support spectrum, while utilitarianism relates to a citizen's

perception that they benefit from the political system, thus measuring utilitarian support.

2.4 Research Hypotheses - Between Performance and Procedure

Having identified EU support as having both a utilitarian and affective element, the core concern of this chapter is to consider how the EU acquires support from its citizens. The research on performance and procedural models discussed above provides a source of key predictors explaining citizen attitudes towards the EU and table 2.1 outlines the hypothesised relationships between these variables in terms of how they impact on support for the EU.

Table 2.1 Economic Expectations, Political Representation and Support for the EU.

	High Economic Expectations	Low Economic Expectations
High Perceptions of Representation	<p><i>Utilitarian support = 3</i> <i>Affective support = 3</i> In both cases support for the EU is high as respondents report both strong feelings of being represented and of having positive perceptions of the economy.</p>	<p><i>Utilitarian support = 1</i> <i>Affective support = 2</i> High perceptions of being represented by the EU have a stronger impact on feelings of affective support compared to utilitarian support.</p>
Low Perceptions of Representation	<p><i>Utilitarian support = 2</i> <i>Affective support = 1</i> Positive expectations towards the economy have a stronger impact on feelings of utilitarian support compared to affective support.</p>	<p><i>Utilitarian support = 0</i> <i>Affective support = 0</i> In both cases respondents report low levels of support for the EU as they have poor expectations for the economy and low perceptions that the EU represents their interests.</p>

Note: numbers reflect hypothesised levels of support for the EU where 0 = no support and 3 = high levels of support.

In line with the performance model, I expect that positive perceptions of the economy generate higher levels of utilitarian support for the EU. Further, studies suggest that identities can develop due to economic rationality, such that, if citizens perceive the political space as being economically advantageous loyalties towards the system will deepen (Kritzinger, 2005). Put another way, Easton (1975) suggests that utilitarian support can, over time, foster affective support because an individual who receives economic benefits from the system in the long term is more likely to continue to support the system even if there are short-term fluctuations in their receipt of benefits. Therefore, I expect that perceptions of the economy will also foster affective support.

To be clear, I expect that perceptions of the national economy, rather than it's EU variant, will impact on levels of support for the EU, which is a claim that warrants further explanation. Scholarship on public opinion has long noted that the average voter is largely uninformed about politics (e.g. Bartels, 2003; Zaller, 1992) and this is particularly the case with respect to the EU (e.g. Hix, 2004). Consequently, existing literature demonstrates that voters tend to use their understanding of the national level as a proxy in evaluating the EU (Anderson, 1998). Thus, it is unlikely that the average voter will make meaningful distinctions between the performance of national and EU economies. Further, it may be difficult to clearly identify where changes in the economy are the product of exclusively national or EU level policy making given that, as Hobolt (2012) notes, national economic policies and outcomes are increasingly affected directly by developments in EU policy. It is highly plausible, therefore, that voters do not make clear distinctions between the national economy and the EU economy but instead evaluate political support for the EU based on their national economic considerations.

This discussion leads to the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a: Individuals who have positive perceptions of the economy are more likely to have high levels utilitarian support for the EU.

Hypothesis 1b: Individuals who have positive perceptions of the economy are more likely to have high levels of affective support for the EU.

Following the procedural model, political representation is an important predictor of how citizens shape attitudes towards the EU. Given the assumption that citizens will afford legitimacy to a system that they feel allows for a fair articulation of their interests (e.g. Dahl, 1989; Easton, 1975, Rohrschneider, 2002) I expect perceptions of representation to affect a citizen's feelings of affective support. However, as Rohrschneider (2002) notes, representation contains both a substantive and a procedural component and thus perceptions of representation can be cast as a measure of an individual's assessment of the EU's potential to deliver benefits now and in the future. Therefore, I expect that perceptions of representation will also shape utilitarian support, leading to hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 2a: Individuals who have positive perceptions that their interests are represented in EU institutions are more likely to have high levels of affective support for the EU.

Hypothesis 2b: Individuals who have positive perceptions that their interests are represented in EU institutions are more likely to have high levels of utilitarian support the EU.

Together, hypotheses 1 and 2 expect that procedural and performance indicators will be key predictors of both affective and utilitarian variants of support. Consequently, it is expected that support for the EU will be highest where respondents both perceive the EU to represent their interests and have positive economic expectations, and lowest where they have negative economic expectations and poor perceptions of representation (see table 2.1).

Table 2.1 also raises a question on whether the relative causal power of these predictors varies across dimensions of political support. The theoretical literature, discussed above, assumes that utilitarian attitudes are less durable than affective ones and are thus more subject to short term fluctuations in the performance of the political system (e.g. Easton, 1975). Further, perceptions of the economy can be cast as an individual's short-term calculation of the present performance of EU institutions, while representation is an appraisal of institutional performance in the longer term, such that assessments of the ability of the EU to deliver benefits in the past structures

perceptions of the capacity of the EU to articulate interests now and in the future. Consequently, I expect that perceptions of the economy will have a stronger effect on the short-term fluctuations of performance-based utilitarian support and that perceptions of representation will have a more powerful impact on the longer-term affective support for the political community (see table 2.1). This discussion leads to the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3a: an individual's perception of the economy is a stronger predictor of utilitarian support than their perceptions of representation.

Hypothesis 3b: an individual's perception of representation is a stronger predictor of affective support than their perceptions of the economy.

Finally, a core argument of this chapter is that performance and procedural indicators have interactive effects on political support for the EU. For example, Easton (1975) argues that affective support can be derived from experience and that consistently high levels of utilitarian support can, over time, foster affective attitudes. Thus citizens may appraise past economic performance by keeping a 'running tally' that builds to a generalised belief of the capacity of the EU system to represent their interests. Similarly, because positive attitudes towards representation are an expression of belief that the EU system can and will yield benefits at least some of the time, I expect that citizens who report that their interests are well represented in the EU will maintain higher levels of support for the EU irrespective of their attitudes towards the economy. Conversely, citizens who feel their interests to be unrepresented in the EU are unable to rely on a belief that the EU will yield benefits in the future. Therefore, I expect that citizens who report being poorly represented in the EU will rely more on their attitudes toward the economy in shaping their level of support. This leads to the final hypothesis as follows:

Hypothesis 4: Individuals who have positive perceptions that their interests are represented in EU institutions are more likely to support the EU irrespective of their perceptions of the economy, compared to individuals who hold negative perceptions of representation.

2.5 Data and Method

In order to test the hypotheses I analyse two measures of support for the EU using the Eurobarometer survey 69.2, which provides individual level survey data obtained in 2008 from the 27 member states. Approximately 1000 individuals aged 15 and over were interviewed in each member state. Here, I only include the 25 states that were EU members at 2004. While Romania and Bulgaria were member states by 2008, their citizens had only one year of membership and had not yet been party to the EU-wide election process. By removing these two countries the reduced dataset contains 24,462 observations across 25 member states.

Support for the EU is measured with two dependent variables (see appendix A for complete question wording). For utilitarian support, respondents were asked whether or not they felt their country benefited from EU membership and results were coded as a dummy variable. Previous studies have measured support varyingly as support for membership, support for integration or satisfaction with democracy. However, both the ‘integration’ and ‘satisfaction with democracy’ variables have been found to tap into other elements of support for the EU outside of the ‘utility’ and ‘performance’ operationalization of the term (Boomgaarden et al., 2011; Norris, 1999). Further, while the ‘benefits from membership’ question correlates highly with ‘support for membership’ question, ‘benefits from membership’ is favoured here as it explicitly taps into the perceived utility of EU membership.

Affective support is operationalized as a sense of European identity and respondents were asked the extent to which they personally feel European on four-point scale. For consistency and ease of analysis with the specific support measure, the identity measure was also recoded as a dummy variable². An advantage to using this specific question wording is that it does not require respondents to make a comparative assessment between having a European identity or a national one. Therefore, the question allows respondents to hold a strong sense of being both a member of their national community and a part of Europe.

² The following analysis was also conducted using an ordered logit model and the original four-point scale variable, but results were substantively similar.

The key predictors in the analysis are *perceptions of the economy* and *perceptions of representation*. Attitudes to the economy are tested with two variables – household economy and national economy. Household economy is the sum of two questions asking respondents about their personal financial and job situations while, national economy is the sum of two questions asking respondents about the employment situation in their country and their expectations for the economy in the next 12 months. Both variables result in a five-point scale where 0= poor perceptions of the economy and 4=positive perceptions of the economy.

As indicated in section 2.4, attitudes towards the EU are likely to be affected by respondent's evaluations of their personal economic welfare, since EU policy has an increasingly direct impact on domestic economies (Hobolt, 2012) but also since support for the EU is likely to be driven by an individual's evaluation of the national level (Anderson, 1998, Karp, Banducci and Bowler, 2003). Further, Gabel and Palmer (1995) argue that support for the EU is driven by an individual's socio-economic situation and that citizens who are better placed to exploit the liberalisation of markets produced by the EU system will be more supportive of it. Thus I argue that the average respondent is unlikely to make a clear distinction between the performance of the EU economy and a purely national one, and I expect that respondent's evaluations of their personal economic welfare will affect their attitudes towards the EU (see also McLaren, 2007) since I assume that responses to questions relating to the national economy tap into a more general evaluation of economic conditions which in turn affects attitudes towards the EU.

Representation is also tested using two variables – EU representation and national representation. Given that earlier findings on support indicate that citizens, having limited knowledge of EU institutions, use their understanding of national governments to shape attitudes towards the EU (e.g. Anderson, 1998; Hooghe and Marks, 2004; Sanchez-Cuenca, 2000), it is important to account for respondent's understanding of country level institutions. Therefore, I utilise individual level variables that tap into perceptions of both EU and national institutions. EU representation is the sum of two questions asking respondents if their voice counts in the EU and if their voice is listened to by MEP's and national representation is the sum of two questions asking respondents if their interests are taken account of

nationally and if government listens to their voice. Each variable results in a three-point scale where 0= poor perceptions of representation and 2=positive perceptions of representation.

Further, a number of control variables are included in the model to account for additional explanations found in the literature that have been shown to influence EU support (e.g. Blondel, Sinnott and Svensson, 1997; Gabel, 1998; Hooghe and Marks, 2004; Karp, Banducci and Bowler, 2003; McLaren, 2002; Sanchez-Cuenca, 2000). These variables include voting in EU elections, attitudes to immigration, levels of political knowledge (e.g. Karp, Banducci and Bowler, 2003), trust in national governments and age. Finally, appendix A offers a detailed list of the question wording for each variable in the analysis.

Since the hypotheses are primarily concerned with individual level predictors of EU support, I use single level logistic regression to test the main propositions. However, many EU studies suggest that this approach may overlook country-level clustering effects by failing to account for national level differences (e.g. Steenbergen and Jones, 2002) and therefore, the hypotheses are further tested with a multi-level model to take account of country level variation in support. In order to take full advantage of this multi level approach I add two country specific variables, namely net EU fiscal transfers³, measured as a percentage of GNI and a measure of government quality using the World Bank's global governance indicators⁴. These indicators measure both performance (economic) and procedural (government quality) models of EU support at the county level.

2.6 Results and Discussion

The theoretical discussion above indicates that dimensions of utilitarian and affective support are conceptually distinct. The *identity* and *benefit* variables used here confirm this by yielding a correlation of 0.29, which suggests that they do not simply reflect a single latent dimension of support. Table 2.2 shows the descriptive statistics for the

³ Source: Eurostat

⁴ This variable is an index measure of government quality ranging from 0 to 10 constructed from indicators assessing accountability, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, adherence to the rule of law and control of corruption. Cronbach's alpha for the additive scale is 0.96.

two dependent variables and demonstrates that respondents are far more likely than not to report feeling at least somewhat European and report believing that their country benefited from EU membership.

Table 2.2 Descriptive Statistics – Utilitarian and Affective Support for the EU

	Support for the EU	
	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
EU Identity (Affective Support)	26.57	73.94
Benefited from Membership (Utilitarian Support)	32.57	67.43

Note: Figures are the percentage of respondents in each category. Missing observations not reported. Source: Eurobarometer 69.2

Further, theory expects that affective support is more durable than the utilitarian dimension so that a political system may continue to enjoy legitimacy even where utilitarian support is low. Therefore, the litmus test for whether or not the EU enjoys affective support is to examine if those individuals who express dissatisfaction with the systems utilitarian performance, nevertheless demonstrate support for the community and regime. Figure 2.1 plots the descriptive statistics to explain the relationship between the *benefit* (utilitarian support) and *identity* (affective support) variables for those respondents who report feeling at least somewhat European.

In each country, the figure demonstrates that a large proportion of respondents (approximately 84% across the 25 member states) who feel that the EU has benefited their country also report feeling at least somewhat European. The descriptive statistics also show fewer respondents reporting a high level of affective support when they demonstrate low utilitarian support (approximately 57%). The analysis thus shows a moderate sense of EU identity amongst respondents who report low utilitarian support, although this finding however varies considerably across member states. For example, less than half of respondents in Cyprus (35%), Greece (23%), Ireland (35%), France (46%), Malta (32%) and Great Britain (25%) who answered negatively to the *benefit* question reported having a strong sense of being European while the majority of respondents in Sweden (76%) Germany (70%), and Denmark

(71%) reported high levels of affective support. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the EU may not have a ‘demos’ sufficient to generate the level of affective support enjoyed by national institutions, results here show that across the EU, the political system experiences at least some degree of support. This then leads to the core question of this chapter, namely what accounts for citizens’ utilitarian and affective attitudes towards the EU? Table 2.3 reports the results for the single level logistic regression models for both utilitarian and affective support⁵.

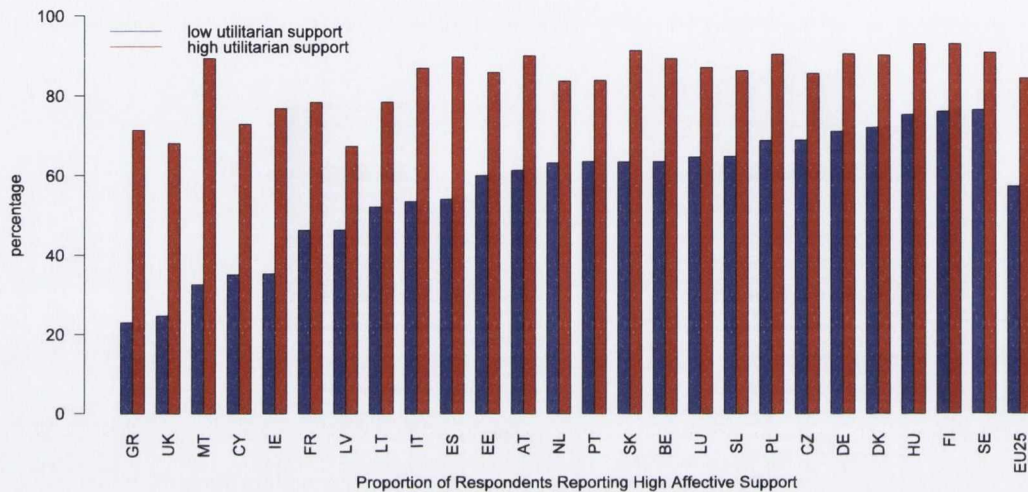


Figure 2.1 Relationship between Affective and Utilitarian Support.

Note: All figures are percentages. Source: Eurobarometer 69.2

With the exception of *household economy* and *national representation*, each variable is significant and in the expected direction across both models. The findings here show that attitudes towards the national economy affect an individual’s opinion of whether or not EU membership benefits their country and the extent to which they feel European. Thus, positive attitudes to the national economy are more likely to foster positive opinions of utilitarian and affective support, consistent with hypothesis 1. The positive effect of *household economy* on the *benefits from membership* variable provides further support for hypothesis 1a and extends previous studies that suggest both an individual’s socio-economic situation (e.g. Gabel and Palmer, 1995;

⁵ There is considerable variation in the number of ‘don’t know’ responses returned by the survey data leading to large losses in the number of observations in the model, where such responses are treated as missing values. In an earlier draft I used multiple imputations using the ‘Amelia’ package in R (Honaker et al, 2010) to treat this data. However, the results were not substantively different from the models reported here which use list-wise deletion of the missing values.

Gabel, 1998) and their perception of the personal utility they derive from membership (McLaren, 2007), impacts on their attitudes towards the EU.

Table 2.3 Logistic Regression Estimates for Utilitarian and Affective Support

Parameter	<i>EU Identity</i>		<i>Benefited from Membership</i>	
	Estimate	S.E.	Estimate	S.E.
Intercept	-1.46***	0.12	-1.47***	0.12
EU representation	0.42***	0.03	0.83***	0.04
National representation	0.13***	0.03	-0.09**	0.03
Household Economy	0.01	0.02	0.14***	0.02
National Economy	0.19***	0.02	0.22***	0.02
National Identity	1.03***	0.09	0.32***	0.09
Trust in Government	0.28***	0.05	0.66***	0.05
Attitudes to Immigrants	0.26***	0.02	0.23***	0.02
Age	-0.01***	0.001	-0.01***	0.01
Vote Intention	0.09***	0.01	0.1***	0.01
Knowledge	0.16***	0.02	0.14***	0.02
National Economy*EU Representation	-0.01	0.02	-0.05*	0.02
N	15545		14595	
McFadden R2	0.45		0.44	
Log Likelihood	-7753.733		-7695.778	

Source: Eurobarometer 69.2 ***=p<0.001, **=p<0.01, *=p<0.05

However, findings here also show that an individual's perception of their personal economic position has no impact on shaping EU identities. It is unclear from the theoretical discussion in section 2.2 as to why this is the case, but one possible line of thought is that respondents' perceptions of 'individual' and 'community' economic circumstances affect each dimension of support in a differential manner. Given that utilitarian support relates directly to the performance of the political system, individuals may draw upon both personal economic circumstances and their perceptions of the state of the economy in the community. By contrast, EU identity is reflective of support for the political community and thus may be driven more by assessments of community level economic circumstances rather than individual situations. It is beyond the scope of the current research to fully assess the nuances of citizens' economic positions at different levels of analysis but the findings here ultimately offer sufficient evidence in support of hypothesis 1 indicating that

individuals who hold positive perceptions of the economy are more likely to support the EU.

Turning to the second key predictor in the analysis, findings in table 2.3 show that positive perceptions of EU representation are associated with higher levels of *EU identity* and *benefits from membership*. This finding provides support for hypothesis 2. The *national representation* variable, however, yields a surprising result. As expected, perceptions of national representation appear to have a positive spill-over effect on *EU identity*, whereby respondents who report feeling that their interests are represented at the national level are more likely to report feeling at least somewhat European, consistent with hypothesis 2. In the case of *benefits from membership*, however, positive perceptions of national representation are likely to lower utilitarian support for the EU, suggesting that in the case of short-term performance based support, citizens engage in a cost-benefit calculation and evaluate support based on a comparative assessment of how effective national and EU institutions are at articulating their interests.

The interaction term between the *national economy* and *EU representation* variables partially confirm expectations of hypothesis 4. In the case of both utilitarian and affective support, positive perceptions that the EU represents an individual's interests decreases the likelihood of supporting the EU due to their perceptions of the national economy although it is noted that the effect is only significant in the case of utilitarian support.

The control variables in each model are also significant and confirm previous findings in the literature discussed in section 3.2. For example, respondents who vote in EU elections, have higher levels of political knowledge, hold positive attitudes towards immigration and express a higher levels of trust in national governments are more likely to report their country as having benefited from EU membership and also are more likely to report feeling at least somewhat European. Further, the national identity variable confirms that citizens experience a positive spill-over effect between identities, such that individuals who hold strong national identities are more likely to express strong European ones.

Beyond detecting the significance of the findings here, logistic regression coefficients can be difficult to interpret directly. I therefore convert the results to odds ratios in order to analyse the strength of each predictor in determining levels of EU support. Considering the affective support model first, the odds ratio for *EU representation* is 1.55 (with lower and upper confidence intervals of 1.41 and 1.63 respectively). Thus for a one unit increase in perceptions of EU representation, the odds of an individual feeling at least somewhat European increases by approximately 55%. Further the odds ratio for *national representation* is 1.14 (with lower and upper confidence intervals of 1.06 and 1.21 respectively). Thus for a one unit increase in perceptions of national representation, the odds of an individual feeling at least somewhat European increases by approximately 14%. Moreover, the odds ratio for *national economy* is 1.2 (with lower and upper confidence intervals of 1.16 and 1.24 respectively) meaning that for a one unit increase in a citizen's attitude towards national economic expectations, the odds of holding a sense of EU identity increases by approximately 20%.

These findings, therefore, reveal a number of interesting results. First, they show that perceptions of both the economy and representation have a significant impact in shaping EU identity. Second, they indicate that affective support for the EU is more likely to be driven by respondents' assessments of the capacity of the EU to represent their interests than national level representation. Finally, these results confirm hypothesis 3b by indicating that appraisals of EU level representation have a larger effect on EU identity than economic considerations.

In terms of utilitarian support, the odds ratio for *national economy* is 1.25 (with lower and upper confidence intervals of 1.18 and 1.27 respectively) meaning that for a one unit increase in a citizen's attitude towards national economic expectations, the odds of perceiving that their country benefits from membership increases by approximately 25%. Similarly, for a one unit increase in a respondent's assessment of their household's economic circumstances, the odds of perceiving that their country benefits from EU membership increases by a factor of 1.15 (with lower and upper confidence intervals of 1.11 and 1.2 respectively). Moreover, for a one unit increase in a respondent's perception that the EU represents their interests, the odds of

perceiving that their country benefits from EU membership increases by a factor of 2.31 (with lower and upper confidence intervals of 2.1 and 2.53 respectively).

These findings indicate that perceptions of representation and the economy also have a significant effect on utilitarian support for the EU. However, contrary to hypothesis 3a, economic considerations do not appear to be a stronger predictor of utilitarian support than attitudes to representation. By contrast, *EU representation* appears to have a very strong effect on whether or not a respondent reports their country as having benefited from membership.

Cumulatively, what is surprising about these findings is that the degree to which individuals believe that the EU has the capacity to articulate their interests has a more powerful influence on support attitudes than economic considerations, irrespective of which dimension of support is under analysis. These results thus confirm and extend research on the procedural model of support, which warns against overestimating the value of economic predictors as a key determinate of citizen attitudes towards the EU. That being said, some caution should be taken in interpreting these results since it is plausible that the question wording used in the Eurobarometer dataset may contribute to the strength of these respective relationships. To be clear, both dependent variables and the independent 'representation' variable refer directly to the EU whereas the independent 'economic' predictors do not. Therefore, it is possible that part of the strength of the procedural relationship stems from the question wording, which asks respondents explicitly to make their evaluations based on EU considerations and these responses are then regressed on dependent variables which also directly refer to the EU. By contrast the economic variables do not directly mention the EU. Consequently these results should be interpreted conservatively.

Returning to hypothesis 4, table 2.3 indicates that economic and representation predictors will have interactive effects in shaping support for the EU, at least in terms of utilitarian support. To further test this proposition, I examine predicted probabilities at each level of *EU representation*, allowing the *national economy* predictor to vary and holding all other variables at their mean. Figures 2.2 and 2.3 report the predicted probabilities for both models.

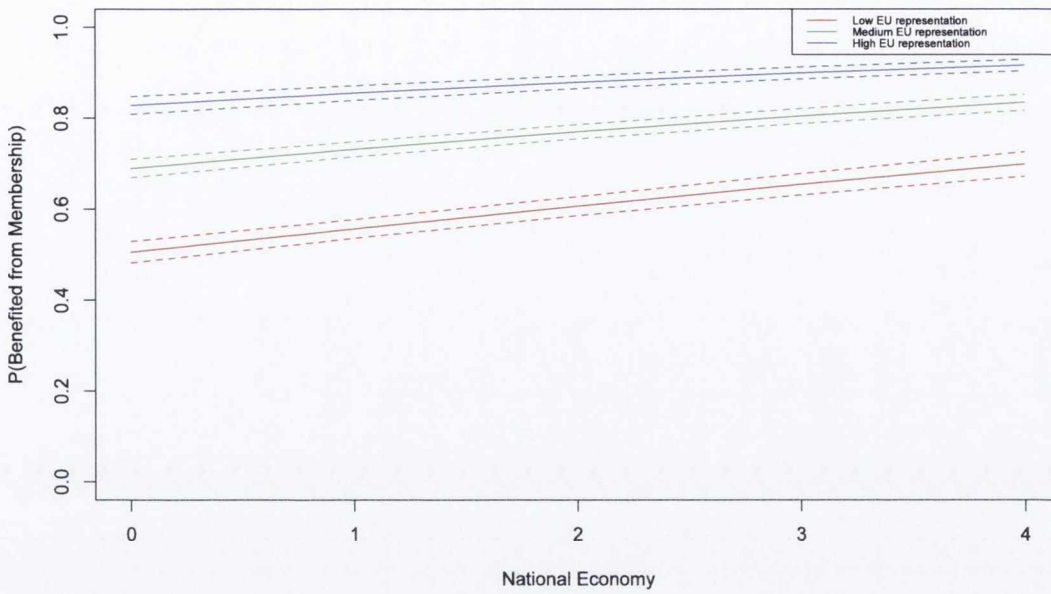


Figure 2.2 Predicted Probabilities of Utilitarian Support (single level logit model).

Note: Probabilities are reported for each level of EU representation varying across values of national economy, all other variables are held at their mean. Dashed lines represent 95% confidence intervals. Probabilities are calculated from results in table 2.3

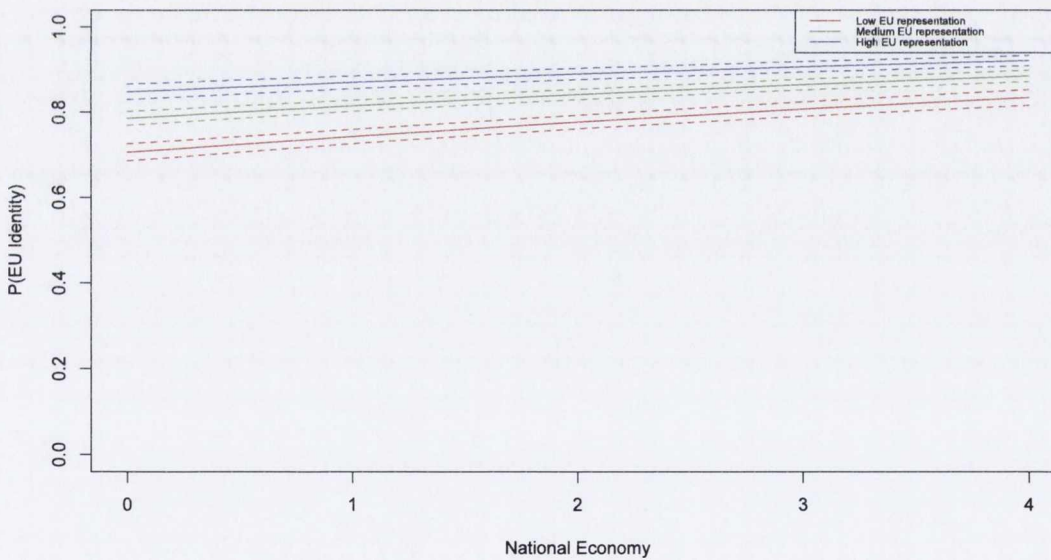


Figure 2.3 Predicted Probabilities of Affective Support (single level logit model).

Note: probabilities are reported for each level of EU representation varying across values of national economy, all other variables are held at their mean. Dashed lines represent 95% confidence intervals. Probabilities are calculated from results in table 2.3

In each case, the figures reflect the expectations of hypotheses 1 and 2 showing that respondents are more likely to support the EU where they believe the system to

represent their interests and where they hold positive expectations towards the economy. The figures also demonstrate that individuals who express high perceptions of EU representation are more likely to continue to support the EU irrespective of their opinions on the national economy.

To illustrate this further, Figure 2.2 shows a probability of 0.49 that individuals who hold low perceptions of representation and low perceptions of the economy will nevertheless feel their country benefits from EU membership. This probability rises to 0.71 where individuals have positive perceptions of the economy, meaning that the probability of expressing utilitarian support where a citizen does not feel represented by the system increases 22% where perceptions of the economy move from negative to positive. However, Figure 2.2 also shows a 0.84 probability of reporting benefiting from membership when perceptions of representation are high but attitudes towards the economy are negative and this rises to a 0.90 probability where economic perceptions are positive. This represents only a 6% increase in utilitarian support where individuals feel that the EU represents their interests.

Figure 2.3 reports similar results, whereby the increase in the probability of an individual reporting feeling at least somewhat European increases by 13% as they move from negative to positive evaluations of the economy when they also express low perceptions of being represented in the EU, but increases by only 6% where they report high perceptions that the EU articulates their interests. These findings indicate that while opinions of both representation and the economy affect citizens' attitudes towards the EU, positive perceptions of representation are a stronger and more durable factor in fostering EU support. By contrast, findings here suggest that citizens who feel they are poorly represented in the EU space are more likely to rely on their perceptions of the economy when evaluating the EU, thus confirming hypothesis 4. It appears then, that individuals do not form judgements about the EU solely on perceptions of its ability to contribute to economic well being, but that attitudes are shaped by perceptions of the EU's capacity to articulate interests and thus deliver benefits in the longer term, if not in the present.

Due to the multi-level governance structure of the EU, a concern with the single level analysis above is that it does not account for potential clustering effects across

countries, which can increase the risk of reporting spurious inferences (Steenbergen and Jones, 2002). To address this concern, table 2.4 reports the results of multi-level logistic regression analysis. In each case I use a two level random slope model that allows the slopes within each country group to vary over the effect of national identity. Although the single level regression (table 2.3) indicated a positive spill-over effect of national identity on EU support, previous research (Hooghe and Marks, 2004) suggests that in some countries national identity is exclusive while in others it is inclusive. Where identity is exclusive, I expect a negative association between strong feelings of nationality and EU support, since here the EU is viewed as a threat to national sovereignty. By contrast, where identity is inclusive, I expect strong feelings of nationality to have a positive effect on EU support, since it is not unusual for individuals to hold multiple identities. The random slopes model captures this variation across countries.

Table 2.4 reports six models, three for each of dimension of support. Models 1 and 4 present the results of individual level predictors; models 2 and 5 add two country level variables; and models 3 and 6 include an interaction term between perceptions of EU representation and the state of the national economy. The fixed effects in each model confirm the results of the single level analysis. Further, the *household economy* variable is significant and in the expected direction in all cases and the sign of the *national representation* variable is reversed in the *benefits from membership* model, providing further support for hypotheses 1 and 2.

Calculating the odds ratios from models 2 and 5 further confirms the results of the single level analysis. For a one unit increase in *EU representation*, *national representation*, *household economy* and *national economy*, the odds of a respondent perceiving that their country benefits from EU membership increases by a factor of 2.02, 1.11, 1.22 and 1.18 respectively. Moreover, for a one unit increase in *EU representation*, *national representation*, *household economy* and *national economy*, the odds of a respondent feeling at least somewhat European increases by a factor of 1.65, 1.11, 1.10 and 1.09 respectively. Therefore, the results confirm hypothesis 3b but not 3a and suggest that perceptions of representation are a more powerful predictor of attitudes towards the EU, irrespective of the dimension of support under study.

Table 2.4 Multi-level Regression Results

Parameter	EU Identity			Benefits from Membership		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
<i>Fixed Effects</i>						
Constant	-1.62 (0.18)	-1.8 (0.47)***	-1.8 (0.47)***	-1.86 (0.23)***	-1.94 (0.6)***	-1.97 (0.6)***
EU representation	0.5 (0.04)***	0.5 (0.03)***	0.52 (0.05)***	0.7 (0.03)***	0.7 (0.04)***	0.77 (0.05)***
National representation	0.1(0.04)**	0.1 (0.04)**	0.11 (0.04)**	0.1 (0.04)**	0.11 (0.04)**	0.11 (0.04)**
Household Economy	0.1 (0.02)***	0.1 (0.02)***	0.1 (0.02)***	0.2 (0.02)***	0.2(0.02)***	0.2(0.02)***
National Economy	0.1 (0.03)***	0.09 (0.02)**	0.09 (0.02)***	0.16 (0.02)***	0.17 (0.02)***	0.19 (0.02)***
National Identity	0.99 (0.1)***	0.99 (0.15)***	0.99 (0.15)***	0.31 (0.13)*	0.29 (0.13)*	0.29 (0.1)*
Trust in Government	0.29 (0.05)***	0.29 (0.05)***	0.29 (0.05)***	0.72 (0.05)***	0.72 (0.05)***	0.72 (0.05)***
Attitudes to Immigrants	0.32 (0.02)***	0.32 (0.02)***	0.32 (0.02)***	0.33 (0.03)***	0.33 (0.03)***	0.33 (0.03)***
Age	-0.01 (0.001)***	-0.01 (0.001)***	-0.01 (0.001)***	-0.01 (0.001)***	-0.01(0.001)***	-0.01(0.001)***
Vote Intention	0.1 (0.01)***	0.1 (0.01)***	0.1 (0.01)***	0.1 (0.01)***	0.1 (0.01)***	0.1 (0.01)***
Knowledge	0.13 (0.02)***	0.13 (0.02)***	0.13 (0.02)***	0.17 (0.02)***	0.17 (0.02)***	0.17 (0.02)***
Net EU transfers (% GNI)		0.08 (0.15)	0.08 (0.16)		0.49 (0.2)*	0.5 (0.2)*
Government Quality		0.02 (0.06)	0.02 (0.06)		-0.03 (0.08)	-0.02 (0.08)
National Economy* EU Representation			-0.01 (0.02)			-0.05 (0.02)*
<i>Variance Components</i>						
Intercept (Country Level)	0.36 (0.6)***	0.35 (0.6)***	0.35 (0.6)***	0.87 (0.93)***	0.85 (0.92)***	0.86 (0.92)***
National Identity	0.32 (0.57)***	0.32 (0.57)***	0.32 (0.57)***	0.14 (0.37)*	0.14 (0.37)*	0.14 (0.37)*
N (country level in parentheses)	15545 (25)	15545 (25)	15545 (25)	14595 (25)	14595 (25)	14595 (25)
AIC	14810	14814	14816	14100	14094	14091
Deviance	14782	14782	14782	14072	14062	14057

Source: Eurobarometer 69.2 ***=p<0.001, **=p<0.01, *=p<0.05

In addition, predicted probabilities for the multi-level models 3 and 6 yield some interesting results. For example, the probability of feeling at least somewhat European when reporting low feelings of being represented by the EU and having poor expectations of the national economy, for a 60 year old non-voter who is opposed to immigration and who holds poor expectations for their household economy is just 0.24 but increases to 0.6 where they report feeling well represented by the EU. By comparison, similar probabilities for a 25 year old voter, who supports immigration and has positive expectations of their household economy, is 0.86 where perceptions of EU representation are low and increases to 0.95 when perceptions of EU representation are high.

Turning to the country level effects, only net fiscal transfers are significant and in the expected direction. The odds ratio for this variable in model 5 is 1.64, showing that for a one-unit increase in net fiscal transfers to the EU, the odds of a respondent reporting that their country has benefited from membership increases by 64%. This finding somewhat supports earlier research (Anderson and Reichart 1996; Karp, Banducci and Bowler, 2003) indicating that where citizens indirectly benefit from EU membership they are more likely to be supportive of the system. However, a more conservative interpretation of these findings is that respondents appear to recognise when their country actually benefits from membership (e.g. through fiscal transfers) and report this understanding accordingly. However, country level benefits do not appear to impact on attitudes towards the EU more broadly as the variable is insignificant for the *EU identity* models.

Finally, the multi-level regression also includes an interaction term between the *national economy* and *EU representation* variables in order to further explore hypothesis 4 and the results confirm the findings of the single level analysis. For both utilitarian and affective support, positive perceptions that the EU represents a respondent's interests decreases the likelihood of supporting the EU due to their perceptions of the national economy. However, this effect is only significant in the case of utilitarian support. Figure 2.4 and table 2.5 report the predicted probabilities of the *benefit from membership* variable, to illustrate this result more clearly.

Table 2.5 Predicted probabilities of Utilitarian Support (multi-level model)

Economic Expectations	Perceptions of Representation		
	<i>Low</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>High</i>
0 = negative	0.54	0.69	0.83
1	0.59	0.73	0.85
2	0.65	0.78	0.86
3	0.69	0.80	0.89
4 = positive	0.75	0.83	0.89

Note: probabilities calculated from results in model 6, table 2.4.

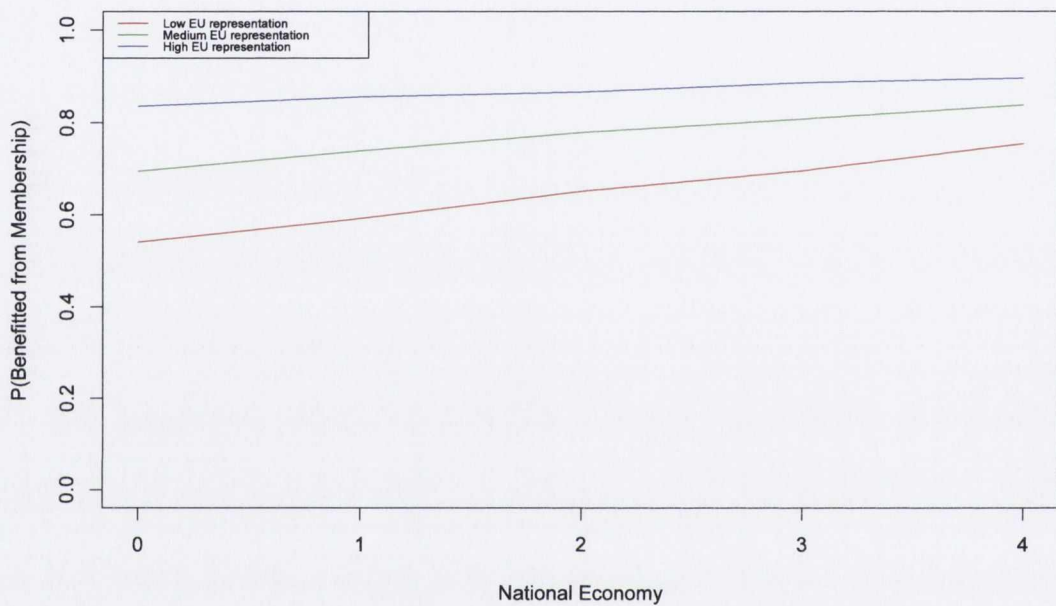


Figure 2.4: Predicted Probabilities of Utilitarian Support (multi-level model).

Note: probabilities calculated from results in model 6, table 2.4.

It shows a probability of 0.54 that an individual who holds a low perception of representation and a low perception of the economy will nevertheless feel their country benefits from EU membership, rising to 0.75 where they report having positive perceptions of the economy. This means that the probability of expressing utilitarian support where a citizen does not feel represented by the system increases 21% where perceptions of the economy move from negative to positive. However, where a respondent feels strongly that the EU represents their interests, the probability of feeling their country benefits from EU membership moves from 0.83 to 0.89 as perceptions of the economy move from negative to positive, which is an increase of

only 6%. This is an interesting result as it confirms that perceptions of representation have a powerful influence in shaping political support for the EU and demonstrate that such perceptions can help maintain support for the system even where economic expectations are poor.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter set out to explore the relative causal power of two alternative theories of political support for the EU – performance and procedure. The analysis confirms the importance of both theories in understanding how citizens shape their preferences towards to the EU. In this respect the chapter confirms and extends the findings of Rohrschneider's (2002) earlier work. While Rohrschneider's analysis focused on a 1994 Eurobarometer survey across 12 member states, the foregoing results show that both the performance and procedure hypotheses hold for updated 2008 data and across 25 member states.

More importantly however, this chapter also offers a number of key innovations that builds on Rohrschneider's earlier paper. First, while individuals clearly rely on their perceptions of the economy to form attitudes towards the system, the belief that the EU represents their interests has an even more powerful effect in fostering feelings of support. Second, I find that the impact of perceptions of representation on political support for the EU is at once simple and complex. While an individual's confidence that their voice counts in the EU is a more powerful predictor of support than their economic expectations, regardless of how support is operationalized, attitudes to representation can also mediate the overall effect of the performance model. Where an individual feels represented they rely less on their understanding of the economy to determine their attitude to the EU. Consequently, this chapter demonstrates that, rather than affecting voter attitudes independently, predictors for both performance and procedural models interact with each other in determining overall support.

This is an important finding because it demonstrates that citizens do not solely focus on the short-term utility of EU institutions but afford legitimacy to the system based on the perceived capacity of the political process to deliver benefits now and in the future. In other words, this chapter reflects Easton's (1975) theory that affective

support is more durable precisely because it allows legitimacy to be maintained even where the system fails to deliver benefits in the short term. Thus it is less important for the EU that the economy functions well today if citizens perceive that the system has the capacity to articulate their interests and thus offer the possibility of deriving benefits in the future.

A third innovation of the chapter was to attempt to conceptually clarify how support is operationalized in the literature and to offer some consideration of how the performance and procedural models may impact on each dimension of support in a differential manner. I expected that attitudes to the economy would be a stronger predictor of utilitarian support and that representation would be more powerful in predicting affective support. The results however did not support the hypotheses and instead indicate that both models perform similarly irrespective of the dimension of support being assessed. This finding is contrary to Boomgaarden et. al (2011) although admittedly their research focused on five support variables whereas the present analysis is restricted to two. However, one promising line of future inquiry may lie with the interaction between variables. As above, the interaction between perceptions of representation and the economy shape individual attitudes towards the EU. However, this result was only significant in the case of utilitarian support. Consequently, future studies may consider not only how performance and procedural models effect different conceptualisations of support for the EU but also how predictors may interact with each other in fostering support.

The findings here thus confirm that representation is indeed important for the on going legitimacy of the EU. This then raises the question of how well citizens are being represented in the EU space, which is the core concern of the dissertation. The next three chapters focus on the substantive representation of citizens' interests to assess how well the EU system functions as an instrument of representation. Chapter 4 considers the issue of agenda congruence and whether or not parties are similar to their voters in the prioritisation of policy issues. Chapter 5 takes a macro level approach and explores whether policy makers respond to changes in public opinion. However, to begin the analysis, the next chapter considers the issue of substantive representation by asking what accounts for variation in voter-party policy congruence and examining where inequalities in representation lie.

Chapter 3

Unequal Representation in the EU:

Analysing Voter-Party Congruence in

European Parliament Elections⁶

This chapter analyses unequal representation in the EU by using a multi-level model to examine voter-party congruence across three policy dimensions in European Parliament (EP) elections. Taking data from the European Election Study and the Chapel Hill expert surveys, I find that congruence is weaker amongst citizens who do not vote in EP elections, who switch party preferences between national and EP elections and who have low political knowledge but find limited evidence that smaller and ideologically extreme parties are more congruent with their support base.

3.1 Introduction

In all but the most minimal theories of representative democracy a core assumption of effective representation is that the spectrum of policy positions in legislative institutions should, to at least some degree, reflect the preferences of the electorate (Pitkin, 1967). Studies of representation in Europe have been largely driven by the responsible party model (Powell, 2004: 284), which holds that citizens have at least weak preferences over policy and vote for parties who best serve (or are perceived to serve) their interests. Thus, parties provide a direct link in the representative process (e.g. Dahl 1989; Easton, 1953; Pitkin, 1967) and evidence of high levels of policy congruence between voters and parties is typically considered to be a litmus test for effective representation in Europe.

In EU scholarship, concerns over the existence of a democratic deficit have generated considerable debate over the capacity of the EU system to represent the preferences of its citizens. Here, several scholars argue that representation in the EU is compromised because, *inter alia*, (a) turnout is consistently lower in EP elections than in national ones, (b) where citizens do vote, they know or care little about the EU and

⁶ A version of this article is published by Routledge in *Representation* 48(1): 2012

so base their vote choice on national rather than EU concerns, (c) voters often use EP elections to signal dissatisfaction with national politics and (d) political parties do not offer a sufficient range of policy choices across 'European' issues (Anderson, 1998; Hix and Follesdal, 2006; Marsh and Hix, 2007; Reif and Schmitt, 1980).

Collectively, these arguments suggest that EP elections fail as instruments of representation because parties, operating in the EP, fail to represent the policy preferences of the people at the EU level and because voters fail to choose parties that best represent their policy interests. Surprisingly, relatively little empirical research has explored how these theoretical explanations may impact on the level of voter-party congruence in EP elections. Much of the existing literature in the EU has focused on identifying mass-elite congruence per se rather than attempting to explain variation in these linkages (e.g. Hooghe, 2003; Schmitt and Thomassen, 1997, 2000). Further, where studies have explored variation in congruence, analysis has been limited to party and country level effects (e.g. Mattila and Raunio, 2006; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2000) with comparatively little attention paid to voter level indicators.

Yet, a study of how individual level predictors affect voter-party congruence is an important contribution to the literature, not least because it may help explain the impact of voting behaviour on congruence, but also because it can illustrate where inequalities in representation of citizens may lie. Consequently, this chapter seeks to address a gap in the literature and explores the question *what explains the variance in policy congruence between parties and their voters in the European Union?* In particular, the analysis focuses on individual and party level determinants and examines whether or not there are inequalities in representation between voters and non-voters and between EU citizens with high and low levels of political knowledge. Building on voting behaviour research, the chapter also considers whether voters who switch parties between national and EU elections are less represented than those who do not. Moreover, the chapter explores the impact parties have on levels of congruence, in particular whether or not party size weakens congruence and whether parties on the ideological extremes are more or less congruent with their support base in EP elections. The remainder of the chapter proceeds as follows. The first section discusses existing findings in the literature on voter-party congruence in the EU and draws upon some of the broader EU research to consider how individual level factors may impact on voter-party congruence in EP elections. The second section sets out

the key research hypotheses and the third section outlines the construction of the dependent and independent variables and considers the research method. The fourth section presents the results of the multi-level model and the concluding discussion summarises the findings.

3.2 Policy Representation in the EU

European research typically relies on the theoretical assumptions of the responsible party model as a benchmark for 'good' representation (APSA, 1950; Powell, 2004: 284). According to the model, representation is effective when parties offer a range of policy choices to voters in competitive elections and voters, having sufficient knowledge of the policy choices offered, vote for parties whose positions best represent their own preferences. European party systems are, moreover, often understood to be dominated by the ideological left-right dimension and that both parties and voters in elections stick to established patterns of competition, reducing the policy space to a left-right heuristic that allows parties to offer clear policy choices and allows voters to map their own policy preferences to the parties they vote for (Kitschelt, 2000: 851).

In the EU however, the policy space is considered to operate across an EU integration dimension in addition to the traditional left-right heuristic (Hix and Lord, 1997; Hooghe and Marks, 2001). The conclusions from the literature are that citizens have quite sophisticated understandings of party positions on left-right issues, but have a far weaker understanding of European positions (Marks and Steenbergen, 2004; Mattila and Raunio, 2006; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2000). Further, studies suggest that there is a lack of discourse between voters and parties on EU issues and that the diversity of voter opinion on the EU is not reflected in the party system (e.g. Mair, 2005; Mattila and Raunio, 2006; Schmidt, 2006: 30-33; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2000; Van der Eijk, Van der Brug and Franklin, 1999). From the perspective of the responsible party model, this indicates that policy congruence is far weaker on EU integration issues than on the left-right dimension, a finding supported by existing empirical research (e.g. Mattila and Raunio, 2006; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2000; Van der Eijk, Van der Brug and Franklin, 1999).

To date, the majority of congruence studies in the EU have focused on identifying the existence of mass-elite linkages across policy dimensions with little attention afforded to the factors influencing degrees of congruence. One exception to this is Mattila and Raunio (2006) who explore variation in voter-party congruence at the party and system levels. Their findings indicate that larger and ideologically centrist parties are less responsive to their support base on EU issues than smaller, more ideologically extreme parties. However, these results say little about what individual level factors cause voter and party preferences to converge across policy dimensions. Yet, the broader research on EU politics offers insights into how some individuals may be less well represented at EP elections than others. For example, a common argument in public opinion literature is that citizens are largely uninformed about politics (e.g. Bartels, 2003; Zaller, 1992) and, in particular, EU politics (e.g. Hix, 2004). For representation to be effective, voters need to have a clear understanding of their own preferences and of the policies offered by parties in order to make an informed vote choice at elections. This suggests that voters with high levels of political knowledge are likely to be better represented by their favoured parties than those with less political awareness.

Research into voting behaviour offers several theoretical concerns about how individual level factors may affect voter-party congruence. For example, in the context of US elections, Griffin and Newman (2005) investigate whether or not political officials might disproportionately respond to voters over non-voters and offer three explanations. First, voters select like-minded representatives in elections. Second, parties are more likely to adapt their positions to voters because voters readily communicate their preferences to representatives. Finally, because representatives ultimately seek re-election, they will care more about representing the views of voters over non-voters. Their results provide evidence for all three explanations and suggest that individuals who vote exhibit higher congruence with political representatives than those who do not.

The EU presents an interesting case as to whether non-voters are less represented since the political space operates across both left-right and EU issues. Studies have noted that turnout is systematically lower in EP elections compared to national ones (e.g. Franklin, 2009; Mattila, 2003) meaning that many citizens who vote at national

elections choose to not do so at the EU level. Recently, some studies have suggested that although turnout is, in part, influenced by the same factors that affect national turnout, EU specific factors also feature. Here, the research finds that participation in EP elections is affected by citizen attitudes to EU integration and shows that lower support for EU integration and membership is associated with lower turnout at elections (Blondel, Sinnott and Svensson, 1997; Mattila, 2003). Moreover, scholars have noted a lack of diversity of opinion between competing parties on EU issues and that major parties in EP elections are typically more pro-EU integration than their support base (e.g. Mattila and Raunio, 2006; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2000; Van der Eijk, Van der Brug and Franklin, 1999). Together, these findings suggest that voters may abstain in EP elections where the political system lacks parties that sufficiently represent their positions over EU issues. Further, if citizens who do turnout to vote are systematically more supportive of the EU, parties may seek to capture this vote by holding more pro-EU positions. Therefore, voter-party congruence over left-right issues may be somewhat unaffected by the decision to vote in EP elections but congruence across the EU dimension may be systematically higher between voters compared to non-voters.

A prominent argument in the literature on voting behaviour argues that due to the second order election hypothesis voters behave differently in EU elections than they do in national ones. Here, scholars note that large parties in EP elections frequently lose votes to smaller ones (Carruba and Timpone, 2005; Marsh and Hix, 2007; Reif and Schmitt, 1980) and there are competing explanations as to why voters may switch party preferences across elections. Marsh and Hix (2007) for example, find little evidence that citizens in EU elections vote with the 'heart' rather than with the 'head' by choosing parties less relevant to government formation but closer to their own policy preferences. Instead, their findings suggest that citizens who switch preferences do so strategically and use these elections to voice dissatisfaction with the parties they normally support by voting for smaller parties that may be more ideologically distant from their own positions (e.g. Marsh and Hix, 2007). Other scholars, however, argue that Europe is becoming more important and that both EU issues and national level concerns feature in voters' decisions to switch parties between elections (Hobolt, Spoon and Tilley, 2009; Karp, Banducci and Bowler, 2003; Rorschneider and Clark, 2009). Thus, citizens may hold different preferences

for policy at varying governance levels, such that citizens vote away from the party they normally support if that party does not satisfy their preferences over EU issues (Carrubba and Timpone, 2005). The consequence of either explanation, however, is that vote switching may weaken the representation across dimensions. On the one hand, voter-party congruence on left-right issues may be significantly lower if voters switch parties to ‘punish’ those they vote for in national elections, but relatively unrelated to EU concerns. On the other hand, voters who switch towards parties who represent their interests on the EU dimension may find themselves less represented on left-right issues.

The findings outlined here suggest there are several individual and party level factors affecting the degree to which citizens are represented in EP elections. However, few previous studies have gone beyond descriptive analysis to explore the factors influencing variation in mass-elite linkages. Therefore, this study constitutes an attempt to build on previous research and to explore the predictors explaining variation in voter-party congruence at individual and party levels and to offer an insight into where potential inequalities of representation may lie between EU citizens.

3.3 Research Hypotheses

As the goal of this chapter is to explore the individual and party level factors that cause variation in voter-party congruence in the EU, the first step in this analysis is to identify the political dimensions across which congruence will be measured. Traditionally, EU congruence research has measured representation across the ideological left-right and EU integration dimensions. Recent research however, suggests that voter preferences are no longer dominated by a single left-right dimension but are split according to both a socio-economic and a socio-cultural dimension (Kriesi et. al., 2006; Rydgren, 2007; Van der Brug and Van Spanje, 2009). The socio-economic dimension refers to the preferred degree of state intervention in the economy. The socio-cultural dimension refers to issues relating to law and order, immigration policy and social lifestyle. Further, recent survey research has highlighted a difficulty in relying on respondents’ self-placements on left-right scales, indicating that they suffer from a lack of perceptual agreement on the substantive

meaning of left-right (e.g. Benoit and Laver, 2007; McElroy and Kritzing, 2010) and that citizens who struggle to place themselves on the scale tend to place themselves on the middle rather than telling the interviewer they ‘don’t know’ (Lutz et al, 2010). This outcome can be demonstrated by looking at overall responses to the left-right question from the European Election Studies voter survey 2009 (EES) (figure 3.1).

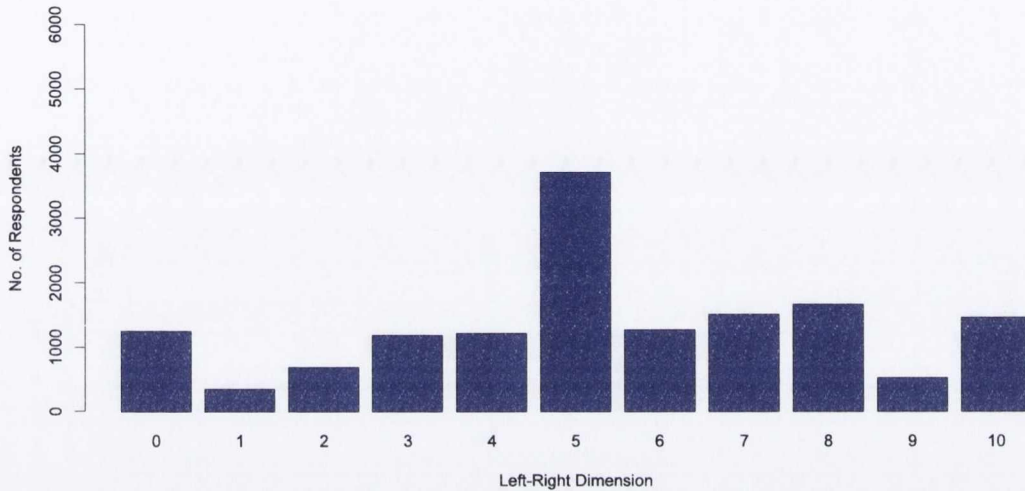


Figure 3.1 Respondents’ scores on the left-right dimension in European Election Study 2009 voter survey.

Respondents were asked their own position on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 = left and 10 = right. 26.14% of respondents placed themselves as a five on a 0-10 scale and a further 9.42% said they ‘don’t know’. Thus, even if the left-right scale comprises a convenient heuristic for citizens to place themselves within the policy space (Kitschelt, 1994) how voters respond to self-placement questions in EU surveys remains problematic and therefore it may be more appropriate to explore voter-party congruence across specific policy dimensions. While it is plausible that citizens may have similar centrist tendencies on alternative policy scales, asking citizens their position on real issues may reduce the problem (Lutz et al, 2010). Therefore, the present study follows Lefkofridi and Casado-Asensio (2013) and examines the factors impacting on levels of voter-party congruence across three dimensions, namely, the socio-economic, socio-cultural and EU integration dimensions respectively.

The hypotheses build on previous scholarship and focus on individual and party level factors that impact on the degree of congruence across dimensions. Three hypotheses relate to the individual level. First, as noted earlier, findings in the EU indicate that voter turnout is negatively affected by low support for EU integration and that the political space fails to offer a sufficient range of clear policy choices on EU issues with larger parties being typically more pro-EU than their supporters. This may lead to a larger gap between parties' positions on EU issues and the preferences of their support base who abstain in EP elections than between the preferences of their support base who turnout to vote. Therefore, I expect that

Hypothesis 1: voter-party congruence will be higher amongst citizens who vote in EP elections on the EU integration dimension compared with citizens who abstain from voting.

However, I expect that there will be little or no significant effect of voting in EP elections on congruence across socio-cultural and socio-economic dimensions.

Second, as discussed earlier, the 'punishment' model of vote switching in the EU suggests that citizens often vote away from parties they typically support in national elections in order to voice political dissatisfaction and thus are not voting on the basis of policy choice. In other words, assuming that citizens vote spatially at the national level, those voters who choose a different party at the EU level in order to signal dissatisfaction with government performance are unlikely to be motivated to vote for a particular party based on their perceived congruence over policy issues. Instead, they are likely to choose smaller parties that most effectively 'punish' national level decision makers, but this decision will have little to do with ideological proximity over policy. By contrast, those who maintain their preference for the same party in both national and EU elections are unlikely to be motivated by punishment/protest considerations. Thus one might expect that switching vote choice between elections therefore increases the distance between voters own policy preferences and the positions of the parties they vote for in the EP. In particular, I expect that this effect will occur on socio-economic and socio-cultural dimensions because voters and parties are expected to focus on evaluations of traditional left-right ideological issues rather than the EU integration dimension. Further, given that previous research

suggests that voters tend to be incongruent with their preferred parties on the EU integration dimension (Mattila and Raunio, 2006) I expect any effect of vote switching on this dimension to be diminished or non-existent. Consequently I expect that

Hypothesis 2: voter-party congruence on the socio-economic and socio-cultural dimensions will be lower where voters switch parties between national and EP elections.

Finally, it is suggested that citizens with a higher level of political knowledge have a clearer understanding of the policy choices on offer and are thus better able to vote for parties with proximate policy preferences. Therefore, I expect that

Hypothesis 3: voter-party congruence will be higher on all policy dimensions where citizens have high levels of political knowledge.

The analysis also considers two party level hypotheses. As the present study assumes that parties engage in vote seeking behaviour, I expect party size to have an impact on voter-party congruence. Larger parties typically seek to capture a broader support base in competitive elections (Mattila and Raunio, 2006) and consequently voters for large parties are likely to be more ideologically heterogeneous than niche parties with a smaller support base. Therefore I expect that

Hypothesis 4: The level of voter-party congruence across policy dimensions decreases with party size.

Similarly, Mattila and Raunio (2006: 435) hypothesise that ideologically more extreme parties are more representative of their supporters than centrist parties as they have clearer policy profiles. However, recent research examining the success of far left and right parties in EP elections offers a more nuanced argument as to how these parties derive their support base (e.g. Lefkofridi and Casado-Asensio, 2013; van der Brug and Fennema, 2009). As studies indicate that voters who switch parties do so in order to protest against the parties they typically support, there may be some drift of voters from centrist parties towards more extreme parties in EP elections. Here one

might expect far left and right parties to be fairly unrepresentative of their support base. Moreover, in a study of 19 ideologically radical parties, Lefkofridi and Casado-Asensio (2013) find that congruence between these parties and their supporters varies across dimensions of conflict. By emphasising concern over immigration issues, studies also indicate that far right parties capture voters who feel threatened by rapid social change (e.g. Lubbers, Gijsberts and Scheepers, 2002; Rydgren, 2007). Consequently, I expect that

Hypothesis 5a: Levels of voter-party congruence on socio-cultural issues will be higher for parties that are to the far right of the socio-cultural dimension.

Similarly, parties on the far left are considered to be so in the socio-economic sense, being critical of neo-liberalist policies and therefore I expect that

Hypothesis 5b: Levels of voter-party congruence on socio-economic issues will be higher between parties that are to the far left of the socio-economic dimension.

Finally, van der Brug and van Spanje (2009) find evidence for the emergence of voters who hold left wing positions on economic issues but right wing positions on cultural issues. They argue that the preferences of these voters are not fully represented by parties in the political system, as parties continue to take a single left or right position on both dimensions so that voters must choose parties based on the policy dimension most salient to them. Therefore, I expect that

Hypothesis 5c: levels of voter-party congruence will be lower on socio-economic issues for parties that are to the far right of the socio-economic dimension and lower on socio-cultural issues for parties on the far left of socio-cultural dimension.

3.4 Data and Method

Data for the analysis is taken from the European Election Study 2009 voter survey and the Chapel Hill 2006 expert survey (Hooghe et. al, 2010)⁷. Both of these datasets

⁷ The European Election Study 2009 also included an elite survey, which has been utilised in later chapters of this dissertation. At the time of writing the current chapter however, the full release of the

are useful to the present analysis as they contain several questions relating to political preferences on a range of policy issues beyond the broad based left-right heuristic. The Chapel Hill dataset contains information for 24 EU member states but information for Malta, Luxembourg and Cyprus was not available and therefore these member states are excluded from the analysis. Further, since Bulgaria and Romania were not members of the EU when the Chapel Hill survey was conducted in 2006, I exclude them from the analysis leaving a sample of 22 countries.

There are many ways to measure voter-party congruence but for the present analysis I focus on three measures. The first measure, called 'bias', measures the difference between voter preferences and the positions of the parties they vote for and gives an indication of whether respondents are more or less conservative than parties across dimensions. The second measure 'distance' measures the absolute distance between voter and party positions and taps into how far away parties and citizens are from each other, whereby higher values mean lower policy congruence. Finally, as lower values of 'distance' indicate higher congruence, the 'congruence' measure is the 'distance' variable multiplied by -1 as follows:

$$\text{Congruence} = -|C_i - P_{ji}|$$

where C_i is the citizen preference and P_{ji} the policy position of the party they voted for. As the variable increases from negative values towards 0, congruence increases.

The policy positions of voters and parties are constructed from comparable items in both the EES and Chapel Hill surveys and several items relating to the three policy dimensions are selected to calculate multi-item index scores (for a detailed list of questions see Appendix B). Economic items include attitudes to state intervention in the economy, the provision of public services and redistribution. Cultural items

elite survey was unavailable and consequently the Chapel Hill expert survey was relied upon. In any case, the subsequent release of the EES 2009 elite survey proved unsuitable to the present analysis. The multi-level analysis used in the present chapter requires a larger number of country level observations for effective analysis than were readily available in the EES elite dataset, due to low response rates (in several countries, the response rate was less than 20%). Consequently, in order to maximize the country level N to ensure the robustness of the findings I proceeded with the Chapel Hill dataset.

include attitudes to multi-culturalism, immigration flows and same-sex marriage. EU integration items are attitudes to membership, further unification and enlargement. Creating an index measure of political preferences helps to solve the problem that any one question might tap into question specific considerations. Questions that elicit information about preferences on underlying policy dimensions will be related to one another and an index of these measures should tap into a common source of variance, eliminating large amounts of measurement error to reveal underlying issue preferences (Ansolabehere, Rodden and Snyder, 2008; Gabel, 2003).

The items used to construct the congruence scores were tested using principal component analysis⁸ to confirm the underlying latent structure of the variables. For both the EES and Chapel Hill data, only the eigenvalues for three components were greater than one and a scree test confirmed that three components were meaningful. In the Chapel Hill data, the items loaded onto the three components as expected and the cumulative variance accounted for by these components was 84%. The items in the EES data, loaded similarly and the cumulative variance accounted for by these components was 53%. Further, although differences in the wording and scaling of items across surveys can reduce the accuracy of congruence measurements if respondents interpret questions across surveys differently, the cronbach's alpha for the socio-economic, socio-cultural and EU integration items were 0.8, 0.8 and 0.86 respectively, confirming the internal consistency of the items used to construct the index scores.

Having confirmed the underlying structure of the variables, policy positions were measured as the sum of the responses to the items in each policy area which were then recoded to give three index measures such that 1 equals economic socialism, cultural liberalism and anti-EU preferences and 5 equals economic liberalism, cultural conservatism and pro-EU preferences. Finally the congruence indicator was then constructed so that 0= complete congruence and -4= complete incongruence.

The independent variables for the individual level derive from the EES dataset. For *hypothesis 1*, *voted EU election* is a dummy variable where 1 = respondents who

⁸ The principal axis method was used followed by a varimax (orthogonal) rotation.

reported voting in the election⁹. While I acknowledge that results from the EES survey indicate significant over-reporting on the vote variable with over 70% of respondents claiming to have voted but with actual turnout across the EU being 43%, it is nevertheless the most direct indicator of voting at the individual level. For *hypothesis 2*, *switched party* is a dummy variable where 1 = respondents who switched party preferences between elections¹⁰. Finally, for *hypothesis 3*, *knowledge* is an additive index measuring the number of correct answers given by respondents to a set of 7 questions about politics included in the EES.

For the party level *hypothesis 4*, *party size* is the share of a party's vote measured as a proportion of the number of votes received in EP 2009 election. *Hypothesis 5* is tested with four dummy variables. *Culture left* and *culture right* are constructed from Chapel Hill expert placements of parties from zero to ten on a socio-cultural left-right scale, whereby 1 = parties that scored between zero and two for *culture left* and between eight and ten for *culture right*. *Economic left* and *economic right* were constructed in a similar manner from expert placements of parties on a socio-economic left-right scale.

The present study employs a multi-level model to test the hypotheses and the results of this analysis are discussed in the next section.

3.5 Results and Discussion

Figure 3.2 shows the distribution of voter responses across the three policy dimensions. The distributions indicate variation across each of the three dimensions and suggest that voters do hold distinct preferences over policy.

Table 3.1 shows average congruence positions across policy dimensions on the 22 member states. The findings show an average distance of slightly over 1 for each policy dimension and although the EU dimension does show weaker congruence than

⁹ The nature of the congruence analysis here means I only use data from respondents who reported a preference for a party whether or not they voted. However, in the full EES dataset 67.35% of those who stated they did not vote nevertheless expressed a preference for a party.

¹⁰ 70.63% of respondents reported supporting the same party in both elections while 29.37% reported switching parties.

on cultural and economic issues, the effect is small. The negative bias values on the EU dimension confirm that parties are, on average, more favourable towards integration than their supporters (e.g. Mattila and Raunio, 2006; Van der Eijk, Van der Brug and Franklin, 1999).

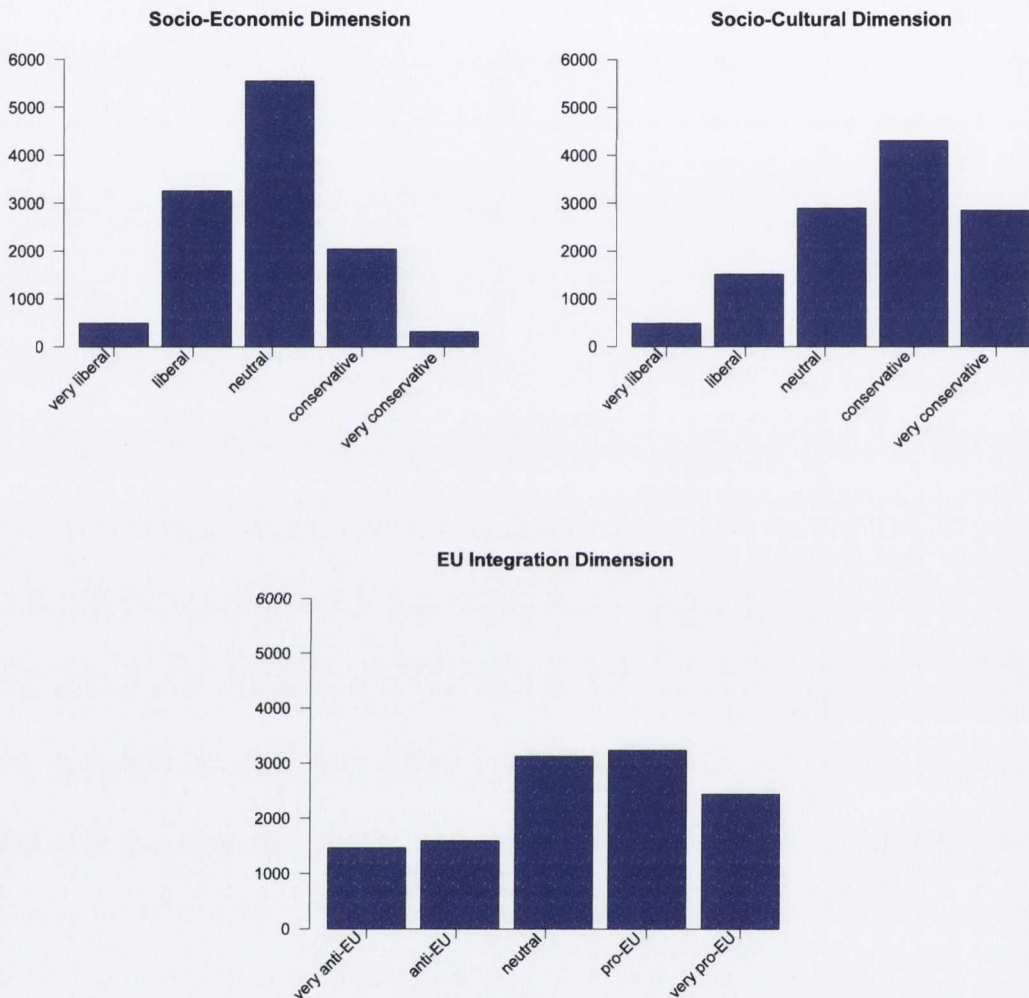


Figure 3.2 Distributions of voter policy positions on three policy dimensions.

Source: *European Election Study Voter Survey 2009*

Interestingly, the negative values on the economic dimension suggest voters are slightly more liberal than parties and the positive values on the cultural dimension suggest voters are, on average, more conservative than the parties they support.

Table 3.1: Opinion Congruence between Voters and Parties

Country	<i>Economic</i>		<i>Culture</i>		<i>EU Integration</i>	
	Distance	Bias	Distance	Bias	Distance	Bias
Austria	1.32	-0.35	1.41	0.20	1.51	-0.34
Belgium	0.93	0.12	1.48	0.85	1.47	-1.00
Czech Republic	1.57	0.12	1.00	0.82	1.39	-0.41
Denmark	0.95	0.3	1.40	-0.19	1.23	0.22
Estonia	1.29	-0.02	1.12	0.93	1.35	-0.64
Finland	0.93	0.09	1.24	0.85	1.33	-0.72
France	1.11	-0.05	1.45	0.50	1.19	-0.45
Germany	1.11	0.06	1.25	0.30	1.19	-0.31
Greece	1.18	-0.21	1.54	1.03	1.69	-0.53
Hungary	0.78	-0.69	0.87	0.67	1.18	-0.34
Ireland	1.11	-0.34	1.15	0.81	1.17	-0.88
Italy	1.52	-0.76	1.26	0.61	1.43	-0.44
Latvia	1.20	-0.67	1.39	0.61	1.63	-1.29
Lithuania	0.94	-0.68	1.22	1.01	1.06	-0.58
Netherlands	1.09	-0.22	1.13	0.09	1.33	0.09
Poland	1.52	-0.80	1.69	1.02	1.13	-0.49
Portugal	1.15	-0.11	1.16	0.63	1.55	-1.15
Slovakia	1.19	-0.39	1.10	0.64	1.03	-0.26
Slovenia	0.99	-0.47	1.35	0.88	1.35	-1.14
Spain	1.04	-0.19	1.15	0.71	0.93	-0.59
Sweden	1.19	0.02	1.12	-0.21	1.56	-1.29
UK	1.00	-0.34	1.29	0.49	1.52	-0.79
EU	1.13	-0.24	1.27	0.55	1.34	-0.54

N=13204

Note: Bias values are the difference between voter and party policy preference scores on each policy dimension constructed from EES 2009 and Chapel Hill 2006 survey data and distance values are the absolute distance between voter and party policy preference scores on each policy dimension.

The results of the empty model in table 3.2, show estimates for the variance components over three levels for each of the ideological dimensions¹¹. The results reach levels of significance in every case except for the country level across the cultural dimension. To obtain a better sense of the explanatory power of each level, I consider the ratio of variance in each level to the total variance (Bryk and

¹¹ In the multi-level analysis shown in both tables 3.2 and 3.3 a considerable number of individual level observations are lost due to list-wise deletion. This could be a potential problem for the analysis since a) the statistical power of the data may be reduced with a smaller sample size and b) findings may be biased if missing values are the result of non-random effects. With respect to a) the list-wise deletion in the sample still leaves approximately 11,000 observations at the individual level, which is a sufficiently high sample size to conduct the statistical tests. With respect to b) I subsequently re-tested the models using multiple imputations to treat the data (with the 'Amelia' package in R), which attempts to eliminate any potential bias. However, results were substantially similar to those shown here in table 3.2 and 3.3.

Raudenbush, 1992). The individual level accounts for the majority of the variance. 63.4%, 63.5% and 81.7% of the observed variance on the economic, cultural and EU integration variables respectively is attributable to the individual level. 33.7%, 36.5% and 16.8.1% of the variance respectively is attributable to the party level and finally, 2%, 0% and 1.5% of the variance respectively is attributable to the country level. Therefore, the majority of the variance remains accounted for at the individual and party levels and as variance on all three levels are significant, this confirms the underlying multi-level structure of the data.

Table 3.2 ANOVA Results

Parameter	<i>Model 1: Economic</i>		<i>Model 2: Culture</i>		<i>Model 3: EU Integration</i>	
	Estimate	S.E	Estimate	S.E	Estimate	S.E
<i>Fixed Effects</i>						
Constant	-1.13***	0.05	-1.36***	0.06	-1.42***	0.05
<i>Variance Components</i>						
Country-Level	0.02***	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.02*	0.13
Party-Level	0.28***	0.53	0.38***	0.61	0.22***	0.47
Individual-Level	0.53***	0.73	0.66***	0.81	1.07***	1.03
Log Likelihood	-12240		-14036		-16354	

Note: Entries are Maximum Likelihood estimates with standard errors presented in the second column, Model 1: N=10,894, Party-level groups = 142, Country-level groups =22, Model 2: =11,334, Party-level groups = 142, Country-level groups =22, Model 3: =11,135 Party-level groups = 143, Country-level groups =22 ***=p<0.01, **=p<0.05, *=p<0.10

Source: European Election Study 2009 and Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2006

Turning to the full models in table 3.3, model 3 shows positive and significant results for citizens who voted in the EU election on the EU integration dimension, confirming *hypothesis 1*. Further, whether or not a citizen voted has no effect on congruence on the economic dimension but, surprisingly and contrary to expectations, a negative effect on congruence on the cultural dimension. The models also show that switching between parties has a negative impact on congruence across socio-cultural and socio-economic dimensions, confirming *hypothesis 2*, although the magnitude of these effects are smaller than for *hypothesis 1*. The knowledge variable yields an interesting result and is significant only for the EU integration dimension. This suggests that citizens with greater political knowledge are more congruent with parties on EU integration issues than those with less knowledge, but that citizens with knowledge have no discernible representation advantage on the cultural or economic dimensions, providing only partial support for *hypothesis 3*.

The models also show partial support for the party level hypotheses. First, party size does not support *hypothesis 4* and while the results are significant across the cultural and EU integration dimensions they are in the opposite direction than expected. Larger parties appear to be associated with higher congruence here.

Table 3.3 Multilevel Analysis of Congruence

Parameter	<i>Model 1: Economic</i>		<i>Model 2: Culture</i>		<i>Model 3: EU Integration</i>	
	Multilevel Estimate	S.E	Multilevel Estimate	S.E	Multilevel Estimate	S.E
<i>Fixed Effects</i>						
Constant	-0.8***	0.07	-1.32***	0.08	-1.68***	0.09
Voted EU election	-0.01	0.02	-0.04**	0.02	0.08***	0.02
Switched Party	-0.03*	0.02	-0.04**	0.01	-0.02	0.02
Knowledge	-0.01	0.004	0.01	0.004	0.01***	0.01
Economic left	-0.65***	0.08			0.29***	0.1
Economic right	-0.75***	0.09			0.01*	0.11
Cultural Left			-0.85***	0.11	-0.078	0.11
Cultural Right			0.19***	0.09	-0.14	0.1
Party Size	0.004	0.004	0.01*	0.003	0.01***	0.004
<i>Variance Components</i>						
Country-Level	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Party-Level	0.17***	0.41	0.21***	0.45	0.22***	0.46
Individual-Level	0.52**	0.72	0.67***	0.81	1.06***	1.03
N	10881		11330		11121	
Log Likelihood	-12177		-13975		-16319	

Note: Entries are Maximum Likelihood estimates with standard errors presented in the second column, Model 1: N=10,881, Party-level groups = 138, Country-level groups =22, Model 2: =11,330, Party-level groups = 138, Country-level groups =22, Model 3: =11,121, Party-level groups = 138, Country-level groups =22 ***=p<0.01, **=p<0.05, *=p<0.10

Source: *European Election Study 2009 and Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2006*

Hypothesis 5a is supported by the results and shows that parties to the far right of the cultural dimension are closer to their supporters on that dimension. However, *hypothesis 5b* is not similarly supported and the evidence here suggests that parties on the far left of the economic dimension are relatively incongruent with their support base on that dimension. Interestingly, parties on the economic left appear more congruent with their support base on EU integration. Finally, the models indicate support for *hypothesis 5c* and show that parties on the economic far right are relatively incongruent with their support base on economic issues and similarly parties on the cultural far left are unrepresentative of their voters positions on the

cultural dimension.

3.6 Conclusion

What conclusions can be drawn from this analysis? The overall results suggest that voter-party congruence in the EU space is moderate at best, that congruence levels are only slightly weaker on the EU integration dimension than on socio-economic and socio-cultural issues but that these results vary across member states. The analysis also shows that even though respondents may have difficulty placing themselves on left-right scales in surveys, they are able to express clear policy positions across more specific policy dimensions.

In terms of the multi-level analysis, the results indicate an inequality of representation of EU policy positions between voters and non-voters in EP elections where citizens who abstain from voting are less congruent on EU issues with the parties they typically support. It may be that Euro-sceptic voters abstain due to lack of policy choice or that citizens who engage in the EP electoral process are generally more supportive of integration and thus find the major parties representing their own positions. Nevertheless, the results clearly show that, on EU issues, non-voters are less well represented by the parties they favour. Moreover, the results suggest that voters who switch parties between national and EP elections are less congruent with the parties they vote for than voters who vote for the same party in both elections. Interestingly this finding only holds for the economic and cultural dimensions and party switchers are no less represented on the EU dimension than those who vote for the same party across elections. While future research may look more closely into how these voters transfer preferences between parties, the present study provides support for the second order election hypothesis and indicate that vote switchers do so to punish the parties they typically support. The consequence of this however, seems to be that voters who use these elections to signal dissatisfaction are at risk of being less represented in the EU space.

The findings also indicate that voters with more political knowledge are advantaged in EU elections but only on the EU dimension where they are more congruent with parties they vote for. In part, this finding may be explained by public opinion

research that suggests that voters' understanding of parties and policy choice is built in an online manner. Here, citizens update their evaluations of political objects based on new information such that citizen attitudes become a 'running tally' that builds on each new piece of information they receive, understand and accept. However, after updating their evaluations the information leading to such updating may be forgotten, leaving a generalised affective orientation towards the object (e.g. Bartels, 2003; Caldeira and Gibson, 1995; Lodge, McGraw and Stroh, 1989). Therefore, as the left-right heuristic remains dominant in the EU space, voters may have a greater ability to accurately locate like-minded parties on economic and cultural scales, even where they lack specific information about EU politics. However, as the EU integration dimension is further removed from traditional patterns of competition, citizens with greater political knowledge are better able to locate parties on this dimension than those who lack awareness and are therefore likely to be better represented.

Previous studies suggest that parties on the ideological extremes are more congruent with their supporters in EU elections as they have clearer policy profiles. The present analysis however, offers a more nuanced argument and shows that while far right parties are close to their supporters on the socio-cultural dimension, they are fairly unrepresentative of their voters on socio-economic and EU dimensions. This finding confirms and extends previous work by Lefkofridi and Casado-Asensio (2013) who show that congruence between radical parties and their supporters varies across dimensions of conflict and that, compared to the socioeconomic and EU dimensions, radical right parties score highest on the sociocultural dimension. Furthermore, recent research by van der Brug and van Spanje (2009) notes that there is a category of voters that hold far right positions on cultural issues but hold far left positions on the economic dimension. These voters, they argue, are underrepresented in the political space as ideologically extreme parties continue to align themselves across a single left-right dimension, which requires voters to support parties based on the ideological issues most salient to them. However, this results in weak congruence across other dimensions. The results of the present study indicate that far right parties are capturing the preferences of voters predominantly across the socio-cultural dimension but are relatively unrepresentative of supporters across other dimensions, which provides support for van der Brug and van Spanje's argument.

The results also show that far left-wing parties are unrepresentative of their supporters on both the economic and cultural dimensions but that they are highly congruent with their voters on the EU dimension. One possible explanation for this is that parties on the ideological extremes often hold Euro-sceptic positions on EU integration and such opposition on the far-left is driven by an incompatibility between the economic goals of the EU and the economic ideology of these parties (Hooghe, Marks and Wilson, 2002). While it is beyond the scope of this analysis to test the assertion, future research may examine whether far-left parties are acquiring a support base driven by Euro-sceptic sentiments such that these parties are close to their supporters on European integration but not on socio-economic and cultural issues.

Finally, the conclusions drawn by this chapter indicate that there may be groups of citizens whose preferences are better represented by their parties in some areas (e.g. the economy) compared to others (e.g. socio-cultural policies). This raises the question of whether or not voters are well represented by the parties they support on the policies that are salient to them. In the next chapter, I will consider this issue of priority congruence, and ask if parties and their supporters share in the prioritisation of policy issues.

Chapter 4

Attending to the Issues: Analysing the Link between Opinion Congruence and Priority Congruence in the EU

Ordinarily, studies of political representation explore the degree to which policy-makers' ideological positions correspond with those of their voters, arguing that closer opinion congruence is evidence of 'good' representation. However, little explicit attention is given to whether or not policy-makers and the public prioritise the same the issues. Yet such priority congruence is an important element of representation since policymakers who emphasise different issues to those that their voters consider important cannot be said to be fully representative. This chapter addresses this issue and considers how opinion congruence and priority congruence interact to create a fuller picture of political representation in the EU. Using data from the European Election Study and European Candidate Study 2009, I compare the policy positions and issue priorities of voters and parties in 14 EU member states and find that while parties tend to be somewhat congruent with their voters across issues, they demonstrate considerable variation in priority congruence. Furthermore, European party groups demonstrate closer priority congruence with voters than do national level parties. Finally, I also find that radical right parties are highly representative of the immigration and multiculturalism policy preferences of those voters who prioritise 'civil liberties' issues.

4.1 Introduction

According to democratic theory, the effectiveness of electoral representation depends upon the convergence of the policy preferences of the majority of voters and the policy outcomes produced by government (Pitkin, 1967, Dahl, 1989). From this starting point, studies of representation have typically focused on positional policy congruence (or opinion congruence) as a measure of 'good' representation, exploring ideological proximity between political representatives and their voters across policy issues (e.g. Costello, Thomassen and Rosema, 2012; Erikson, Mackuen and Stimson, 2002; Lefkofridi and Casado-Asensio, 2011; Mattila and Raunio, 2006; Miller and Stokes, 1963; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2000, Van der Eijk, Van der Brug and Franklin, 1999; Walczak and van der Brug, 2013).

Here the argument is that political representatives must first demonstrate shared ideological positions with their voters and then pursue these policy preferences through their actions in the legislative process.

This line of reasoning implicitly assumes that both voters and policy makers attend to all issue areas equally at each stage of the decision-making process. However, the multitude of issues that exist in the political space means that both citizens and representatives can focus only on a subset of policy concerns at any one time. Thus, if effective representation requires policymakers to share preferences over policy with the public, then, consequently, representation is as much about congruence of political priorities as it is about congruence of positions. Policymakers cannot take effective political action over the policies preferred by citizens unless their attention is first directed towards the issues that citizens believe to be important. The goal of this chapter is to examine how such priority congruence interacts with opinion congruence to create a fuller picture of political representation in the EU.

Here I argue that priority congruence is a necessary (although not sufficient) condition for effective representation between citizens and legislative actors. However, in the literature to date, studies have typically focused on how voters or representatives view different issues as salient rather than on the congruence of priorities explicitly. Studies have found, for example, that citizens will only hold meaningful preferences over issues that are important to them (Franklin and Wlezien, 1997; Stimson, 1991; Wlezien, 1995; Zaller, 1992) but will hold stronger, clearer positions on those areas of importance. Thus, opinion congruence will be stronger over salient issues and weaker over non-salient ones. Yet studies of public salience highlight only one half of the representation picture since improved opinion congruence means little if issues that are of salience to voters are not equally valued and attended to by political representatives.

By contrast, studies of how political representatives prioritise policy issues tend to focus on the legislative rather than the electoral process, considering how interest groups, media outlets, veto players and the sheer volume and complexity of issues pressing on legislators in the policymaking space, all impact on how the agenda is set (e.g. Greenwood, 2003; Jones and Baumgartner, 2004; Princen, 2007). Further, these

studies imply that due to informational and organisational asymmetries, policy-makers may be able to prioritise a larger number of issues than the public at any one time and that varying capacities to hold issues as being important may act as a constraint on representational behaviour (Jones and Baumgartner, 2004, 15).

Of the few studies that directly examine ‘agenda’ congruence, research has concentrated on the US (e.g. Jones, Larsen-Price and Wilerson, 2009; Jones and Baumgartner, 2004) and yet the issue of priority congruence is also important for the study of representation in the EU. To illustrate this point, a common argument in the EU literature is that EP elections are second order (Reif and Schmitt, 1980; Marsh and Hix, 2007) and that voters fail to deliberate meaningfully over party choices as they have little knowledge of or care too little about ‘European’ policy issues. Thus, when voters express opinions about the issues that they prioritise, national level concerns rather than European ones may drive these priorities. By contrast, MEPs are likely to prioritise issues over which they can have a direct impact, namely issues that are addressed in the EU space, which may differ from those issues highlighted by their voters. In the absence of clear priority congruence between issues the effectiveness of positional representation is diminished since, even if voters and parties share preferences over policy issues, representatives are unlikely to take action over the issues that voters consider important. This leads to the central question of this chapter, which asks, *do the policy priorities of the public in the EU correspond with the priorities of the parties they vote for in EP elections?*

The chapter does not argue that priority congruence takes precedence over positional representation but instead seeks to add a new piece to the puzzle by exploring how well parties in the EU represent their voters in terms of both issue preferences *and* the policies they prioritise. Taken together, for example, weak priority congruence could help explain why citizens may feel distant from the EU even where positional representation is high if MEPs fail to champion the issues that their supporters consider important. The remainder of the chapter proceeds as follows. Sections 4.2 and 4.3 outline the literature on opinion congruence and the role of salience on representation in the EU. Section 4.4 develops a model of congruence that takes account of both issue preferences and policy priorities before outlining the key hypotheses. Section 4.5 outlines the data and method for constructing the congruence

scores across the dimensions of analysis. Thereafter I discuss the main findings in section 4.6 and section 4.7 concludes.

4.2 Issues, Saliency and Political Representation

Given that not all policy issues are equally valued all of the time, a 'preference' over any given policy area comprises two interrelated components, namely the position on an ideological spectrum that the individual holds over the issue in question and the importance that the individual attaches to having that ideological position realised as a policy outcome. Therefore, representation requires that political actors hold policy positions that are close to their voters but also requires that they prioritise the same set of issues that their voters consider important. It is reasonable to question how representative legislators are if they are congruent with their supporters across policy positions but attend only to those issues that are of low priority to voters (Jones and Baumgartner, 2004, 2). Therefore, the aims of this chapter are to demonstrate how the congruence of opinions and priorities interact in the policy space, and to examine the level of agreement between voters and parties in the EU on both issue positions and policy agendas.

The importance of both policy and priority congruence is encapsulated in two major theories of party competition and vote choice, namely spatial theory (Downs 1957) and salience (or valence) theory (Green, 2007; Miller and Stokes, 1963). In spatial theory voters seek to maximise their electoral utility by choosing parties that are closest to their own policy positions. Undoubtedly this theory has a strong influence on dominant theories of representation such as the responsible party model and provides the theoretical basis for many empirical studies that emphasise the measurement of positional policy congruence (e.g. APSA, 1950; Marks and Steenbergen, 2004; Mattila and Raunio, 2006; Powell, 2004; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2000). Further, research has indicated that congruence with issue positions is likely to be stronger over policy areas that are of salience to voters (Franklin and Wlezien, 1997; Miller and Stokes, 1963; Stimson, 1991; Wlezien, 1995).

By contrast, salience theory argues that, on many issues, such as 'lower crime rates' or 'economic growth' voters and parties on either end of the ideological spectrum do

not disagree on the desired outcome. It is highly improbable that individuals would favour 'more crime' or 'less growth'. Here, vote choice is a question of competence and salience, where voters choose the party that appears best able to achieve desired policy outcomes over the issues that are considered important at the time of the election. Implicit in this discussion then is that the parties who are deemed 'most competent' to address issues of importance, will be those same parties who prioritise and emphasise the issues in question. For example, if voters prioritise lower crime rates over economic development then they are likely to support the party they perceive as being most competent at reducing crime rather than the party they perceive as most capable of achieving growth. Thus, the primary decisions in terms of vote choice are issues of salience and competence, ahead of congruency with policy positions.

To be clear however, salience and priority congruence are not conceptually equivalent because salience refers only to those issues of importance to voters but says little about whether or not parties and their supporters are similar in their prioritisation of policy. The importance of priority congruence, as opposed to 'salience' is illustrated by the recent scholarship on party cleavages by Kriesi et. al (2006) and van der Brug and van Spanje (2009). Kriesi et. al (2006) claim that a new cleavage is evolving in Europe that divides the winners and losers of globalisation. Here, increased economic competition through the development of open markets and cultural competition through immigration have created opportunities and benefits for educated and mobile workers. However, globalisation has seen those with fewer skills lose out due the relocation of jobs to cheaper locations such as China and also by increased competition for the remaining employment opportunities resulting from greater levels of labour mobility within Europe. Thus the 'losers' of globalisation are likely to be economically left wing, favouring greater wealth redistribution and political intervention in the economy, but culturally right wing, resisting higher levels of immigration and multiculturalism.

However, van der Brug and van Spanje (2009) demonstrate that parties remain constrained by a single left-right dimension. Consequently, this leaves groups of citizens whose combined policy preferences across economic and cultural dimensions cannot be fully realised by the party that they voted for, which creates problems for

democratic representation. It is in this context then that priority congruence can be viewed as instrumental in facilitating representation. For example a party that agrees with its supporters on the relative importance of each policy dimension and shares ideological preferences on issues that are considered salient but holds opposing positions on non-salient policies may, nevertheless, be regarded as being much more representative than a party who takes action over issues that its supporters deem to be unimportant and whose decisions are at odds with the preferences of its voters on those issues.

4.3 Saliency and Policy Priorities in the EU.

Research indicates that party competition in the EU comprises two (albeit related) dimensions of political contestation, namely the traditional left-right heuristic and the more recent 'European integration' dimension (Hix and Lord, 1997; Hooghe and Marks, 2001; Marks and Steenbergen, 2004; Mattila and Raunio, 2006; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2000; Van der Eijk, Van der Brug and Franklin, 1999). The main conclusions of these works is that voters are quite well represented by parties on the left-right dimension but not on the European one and that the diversity of voter opinion on the question of EU integration is not well reflected in the party system.

Yet these studies focus on the congruence of issue positions and thus mostly assume equality of saliency (for both voters and parties) across policy dimensions. Although some studies argue that 'European' issues are becoming more salient in national party competition in their own right (e.g. Netjes and Binnema 2007, Steenbergen and Scott 2004), other evidence suggests that EU integration, in terms of the ranking of priorities, may not be salient to parties or voters compared with traditional areas of ideological contestation. Mair (2000) for example, argues that mainstream parties depoliticise the question of EU unification since the general pro-integration consensus among these parties leaves few incentives for competition across this dimension. Moreover, scholars suggest that Eurosceptic positions adopted by radical parties may not be emphasised as important in their own right, but are only salient to the extent that they reflect the core ideological stances of these parties on traditional economic or cultural issues (Mudde, 2011). For example, a radical right party that prioritises

immigration as a policy issue may oppose Europe on the basis that that open markets and the free movement of workers contravenes its core anti-immigration ideology¹².

If neither parties nor voters in EP elections prioritise 'European' issues then what does this mean for the quality of the representation process? Certainly the evidence that opinion congruence on the EU integration dimension is weak, coupled with findings that EP elections are not contested over this issue (e.g. Anderson, 1998; Reif and Schmitt, 1980; van der Eijk and Franklin, 1996), raises questions about the level of representation present between voters and parties in the policy space. However it would be erroneous to conclude from this that the EU is wholly unrepresentative of its citizens since it assumes that the EU system only holds legislative competence over 'European' issues. In the context of the two key dimensions of political contestation, 'European' issues are largely constitutional as they deal with, for example, the degree to which the EU retains control over the legislative process in various policy areas or which European countries will become member states. Yet the day-to-day decisions made in EU institutions are not primarily constitutional matters but rather comprise of substantive issues that relate more readily to traditional party competition over socio-economic and socio-cultural concerns. Moreover, there are few substantive policy areas today that the EU does not maintain at least some influence over. Consequently, if parties and voters share both issues positions and priorities over substantive policy areas, this may indicate a high degree of representation even if one does not see similar congruence across the EU integration dimension.

This is not to assume, however, equality over the meaning of 'substantive policy' within national and EU spaces but it is argued that the divisions between national and European competencies are not easily divided between policy issues. Certainly the EU takes more control over policy making in particular issue areas than others but it may be difficult for voters to clearly distinguish between substantive policy areas that are wholly 'national' and ones that are predominantly 'European'. Indeed, even where there are strong mass-elite linkages across substantive issue positions, priority congruence may be weakened if voters fail to recognise the different legislative roles that national and EU policy-makers hold. In this case it is plausible that voters may

¹² UKIP, for example, maintain that their immigration policies are incompatible with Britain's continuing membership of the EU.

seek out parties who share positions on issues that are of salience to them but, in the context of EU politics, these parties may prioritise policies that the EU has a stronger competency in and these areas may or may not be different to those their supporters consider important. For example, a voter may choose a party who shares its issue position on public welfare but that party's representative in the EP may prioritise macro-economic policy as the EU holds far greater competency in this area.

4.4 Opinion Congruence and the Congruence of Priorities

The foregoing discussion illustrates the importance of examining both opinion and priority congruence in assessing representation in the EU. It shows that the two congruence dimensions are not mutually exclusive and that 'good' representation only occurs when voters and parties share issue positions on policies that are mutually important to them. Thus it is important to consider how congruency of positions and priorities relate to each other and how this interplay affects the quality of representation. Table 4.1 illustrates the hypothesised relationships between policy and priority congruence.

Table 4.1: Hypothesised Relationships between Policy and Priority Congruence.

	High Priority Congruence	Low Priority Congruence
High Opinion Congruence	<i>A: Ideal Representation.</i> Voters and parties share ideological positions and agree on issues of salience	<i>B: Moderate Representation</i> Voters and parties agree on issues but differ on priorities. Voters may see preferences realised but only on non-salient issues.
Low Opinion Congruence	<i>D: Opposing Representation</i> Voters and parties agree on priorities but differ on issue positions. Parties are likely to take action on salient issues that is opposed to the preferences of voters.	<i>C: Non Representation</i> Voters and parties disagree on both issue positions and salience of policy. Parties are likely to take action opposed to voter preferences but only on issues non-salient to supporters.

Cell A characterises the ideal scenario of high congruence, where voters and parties share preferences on issues and agree on which policy areas are important. In the

context of EU representation even this outcome can be imperfect, since voters and representatives may share a high degree of congruence on issues over which the EU has little control. While this raises interesting questions about how representation may be diminished or enhanced depending on the arena of electoral competition, the purpose of the present chapter is to explore the more basic questions of whether or not parties in EP elections attend to the same issues as their supporters and whether or not they share preferences on those issues. Therefore, the standard of 'ideal' representation here is the cell A outcome in table 4.1.

Cell B highlights the case where there is some, but not complete, congruence since voters and parties agree on issues but differ on the salience they afford to policies. Here, if voters prioritise an issue, the party they support is unlikely to take strong action over it. Thus the voters' preferences are unlikely to be fully realised in the legislative process. On the other hand if representatives prioritise the issue, even though their supporters do not they are likely to take action over it. However, this is not necessarily bad for the voter since they will see action taken over issues in a manner that is compatible with their preferences, albeit not on the policies that are of most concern to them. Therefore, while this is not a measure of 'perfect' congruence, this outcome is, nevertheless, somewhat desirable.

Cells C and D both characterise 'poor' representation scenarios. Cell D arguably, represents the most dramatic result. Here both voters and parties agree on what issues are important but take opposing preferences on those policy areas. Not only will voters not have their preferences realised over salient issues but also their representatives are likely to actively pursue outcomes that are contrary to the preferences of their supporters. Further, cell C describes a case where representation between voters and parties is weak across both congruence dimensions. Here, if a voter prioritises an issue her representative is unlikely to take action over it. This outcome is similar to cell B since even where voters and parties take opposing views on issues voters are unlikely to see contradictory action taken over salient issues. However, if a representative prioritises an issue that is not salient for voters this, nevertheless, demonstrates weak representation because the party is likely to take action that is opposed to the preferences of their supporters, albeit over areas that are non-salient.

Empirically, the most likely outcomes in the context of voter-party congruence in the EU are cells B and C since the theoretical expectations suggest that citizens and representatives will prioritise issues differently irrespective of the degree of opinion congruence. This may particularly be the case if voters use EP elections as mid term popularity polls of national governments such that they use their vote to ‘punish’ incumbent parties by voting for smaller ones in Europe (Marsh and Hix 2007). Thus if voters do not make electoral choices based on either shared issue positions or salience of policies, then one might expect parties to be incongruent with their supporters on both dimensions.

Based on this discussion I test the following expectations concerning voter party congruence of both issues and priorities.

Hypothesis 1: Voters and parties in EP Elections prioritise substantive socio-economic and socio-cultural policy issues over European integration ones.

Hypothesis 2: Parties in EP elections are incongruent with the policy priorities of their supporters.

The literature discussed above indicates that the dimensionality of substantive policy among voters may no longer be linear, instead suggesting that voters (if not parties) distinguish between a socio-economic left-right dimension and a socio-cultural left-right one. This finding suggests that some voters and their representatives may find themselves occupying both cells A and D (or indeed cells B and C) from table 4.1, simultaneously across policy areas. For example, a voter who holds an anti-immigration viewpoint and prioritises this issue may vote for a radical right party that both emphasises immigration as a key platform in their manifesto and that shares in their anti-immigration position. Thus on socio-cultural issues, the voter and its representative occupies cell A. Yet this voter may also favour left-wing economic policies that are at odds with their party’s free market position. Both the voter and party agree that socio-economic issues are of secondary importance, but they disagree on issue positions, meaning that on the socio-economic dimension they occupy cell D. So long as representatives limit their actions over policies that are of low opinion

congruence, where voters and parties agree on the non-salience of the issue, then they may nevertheless be said to enjoy a good level of representation. However, as van der Brug and van Spanje (2009) note, so long as parties compete over a single dimension while voters economic and cultural issues separately, groups of citizens will remain in the political system who are precluded from having their positions fully represented.

While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to test these hypothesised expectations across all issues and party types, I test the expectations of this discussion by focusing on the congruence of socio-cultural and socio-economic policies and priorities between radical right parties and their supporters. Arguably, radical right parties provide a clear test case since I assume that these parties demonstrate clear prioritisation of immigration issues over economic ones and, typically being niche parties assume that they are likely to be highly congruent with the preferences of their voters on immigration issues. This leads to the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4: Supporters of radical right parties who prioritise socio-cultural issues are more congruent on those issues with the party they vote for (in terms of both priorities and positions) compared to voters of other parties.

4.5 Data and Method

To test congruence across issues, I utilise eleven questions from the European Election Study and European Election Candidate Study 2009 asking respondents their positions on socio-economic and socio-cultural policy issues. I rely on these surveys to construct opinion congruence scores between voters and the parties they voted for across issue areas. Economic items include attitudes to state intervention in the economy, the provision of public services and redistribution of wealth. Cultural items include attitudes to multi-culturalism, immigration flows and same-sex marriage. The complete question wording for each item used can be found in Appendix C.

For the present analysis, the level of opinion congruence is measured for each party as the mean of the absolute distances between the opinion of voters on each issue and the party's position. The party position is taken to be the average preference of the candidates from each party in the EECS. This creates a congruence score where

lower values indicate higher congruence and so for ease of interpretation, the opinion congruence variable is multiplied by -1 as follows:

$$\text{opinioncongruence} = -\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N |C_i - P_{ji}|$$

where C_i is the citizen preference, P_{ji} the policy position of the party they voted for and N is the number of voters in the sample who voted for the party in question. As the variable increases from negative values (bounded at -4) towards 0, congruence increases. Finally, the average congruence score across the 11 policy questions is taken to create an overall 'opinion congruence' measure¹³ between voters and parties.

To measure priority congruence, I rely on an open-ended question asked in both voter and candidate surveys, which examines what respondents believed were the three most important problems (MIP) facing their country today. MIP responses were then coded across 24 policy categories and the proportion of attention allocated to each issue area by party candidates and their supporters was calculated. Finally, the priority congruence measure was constructed using the Duncan dissimilarity index. This index measure has traditionally been used to compare inequalities across contextual groups, for example, comparing distributions of men and women in the population. Here, however, I use the index to compare the differences between the voter and party policy priorities. The index is calculated as follows:

$$\text{prioritycongruence} = 0.5 * \sum |X_i - Y_i|$$

where X is the proportion of respondents who voted for a party who mention the i th category as one of the three most important problems and where Y is the proportion of candidates in a party who mention the i th category as one of the three most important problems. The index then ranges from 0 to 100 where 0 means two

¹³ Where appropriate in the analysis, the average score on cultural questions and economic questions is also taken to create two separate socio-economic and socio-cultural opinion congruence variables.

identical distributions are compared and 100 means two completely different distributions are compared. Thus lower values mean higher priority congruence.

It should be noted that the MIP question has certain limitations and has been recently critiqued as a method of measuring issue salience. Wlezien, (2005) for example, argues that using the MIP as a measure of issue salience is problematic since the concepts of 'salience' and 'importance' may not be equivalent. An issue may be individually important but not politically salient in terms of vote choice (e.g. Wlezien, 2005; Myers and Alpert, 1977). Further, the MIP question asks respondents what they believe are key problems in their country, rather than in the EU specifically, and while the discussion in section 4.3 suggests that the distinction between substantive issues that are 'national' and ones that are 'European' may be not entirely clear cut, some caution should be taken in interpreting the priority congruence scores since problems facing national and European levels may not be equivalent. These concerns notwithstanding, however, the MIP question remains the best question in existing surveys for examining issues of importance to citizens.

The 24 policy content categories used in the analysis are derived from the Policy Agendas Project (Baumgartner and Jones, 2002) but because the project was principally developed to explore comparative agendas in the US I make a number of important additions to the original content categories. For example, I add common market issues as a separate category as it refers explicitly to macro-economic policy that is controlled by the EU. In addition I also add a EU specific category 'Europe' which supplements the 'Government' category. Both of these categories refer to concerns over the legislative process and democracy in national and EU institutions respectively such as the funding of public bodies, appointments of public officials, voting procedures, inter-institutional relations and institutional efficiency. Table 4.2 and figure 4.1 lists the 24 categories used in the analysis.

Finally, the resulting dataset comprises of observations from 7494 voters and 858 candidates organised into 113 parties across 14 countries¹⁴. While, ideally, the study

¹⁴ The 14 countries in the analysis are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, The Netherlands and United Kingdom. A list of the 113 parties can be found in Appendix C.

of priority congruence would comprise a dataset of parties in the 27 member states, the smaller subset of 14 countries was chosen for analysis due to the low response rates in the candidate survey. Investigators for the Comparative Candidate Survey, for example, suggest that return rates below 20% are unacceptable for subsequent analysis and yet in the EECS, response rates for several countries were below this minimum threshold. Therefore, member states that yielded a less than 20% response rate for candidates surveyed were excluded from the analysis.

4.6 Results and Discussion

Figure 4.1 reports the percentage of voters and candidates who mention each issue category as being one of the three 'most important' problems facing their country today. The figure shows a high level of agreement between the rankings of the relative importance of issues. For voters and candidates, 'economics', 'employment', 'civil liberties' (e.g. immigration), 'environment' and 'government' operations rate as the top five most important problems. Further, the results here do not demonstrate a significant difference in the capacities of voters and representatives to hold different issues as important since candidates do not appear to attend to issues any more evenly than voters do, running counter to findings from existing studies of priority congruence (John, Bevan and Jennings, 2011; Jones, Larsen-Price and Wilerson, 2009; Jones and Baumgartner, 2004). The dissimilarities in the present results may be, in large part, due to the different variables used to measure the salience of issues of representatives, because previous works focused on a measurement of policy outputs at various points in legislative cycle but the measure used in this study focuses on a 'one shot' MIP question which is directly comparable with the voter priority variable. Consequently, these results are promising as they show, in the broadest sense, that voters and representatives recognise the same issue areas as being 'most important'.

Figure 4.1 also establishes support for hypothesis 1. In terms of EU constitutional issues, not many respondents consider either 'Europe' or 'Common Market' policy categories to be important and although twice as many candidates as voters consider European issues to be important, less than 2% rate 'Europe' as a priority. Therefore,

these results confirm that both voters and representatives prioritise substantive policy issues over EU constitutional ones.

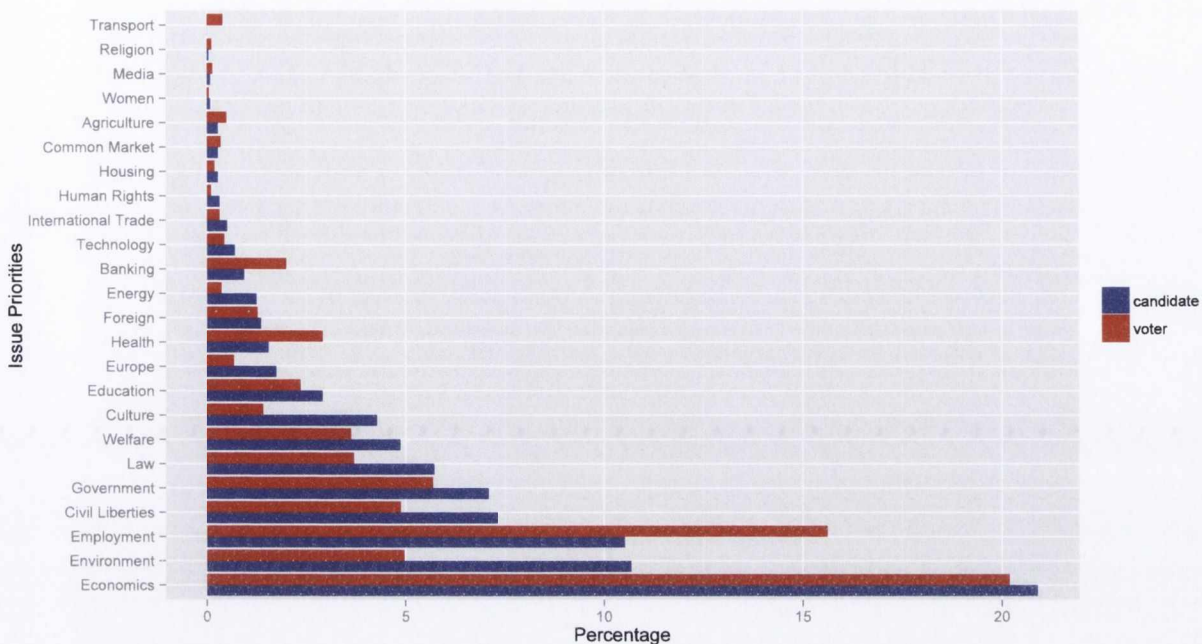


Figure 4.1 Issue Priorities of voters and candidates. *Note: No. of observations, candidates = 858, voters = 7494 Source: European Election Study Voter Survey and Candidate Survey 2009*

However the finding that voters and candidates rank issues similarly is not sufficient to establish congruence with priorities since, as figure 4.1 shows that there are a number of differences in the relative emphasis that voters and candidates place on each issue. This is most clearly seen in the case of employment where voters view the issue as salient by over 5 percentage points more than candidates do. By contrast, the proportion of candidates rating the environment as important is almost twice that of voters. Moreover, while the figure reports the issues that both voters and candidates prioritise it does not distinguish between parties or party groups. Table 4.2 illustrates the issue prioritisation of party groups and their voters by describing the relative proportion of attention devoted to the top ten issue categories reported by candidates and showing the Duncan dissimilarity index (the priority congruence value) for European party groups.

Even disaggregating by party groups, table 4.2 demonstrates that voters and candidates attend to the same top five issues in the policy space. However,

respondents do not necessarily prioritise these issues proportionately. For example, voters of parties in the European Conservative and Reformist group (ECR) prioritise economics, employment and government issues, but parties in the ECR group rank economics, civil liberties and law (including criminal issues) as most important. Similarly, over a quarter (26.9%) of respondent party candidates in the Europe of Freedom and Democracy group (EFD) prioritise the economy compared to just 14% of their voters. By contrast, voters and candidates for Greens-European Free Alliance (Greens-EFA) parties similarly classify economic, employment and environment issues as most important and do so in relative proportion to each other. Approximately 11.37% of these voters prioritised the environment as an important issue, compared with 10.21% of parties.

In terms of priority congruence, the Greens-EFA and European People's Party (EPP) groups do remarkably well with a score of 11.27 and 19.39 respectively, which suggests that both voters and parties within these groups prioritise issues similarly and attend to them proportionately. Put another way, these results indicate that only 11.27% of voters for Greens-EFA parties would have to change the policy categories that they consider most important in order for the distribution of issue priorities among those voters to match the party group distribution. On the other hand, the Confederal Group of European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) and EFD groups have only moderate priority congruence scores with 40.91 and 50.86 respectively. Thus, 50.86% of EFD voters would have to change the policy categories they consider most important in order for the distribution of issue priorities among those voters to match the party group distribution. Consequently, the descriptive analysis demonstrates that the degrees to which representatives are congruent with the issue priorities of their voters varies across party groupings, which offers only moderate support for hypothesis 2.

Turning to issue congruence, Figure 4.2 shows the average issue positions of voters and candidates by European party group. For ease of reference the reported scores are coded such that 0 is the most conservative position and 5 is the most liberal position. In general, the figure reports a familiar pattern across policy issues. Voters and

Table 4.2 Issue Priorities of Voters and Candidates by Party Group

Issue	Total		EPP		SD		ALDE		G-EFA		GUE/NGL		ECR		EFD		Other	
	voter	party	voter	party	voter	party	voter	party	voter	party	voter	party	voter	party	voter	party	voter	party
<i>Economics</i>	20.19	20.90	21.68	24.15	22.38	20.18	19.27	17.59	17.00	22.08	14.97	24.82	20.13	22.67	14.11	26.90	18.88	17.83
<i>Environment</i>	4.96	10.68	3.68	8.21	4.33	13.45	4.05	11.30	11.37	10.21	9.72	14.18	0.94	8.00	4.59	10.53	1.69	10.08
<i>Employment</i>	15.62	10.53	15.99	11.59	16.67	9.06	16.46	9.63	13.44	13.13	14.35	7.09	12.58	5.33	15.34	8.77	14.58	10.85
<i>Civil Liberties</i>	4.87	7.30	4.24	6.04	4.76	9.94	4.33	5.74	4.04	3.96	3.55	14.89	7.86	10.67	10.41	7.02	8.27	9.82
<i>Government</i>	5.68	7.07	4.92	9.66	5.42	3.51	6.67	8.15	4.81	8.13	2.47	6.38	12.74	6.67	8.64	4.09	6.64	6.72
<i>Law</i>	3.69	5.71	2.94	5.31	3.15	7.31	3.86	4.26	4.39	4.38	6.02	5.67	3.77	9.33	4.94	7.60	5.60	7.24
<i>Welfare</i>	3.62	4.86	3.09	5.31	3.15	3.22	4.57	5.74	4.30	6.67	3.86	3.55	3.93	2.67	4.76	1.17	3.32	4.91
<i>Culture</i>	1.42	4.27	1.20	4.35	0.88	2.63	2.04	5.56	1.88	4.38	2.01	2.84	1.73	8.00	0.53	1.17	1.89	5.17
<i>Education</i>	2.35	2.91	2.45	2.42	2.11	3.22	1.85	2.59	3.06	4.58	4.32	0.00	2.99	1.33	1.41	3.51	1.76	2.84
<i>Health</i>	2.92	1.55	2.78	0.97	3.03	1.17	2.86	1.11	2.90	2.92	4.32	1.42	2.52	0.00	3.70	2.34	2.60	1.55
<i>Dissimilarity Index (priority congruence)</i>			19.39		27.66		26.63		11.27		40.91		31.24		50.86		14.81	

Note: top 3 ranked issues by party group are in bold. Source: European Election Study Voter Survey and Candidate Survey 2009

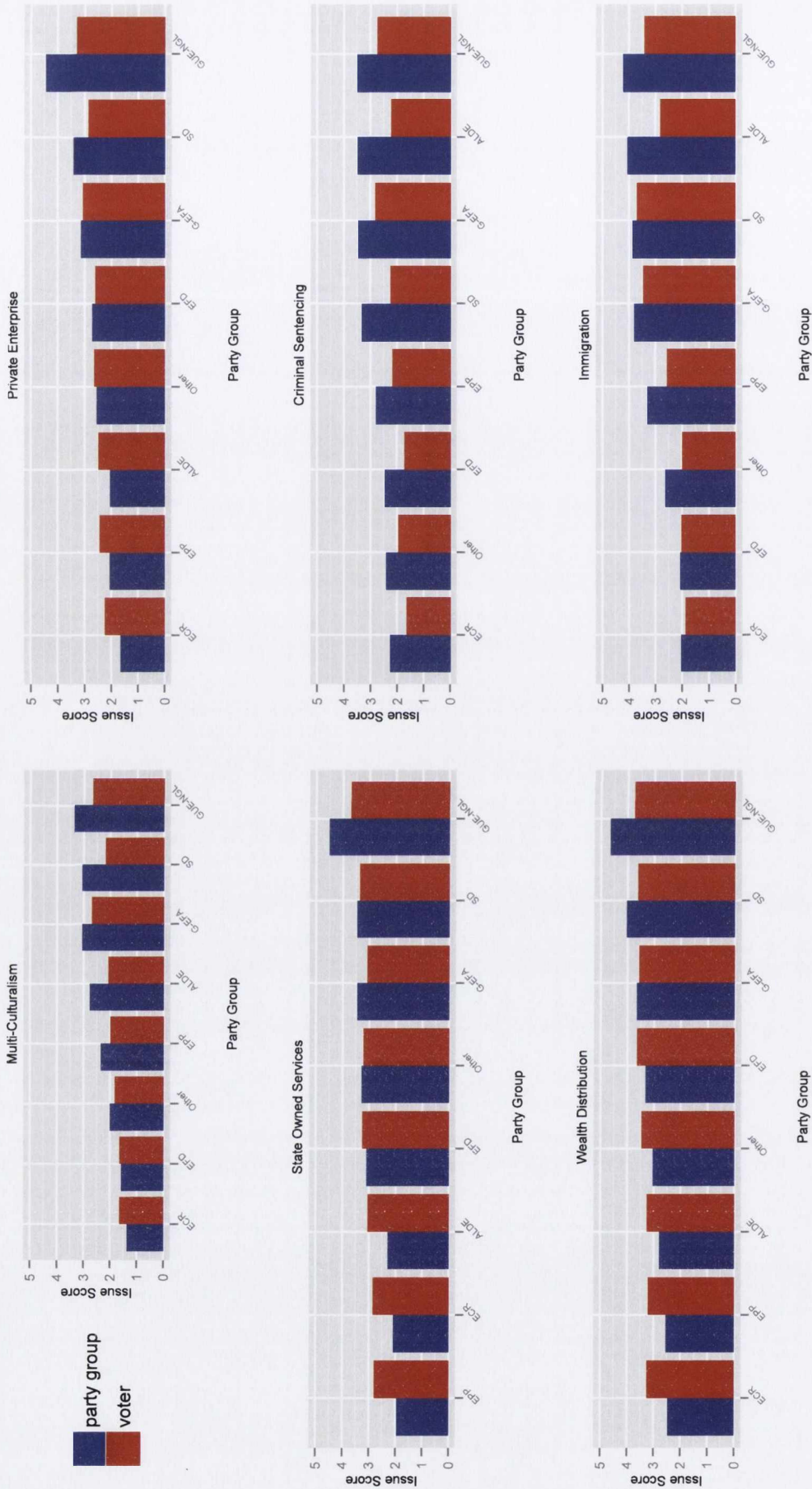


Figure 4.2: Issue Positions of Voters and Candidates across Party Groups. Note: 0 = conservative values, 5 = liberal values. Source: European Election Study Voter Survey and Candidate Survey 2009

candidates from right wing party groups such as the ECR and EFD adopt more conservative values across issues while left wing groups such as the GUE/NGL take a more liberal stance. This distinction is clearer on certain policy issues such as immigration and the role of private enterprise in the economy, than it is on others such as criminal sentencing. In terms of the difference between party groups and their voters, the figure demonstrates that, across issues, groups are reasonably close to their supporters. However a few distinctions are notable. For example, on socio-economic issues such as wealth distribution and whether services should be in state ownership, voters for EPP and Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) parties hold more liberal preferences than the party group but hold more conservative preferences on multiculturalism and immigration issues. By contrast, candidates in the GUE/NGL and Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (SD) groups hold more liberal positions than their voters across virtually all issue areas. Overall, the picture presented here is consistent with previous findings in the literature and in the preceding chapter, demonstrating moderate congruence of issues between voters and representatives on socio-economic and socio-cultural issues.

Thus far, the analysis indicates that while voters and representatives are quite close to each other in terms of opinion congruence across issues, there is considerable variation in the degree of priority congruence across party groups. However, the central aim of this paper is to explore the interplay between the two congruence dimensions. Figure 4.3 presents the results of this exercise by European party group across all policy issues. The results show that, across party groupings, there is a high degree of congruence in terms of both issue positions and issue salience although there is more variation on the priority congruence dimension than amongst opinions. With the exception of the EFD, all party groups occupy the 'ideal representation' quadrant. Consistent with the findings in table 4.2 the Greens-EFA group demonstrates a remarkably high degree of congruence on both dimensions. On the other hand, the EFD is the weakest in terms of overall congruence, but this is only as a result of weaker priority congruence rather than differences across issue positions.

While this pattern is suggestive that there is a reasonable degree of congruence between voters and elites in the EP, it should be noted that the party groups' positions reported here measure the average congruence positions of parties in the 14 countries

under study rather than the full complement of parties from the 27 member states and therefore, the results at the party group level should be interpreted conservatively.

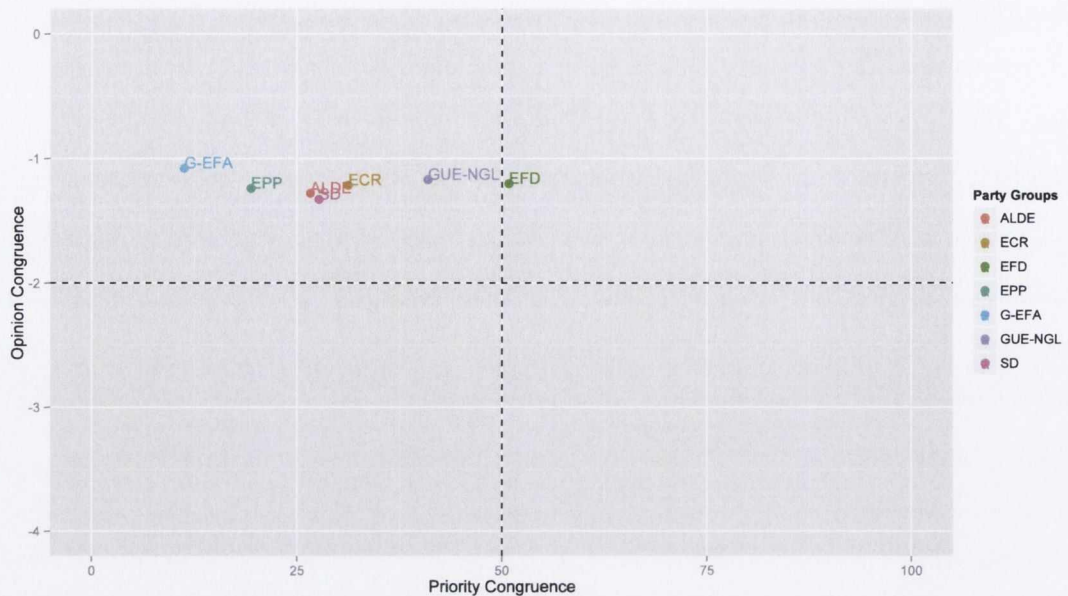


Figure 4.3 Opinion and Priority Congruence by Party Group *Note: Opinion congruence scores are bounded by -4 and 0. Priority congruence scores are bounded by 0 and 100.*

Source: European Election Study Voter Survey and Candidate Survey 2009

Further, in the context of EP elections, citizens do not vote directly for party groups but for candidates nominated by national parties in member states who then collectivise into political groups post-election. This may have implications for the relevant level at which one expects representation to occur in the EU since it means that national parties are the main unit of political contestation in elections but party groups are the main unit of competition in the legislative process. On the one hand, studies have shown an increasingly high level of voting and policy cohesion among the main party groups (Hix, 2007; McElroy and Benoit, 2011) suggesting that the degree of congruence between a citizen and the national party they vote for should be maintained as the political candidate moves from electoral to legislative competition. On the other hand, these studies acknowledge that cohesion does not mean that parties are identical on policy issues within groups and that there is still variation in the degree of cohesiveness across issues. Therefore, it is important to identify the degree to which voters are congruent with national level parties and not only with the party group.

Figure 4.4 maps the levels of opinion and priority congruence between national parties and their supporters. Virtually all parties fall under the ‘moderate representation’ quadrant, meaning that while parties are quite close to the preferences of their voters, they do not share an understanding of which policy categories are important. Only RKP (Finland), Christen Unie (Netherlands), KOK (Finland), SNS Slovakia, KDH (Slovakia), and VB (Belgium) fall into the ‘ideal representation’ quadrant, whereby less than 50% of supporters for that party would need to change the policy categories they consider salient in order for the voter priority distributions to match that of the parties. By contrast, only one party - IRL (Estonia) - fails to be congruent with their voters on either issue opinions or priorities.

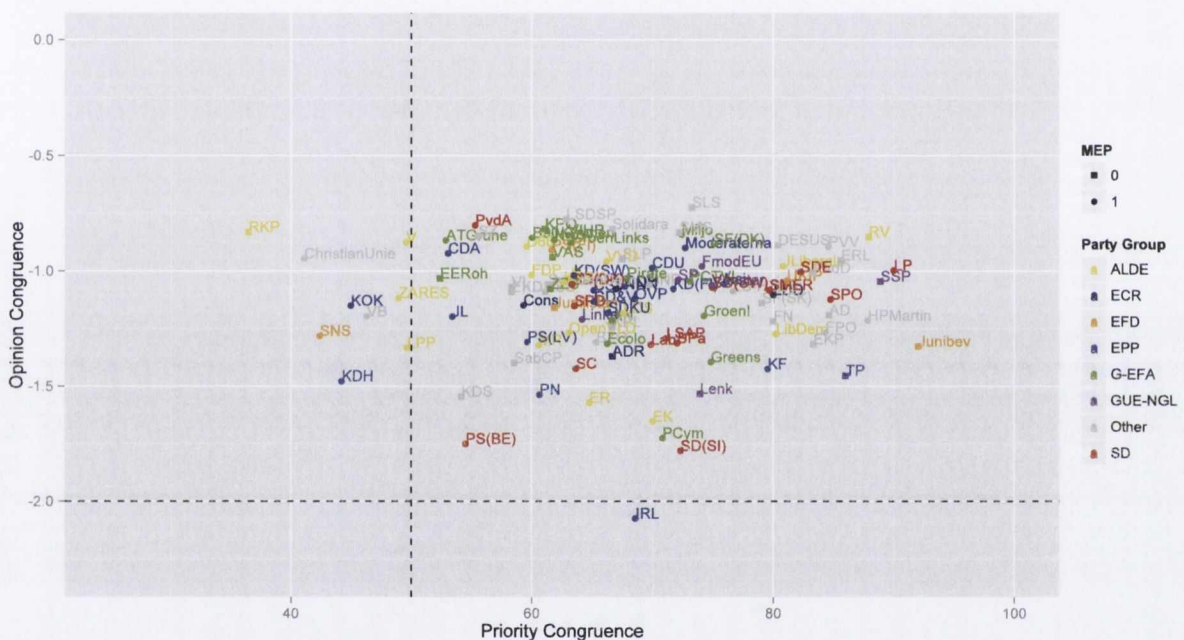


Figure 4.4 Opinion and Priority Congruence by National Party. *Note:* Opinion congruence scores are bounded by -4 and 0. Priority congruence scores are bounded by 0 and 100. *Source:* European Election Study Voter Survey and Candidate Survey 2009

These results are also interesting because they demonstrate considerably weaker priority congruence compared to the party group level. Figure 6.4 illustrates the distribution of parties across party groupings and shows that several parties in the Greens-EFA group appear to cluster more tightly on both opinion and priority congruence compared to other groups. Also, GUE-NGL parties rather poorly represent their voters in terms of issue priorities but otherwise there are few distinct

patterns, since, relative to each other, the parties within each group vary considerably across congruence dimensions. Therefore figure 6.4 supports hypotheses 2, demonstrating that parties are moderately close to their supporters on issue preferences but incongruent on the prioritisation of policy.

While figures 4.3 and 4.4 demonstrate a moderately promising result in the context of representation between voters and parties in the EU, they do not distinguish between different ideological dimensions and yet, as the theoretical discussion above suggests, parties may be unable to be highly congruent with many of their voters on both socio-cultural and socio-economic issues. Therefore a key test for voter-party congruence is whether or not parties *both* prioritise the same issues that voters do and whether they share similar opinions on those policy areas. Figures 4.5 and 4.6 report the degree of issue congruence on socio-cultural (specifically immigration) issues and socio-economic issues.

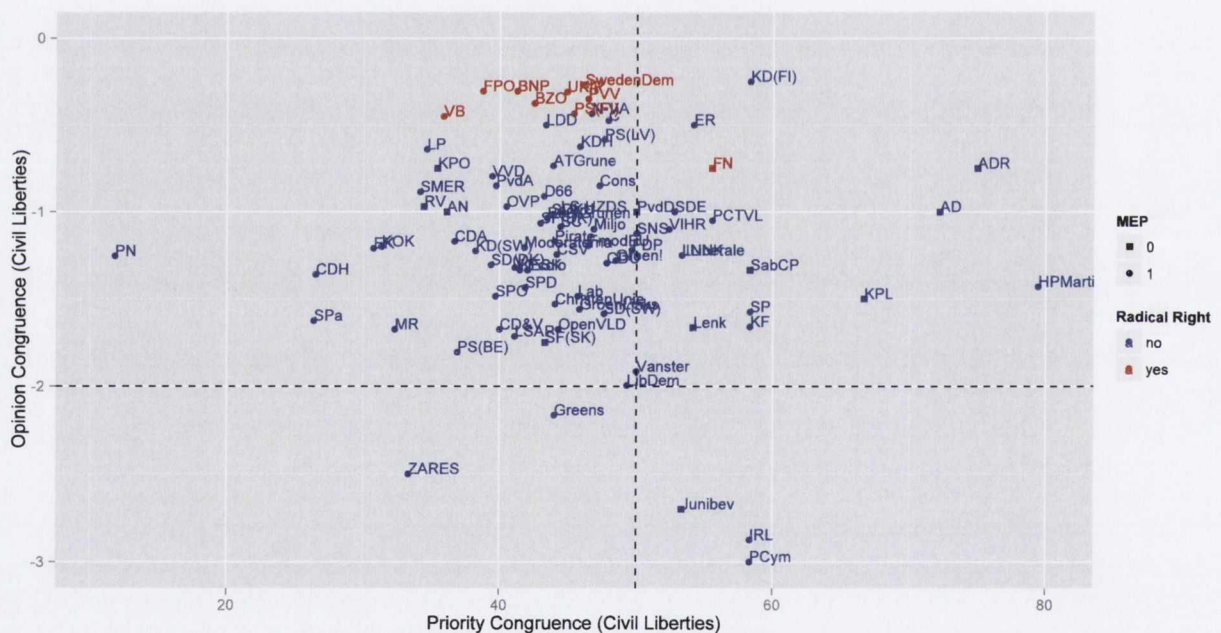


Figure 4.5 Opinion and Priority Congruence of Parties on Civil Liberties issues. *Note:* Opinion congruence scores are bounded by -4 and 0. Priority congruence scores are bounded by 0 and 100. *Source:* European Election Study Voter Survey and Candidate Survey 2009

Turning to figure 4.5 first, the plot shows the priority congruence between parties and the subset of voters who consider the ‘civil liberties’ issue category to be an important problem. This category predominantly relates to issues such as immigration and multiculturalism. The plot also shows the average level of opinion congruence between parties and voters on the immigration and multiculturalism policy questions. Overall, the level of priority congruence between parties and their supporters improves when only those voters who prioritise civil liberties issues are considered. This is unsurprising since, as figure 4.1 demonstrates, ‘civil liberties’ is one of the top ranked issues of importance for both voters and parties. Further, in restricting the analysis to immigration based issues, many parties occupy the ‘ideal representation’ quadrant, which is a strong indication that these parties agree with their voters that civil liberties issues are a priority and also share policy preferences in this area with them. Indeed only five parties poorly represent the issue positions of their voters here, although, two of them – the Greens (UK) and ZARES (Slovenia) - also prioritise issues similarly which may be of concern, since if these parties take action on immigration issues they may do so in a manner opposed to the preferences of their supporters.

The key finding in this figure, however, is that it clearly demonstrates how close radical right parties are with those voters who prioritise civil liberties issues. With the exception of Belgium’s FN, all radical right parties have a priority congruence score of less than 50, and have close to perfect opinion congruence with their voters on immigration issues. This finding supports hypothesis 4 and reveals that where voters and radical parties similarly prioritise issues, a high level of issue representation follows.

In order to draw comparison with the analysis of civil liberties issues, figure 4.6 represents the degree of congruence parties hold on economic issues with those voters who prioritise civil liberties concerns. The overall pattern shows that, even where voters consider immigration and multicultural issues as an important problem, parties tend to be closer with these voters on economic policy positions than on cultural ones, since most parties cluster quite tightly around an opinion congruence score of -1. This result is consistent with recent research by Costello, Thomassen and Rosema,

2012. (2012) who demonstrate that the general quality of representation in the EU is high on economic issues but lower on cultural ones.

Moreover, while the degree of incongruence across issue opinions should not be overstated here, a comparison of the two figures raises a concern that the level of issue congruence across policies is not sufficiently connected to the congruence of priorities. This is clearly illustrated in the case of ZARES (Slovenia) and Junibev (Denmark) where the parties are relatively incongruent with the civil liberties issue positions that voters explicitly prioritise and yet congruent with economic preferences that may be of lesser importance to their supporters.

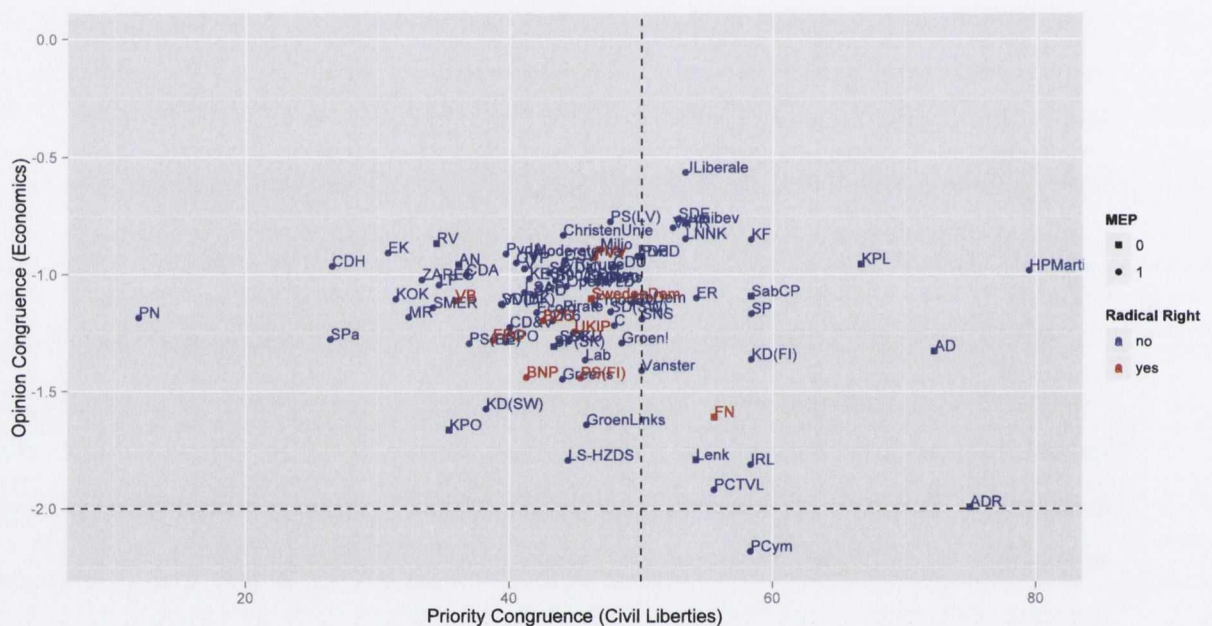


Figure 4.6: Opinion Congruence of Parties on Economic Policy where Voters Prioritise Civil Liberties Issues. *Note: Opinion congruence scores are bounded by -4 and 0. Priority congruence scores are bounded by 0 and 100. Source: European Election Study Voter Survey and Candidate Survey 2009*

One clear exception to this pattern is the case of radical right parties, which shows that the degree of opinion congruence between voters and radical parties on economic issues is approximately one fifth lower than it is on immigration issues. Overall this result demonstrates that opinion congruence between radical parties and their voters is stronger over issues that they agree are a priority. It is not possible to establish, from

these results, all the causal mechanisms that may be driving the overall levels of representation. Consequently, it remains unclear whether or not weaker congruence between radical parties and their voters on economic issues is because these voters are apathetic to economic policies and consequently do not hold clear preferences in these areas, or because these parties compete on a single left-right dimension while their supporters distinguish between socio-economic and socio-cultural dimensions. Nevertheless, the results provide clear evidence in support of Hypothesis 4.

To summarise, the results here indicate that parties share close, but not identical issue opinions with their voters across both dimensions of ideological congruence but vary considerably across priority congruence. Moreover, the case of radical right parties confirms that when parties and voters share in the salience of issues, opinion congruence on those policies also improves.

4.7 Conclusion

Existing studies of EU representation focus primarily on opinion congruence on the traditional left-right and EU integration ideological dimensions and conclude that parties are highly representative of their supporters policy positions on left-right issues. The main argument of this chapter is that without taking account of how voters and parties rate the importance of different policies on the legislative agenda, our understanding of how representative political actors in the EU are remains incomplete. So when congruence with priorities are taken into consideration, how do parties fare when it comes to representing their voters? The results of this analysis indicate that they do so reasonably well.

Consistent with the findings of earlier scholarship, results here show that on socio-economic and socio-cultural issue positions, parties and their voters are somewhat, although by no means perfectly, congruent. Moreover, in terms of the policy categories that are considered salient, parties and voters appear to rank the importance of issues in a similar order. Here, the findings confirm that neither voters nor parties rate 'European integration' issues as important but also show a tendency to prioritise issues over which the EU has substantive competence. For example, three of the top five issues rated as being most important – economics, the environment and civil

liberties – are issues over which the EU holds at least some jurisdiction in decision making. Admittedly these results need to be interpreted conservatively, since the ‘most important problem’ question used in the analysis specifically refers to country level rather than EU level problems. Such reservations notwithstanding however, the findings here show that, in the aggregate, both voters and parties do attend to similar issues.

However, beyond the simple ranking of issues, the analysis demonstrates considerable variation in the degree to which parties and voters place similar emphasis on a range of policy categories. An interesting outcome here is that European party groups appear to be more cohesive with the relative salience of issues of their voters than the individual parties which they are composed of. This may mean that a voter who shares issue positions with a party but who is incongruent with the relative prioritisation of those issues may, nevertheless, find the policies they consider salient prioritised in the EU legislative process, as the party they voted for collectivises into a party group. The findings here cannot fully explore these expectations but they open up a noteworthy line for future research into the role played by party groups in facilitating European representation.

Further, by focusing on a test case of radical right parties, the analysis demonstrates the interplay between opinion and priority congruence. Voters of radical right parties, who prioritise immigration issues, are highly congruent with the socio-cultural policy positions of those parties but less congruent over economic issues. This is an important finding since it illustrates that radical right parties well represent, at least, that group of voters who are concerned about immigration because not only are they congruent across issue positions but they are also highly representative on the issues that are most important to those voters. This provides a useful point of departure for future research which may explore more closely how different groups of voters who prioritise various policy categories are represented by their parties on those issues in the EU space and which may offer a clearer understanding of how and to what extent voters are represented across issues.

Finally, one limitation of this, and the preceding, chapter, is that they focus solely on the front end of the representational process, namely voter-party congruence with

policy issues in EP elections. In the next chapter I broaden the discussion by looking at whether or not there is any link between public attitudes towards the EU and legislative outputs produced by the system. In other words, I now turn to the question of whether policy makers in the EU are responsive to the preferences of their citizens.

Chapter 5

The Far Side of Representation: An Analysis of Policy Responsiveness to Public Opinion in the EU

In the past decade, macro level studies of political representation, particularly in the US, have demonstrated an association between public opinion and the legislative activity of national governments. In the EU, however, research has typically focused on the micro level, exploring policy congruence between the preferences of voters and political elites. By contrast, studies considering the responsiveness of the political system to the aggregate public preference are rare. This chapter seeks to build on the existing scholarship by investigating whether there is any macro level responsiveness between voters and decision makers in the EU. Utilising the Kovats (2010) dataset which is derived from PreLEX to measure legislative outputs in the EU (1977-2008) and Euro-barometer surveys to measure voter preferences I find that the volume of directives produced in the EU each year responds to public attitudes towards EU membership and not the other way around. Further, I find that the level of policy responsiveness is even greater when restricted to redistributive policy areas.

5.1 Introduction

The responsiveness of government to public opinion has long been viewed as an important characteristic of democracy (Dahl, 1971, chapter 1). Numerous studies at the national level, mainly conducted in the US, have demonstrated a clear association between citizen preferences and political behaviour (e.g. Erikson, Wright and McIver, 1993; Erikson, Mackuen and Stimson, 2002; Jennings, 2009; Wlezien, 1995; Soroka and Wlezien, 2010). In the EU, however, scholars have typically focused on the front end of the policy making process by exploring the degree of congruence between the policy preferences of voters and political elites in the European Parliament (e.g. Lefkofridi and Casado-Asensio, 2011; Mattila and Raunio, 2006; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2000, Van der Eijk, Van der Brug and Franklin, 1999; Walczak and van der Brug, 2013). By contrast, studies of the far end of representation, namely whether there is any relationship between the aggregate opinions of the European public and political activity in EU institutions, are rare, and to this author's knowledge, there are only two published studies of representation that directly consider whether such a

'macro level' approach (Erikson, Mackuen and Stimson, 2002) can be applied to the EU case (Franklin and Wlezien, 1997; Toshkov, 2011). Consequently, the goal of the present chapter is to build on these earlier works and explore whether there is a link between the degree of citizen support for EU level policy making and the volume of legislative activity in the EU over time.

Owing to the so-called democratic deficit, it is often argued that the EU is unlikely to demonstrate a high level of political responsiveness since the institutional mechanisms of the system insulate decision makers from the threat of electoral sanction by voters, which in turn causes legislative outputs to 'drift' away from citizen preferences (e.g Hix, 2008; Hix and Follesdal, 2006; Jolly, 2007, 237). Thus, representation in the EU is conceptualised hierarchically whereby the mass-elite linkage is expected to be strongest at the front end of the policy making process – between voters and elites in competitive elections – and weakest at the far end – where policy positions are translated into legislative outputs. Consequently, scholars have mostly assumed there to be only a weak relationship at best between European public opinion and political activity in EU institutions (Toshkov, 2011, 2).

However, this is not the only viewpoint and there are a number of theoretical arguments that allude to the rejection of the assumption that political responsiveness in the EU is poor. First, some scholars contend that the EU system is as democratic as it needs to be and state that concerns over the legitimacy of the system stem from a 'crisis of credibility' rather than one of democracy (Moravcsik, 2002; Majone, 1998). Majone (2005) for example argues that the EU offers a form of mixed government, defined by a representation of national and international interests. Central to this mode of governance is a principal-agent relationship whereby extensive powers are delegated to the EU from member states and the political system is responsive to the preferences of national governments on the one hand and EU citizens on the other. Similarly, Crombez (2003) suggests that the institutional set up of the EU is not inherently undemocratic, reflecting a bi-cameral structure whereby the Council is an upper chamber that represents member states and the EP is a lower house, representing the people.

Second, Sharpf (1999) suggests that because policymakers require public consent to maintain institutional legitimacy, they will often still take account of public opinion even where there are no direct electoral incentives to do so. Indeed, EU policymakers put considerable investment into gathering and examining public opinion on European issues through its bi-annual Euro-barometer surveys and several scholars have commented that since the early 1990's EU officials have pushed for legislative developments, most notably the expansion of the EP's powers, that are designed to make the EU more relevant to its citizens and to bring citizens closer to the policy-making process (e.g. Hix and Hoyland, 2011; Tsebelis and Garrett, 2001).

Third, a comparative examination of recent developments in US public opinion literature suggests that EU scholarship may suffer from a mis-conceptualisation of representation as an exclusively micro level process. In a seminal study of public opinion Erikson et al (2002) theorised a distinction between the study of representation at the micro level, in which individual voters signal their preferences over policy to governments through competitive elections, and responsiveness at the macro level, whereby legislative behaviour responds to the aggregated preference of the electorate. They argue that, at the macro level, the electorate is recast as a rational 'consumer' of government that communicates demand collectively in an aggregated 'policy mood' and government responds by producing 'more' or 'less' policy at each time period in the form of budgetary expenditure or legislative activity.

To test for a macro level approach in the present analysis, I use a vector autoregression model (VAR) to examine whether changes in the volume of legislative outputs produced by the EU respond to changes in public attitudes towards EU level policymaking. I utilise data from Euro-barometer surveys to measure 'policy mood' in the EU and the Kovats (2010) dataset to measure legislative outputs between 1977 and 2008 in exploring this research question. I find, consistent with Toshkov (2011), that policy 'granger causes' public opinion and not the other way around. Further, restricting the analysis to redistributive policy areas I find policy output to be even more responsive to public opinion. Moreover, the findings are shown to be robust to the inclusion of economic predictors, but demonstrate that both public opinion and policy outputs are influenced by changes in public economic expectations.

The remainder of the chapter proceeds as follows. First, in sections 5.2 and 5.3, I review the literature on policy mood and political responsiveness and will consider whether a macro level model of representation can be applied to the EU case. In section 5.4 I will discuss the data and method of analysis. Section 5.5 presents and discusses the main results of the regression model and finally section 5.6 concludes.

5.2 Policy Mood and the Public Thermostat

The aim of the current chapter is to consider whether or not decision makers are responsive to changes in public attitudes towards the EU by restricting the volume of legislation produced at times when support for EU level policy-making is low, and vice versa. The starting point for the analysis lies with the US literature because, although the study of the effect of public opinion on political activity has been mostly overlooked in EU scholarship, it has become a dominant thesis for the study of political representation in the US (e.g. Erikson, Mackuen and Stimson, 2002; Page and Shapiro, 1992; Stimson, 1991; Wlezien, 1995.).

Research on aggregate level measures began to emerge in the early 1990's, in part as a reaction to the earlier findings of micro level studies on public opinion. Democratic theory typically assumes that political representation is assured through the electoral connection where citizens, holding concrete preferences over policy and sufficient knowledge of the party choices available to them, signal both their opinion on policy and their satisfaction with government action by voting in elections. Contrary to this thesis, however, public opinion analysis showed the typical American voter to hold only weakly held preferences, to have poor knowledge of the political landscape, and to be highly subject to short term cue-taking by political parties and the media (e.g. Campbell et al, 1960; Zaller, 1992). These findings raised troubling questions about the ability of the typical voter to engage meaningfully in the electoral process and, ultimately raised questions about the quality of democratic governance.

In response to these findings, early aggregate level research showed that while the average voter might be ill informed and inattentive, taken collectively, the public tends to march together in a conservative or liberal direction over different issues and that preferences are relatively stable over time (e.g. Durr, 1993; Page and Shapiro,

1992; Stimson, 1991). Consequently, Wlezien (1995) conceptualised responsiveness as a ‘thermostat’ where an attentive public signals a preference for ‘more’ or ‘less’ policymaking by governments when the actual level of legislative activity differs from the electorates preferred level of output. Given that this model requires the public to be collectively attentive to policy, however, Wlezien (1995) argued that public opinion would act as a thermostat only in policy domains that are of salience to voters.

Later, Erikson et al (2002) offered a similar macro level model of policy responsiveness. They demonstrate that while the typical voter is inattentive and uninformed, the aggregate preference of the electorate across policy issues is ordered, rational and responsive to political change. They suggest that more knowledgeable citizens drive this ‘policy mood’ while the errors that results from the uninformed positions of voters on the low end cancel each other out. The preference of the electorate is then recast as being in a supply-demand relationship where the electorate signals a demand for ‘more’ or ‘less’ government and political institutions respond by increasing or restricting the level of legislative activity or budgetary expenditure. Thus the “policy mood” model is similar to the “public thermostat” in the sense that responsiveness describes the move towards equilibrium between the demand for and supply of policy.

Yet the EU is a very different political system and voters and representatives in the EP do not enjoy the same constituency level connections as their American counterparts. The multi party structure that is typical of the majority of European politics coupled with the on-going enlargement and development of the EU as a system of multi-level governance precludes a direct comparison between the EU and US policy space. Nevertheless, there are reasons to expect that a macro level analysis of the relationship between public opinion on policy activity in the EU provides a useful point of inquiry for the study of representation in the EU more generally. First, Toshkov (2011) notes that there is anecdotal evidence that European integration follows the grand contours of public opinion because the constraining effects of negative public sentiment can be observed following referenda in Norway (1972 and 1994), Denmark (2000) France (2005) The Netherlands (2005) and Ireland (2001 and 2008). Second, the unique nature of the EU as a developing political system means

that the policy space is defined not only through the traditional left-right ideological dimension, but also from a pro-anti EU integration perspective (Hix and Lord, 1997; Hooghe and Marks, 2001). Thus the question of more or less EU level policy making is understood as a policy dimension in and of itself, which is directly applicable to a thermostatic understanding of responsiveness. Indeed, Franklin and Wlezien (1997) in applying a thermostatic model to the issue of EU integration, noted that as the salience of the EU domain increased, so too did the public reaction to the degree of the EU's legislative activity. Franklin and Wlezien (1997) did not consider the other half of the reciprocal link, which is the core focus of the present chapter and to which I now turn.

5.3 Political Responsiveness

If political institutions are responsive, then changes in government outputs will be correlated with preceding changes in public opinion¹⁵. This assertion is in keeping with democratic theory that understands political representation as a two-way flow of information between voters and policy makers (e.g. Dahl, 1989; Easton, 1965; Erikson, Stimson and Mackuen, 1995). Here, an attentive public reacts to the observed level of government activity in the previous period and, assuming representatives engage in office seeking behaviour, decision-makers respond to public attitudes due to the threat of electoral sanction whereby voters who perceive politicians to be unresponsive to their interests will seek to 'throw the scoundrels out' in subsequent elections.

In the EU however, an assertion that is central to the democratic deficit debate is that the threat of electoral sanction is weak. Here the literature contends that the EP is not at the heart of government creation and that there are no true opposition parties capable of holding decision makers accountable by acting as a 'government in waiting'. Consequently, the EU system lacks the necessary contestation over political leadership that affords citizens meaningful democratic control over the policy making process (Hix and Follesdal, 2006; Mair and Thomassen, 2010). This begs the

¹⁵ There are *a priori* reasons to believe that the relationships between public opinion and policy output will operate at a lag, since it may take time for citizens to become aware of the changes to and effects of policy production before updating their preferences and it will also take time for policy makers to process public opinion information and alter policy activity accordingly.

question of whether or not a relationship between public opinion and policy output can ever exist in such a setting.

Yet, scholars have shown institutions that are typically insulated from the electoral process, such as the US Supreme Court, can nevertheless be responsive to public opinion in their day-to-day activity. For example, the ‘strategic behaviour’ hypothesis argues that because the Supreme Court has a limited ability to enforce its judgements and have them respected by elected officials and the public more generally, they will form opinions strategically to ensure the maximum efficacy of their decisions (e.g. Casillas, Enns and Wohlfarth, 2011; McGuire and Stimson, 2004).

In a similar manner, I argue that the EU may also act strategically when engaging in legislative activity. For example, Carrubba (2001) notes that when electorates are more in favour of EU integration their representatives take a more supportive position also. Although the direction of the causal link is difficult to confirm, this finding may suggest that parties at the national level adjust their positions on EU integration toward the opinion of the electorate, possibly due to the threats of electoral sanction present in national legislatures. Also, it is useful to note that the bulk of day-to-day policy making in Brussels takes the form of directives, which require the cooperation of national parliaments and bureaucrats for the timely and effective implementation of EU law. Thus the Commission, in seeking to ensure the most efficient execution of EU policy throughout Europe, may strategically restrict the number of proposals it submits at times when national governments express more conservative attitudes towards EU integration and increase legislative activity at times when national level sentiment is more supportive. At the same time, Council members may be reluctant to vote through EU level policies that they would struggle to implement effectively in national parliaments when national level public support for the EU is weak. Thus the relationship between public opinion towards EU Integration and the volume of legislation produced by the EU is the result of a process whereby national level representatives respond to changes in public opinion due to threats of electoral sanction and EU level policy makers increase or restrict outputs strategically in response to national level sentiments towards integration.

It is beyond the scope of the present analysis to address every nuance of the causal mechanism outlined above and consider, for example whether the European public is responsive to the actions of their national level representatives, although a very small but emergent body of literature suggests that it is (e.g. Bartle, Dellepiane-Avellaneda and Stimson, 2011; Wlezien and Soroka, 2012). Nevertheless, evidence that the level of policy outputs in the EU adjusts in response to public attitudes toward the EU in the preceding period would provide a promising starting point for a macro level understanding of EU representation. Therefore, the preceding discussion leads to the foregoing hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Citizens' preferences for EU level policy-making at time t vary in response to the volume of legislation produced by the EU in the previous period.

Hypothesis 2: The volume of legislation produced by the EU at time t varies in response to citizens' preferences for EU level policy-making in the previous period.

While this discussion does not explicitly require that the electorate is attentive to EU level policy-making (only that it is attentive to national level representatives), the thermostatic model indicates that politicians may have little reason to respond to public preferences if the public is inattentive to their actions. Franklin and Wlezien (1997) find that citizens' relative preferences for EU level policy making change in response to changes in the volume of legislative output by the EU and thus hypothesis 1 seeks to confirm and extend this result. Hypothesis 2 is the core interest of this chapter however, and while positive results would still leave open the question of exactly how the representative mechanisms in the EU operate, they would suggest that EU level policy makers are at least somewhat responsive to public opinion.

In testing the responsiveness of decision makers to public opinion, it is important to control for other issues that may be influencing observed changes in the variables. A key factor here is the impact of economic performance on both policy change and public opinion. Existing literature indicates that economic performance (Erikson, Mackuen and Stimson, 2002) and the public's economic expectations (Durr, 1993) affect 'policy mood' and impact on the level of support for the EU (Anderson and Reichart, 1996; Gabel, 1998). In turn, political activity impacts on economic

performance, for example, altering the levels of unemployment and inflation over time (Erikson et. al. 2002). Also, because economic performance may impact on an incumbent's chance for re-election, I expect the impact of EU legislation on national economies to influence a decision-makers willingness to produce more policy at the EU level. Using the same logic, I expect that the public's expectations for a strong (weak) economy will influence the volume of legislation produced by the EU. Thus, economic indicators are an important control in the analysis in order to confirm whether or not public opinion and policy outputs are responding to each other rather than simply responding simultaneously to changing economic conditions.

Related to the economic discussion, some consideration needs to be afforded to the understanding that the EU does not have full competence over policy-making in the European space since national governments maintain control in many areas such as security and defence, employment and social welfare. Unlike national level studies of policy mood where many policy areas are of high salience, contentious and redistributive in nature, scholars often point to the fact that the bulk of legislation made in the EU is technical, of low salience, non-contentious and regulatory.

Researchers that defend the democratic credentials of the EU argue that regulatory policies, being efficiency oriented, aim to benefit the aggregate welfare of society and thus it is appropriate for such policies to be removed from short term electoral pressures and delegated to political elites who have the technical expertise to produce legislative outputs compatible with the broader public preference (Moravcsik, 2002; Majone, 1998). From this perspective, legislative activity in the EU may not respond directly to changes in public opinion but that this finding would not be sufficient to claim that the EU is wholly unresponsive to its electorate.

On the other hand, Hix and Follesdal (2006) note that redistributive policies such as agricultural and cohesion policy, form a core part of EU decision making but can hardly be considered Pareto-improving since there are clear winners and losers resulting from these policies at the individual, regional and country levels. Therefore, although, the relative size of the EU budget is small compared to national level counterparts, I expect national level political actors to be more attentive to public opinion towards the EU in taking actions over redistributive policies that have a direct

economic impact given that both the threat of electoral sanction and public support for the EU are tied to economic performance. Thus the litmus test for whether policy-makers in the EU are responsive to public opinion is to consider the effects of public preferences towards the EU on the output of redistributive policies only. This discussion leads to the following hypothesis

Hypothesis 3: The volume of legislation concerning redistributive policies produced by the EU at time t varies in response to citizen's preferences for EU level policy-making in the previous period.

5.4 Data and Method

Given that public opinion and policy outputs are somewhat abstract concepts, some consideration of how each variable is operationalized is necessary before proceeding with the analysis. Jennings (2009) notes, for example, that there is a conceptual distinction between understanding policy as a) a political commitment to pursue a particular agenda (which is quantified through the volume of legislation or budgetary expenditure devoted to achieving an outcome), b) the sum of activities devoted to the pursuit of a policy goal, e.g. the building of roads, the opening of national borders to foreign workers etc. and c) the consequences of policy intervention manifest, for example, as the overall improved quality of life for the citizenry. In practice, both b) and c) can be difficult to quantify empirically and policy output has thus been typically operationalized as the degree of budgetary expenditure (Erikson, Wright and McIver, 1993; Wlezien, 1995; Soroka and Wlezien, 2010), the volume of legislation produced (Franklin and Wlezien, 1997; Lax and Philips, 2009; Monroe, 1998; Toshkov, 2011) or the level of legislative attention afforded to particular policy areas (Jones and Baumgartner, 2004).

In the context of the present analysis, policy output is operationalized as the volume of directives produced in the EU each year. The limited size and scope of the EU budget makes it an inappropriate measure of policy outputs and both of the two existing studies on responsiveness in the EU have thus relied on the number of legislative acts produced in any one period as an alternative measure of policy-making responsiveness (Franklin and Wlezien, 1997; Toshkov, 2011). Not all

legislative acts are created equal, however, since regulations, directives and decisions vary considerably in their aim and scope. Indeed, the majority of regulations produced each year focus on administrative acts and policy management rather than substantive policy development and change. Further, decisions can be limited in scope as they are typically binding on individuals and organisations rather than the citizenry in general. By contrast directives are the key policy-making instruments for day-to-day decision making in Brussels.

The policy output variable is derived from Kovats (2010) who uses software called Law Leecher to parse information on EU legislation from the PreLex database. PreLex is an online resource that provides important information about legislative and non-legislative acts issued by the Commission since 1976. Importantly for the present study, it contains information about the type of act, the legislative procedure used, the date when the policy was adopted and the policy field to which each act relates. Each data point in the variable is thus the number of directives produced in each year between 1977 and 2008.

Further, because hypothesis 3 focuses on the impact of public opinion on policies that have redistributive effect, an additional variable - 'redistributive policy' - is also used in the analysis. The bulk of the EU budget funds development in agricultural and fisheries and regional support policies¹⁶ and consequently, I classify these policy areas as those policies that have redistributive effect. To ensure consistency with the analysis of overall policy I use a count of the number of directives produced in these policy areas each year to construct the 'redistributive policy' variable. While an alternative method would be to rely on budgetary spending, it is common for studies of policy responsiveness (particularly in American research) to use the volume of legislation produced in different policy areas as a measure of decision-maker activity (Lax and Philips, 2009; Monroe, 1998; Toshkov, 2011). Thus I argue that a count of the number of directives produced each year is a valid alternative to budgetary spending measures.

¹⁶ 73% of the EU's budget was allocated to agricultural spending in 1980 and while this has declined over time, according to the EU's financial framework 2007-2013 (Source: European Commission) 42% of the budget is allocated to agricultural, fisheries and rural development policies, while 44% is spent on competitiveness and cohesion funding.

In respect of the “public opinion” variable, data is derived from standard Euro-barometer surveys (1977-2008), which contain data from twice annual EU wide voter surveys. Again the unit of analysis is yearly data and the autumn wave of these surveys is used to obtain information about public opinion at the end of each yearly period. The Euro-barometer provides one question that taps into public support for the EU and which was asked consistently across the period of analysis. This question asked respondents whether or not they believe their countries membership in the EU is a ‘good thing’, a ‘bad thing’ or ‘neither a good nor bad thing’. This variable is commonly used in the literature to measure citizen support for the EU (e.g. Brineger and Jolly, 2005; Eichenberg and Dalton, 1993; Gabel, 1998; McLaren, 2002; Toshkov, 2011) and consequently the membership question provides a useful proxy for ‘policy mood’. Ideally an index measure of policy mood would be constructed from questions asking respondents whether they would like the EU to engage in more or less legislative activity over a variety of policy areas. Unfortunately such questions were asked in the Euro-barometer surveys sporadically before 1989 and thereafter consistently across 8 policy areas only (by contrast Erikson et al (2002) use 31 policy areas to construct their policy mood variable). Public opinion is, therefore, operationalized as the percentage of respondents in each yearly sample that believe EU membership is a ‘good’ thing.

The analysis also needs to control for the potential impact of economic performance and citizens’ economic expectations on both public opinion and policy. I use the so-called misery index, which is the sum of the employment and inflation rates in the EU each year, to measure economic performance. OECD estimates of rates weighted by population in each member state are used to construct the aggregate EU index. Further, from 1980 onwards the Eurobarometer included a question, which asked respondents about their expectations for the economy in the following 12 months. Thus the economic expectations variable is measured as the percentage of respondents reporting a belief that the economy would get ‘better’ in the following year.

Figures 5.1 plots the public opinion data, number of directives produced per year, the misery index and the economic expectations variable to be used in the analysis.

Figure 5.1 illustrates the familiar history of the public's 'permissive consensus' towards the EU in the early years, the high levels of support in the late 1980's leading towards the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 and the sharp decline in support for membership thereafter. The figure also illustrates a peak in legislative decision-making in the years between the Single European Act and Maastricht, followed by more restricted output afterwards.

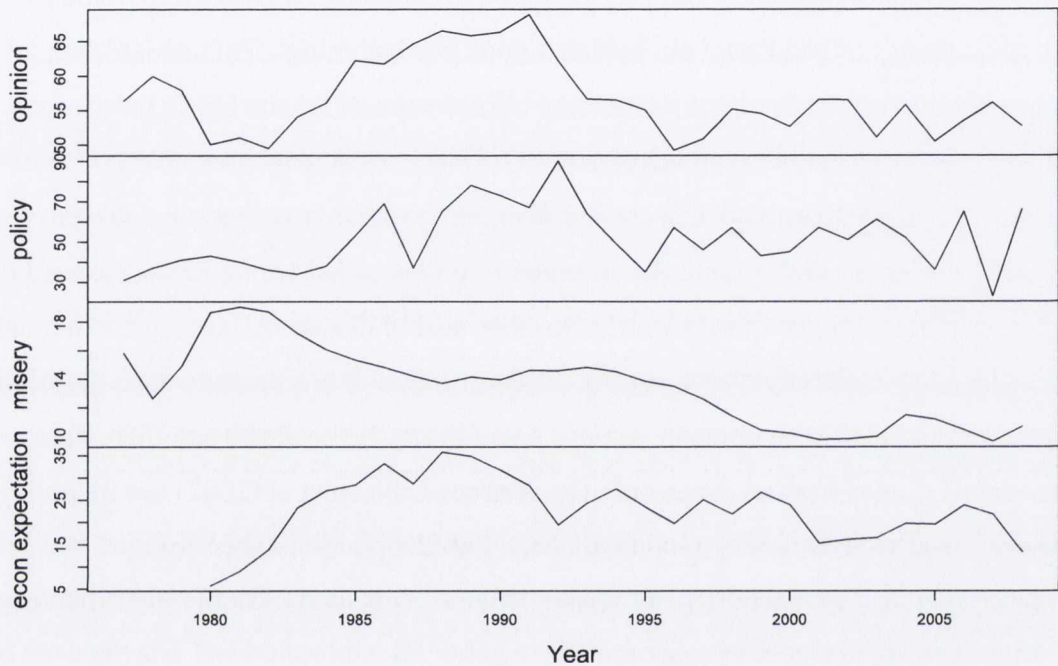


Figure 5.1 Public Opinion towards EU Membership, Policy Outputs in the EU, Misery Index and Public Expectations Towards the Economy, 1977-2008

Source: Eurobarometer 1977-2008 and the Kovats (2010) dataset, derived from PreLex database.

The hypotheses are tested using a vector autoregressive model (VAR) to explore the relationship between public opinion in the EU and the volume of legislative production. This model allows for an examination of potentially endogenous variables so that each variable is explained by its own lagged values and the lagged values of all other variables in the system. The method is useful to the present analysis as it examines causal effects of potentially endogenous variables on each other and considers how much variance in one variable can be attributed to changes in the other variables. For the remainder of the analysis I will first examine a bivariate

VAR to assess each of the hypotheses and the key expectation that legislative output responds to changes in public support for the EU. I will then present three variable VARs that include the economic indicators to test for the robustness of the findings.

5.5 Results and Discussion

Figure 5.2 plots the normalised (mean set to 0) values of support for EU membership and the normalised levels of directives (using a 3 point moving average) produced by the EU each year. The results are reflective of Toshkov's (2011) findings and show a remarkable link between the two series. This initial plot of the series is promising for the theoretical discussion above since it demonstrates a similar movement between a very general measure of policy mood towards the EU and a very specific measure of policy change – the number of directives produced each year.

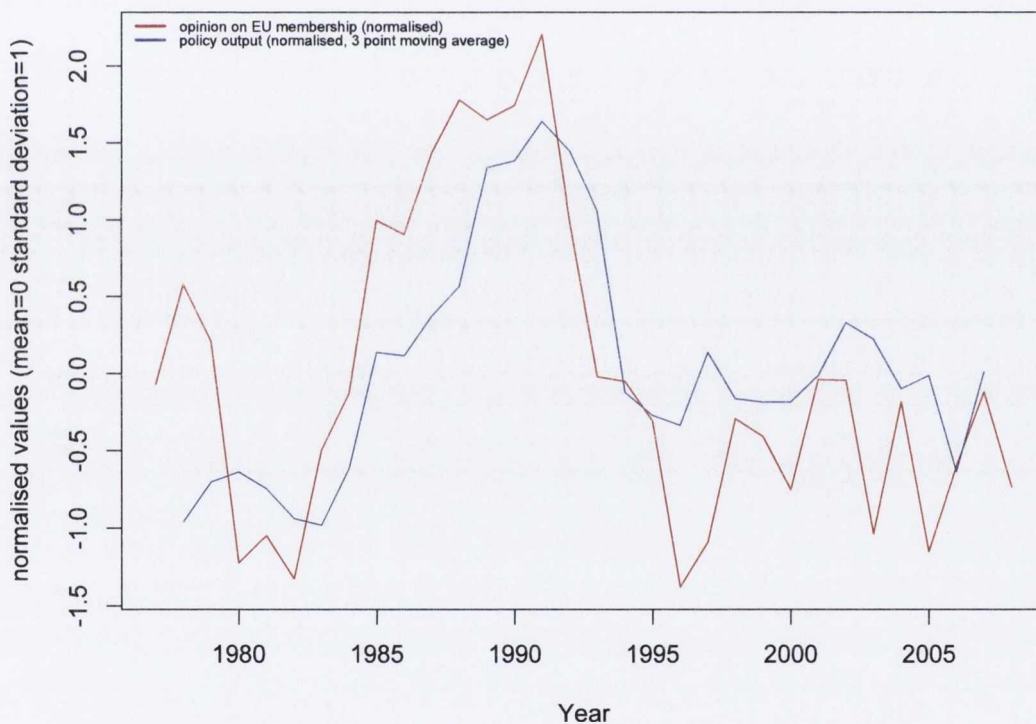


Figure 5.2 Normalised Plot of Opinion on EU Membership and Policy Output 1977-2008 Source: Eurobarometer 1977-2008 and the Kovats (2010) dataset, derived from PreLex database

Next, an important step in the VAR analysis is to identify the appropriate number of lags to be included in the model. Figure 5.3 shows the Cross Correlation Function between the two variables of interest. The CCF helps to identify the lags at which the cross-correlations peak, which in this case is a period of one year where the CCF is maximised at 0.59, its nearest competitor having a value of 0.57 at lag 2. Here, the CCF coupled with a comparison of information criteria (not shown) between models set at increasing lag lengths indicates that a one-year lag is appropriate for the bivariate model.

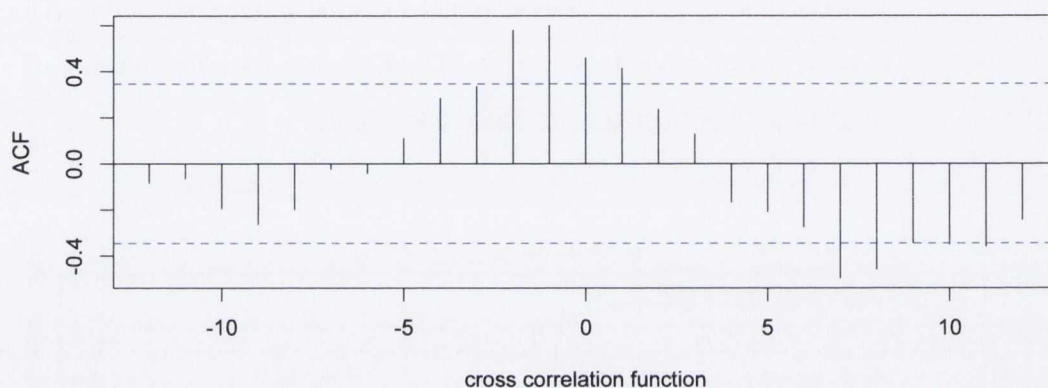


Figure 5.3 Cross Correlation Function for Opinion on EU Membership and Policy Output.

Table 5.1 reports the OLS regression estimates for the bivariate VAR. The table shows results for the both the total policy model, which tests hypothesis 1 and 2, and the model restricted to redistributive policy only, which tests for hypothesis 3. The auto-correlation functions of the residuals do not demonstrate the presence of autocorrelation¹⁷. Further, the moduli of the eigenvalues in the companion matrix are less than one, indicating stability of the model (Pfaff, 2008). However, as it is difficult to interpret the regression coefficients directly, I conduct Granger causality tests on the VAR(1) model to examine the effect of the variables on each other. The results of the granger tests are reported in table 5.2.

¹⁷ Durbin Watson, Portmanteau and Breusch-Godfrey tests further confirm the absence of autocorrelation.

Table 5.1 OLS Estimates for VAR(1) Model.

	Public Opinion/Total Policy		Public Opinion/Redistributive Policy	
	<i>Opinion</i>	<i>Policy</i>	<i>Opinion</i>	<i>Policy</i>
Public Opinion t-1	0.75 (0.13)***	1.75(0.47)***	0.82(0.14)***	0.62(0.18)***
Policy t-1	0.02(0.04)	-0.03(0.16)	-0.06(0.12)	0.46(0.14)***
R2	0.6	0.39	0.6	0.62
Durbin-Watson	1.82	2.28	1.93	1.78
N	31	31	31	31

Standard errors in parentheses ***= $p < 0.01$

Source: Eurobarometer 1977-2008 and the Kovats (2010) dataset, derived from PreLex database

Table 5.2 Granger Causality Tests of Bivariate VAR(1) Model

Cause:	Effect On:	
	<i>Public Opinion</i>	<i>Policy</i>
Total Policy		
Public Opinion		13.82***
Policy	0.14	
Redistributive Policy		
Public Opinion		10.87***
Policy	0.33	

Note: Coefficients are F-statistics. Standard errors in parentheses ***= $p < 0.01$

Source: Eurobarometer 1977-2008 and the Kovats (2010) dataset, derived from PreLex database

These tests examine whether or not the past values of one variable X can better explain the present values of another variable Y than the past values of the Y variable alone. In respect of both total policy and where the model is restricted to redistributive policy only, the table indicates clearly that we can refute the null hypothesis of no causation and say that public opinion on EU membership Granger-causes policy output¹⁸. These results provide support for both hypothesis 2 and hypothesis 3. However, the tests do not show a similar result on the other half of the reciprocal link. The coefficients of the granger tests estimating the effect of past policy output on public opinion do not reach levels of significance and therefore do not support hypothesis 1.

The dynamics of the VAR(1) model are further explored by examining the impulse response function (IRF), shown in figure 5.4 and 5.5. The IRF examines the response of a variable in the system to a shock of one standard deviation to the residuals over

¹⁸ The hypothesis of instantaneous causality was refuted in all cases using Wald-type tests.

time. Figure 5.4 shows that a shock to public opinion leads to a significant increase in policy output that peaks at period 2 and fades by period 9. By contrast, figure 5.5 demonstrates that the effect of a shock of one standard deviation from policy activity to public opinion is small and not significant. Similar results were found for the IRF (not shown) when policy was restricted to redistributive policy areas. These findings demonstrate further evidence for hypotheses 2 and 3, but not for hypothesis 1.

It should be noted that these results are in contrast to Franklin and Wlezien's (1997) earlier study, which argued that the thermostat model requires public preferences to be responsive to changes in legislative activity. Nevertheless, the discussion in section 5.3 above suggests that public reaction to EU level policy making is not a prerequisite for the responsiveness of decision-makers, only that citizens are, at minimum, responsive to political activity at the national level. The findings here cannot make any inferences into whether or not public responsiveness to national legislative behaviour is actually taking place and empirical studies on this issue outside of the US are rare (Bartle, Dellepiane-Avellaneda and Stimson, 2011; Wlezien and Soroka, 2012) but I argue that the absence of a reciprocal link, evidenced here, is not fatal to the existence of political responsiveness in the EU, particularly given that the results clearly support hypotheses 2 and 3.

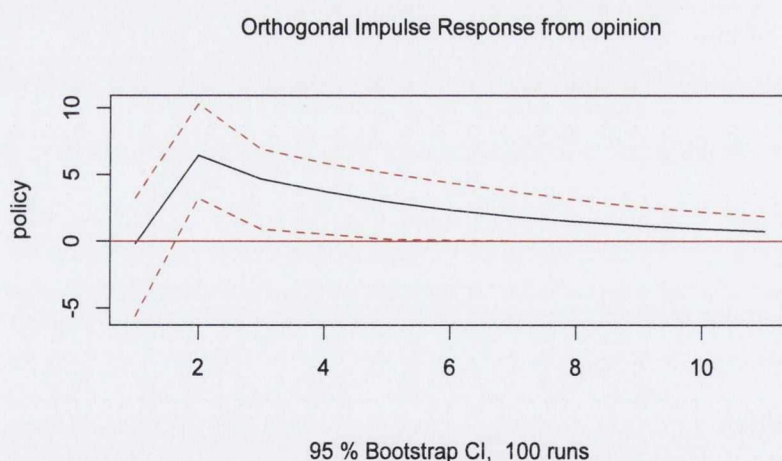


Figure 5.4 Impulse response function from public opinion on EU membership to policy output. *Note: calculated from VAR(1) model in table 5.1*

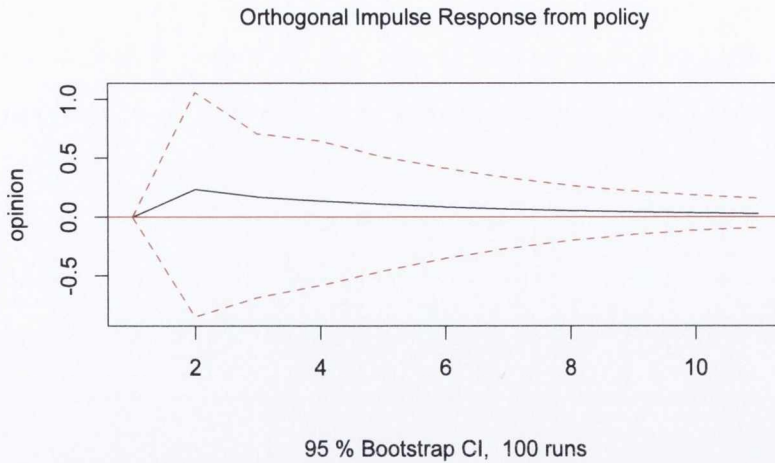


Figure 5.5 Impulse response function from policy output to public opinion on EU membership. *Note: calculated from VAR(1) model in table 5.1*

While the Granger causality tests and the IRF indicate that policy output is responsive to public opinion in terms of both total policy and when the analysis is restricted to redistributive policy areas, they do not demonstrate the dynamic relationship between variables over time. However, forecast error variance decomposition (FEVD) allows for an examination of these relationships. FEVD estimates the amount of variation in one variable that can be attributed to its own past values and the past values of the other variables in the model over specified time periods. Table D1 in Appendix D presents the full table of FEVD results from the analysis. In terms of overall legislative activity, the FEVD indicates that after five time periods 36% of the variance in the number of directives produced can be attributed to the influence of public attitudes to EU membership. Further, in respect of the EU's redistributive policies, the results are even larger as the FEVD indicates that 49% of the variance in the production of redistributive policies can be explained by past values in public opinion after five time periods. This finding is promising since it suggests that not only are policy makers attentive to public opinion in general but that they are particularly responsive to policies with redistributive effects that have a direct impact on national economies where member states clearly stand to gain or lose from the allocation of budgetary spending.

5.5.1 Robustness Checks

Overall, the results are encouraging and show support for the theoretical expectation that the volume of legislative output produced by the EU varies in response to changes in public opinion although it appears that EU citizens are not similarly responsive to changes in policy production. However, a major concern in time-series analysis is that the nature of the data used in the model can lead to spurious estimates, which may compromise the validity of the findings. In particular, Granger and Newbold (1974) note that regressing non-stationary variables on each other are problematic as regressions of integrated time-series are biased towards a false rejection of the null hypothesis, increasing the likelihood of reporting spurious relationships. One indicator that regression estimates might be spurious follows an examination of the R-square and Durbin-Watson (DW) statistics. Large R-square estimates coupled with small DW values are symptomatic of spurious regressions. Here, the results of table 5.1 are encouraging as the R-square values are consistently smaller compared to the larger DW statistics.

It is also necessary to establish the stationarity of the time series to confirm the validity of the model estimates. A series is stationary if its mean and variance are constant over time and testing for the presence of unit roots can help identify the nature of the time series. Table D2 in Appendix D show the results of Augmented Dickey Fuller (ADF) tests on the variables. The tests indicate that the variables are non-stationary and are integrated of order one (i.e. I(1) processes) since first differencing of the data creates a stationary series. Theoretically, it is sometimes suggested that percentage based variables, such as the public opinion measure used here, cannot be non-stationary as the data points are bound between 0 and 100 and that because the number of observations in political science data are typically small what is often taken for unit roots are only short term trends (e.g. Brandt, 2007; Toshkov, 2011). Nevertheless, results here demonstrate that random walk behavior cannot be excluded and thus caution must be taken in interpreting the results of the analysis.

In cases where non-stationarity is suspected, differencing of the variables is often recommended but, in VAR models, such differencing can lead to losses of

information about the long run relationships between the variables (Toshkov, 2011; Jennings, 2009). This may be particularly important for the present analysis as policy-making may be insulated from short-term changes in public opinion but still be responsive to long-run preferences. It is useful to note then, that when variables are integrated of the same order, regressions of non-stationary series that are co-integrated can produce systems that are stationary (Engle and Granger, 1987). Variables that are co-integrated move together over time and although not identical, will not drift too far from each other despite individual trends. Table C2 reports the results of a two-step Engle-Granger test for co-integration in the bivariate VAR, which implies co-integration both in the case of the total policy and redistributive policy models since the null hypothesis of non-stationarity in the residuals of each regression is refuted. Consequently, I conclude that despite evidence of non-stationarity in the time series, the VAR results are valid owing to the co-integration of the resulting system.

5.5.2 Multivariate Analysis – Economic Indicators

So far I have only considered the results of a bivariate VAR(1) model and although the findings provide evidence that the level of policy produced in the EU is responsive to public opinion towards membership, one must be cautious in concluding that this means politicians are actually responding to changes in public preferences since it is possible that both citizens and policy makers are responding to some other unobserved variable. While it is not the focus of this study to consider several alternative predictors affecting policy and opinion, one likely candidate of intervening variable is the economy.

As discussed in section 5.3 it is theoretically plausible that changes to the economy affect levels of citizen preferences towards the EU, the policy positions of political elites and the production of legislative outputs. Therefore, it cannot be ruled out that what I observe in the analysis as responsiveness may simply be contemporaneous reactions to economic performance. Further, past research in the US indicates that the ‘policy mood’ of the electorate changes according to public expectations that the economy will grow or shrink in the immediate future (Durr, 1993). Similarly in the EU case, individual level analyses have shown that public perceptions of the economy

(as opposed to actual economic changes) influence the degree to which a voter expresses support for the EU (see chapter 2 of this dissertation for further discussion). Therefore, to check the robustness of the foregoing results I test a four variable VAR that includes a misery index variable to measure economic performance¹⁹ and an economic expectations variable.

Once again, I test for stationarity and co-integration before running the VAR model. Table D2 in Appendix D shows that both the misery index and economic expectation variables are integrated I(1) processes and thus non-stationary. To test for co-integration, I use a Johansen test, which is a more appropriate measure than the two step Engle-Granger approach when considering a multivariate VAR. The test identifies the total number of co-integrating vectors with reference to the lags of each variable in the underlying VAR. As with the bivariate case, Akaike's Information Criterion (AIC) suggests using a lag order of 1. The resulting Johansen test statistics indicate that there is one co-integrating vector in the total policy model but more than two co-integrating vectors when the model is restricted to re-distributive policies, suggesting that results should be interpreted conservatively.

Table 5.3 shows the regression results for the four variable VAR and table 5.4 presents the granger causality statistics for each pair of variables. The results of table 5.3 are similar to the bivariate case. Public support for EU membership 'granger causes' levels of legislative output, not the other way around and this finding appears robust to the inclusion of the two economic indicators. The misery index does not have a significant effect on public opinion or total policy output and while the index reaches significance at the 10% level in the redistributive policy model, the effect of public opinion at t-1 on the level of redistributive policy at t is significant also. Further in table 5.4, the granger causality tests do not demonstrate any evidence that either the misery index or the economic expectations variable have a significant effect on either the level of policy output or the level of public opinion on EU membership.

¹⁹ The model was also tested using two separate economic measures for employment and inflation, as the study by Erikson et al (2002) suggest that these predictors may have opposing effects on levels of public opinion. In the present case, however, the model was not significantly different than when using the misery index measure.

Further, the economic expectations variable yields an interesting result, indicating that the variable 'granger causes' the electorate's attitudes towards membership but not the other way around. Moreover, the misery index at $t-1$ appears to influence public expectations for a growing or shrinking economy at t . In the context of the theoretical expectations in section 5.3 and 5.4 these findings are encouraging. They suggest that economic performance influences the electorate's expectations for future economic growth and that these expectations in turn influence public attitudes towards the EU. Contrary to Franklin and Wlezien (1997) the results here do not demonstrate that citizens respond directly to changes to the level of policy at each time period, which is not consistent with the thermostatic model, but, following Erikson et al. (2002) the foregoing theoretical discussion in section 5.3 and 5.4 does not require that they do so. In sum, the findings show that changes in the volume of legislative output are associated with changes to public attitudes towards the EU providing support for the core hypotheses of this chapter and confirming that they are robust to the inclusion of economic indicators.

Table 5.3 OLS Estimates for Multivariate VAR(1) Model

	Public Opinion/Total Policy					Public Opinion/Redistributive Policy				
	Opinion	Policy	Misery Index	Economic Expectations		Opinion	Policy	Misery Index	Economic Expectations	
Public Opinion t-1	0.42 (0.16)**	2.48 (0.65)***	-0.02 (0.06)	-0.09 (0.23)		0.52 (0.17)***	0.57 (0.25)**	0.08 (0.03)*	-0.03 (0.24)	
Policy t-1	0.03 (0.05)	-0.24 (0.18)	-0.01 (0.01)	0.06 (0.06)		-0.05 (0.12)	0.31(0.16)*	0.01 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.15)	
Misery Index t-1	0.33 (0.22)	-1.27 (0.97)	0.9 (0.08)***	0.82 (0.34)**		0.37 (0.24)	0.74 (0.37)*	0.88 (0.04)***	0.65 (0.34)*	
Economic Expectations	0.35 (0.12)***	-0.37 (0.47)	0.001 (0.05)	0.58 (0.16)***		0.34 (0.12)**	0.12 (0.18)	-0.06 (0.02)*	0.75 (0.17)***	
N	28	28	28	28		28	28	28	28	

Source: Eurobarometer 1977-2008 and the Kovats (2010) dataset, derived from PreLex database. Standard errors in parentheses * $p < 0.1$ ** $p < 0.05$ *** $p < 0.01$

Table 5.4 Granger Causality Tests for Four Variable VAR (1) Model

<i>Cause:</i>	<i>Effect On:</i>			
	Public Opinion	Policy	Misery Index	Economic Expectations
Public Opinion		19.31***	2.18	0.01
Policy	0.05		1.48	0.18
Misery Index	0.56	0.52		4.53*
Economic Expectations	6.59***	4.57*	0.27	
Redistributive Policy				
Public Opinion		9.34***	2.83*	0.01
Policy	0.11		2.66	0.58
Misery Index	0.56	0.65		4.52**
Economic Expectations	6.59***	5.43*	0.29	

*Note: Results are F-statistics from bivariate granger causality tests. *= $p < 0.1$ **= $p < 0.05$ ***= $p < 0.01$ Source: Eurobarometer 1977-2008 and the Kovats (2010) dataset, derived from PreLex database.*

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter set out to explore the far side of representation, namely whether or not there is a link between public attitudes towards EU membership and legislative activity in the EU. Building on a macro level understanding of political responsiveness (e.g. Erikson, Mackuen and Stimson, 2002; Franklin and Wlezien, 1997; Toshkov, 2011), the analysis shows that the volume of directives produced by the EU follows the contours of the electorates support for EU membership. It cannot be definitively concluded from this study that politicians in the EU are actually paying attention public preferences rather than varying concurrently due to other unobserved effects, but the results are encouraging, particularly as they appear robust to the effects of economic predictors.

Moreover, the results offer some promising empirical evidence towards the theoretical discussion on the EU's democratic deficit. Those who question the deficit, often do so on the basis that policy making in the EU is highly technical, lacks salience and is regulatory in nature such that low responsiveness towards public opinion is not fatal to the systems democratic credentials (Crombez, 2003; Majone 1998; Moravscik, 2002). Implicit in this discussion is that where policies are not pareto improving, i.e. where they have redistributive effects, then one would expect EU decision makers to be more responsive to public attitudes (Hix and Follesdal, 2006; Majone, 1998). The

findings here show that not only does the total volume of legislative activity change in response to the level of support for EU membership but when restricted to redistributive policy areas, the volume of legislative output is even more sensitive to public opinion. Of course this says little about the degree to which EU policy-making is attentive to public preferences over specific policies or whether decision-makers move particular policies in the direction that the public favours. Nevertheless, the analysis does suggest that a democratic deficit, where it might exist, does not lie at the level of aggregated policy output since it shows that the pace of EU level decision making slows down at times when citizens are less supportive of the system.

An additional element of the democratic deficit debate is that citizens typically have a very weak understanding of the EU system and thus are unlikely to respond to changes in the level of legislative activity stemming from its institutions. Confirming this the results here show little evidence that the public complete the reciprocal link, required by the thermostatic model, by reacting to changes in the volume of EU legislation. This is in contrast to Franklin and Wlezien's (1997) earlier study who indicate that public support for EU integration varies in response to changes in legislative activity.

It is worth noting, however, that the model of responsiveness outlined in this analysis does not require that citizens are highly attentive to political activity at the EU level, but only that they are attentive to the policy positions and actions of national level representatives. In this respect the results are somewhat encouraging, as they demonstrate that the electorate pays some attention to economic performance in evaluating economic expectations and, in turn, relies on their expectations of future economic growth in forming attitudes towards the EU.

One limitation of this chapter then, is that it raises as many questions as it answers, particularly in relation to the causal mechanism that links public opinion to policy output. For example, the analysis leaves open the question of whether or not public sentiment towards the EU is driven by the political behaviour of national level representatives as much as perceptions of economic factors. Macro level studies of responsiveness in national European parliaments are rare, although Wlezien and Soroka (2012) provide some evidence that the thermostatic model holds outside the

US. Also, Bartle et al (2011) find that a policy mood model is appropriate in the case of the UK where public opinion responds to changes in national spending. Future research then, that further explores the responsiveness of public mood towards national level policy-making across member states, would be useful in order to further test the causal mechanisms linking public preferences to EU policy activity.

Finally, in the context of the core question raised by this project about the quality of EU representation, this, and the preceding two chapters construct an image of the EU as a moderately representative institution that is neither a glowing example of representative democracy nor a quasi-despotic legislative system ruled by unaccountable bureaucratic elites who are unresponsive to public preferences.

Rather, at the micro level, parties are shown here to be somewhat congruent with the issue positions of their voters, although this varies considerably across policy areas and is influenced by citizen's voting behaviour (see chapter 3). Further, issue congruence is shown to be weaker for some parties since there is considerable variation between how parties and voters prioritise policy issues (see chapter 4). Moreover, at the macro level, the present chapter provides evidence there is some degree of attentiveness by decision-makers to changes in public opinion.

However, as discussed in the introduction to the dissertation, there are many ways of conceptualising representation beyond its substantive variant. Thus, the next chapter offers a slightly different analysis and shifts attention towards one such conceptualisation, namely descriptive representation in the EU. Specifically, the goal of the chapter is not to move too far away from the core aims of the present discourse, which is to explore the degree to which the EU represents the substantive interests of its citizens, but instead attempts to open empirical analysis to alternative understandings of what it means for a citizen to be represented. Consequently, the next chapter turns to the question of whether the descriptive representation of women matters for the substantive representation of their interests.

Chapter 6

Does Descriptive Representation Matter?

An Analysis of the Descriptive

Representation of Women in the EU

Recent studies that express concern over the continued under-participation of women in politics rest on the assumption that a greater balance between the number of male and female representatives in democracies leads to the greater substantive representation of women's policy preferences. This paper advances this discussion by asking if the descriptive representation of women is also important at the EU level. Using the European Election Study and European Election Candidate Study of 2009, I find that differences between policy preferences of men and women in the EU do exist and that these differences are replicated between male and female candidates in European elections. Further, I find some evidence that increasing the number of female MEP's leads to greater congruence between voters and parties in general but does not increase congruence between parties and female voters specifically.

6.1 Introduction

Prompted by the finding that political representation is an activity that remains dominated by men, democratic scholarship and the general public discourse alike have sought to understand the continuing low participation rate of women in political life. This research has indicated that electorates do not exhibit any significant bias for or against the election of female candidates (Engeli and Lutz, 2012; McElroy and Marsh, 2010; Seltzer, Newman and Leighton, 1997) but that women may self-select out of the political profession, believing that they are less qualified to run (Lawless and Fox, 2005) and that parties may lack a strategic incentive to promote women, where women's representation is not a politicised issue (McElroy and Marsh, 2010,11). Consequently, such findings have stimulated debates concerning the role of gender quotas within parties and legislatures that aim to increase female descriptive representation in national parliaments (e.g. Celis, Krook and Meier, 2011). Implicit in these discussions is the assumption that it is desirable, in modern democracies, for

there to be a balance between the numbers of men and women in politically representative roles that is reflective of the male to female ratio in the population. This is the descriptive representation of women and the theoretical literature puts forth several arguments in favour of it. For example, women may be best placed to represent policy interests that are of particular salience to women as a group and thus increasing the participation of women in parliaments facilitates greater substantive representation of policy issues that affect them directly (Celis, 2009; Philips, 1995; Pitkin, 1967). Furthermore, Mansbridge (1999) notes that the entry to elected office of representatives from historically disadvantaged social groups enhances the quality of political deliberations and increases the democratic legitimacy of institutions. Moreover, Susan Dovi (2007, p308) argues that the presence of women in parliaments is necessary to enhance the trust and legitimacy of the political system.

Thus the desirability of descriptive representation is premised on three conditions, namely that a) men and women, at least on certain political issues, systematically differ in their preferences over policy, b) gender differences in terms of these policy positions are replicated between male and female political representatives and c) where differences between men and women are shown to exist, female representatives are more congruent with their female supporters than they are with their male ones. The purpose of this chapter is to explore these conditions in the context of EU politics and ask if the descriptive representation of women in the EU is important for the substantive representation of their policy interests.

The existing empirical research has shown that gendered differences do exist in the case of both voter and representative attitudes across a range of policy issues, although these studies are typically limited to policy areas that come under the heading of 'women's interests' such as childcare policy, abortion rights and equality (e.g, Cambell, Childs and Lovenduski, 2009; Lovenduski and Norris, 2003; Bratton and Ray, 2002; Swers, 1998). Further, this scholarship has also shown that gender can affect the actions of political representatives in office such that a greater number of women in decision-making positions can impact on policy outcomes (Bratton and Ray, 2002; Swers, 1998).

However, while such findings imply that increasing the participation of women in parliaments can enhance the substantive representation of women's policy preferences, little empirical research has directly explored the degree to which female representatives are congruent with the policy positions of their female supporters. Moreover, the majority of studies on women's descriptive representation have conducted single country analyses only and large-N comparative research that takes account of country level effects on representation is rare (however, see Schwindt-Bayer and Mischler, 2005 for an exception). Further, little is understood about the level and effects of descriptive representation in the multi-level governance structure of the EU and yet gender equality has been an issue in EU politics since the 1957 Treaty of Rome and has been considered a fundamental principle of the functioning of EU democracy. Indeed, on average, a greater number of female politicians in each member state have been returned to the European Parliament than have been elected in their respective national parliaments (see figure 6.1) and yet, in both the feminist and representation literature, the EU has often been overlooked as a site where the descriptive representation of women may occur (Kantola, 2009).

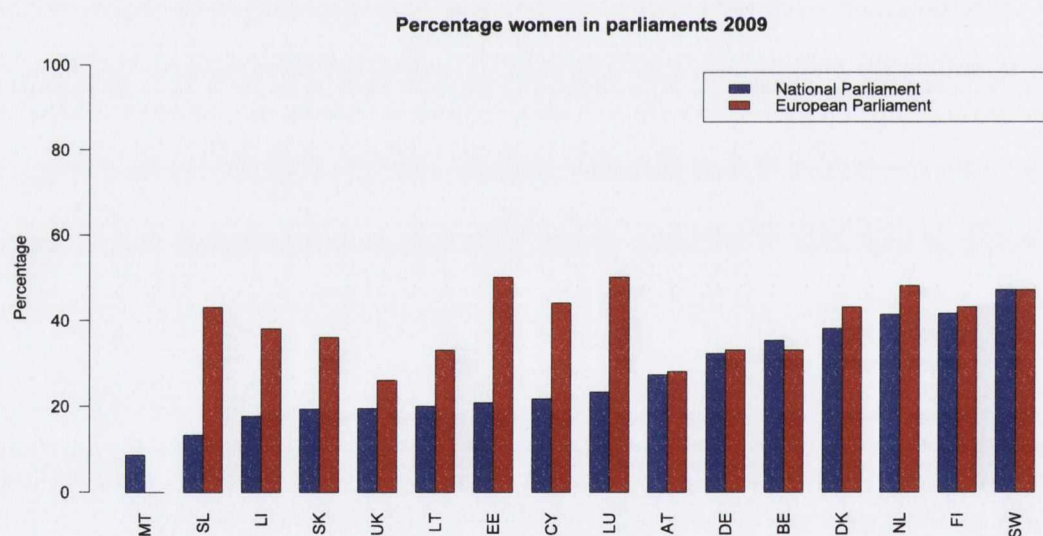


Figure 6.1: Percentage of women in national and European parliaments 2009. *Source, EES 2009 contextual data and <http://www.europarl.europa.eu> accessed on 14/10/2012*

This chapter seeks to address these issues and contributes to the existing state of the research by considering the descriptive representation of women in the EU. In

particular, where the preceding chapters of this project focused on measuring the substantive representation of public interests by exploring both its determinants and its effects in the EU space, the present chapter is a ‘first-cut’ attempt to connect a broader theoretical understanding of political representation (e.g. descriptive representation) to the empirical research on policy congruence in the EU. Through an empirical analysis of the policy attitudes of voters and candidates in the EP derived from responses to the European Election Study 2009 and European Election Candidate Study 2009, the paper considers three core research questions. First, do men and women in the EU systematically differ in their attitudes across a range of policy areas? Second, are these differences (if any) replicated between male and female political representatives in the EU? Finally, are the policy positions of female representatives more congruent with the policy attitudes of women voters than with their male counterparts?

In order to address these questions, the remainder of the chapter proceeds as follows. Section 6.2 outlines the theoretical argument that descriptive representation supports and facilitates the substantive representation of women’s policy preferences. Next the role of descriptive representation of women in the EU is discussed in section 6.3 before section 6.4 outlines the key hypotheses. The data and method are described in section 6.5 and finally sections 6.6 and 6.7 present the key results and offer a discussion of the main findings.

6.2 Theorising the Descriptive Representation of Women

Descriptive representation occurs when political actors are a ‘mirror image’ of those they represent (Pitkin, 1967). For a political institution to be descriptively representative, its composition needs to be a ‘microcosm’ of the population on whose behalf it acts, reflecting the diversity of the citizenry in terms of gender, religion, ethnicity etc. This conceptualisation is different from, but related to, the common operationalization of representation as substantive, whereby political representatives must act in a manner that is responsive to the policy interests of the citizens they represent. Thus, while the key test of substantive representation is whether political actors reflect the policy positions of their voters and take action in a manner consistent with those preferences, the central measure of descriptive representation is

that the political actor shares in the contextual characteristics of their supporters. From this starting point then, a growing literature in political science has been driven by concerns about the continued underrepresentation of women as a group (Bratton-Ray, 2002; Cowell-Meyers and Langbein, 2009; Campbell, Childs and Lovenduski, 2009; Engeli and Lutz, 2012; Mansbridge, 2005; McElroy and Marsh, 2010; Seltzer, Newman and Leighton, 1997)

These works raise several interesting questions about political representation, such as why and under what circumstances is it necessary for the ratio of men and women in political office to reflect that of the population. For example, 'critical mass' theory argues that the impact of the increased representation of women in parliament is conditional on the proportion of women within the legislature. In other words, the percentage of women within political life has to reach a 'critical mass' before female participation can impact on policy and that a mere 'token' number of women would be insufficient to increase the prioritisation of women's interests in the policy making process.

However, Kanter's threshold hypothesis has been criticised on theoretical grounds since it remains unclear what exact percentage of women is needed to create a critical mass, that adding more women may lead to a backlash by men and that certain male politicians may be just as competent at furthering a 'female-friendly' agenda as women (Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers 2007; Bratton 2005; Cowell, Meyers and Langebein, 2009). Also, in the empirical scholarship, limited evidence has been uncovered to support this theoretical expectation, not least because few legislatures have sufficient numbers of women large enough to appropriately test for the effect of a critical mass (Bratton and Ray 2002; Swindt-Bayer and Mischler, 2005).

Debates over the validity of critical mass theory notwithstanding however, these arguments mostly assume the existence of an *a priori* condition that men and women in the population differ in their preferences over policy. Thus, the core assumption is that descriptive representation is important precisely because of its link with the substantive variant. If women can be considered to have shared interests then female politicians should be best placed to 'act for' female citizens and so more women in parliament should improve the degree of advocacy in favour of a female-friendly

policy agenda within governments (Bratton-Ray, 2002; Campbell, Childs and Lovenduski, 2009; Cowell-Meyers and Langbein, 2009; Mansbridge, 2005) The goal of the present chapter is to examine this assumption in the EU case.

The theoretical literature varies considerably on the question of whether or not female politicians are best placed to represent the interests of other women. For example, in "The Politics of Presence", Philips (1995) argues that women, due to similarities in life-experiences, share a common group identity over political interests such as child-care, abortion and equality. Consequently, only when present in the deliberative decision making processes of legislatures can women have their policy interests realised. However, other scholars suggest that descriptive and substantive representation need not necessarily be linked and argue that the sex of a candidate may not be important so long as the interests of their constituents are represented in parliament²⁰ (Mansbridge, 2003). Therefore, if descriptive representation is to matter, it must be first established that there are policy areas in which the preferences of men and women systematically differ and that female decision makers in political institutions reflect and act upon the preferences of their female supporters on those issues. If men and women do not differ in their preferences, or if female policy-makers do not place a premium on representing the interests of their female supporters in those areas where men and women are shown to differ, then one may question the degree to which a gender-balanced legislature is necessary for effective political representation.

On this issue, the empirical literature has delivered somewhat mixed results. For example, in considering whether or not men and women differ in terms of their policy preferences, Lovenduski and Norris (2003) in a study of British politics find that, once they control for the effects of party, male and female politicians exhibit no systematic differences of opinion on issues such as the economy, Europe or moral traditionalism, although they find some variation among issues that may be categorised as women's interests, such as equality and affirmative action. Further, in respect of the extent to which female politicians may champion a 'female-friendly' policy agenda, studies have shown a link between participation rates of women in

²⁰ Although Mansbridge admits that practical requirements necessary to equitably represent both male and female interests may be prohibitive in complex society.

legislatures and an increase in policy outputs that focus specifically on women's issues (Bratton and Ray 2002; Reingold 2000; Swers 2002).

Research in the US yielded a different result indicating that even where dissimilarities between male and female legislators attitudes towards women's policy issues do exist, they do not prioritise these policy issues in a differential manner (Thomas, 1994).

This suggests that even if one sees greater congruence of issue preferences between female citizens and politicians, this may not necessarily translate into the delivery of legislative outputs, if political elites do not view so called women's interests as a priority irrespective of their gender.

6.2.1 Women as an 'Interest Group'

Of course one of the key tasks of these studies is in identifying issues where women may be expected to hold different preferences to men and, as the foregoing discussion suggests, efforts to classify women as a specific social group with identifiable attitudes is an on-going theoretical concern in the literature. On the one hand descriptive representation assumes that there are clear policy areas where women can be expected to share attitudes that differ from the positions of men. On the other hand, to identify men and women as fixed groupings rather than being members of interchangeable categories is overly simplistic and does not reflect the diversity of attitudes that may exist in a given policy space (Wangernaud, 2009; Diez, 2003).

Indeed, there are many factors which influence and shape a voters political attitudes, e.g. religion, family background, class, party identification, education, wealth, of which gender is only one. In a classic discussion of societal cleavages, Lipset and Rokkan (1967) argued that other distinctions within society e.g. Catholic versus Protestant or workers versus capital, were dominant in structuring party competition and that any residual gendered differences were absorbed by these dominant dimensions. Here, both men and women may situate themselves in the policy space according to religion, class or party identification rather than on the basis of gender. Thus a non-religious, left-leaning woman may be closer to an equally non-religious man in terms of her preferences over abortion than to a religious, right-leaning woman. Young (2000) takes this argument further suggesting that although social

groups are structured around contextual dimensions such as gender, race, religion etc., these groups cannot be defined by similarity of opinion and therefore women cannot be represented on the basis of interest but only on the basis of the social perspective of the group that derives from their structural position in society.

On the other hand, Philips (1995, p68) argues that while the universality of women's interests may be refuted, gendered interests nevertheless exist by virtue of the way in which modern society is constituted. She states that the existence of a variety of preferences amongst women does not undermine the concept that interests may be gendered. It is sufficient to establish the existence of difference between the interests of men and women albeit without the universality of opinion among women as a group. Underpinning this argument is the assumption that political preferences are, largely, driven by rational self-interest²¹ such that if one takes account of other contextual dimensions which may also shape citizen attitudes over policy, women are likely to adopt preferences which serve their self-interest whether or not they also stand to serve the interests of men. For example, one might expect that a woman, within the constraints of her structural position in society (determined by issues such as race, class, religion etc.), may adopt a more liberal attitude towards abortion policy, than a similarly positioned man, because it is in her self-interest to do so. Further, one can hypothesise that because women are typical beneficiaries of equality legislation, they are likely to adopt more liberal positions over equality issues in general than their male counterparts.

This conceptualisation is in line with Wängnerud (2000) who understands women's interests to encompass all policy areas that can increase female autonomy and, therefore, may be defined as policies which seek to increase child-care, promote equality, improve the welfare state and support rights to bodily integrity (for example, issues relating to abortion rights). The empirical literature offers some evidence of such differences in the preferences of men and women. For example, Lovenduski and Norris (2003) showed that attitudes of British MP's vary across gender in respect of

²¹ While individual rational self-interest is a common assumption in political science literature, and is the approach adopted for the remainder of this analysis, several useful studies exist that highlight how political preferences may also be shaped by other factors including ideology, fairness, framing and asymmetries of information (e.g. Bartels, 2003; Chong and Druckman, 2007; Esarey, Salmon and Barrilleaux, 2012).

issues such as affirmative action and support for equal opportunities although no significant differences were found over policy, more generally. Further, in a US study, Poggione (2004) found that female state legislators expressed more liberal preferences over welfare policy than men. Moreover, Campbell, Childs and Lovenduski (2009) demonstrate that attitudinal differences between men and women over gender equality in Britain are reproduced amongst political elites.

Consequently, these studies indicate that, even taking account of alternative cleavages that dominate attitude formation, gendered differences in preferences may exist in the policy space. The purpose of this chapter then, is to develop this research in the context of the EU since a finding that differences in policy preferences exist between men and women over 'women's interest' issues and a finding that these differences are reproduced at the elite level such that female representatives are more congruent with their female voters than their male ones on these issue areas, would make a convincing case for the importance of promoting the descriptive representation of women in the EU.

6.3 Representation of Women in the EU

Studies on the EU's capacity to serve as an effective representative institution have been dominated by analyses of policy congruence between voters and parties (e.g. Lefkofridi and Casado-Asensio, 2011; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2000, Mattila and Raunio, 2006, Van der Eijk, Van der Brug and Franklin, 1999). In other words, scholars of EU representation have prioritised investigations into the level of substantive representation that citizens enjoy in the EU space. Little is known, however, about how the EU serves as an instrument of descriptive representation or if a greater number of female decision makers in the EU can increase the substantive representation of their interests, and yet there are several reasons why the EU may serve as a useful site for the study of women's participation in elected office.

First, comparatively more women tend to be elected to the EP than to national parliaments although the proportion of women elected in each member state varies

considerably²². For member states that use majoritarian voting systems at the national level, some of this difference may be explained by the fact that proportional representation systems, such as is found in EP elections, tend to return more women to office than majoritarian systems do (Norris, 1985; Matland, 1998; Siaroff, 2000). Further, scholars have highlighted that the style of politics in the EP may be more women friendly than other political bodies, as decision making tends to be less confrontational and, as a relatively new institution, male hegemony is less entrenched than in national parliaments (Kantola, 2009, p390; Footitt, 1998, p51). Arguably this may encourage more female politicians to seek out office in the EU rather than in the national arena.

Second, a well-known argument in the literature is that EP elections are generally considered to be of lesser importance by the electorate and are therefore regarded as 'second-order' national contests (Reif and Schmitt, 1980). Here, large parties in EP elections frequently lose votes to smaller ones. Some scholars argue that this is the result of EP elections functioning as mid-term popularity polls, where voters use such elections to signal dissatisfaction with national parliaments (Reif and Schmitt, 1980; Marsh and Hix, 2007). By contrast, however, other researchers suggest that voters have differential preferences over policy at alternative levels of governance and thus citizens may 'vote with the heart' by selecting candidates who share preferences over policies that are salient to them, but that may not be prioritised at the national level (Carrubba and Timpone, 2005). Further, Kantola (2009) notes that the EU has paid much attention to the issue of women's representation since the 1950's. Arguably then, the EU may be viewed as a site where the representation of women's interests are prioritised and female voters may seek to elect more women to the EP, not merely because they are women, but because they can more effectively represent those same gendered interests that may not be prioritised at the national level.

6.4 Research Hypotheses

As the foregoing discussion suggests, a study of descriptive representation in the EU needs to explore the value that the participation of women in the EP brings in

²² Figure 6.1, for example, shows that out of 16 countries, only Malta and Belgium returned more women to their national parliaments than to the EP.

contributing to the substantive representation of policy preferences. In order to test this empirically, three issues need to be considered. First, do male and female voters systematically differ in their policy preferences? The literature here suggests a contingent yes and indicates that while gendered differences across many policy areas may be absorbed by more dominant contextual dimensions such as religion, class or party affiliations (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967; Lovenduski and Norris, 2003), variation in attitudes may be seen across issues relating to female autonomy such as equality, abortion and the role of the welfare-state. Specifically, I expect that since less conservative positions on these issues are associated with increased female autonomy, the following hypothesis states that:

Hypothesis 1: All else equal, women in the EU have more liberal attitudes on policy issues relating to equality, abortion and the welfare state than men.

The second issue for the empirical analysis is that if the participation of women is to make a substantive difference to gendered policy outcomes then any differences in the attitudes of men and women need to be reproduced at the elite level. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: All else equal, female MEPs have more liberal attitudes on policy issues relating to equality, abortion and the welfare state than male MEPs.

It is, of course, plausible that men and women will not exhibit any significant differences over policy if such differences are absorbed by more dominant societal cleavages (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967, Young 2000) and yet, as Philips notes, while gendered attitudes may not be universal, this does not preclude the existence of gendered interests. In the context of the present analysis, attitude formation on equality and abortion may be dominated by other contextual characteristics such as religion or education and, further, a respondent's perceived standard of living may influence their attitudes towards the welfare state.

Therefore, it is important to control for potential predictors, other than gender, that can influence voter positions over policy. In particular, the present analysis controls for religiosity, standard of living, age, education and whether or not the respondent

lives in an urban or rural area. Consequently, in respect of hypotheses 1 and 2, I expect that women have more liberal attitudes on policy issues than men, even taking account of these contextual factors, as it is in their self-interest to do so. For example, I expect that both men and women with a low level of religiosity will be more supportive of a liberal abortion policy compared to men and women with high levels but that, at each level of religiosity, women will demonstrate more liberal attitudes towards abortion issues compared to their male counterparts.

Finally, for descriptive representation to lead to the substantive representation of women's interests not only should the policy positions of female MEPs differ from their male counterparts in a manner similar to that of voters, but their preferences should also be more congruent with female voters. This third condition is difficult to address empirically for two reasons. First, where member states have closed list voting systems, voters choose only the party in question rather than the representative meaning that one cannot effectively identify where a female citizen voted for a female candidate. Second, voter surveys typically ask respondents only about the party they voted for rather than the candidate meaning that we lack the information necessary to directly compare the policy positions of voters and the candidates they voted for.

Nevertheless, the preceding discussion argues that, all else equal, female MEP's share more liberal attitudes with female voters on policy issues relating to equality, abortion and the welfare state compared to male representatives. Therefore, I expect that congruence between female voters and the parties they vote for, on those issues, should be improved when those parties return greater numbers of female politicians to the EP. Consequently, the following hypothesis expects that:

Hypothesis 5: The level of congruence between female voters and the party they voted for on equality, abortion and welfare state issues increases when a higher proportion of female representatives are returned to the EP by the party in question.

6.5 Data and Method

The dependent variables for hypotheses 1 and 2 are voter and EP candidate²³ attitudes to policy attitudes on equality, abortion and welfare state issues. The common problem in empirical representation research of finding measures of policy preferences that can be reliably compared between voters and elites is a particular challenge in the context of identifying attitudes on women's interests since few datasets contain information about specific policy attitudes on these issues for both voters and political actors. However, the European election study and European election candidate study conducted during the 2009 EP elections, contain several questions on policy issues that go beyond left-right or EU integration dimensions and which use identical question wording for both voters and candidates.

Thus the dependent variables are voter and EP candidate responses to a range of policy statements where each item is coded on a scale between 1 and 5 where 1 equals highly liberal responses and 5 equals conservative preferences over policy. Two policy statements relate to equality, specifically asking whether women should be required to cut down on paid work for the sake of the family and attitudes towards same-sex marriage. While same-sex marriage cannot be said to directly increase female autonomy, it is expected that women may nevertheless hold more liberal attitudes on equality issues more generally, since women often stand to benefit from equality legislation. Further, one policy statement relates to abortion policy and a fourth policy statement relates to attitudes relating to the welfare state. It is expected that women will hold more liberal attitudes towards the provision of welfare as they are likely to be direct beneficiaries of such policies in respect of issues such as child care provision and income.

The key independent variable for the hypotheses is gender, which is coded as a dummy variable where woman equals 1. Further, because the discussion in section 6.4 notes that other contextual factors may shape a person's political attitudes, the

²³ While it could be argued that an analysis of policy congruence should focus on elected officials, who actually impact on the policy making process, rather than on candidates that may or may not have been elected to office, no significant difference in results was found between running the models using only responses of those politicians who were elected to the EP and using the fuller candidate dataset. Consequently, I take advantage of the greater statistical power afforded by having a larger N and use the full candidate dataset rather than the smaller subset of elected MEP's.

degree to which respondents view themselves as religious (religiosity) and to which they view themselves as having a good standard of living is controlled for. Responses were coded on a scale of 0 to 10 for degree of religiosity where 0 equals 'not at all religious'. Further responses were coded on a scale of 1 to 7 for standard of living, where 1 equals 'poor standard of living'. Age is also controlled for, as is living in an urban or rural area and education, which are constructed as a set of dummy variables.

The congruence measure for the analysis of hypothesis 3 is operationalized similarly to chapters 3 and 4, namely as the absolute distance between voter and party positions multiplied by -1 as follows:

$$\text{Congruence} = -|C_i - P_{ji}|$$

where C_i is the citizen preference and P_{ji} the policy position of the party they voted for. As the variable increases from negative values (bounded by -4) towards 0, congruence increases. Party positions are calculated as the average preference to each policy issue reported by candidates in the EECS.

The key independent variables for the analysis of hypothesis 3 are gender (coded as a dummy variable where woman = 1), and the number of female MEP's returned by each party. The number of MEP's are recorded as a percentage of the total number of MEP's returned in the 2009 election by each party, where 0% means no female MEP's won a seat and 100% means only female representatives one a seat in the EP. Finally, education and party size are also controlled for.

The final datasets comprise observations from 11711 voters, 1118 candidates across 16 countries. Similar to the analysis in chapter 4, a smaller subset of countries rather than the full 27 member states was chosen for analysis due to the low response rates in the candidate survey, with one small difference. In the present chapter, 16 rather than 14 countries were analysed which added Lithuania and Cyprus to the dataset²⁴. Both these countries were just below the 20% response rate threshold for chapter 4,

²⁴ Member states in the analysis are Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

but I opted to include them here in an effort to improve the statistical power of the empirical tests by increasing the sample size. The difficulty in choosing which countries to include, both in this chapter and in chapter 4, represents a trade off that is common to much empirical research between having a sufficiently large sample size for regression analysis and using data that may be subject to an unobserved bias due to survey response rates.

Analysis for each of the main hypotheses uses ordered logit regression and country dummies were included to account for country level variation. While, many recent studies suggest using multi-level models to take account of the hierarchical structure of the EU, the small number of country level units in the present dataset prevents the full realisation of the benefits of hierarchical modelling. The main results of the analysis are now discussed below.

6.6 Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistics of voter and candidate responses for the four policy categories are reported in figures 6.2 and 6.3. Figure 6.2 displays the percentage of male and female voters who reported a liberal or conservative preference across each of the policy categories. In respect of same sex marriage, abortion and welfare state issues, 'very liberal' and 'liberal' are the most popular response categories, irrespective of gender, while for the 'women and paid work' policy category, 'liberal' and 'conservative' are the most popular response categories. In the four policy categories slightly more women than men hold a 'very liberal' preference. For example, 45.54% of women held a 'very liberal' preference compared to 40.72% of men. Further, 21.73% of women held a 'very liberal' preference on the welfare state compared to 18.75% of men. Moreover, slightly more men than women report a 'conservative' preference over same sex marriage (15.24% men to 13.69% women), abortion (8.13% men to 7.06% women) and the welfare state (19.12% men to 16.43% women). This provides some support for hypothesis 1 since, on each policy category, a greater proportion of women reported holding very liberal attitudes over each issue while a greater proportion of men hold conservative attitudes.

Figure 6.2 also shows that, with regards to the ‘liberal’ response category, the findings are reversed, and slightly more men than women report holding a ‘liberal’ attitude toward each issue, contrary to expectations in hypothesis 1. For example, 29.13% of men report a ‘liberal’ preference when asked if women should be expected to cut down on paid work for the sake of their family, compared with 24.8% of women. Further, 38.35% of men give a ‘liberal’ response to the question of a woman’s right to decide in matters of abortion compared with 35.99% of women. Moreover, in the case of the ‘women and paid work’ policy category, more women (25.93%) than men (24.96%) report a ‘conservative’ preference. In addition, the overall picture presented here, does not show a substantial difference between men and women in terms of preference across policy categories. While women do appear to report holding very liberal attitudes towards each policy category, the greatest difference between men and women is on the issue of abortion and yet only 5% more women than men report a ‘very liberal’ response.

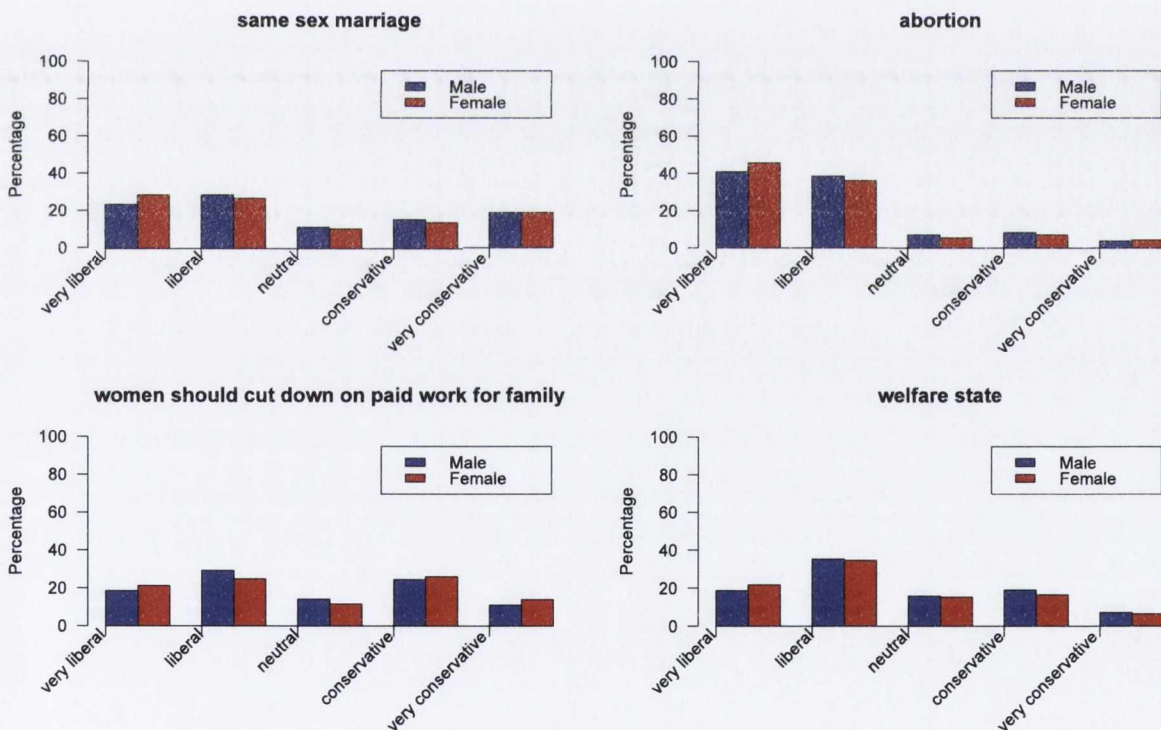


Figure 6.2 Voter attitudes over policy issues. *Source: European Election Study 2009.*

Thus while there is some limited evidence in support of hypothesis 1, is it insufficient to conclude that women hold more liberal preferences over each policy issue and, further,

the high degree of similarity between the proportion of male and female preferences in each response category provides support for the expectation that gendered differences over policy may be absorbed by other, more dominant, contextual factors (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967, Young 2000).

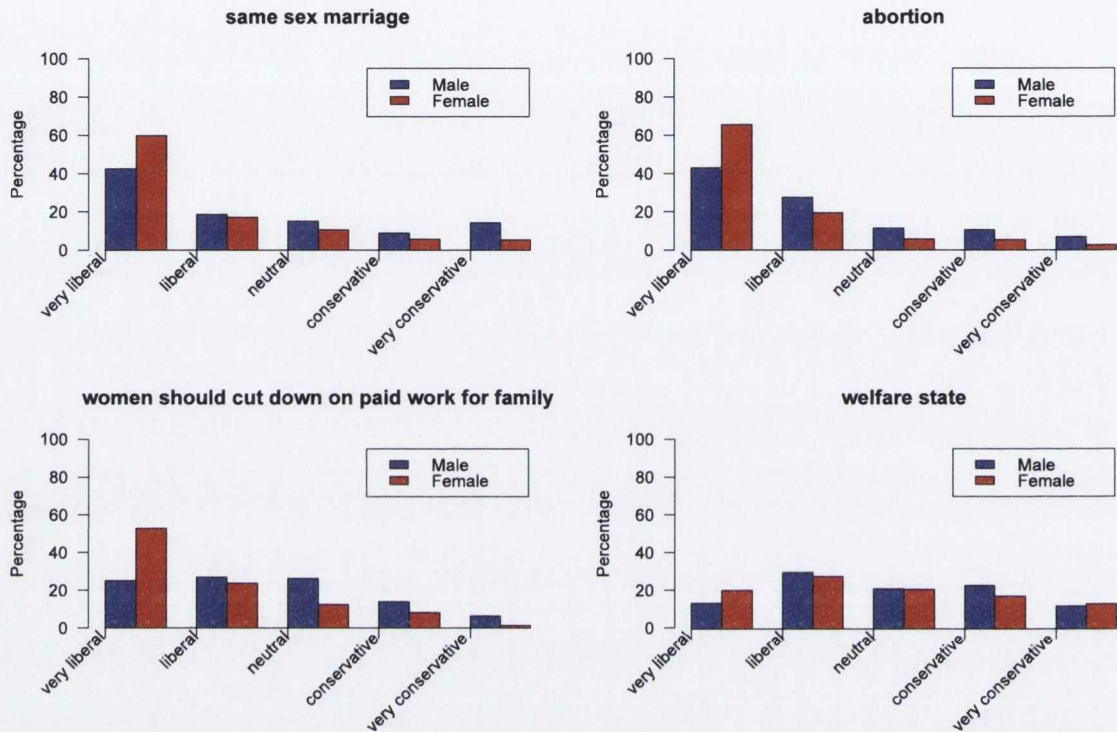


Figure 6.3 Candidate attitudes over policy issues. *Source: European Election Candidate Survey 2009*

Figure 6.3 displays the percentage of male and female candidates who reported a liberal or conservative preference across the same policy categories as in figure 6.2. As with the voter responses, a greater proportion of female candidates report holding ‘very liberal’ attitudes over the four policy categories and a greater percentage of male candidates report holding a ‘conservative or ‘very conservative’ preference. However, compared with the voter responses, male and female candidates demonstrate substantially larger differences over policy preferences. For example, 22.39% more women than men report holding ‘very liberal’ preferences over abortion and 27.77% more women report ‘very liberal’ preferences over women cutting down on paid work for family. Further, 14.31% of men give a ‘very conservative’ response to the issue of same sex marriage compared to just 5.28% of women, while, 22.71%

of men give a 'conservative' response to the welfare compared to 17.16% of women. These findings are in support of hypothesis 2 and indicate that, on average, female candidates tend to report more liberal preferences over equality, abortion and welfare state issues than men. It should be noted, however, that the proportion of men and women in each response category show similar patterns also, even where more women hold 'very liberal' preferences over each policy issue. For example, in the case of abortion, the most popular response categories irrespective of gender are 'very liberal' and 'liberal'. Consequently, the findings in support of hypothesis 2 should be interpreted conservatively, since the result that women are more inclined to hold a 'very liberal' attitude over policy, does not imply that men, of necessity, hold the opposing 'very conservative' viewpoint.

These findings demonstrate some limited support for hypothesis 1 and greater support for hypothesis 2. However, the descriptive statistics only take account of aggregate differences between men and women over these policy issues, but does not take account of different factors, other than gender, which may also impact on policy attitudes. To address this, tables 6.1 and 6.2 report the ordered logistic regressions for the voter level analysis.

In each case the dependent variable is coded between 1 and 5 whereby the higher the value, the more conservative the response. The estimates for gender in each model are significant and in the expected direction, indicating that women tend to report more liberal preferences across each of the four policy areas compared to men, which provides support for hypothesis 1. The table also shows that contextual factors other than gender have a significant effect on policy attitudes. In particular, the results demonstrate that voters who report being more religious hold more conservative attitudes towards same sex marriage (Models 1 and 2), abortion (Models 3 and 4) and whether or not women should cut down on paid work for the sake of their family (Models 5 and 6). Further, the findings suggest that respondents who report having a high standard of living are also more likely to hold conservative attitudes towards wealth re-distribution (Models 7 and 8). Similarly, compared to the respondents who report having high levels of education, respondents with middle to low education are more likely to report conservative attitudes towards same sex marriage, abortion and women and paid work but more liberal attitudes towards the welfare state.

Moreover, the country dummies highlight significant variation in policy attitudes across member states. For example, compared to the UK, voters in Sweden and Denmark report more liberal attitudes towards same sex marriage and whether women should cut down on paid work for their family but, interestingly, more conservative

Table 6.1: Ordered Logit Regressions of Political Attitudes of Voters – Same Sex Marriage and Abortions Issues.

Parameter	<i>same sex marriage</i>				<i>abortion</i>			
	Model 1	S.E	Model 2	S.E	Model 3	S.E	Model 4	S.E
woman	-0.48***	0.03	-0.54***	0.08	-0.33***	0.03	-0.48***	0.07
age	0.02***	0.00	0.2***	0.00	-0.003	0.00	-0.003	0.00
urban	-0.19***	0.04	-0.19***	0.04	-0.18***	0.04	-0.18***	0.04
religiosity	0.11***	0.02	0.11***	0.01	0.15***	0.01	0.12***	0.04
living standard	-0.01	0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.03*	0.01	-0.04*	0.02
low education	0.52***	0.05	0.41***	0.07	0.23**	0.05	0.23**	0.05
middle education	0.26***	0.04	0.25**	0.06	-0.002	0.04	-0.004	0.05
Austria	-0.11	0.10	-0.11	0.11	0.73***	0.12	0.73***	0.12
Belgium	0.44**	0.10	0.44***	0.11	1.08***	0.12	1.08***	0.12
Cyprus	1.38***	0.10	1.38***	0.11	1.47***	0.12	1.48***	0.12
Denmark	-1.03***	0.10	-1.03***	0.11	0.18	0.11	0.18	0.11
Estonia	2.18***	0.11	2.18***	0.12	0.85***	0.12	0.85***	0.12
Finland	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.48***	0.12	0.48***	0.12
Germany	-0.15	0.10	-0.15	0.10	0.97***	0.11	0.98***	0.11
Latvia	2.49***	0.12	2.5***	0.11	0.71***	0.12	0.71***	0.12
Lithuania	2.03***	0.12	2.03***	0.12	0.9***	0.13	0.9***	0.13
Luxembourg	-0.51**	0.10	-0.51***	0.11	0.7***	0.12	0.7***	0.12
Malta	0.83***	0.12	0.81***	0.10	3.03***	0.12	3.03***	0.12
Slovakia	1.33***	0.12	1.33***	0.12	0.52**	0.13	0.51**	0.13
Slovenia	0.56**	0.11	0.56**	0.11	0.52**	0.12	0.53**	0.12
Sweden	-1.09***	0.11	-1.09***	0.11	-0.09	0.12	-0.09	0.12
Netherlands	-0.84***	0.11	-0.84***	0.11	1.002***	0.12	1.002***	0.12
woman* religiosity			0.01	0.01			0.03**	0.01
Nagelkerke R2	0.49		0.49		0.38		0.38	
Log-Lik	-14289		-14289		-12255		-12252	
N	10560		10560		10684		10684	

Notes: Reference category for education dummies = "high education". Reference category for country dummies = "United Kingdom" ***= $p < 0.01$, **= $p < 0.05$, *= $p < 0.1$ Source: *European Election Study Voter Survey 2009*

Table 6.2: Ordered Logit Regressions of Political Attitudes of Voters – Women and Paid Work and Welfare State Issues

Parameter	<i>women and paid work</i>				<i>welfare state</i>			
	Model 5	S.E	Model 6	S.E	Model 7	S.E	Model 8	S.E
woman	-0.11**	0.04	-0.26**	0.06	-0.11**	0.03	-0.12	0.13
age	0.01***	0.00	0.01***	0.00	-0.001	0.00	-0.001	0.00
urban	-0.14***	0.04	-0.14***	0.04	0.1**	0.03	0.1**	0.03
religiosity	0.09***	0.01	0.07***	0.01	-0.001	0.01	-0.001	0.01
living standard low	-0.03	0.02	-0.03	0.01	0.17***	0.02	0.17***	0.02
education middle	0.51***	0.05	0.51***	0.05	-0.42***	0.05	-0.42***	0.05
education Austria	0.29***	0.04	0.28***	0.04	-0.22***	0.04	-0.22***	0.04
Belgium	0.84***	0.11	0.84***	0.11	0.69***	0.11	0.69***	0.11
Cyprus	0.88***	0.11	0.88***	0.11	-0.26*	0.11	-0.26*	0.11
Denmark	2.38***	0.11	2.39***	0.11	-0.34**	0.11	-0.34**	0.11
Estonia	-0.76***	0.10	-0.77***	0.10	0.46***	0.11	0.46***	0.11
Finland	1.5***	0.11	1.51***	0.11	1.07***	0.11	1.07***	0.11
Germany	-0.31*	0.11	-0.31*	0.11	-0.43**	0.11	-0.43**	0.11
Latvia	0.73***	0.11	0.73***	0.11	0.83***	0.11	0.83***	0.11
Lithuania	1.74***	0.12	1.75***	0.12	-0.27*	0.11	-0.27*	0.11
Luxembourg	1.23***	0.12	1.23***	0.12	-0.31**	0.12	-0.31**	0.12
Malta	0.95***	0.10	0.95***	0.10	0.59***	0.11	0.59***	0.11
Slovakia	1.81***	0.11	1.81***	0.11	-0.24**	0.11	-0.24**	0.11
Slovenia	1.1***	0.11	1.1***	0.11	0.73***	0.13	0.73***	0.13
Slovenia	-0.78***	0.11	-0.78***	0.11	-1.22***	0.11	-1.22***	0.11
Sweden	-1.14***	0.11	-1.14***	0.11	0.83***	0.11	0.83***	0.11
Netherlands	-0.34	0.11	-0.34	0.11	0.04	0.11	0.04	0.11
woman* religiosity			0.03**	0.01				
woman* living standard							0.01	0.03
Nagelkerke R2	0.47		0.47		0.32		0.32	
Log-Lik	-14646		-14643		-14809		-14807	
N	10621		10621		10388		10388	

Notes: Reference category for education dummies = “high education”. Reference category for country dummies = “United Kingdom” ***= $p < 0.01$, **= $p < 0.05$, *= $p < 0.1$ Source: *European Election Study Voter Survey 2009*

attitudes towards the welfare state. By contrast, voters in Estonia report having more conservative values compared to the UK across all four issue areas. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to examine the predictors that may impact on such

cross-country variation, it does not appear to be directly related to the number of women returned to national and European parliaments in each country. For example, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands and Belgium had more women in both national parliament and the EP in 2009 compared to the UK (figure 6.1) but tables 6.1 and 6.2 reveal that voters in these countries do not hold consistently more liberal attitudes compared to UK voters across the four policy areas.

To further explore the effect of the predictors in determining policy attitudes, I convert the regression estimates to odds ratios²⁵. For the same sex marriage issue the odds ratio for religiosity is 1.11 (with lower and upper confidence intervals of 1.09 and 1.13 respectively), meaning that for a one unit increase in the degree to which a voter reports being religious, the odds of an individual reporting a more conservative response compared to a liberal one increases by approximately 11%. Further, the odds ratio for woman is 0.6 (with lower and upper confidence intervals of 0.55 and 0.64 respectively) meaning that compared to men, the odds of a woman reporting a more liberal response compared to a conservative one, increases by 40%. The findings are similar for abortion and women and paid work issues, with odds ratios for religiosity being 1.13 and 1.07 respectively, and with odds ratios for woman being 0.61 and 0.77 respectively.

By contrast, neither the religiosity nor the woman variables are significant for the welfare state model (Model 8). Yet, the odds ratio for a voters self reported standard of living is 1.18 (lower and upper confidence intervals are 1.14 and 1.22 respectively) and significant, meaning that for a one unit increase in a voters self reported standard of living, the odds of reporting a more conservative attitude towards wealth redistribution increases by 18%.

Thus far, the analysis indicates that gender, religion, a persons self reported standard of living and even being a national of a particular member state can impact on the policy attitudes under study. However, as the discussion in the preceding sections indicates, the effects of gender on policy attitudes may be contingent on other

²⁵ Odds ratios are calculated from even numbered models in tables 6.1 and 6.2.

contextual predictors that can also influence preferences. The even numbered models in tables 6.1 and 6.2 test this by including interaction terms in the logit regressions.

In the case of both abortion and women and paid work issues, the interaction terms between woman and religiosity variables are significant, indicating that the effect of religiosity on these policy attitudes varies between men and women. However, it can be difficult to interpret directly the coefficients of logit models containing interaction terms. Thus, in order to assess how men and women at each level of religiosity differ in their policy attitudes, it is useful to obtain predicted probabilities from each model. Figures 6.4 and 6.5 plot the probabilities of holding a ‘very liberal’ attitude on each policy area for 51 year-old men and women with high levels of education in Sweden and the UK, varying across levels of religiosity. All other variables are held at their mean.

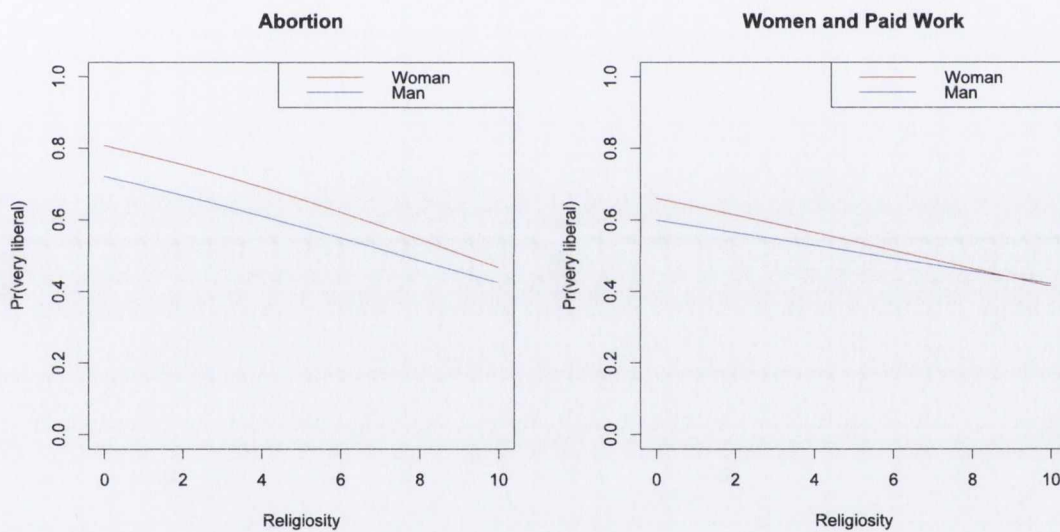


Figure 6.4 Predicted probabilities of voters (Sweden, age=51, rural, high education).

Note: Probabilities calculated from models in table 6.1 and 6.2

Both figures illustrate some differences between the two countries in the logit models, showing that for the women and paid work issue, Swedish voters are more likely to report ‘very liberal’ attitudes compared to the UK. Further, both figures demonstrate that increases in religiosity are associated with a lower probability of reporting a ‘very liberal’ attitude towards each issue area.

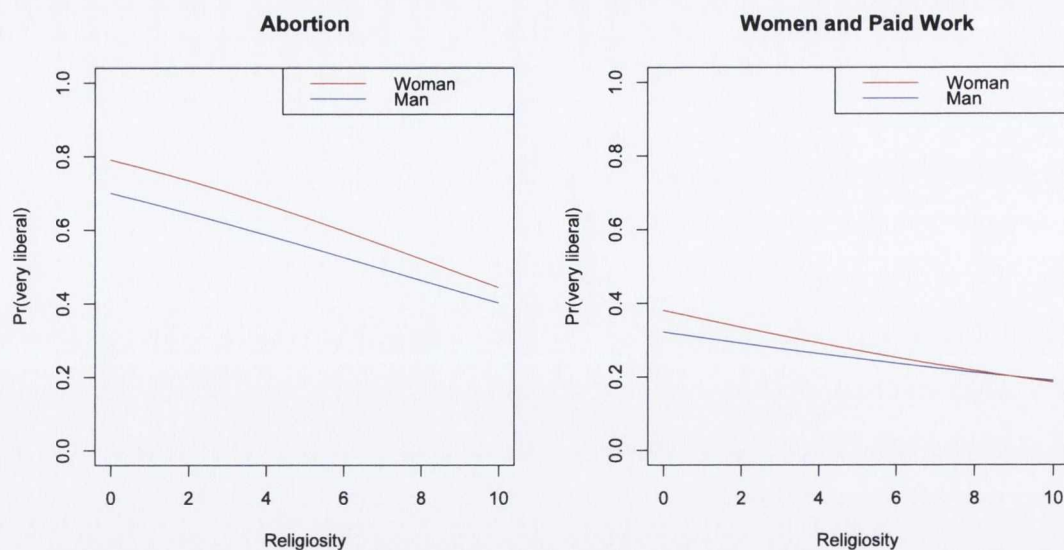


Figure 6.5 Predicted probabilities of voters (UK, age=51, rural, high education).

Note: Probabilities calculated from models in table 6.1 and 6.2

On the issue of whether or not men and women differ in their policy attitudes however, the results are mixed, providing only partial support for hypothesis 1. In the case of abortion, women across each level of religiosity are more likely to report having a ‘very liberal’ attitude compared to men. For example the probability of a woman in Sweden or the UK holding a ‘very liberal’ attitude towards abortion issues who has a religiosity score of 0 is 0.81 and 0.79 respectively, compared to, 0.72 and 0.70 respectively for a similar man. By contrast the probability of a woman in Sweden or the UK holding a ‘very liberal’ preference, who has a religiosity score of 10 is 0.46 and 0.44 respectively, compared to 0.42 and 0.4 respectively for a similar man.

Further, the probabilities demonstrate that, when taking other contextual factors into account, differences between men and women are not consistent across levels. For example, while a woman in the UK is 9% more likely to report a ‘very liberal’ attitude on the abortion issue compared to a man, when both report low levels of religiosity, this gap narrows to 4% where both men and women report high levels of religiosity. This effect can be clearly seen in the case of the women and paid work issue, where both men and women share the same probability of reporting ‘very liberal’ attitudes, when they both have high levels of religiosity.

Table 6.3 Ordered Logit Regressions of EP Candidates – Same Sex Marriage and Abortion issues.

Parameter	<i>same sex marriage</i>				<i>abortion</i>			
	Model 9	S.E	Model 10	S.E	Model 11	S.E	Model 12	S.E
woman	-0.79***	0.16	-0.51*	0.27	-1.01***	0.16	-0.94***	0.28
age	0.03***	0.01	0.03***	0.01	0.01**	0.01	0.01**	0.01
urban	-0.24	0.14	-0.24	0.14	0.07	0.14	0.07	0.14
religiosity	0.23***	0.02	0.24***	0.03	0.22***	0.02	0.22***	0.02
living standard	-0.05	0.07	-0.05	0.07	-0.05	0.07	-0.05	0.07
low education	-0.13	0.39	-0.12	0.39	0.26	0.37	0.26	0.37
middle education	0.16	0.21	0.16	0.21	-0.1	0.20	-0.1	0.20
Austria	-1.36***	0.39	-1.37***	0.42	-0.16	0.36	-0.16	0.36
Belgium	-1.31***	0.38	-1.31***	0.38	-0.13	0.32	-0.13	0.32
Cyprus	0.75	0.63	0.77	0.63	0.07	0.71	0.08	0.71
Denmark	-1.03***	0.22	-1.04***	0.22	0.11	0.21	0.10	0.21
Estonia	2.21***	0.60	2.21***	0.60	-2.09***	0.66	-2.09***	0.66
Finland	0.84*	0.43	0.82*	0.43	-0.46	0.49	-0.41	0.50
Germany	-1.11***	0.38	-1.11**	0.38	-0.49	0.37	-0.49	0.37
Latvia	1.48***	0.36	1.48***	0.36	0.03	0.36	0.03	0.36
Lithuania	-1.75***	0.63	-1.75***	0.63	0.12	0.53	0.12	0.53
Luxembourg	1.49***	0.35	1.5***	0.35	-0.02	0.35	-0.02	0.35
Malta	0.88	0.65	0.85	0.65	1.55**	2.51	1.53**	2.49
Slovakia	-0.67*	0.28	-0.66*	0.29	-0.37	0.28	-0.37	0.28
Slovenia	-0.13	0.29	-0.12	0.47	-0.83	0.55	-0.83	0.55
Sweden	0.64	0.38	0.64	0.38	0.13	0.41	0.13	0.41
Netherlands	-0.9	0.22	-0.9	0.22	-1.05***	0.23	-1.05***	0.23
woman*religiosity			-0.06	0.04			-0.01	0.04
Nagelkerke R2	0.52		0.52		0.44		0.44	
Log-Lik	-1035.00		-1034.00		-1008		-1008	
N	874		874.00		873		873	

Notes: Reference category for education dummies = "high education". Reference category for country dummies = "United Kingdom" ***= $p < 0.01$, **= $p < 0.05$, *= $p < 0.1$

Source: European Election Study Candidate Survey 2009

Turning to the EP candidate results, tables 6.3 and 6.4 show the logistic regression results for EECS data. Similar to the voter data, estimates indicate that female candidates are more likely to hold more liberal preferences over equality and abortion issues (although this finding is not significant in the case of welfare state attitudes) compared to men. In addition, the more religious the candidate the more likely they

are to report a more conservative attitude on abortion and equality issues. Moreover, estimates show that candidates who report having a higher standard of living are more likely to report a more conservative preference over wealth redistribution.

Table 6.4 Ordered Logit Regressions of EP Candidates – Women and Paid Work and Welfare State Issues.

Parameter	<i>women and paid work</i>				<i>welfare state</i>			
	Model 13	S.E	Model 14	S.E	Model 15	S.E	Model 16	S.E
woman	-1.16***	0.15	-1.16***	0.15	-0.17	0.14	-0.03	0.64
age	0.02***	0.01	0.02***	0.01	-0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.01
urban	-0.29*	0.14	-0.29*	0.14	-0.24*	0.13	-0.24*	0.13
religiosity	0.14***	0.02	0.14***	0.02	0.06***	0.02	0.06***	0.02
living standard	-0.05	0.07	-0.05	0.07	0.3***	0.06	0.31***	0.08
low education	0.61	0.37	0.61	0.37	-0.09	0.32	-0.09	0.32
middle education	0.35	0.19	0.35	0.19	0.37**	0.17	0.37**	0.17
Austria	-1.23***	0.37	-1.22***	0.35	0.48	0.36	0.48	0.36
Belgium	-1.33***	0.31	-1.32***	0.31	0.26	0.28	0.26	0.28
Cyprus	-0.36	0.67	-0.35	0.67	-0.45	0.67	-0.45	0.67
Denmark	-1.19***	0.21	-1.20***	0.21	1.11***	0.21	1.11***	0.21
Estonia	-1.81***	0.48	-1.81***	0.48	-0.3	0.39	-0.3	0.39
Finland	0.22	0.44	0.22	0.44	1.18**	0.46	1.19**	0.46
Germany	-1.21***	0.34	-1.21***	0.34	-0.41	0.32	-0.41	0.32
Latvia	0.07	0.36	0.07	0.36	0.52	0.36	0.52	0.36
Lithuania	-2.12***	0.54	-2.12***	0.54	-0.5	0.46	-0.5	0.46
Luxembourg	0.75	0.34	0.76	0.34	0.16	0.32	0.16	0.32
Malta	0.07	0.65	0.07	0.65	0.34	0.61	0.35	0.61
Slovakia	-0.73**	0.28	-0.73**	0.28	0.48	0.25	0.49	0.25
Slovenia	-1.06**	0.48	-1.06**	0.48	-0.9**	0.49	-0.9**	0.49
Sweden	-0.27	0.38	-0.27	0.38	1.79***	0.39	1.79***	0.39
Netherlands	-1.69***	0.21	-1.69***	0.21	0.85***	0.19	0.85***	0.19
woman*religiosity			-0.003	0.04				
woman*living standard							-0.03	0.14
Nagelkerke R2	0.48		0.48		0.39		0.39	
Log-Lik	-1125		-1125.00		-1298		-1298	
N	871.00		871.00		871.00		871.00	

Notes: Reference category for education dummies = “high education”. Reference category for country dummies = “United Kingdom” ***= $p < 0.01$, **= $p < 0.05$, *= $p < 0.1$

Source: European Election Study Candidate Survey 2009

The odds ratios illustrate these findings further. For example, on same sex marriage, the odds ratio for religiosity is 1.26 (with lower and upper confidence intervals of 1.2 and 1.31 respectively), meaning that for a one unit increase in the degree to which a candidate reports being religious, the odds of a candidate reporting a more conservative response compared to a liberal one increases by approximately 26%. Further, the odds ratio for a female candidate is 0.6 (with lower and upper confidence intervals of 0.35 and 1.01 respectively) meaning that the odds of a male candidate reporting a more conservative response increases by 40% compared to the odds for a female candidate. The findings are similar for abortion and women and paid work issues, with odds ratios for religiosity being 1.26 and 1.15 respectively, and with odds ratios for woman being 0.39 and 0.32 respectively. These results provide some support for hypothesis 2, and indicate that differences between the attitudes of men and women in the population are somewhat replicated in between male and female candidates. However, the interaction terms for the candidate data are not significant for any of the 4 policy issues, indicating that, unlike for voters, differences between men and women candidates do not vary significantly across levels of religiosity.

To illustrate the model results, figure 6.6 plots the predicted probabilities for UK candidates on the abortion and women and paid work issues.

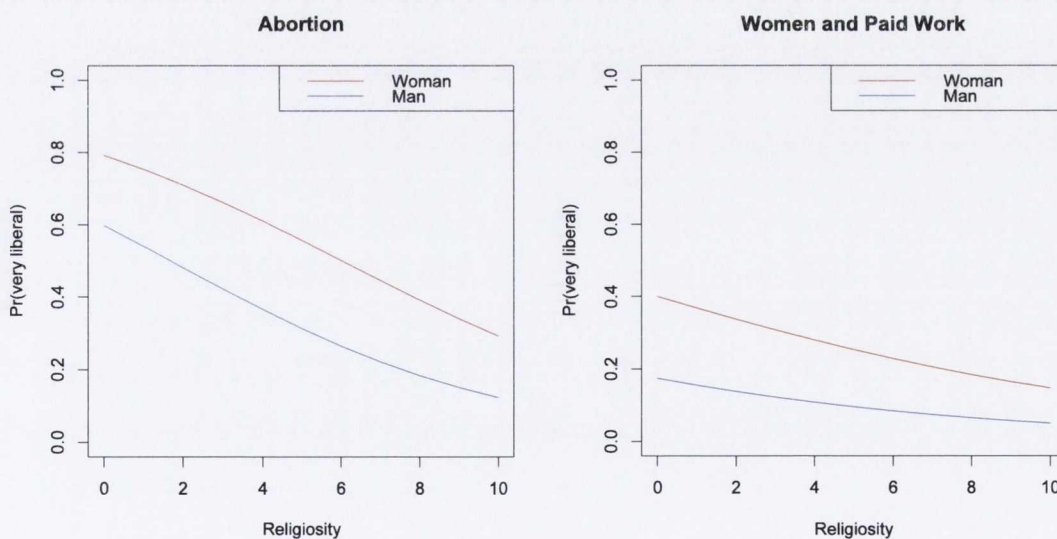


Figure 6.6 Predicted probabilities of candidates (UK, age=51, rural, high education).

Note: Probabilities calculated from models in table 6.3 and 6.4

Table 6.5 Voter-Party Policy Congruence Regression Results – Same Sex Marriage and Abortion Issues.

Parameter	<i>same sex marriage</i>				<i>abortion</i>			
	Model 17	S.E	Model 18	S.E	Model 19	S.E	Model 20	S.E
woman	0.25***	0.04	0.25**	0.07	0.03	0.05	0.03	0.05
low education	-0.57***	0.06	-0.57***	0.06	-0.27***	0.06	-0.27***	0.06
middle education	-0.16**	0.05	-0.16**	0.05	-0.09	0.05	-0.09	0.05
% of female MEP's	0.004***	0.001	0.004***	0.001	0.01***	0.001	0.01***	0.001
party size	-1.86***	0.05	-1.87***	0.05	-0.92**	0.34	-0.92**	0.34
Austria	-0.06	0.12	-0.06	0.12	-0.38**	0.13	-0.38**	0.13
Belgium	-0.43**	0.12	-0.43**	0.12	-1.05***	0.12	-1.05***	0.12
Denmark	0.74***	0.12	0.74***	0.12	-0.15	0.12	-0.15	0.12
Estonia	-1.65***	0.17	-1.65***	0.17	-2.48***	0.18	-2.48***	0.18
Finland	-0.27*	0.13	-0.27*	0.13	-0.56***	0.14	-0.56***	0.14
Germany	0.32*	0.13	0.32*	0.13	-0.81***	0.14	-0.81***	0.14
Latvia	-1.36***	0.12	-1.36***	0.12	-0.22	0.13	-0.22	0.13
Lithuania	-0.02	0.14	-0.02	0.14	-1.07***	0.15	-1.06***	0.15
Luxembourg	0.47**	0.15	0.47**	0.15	-1.08***	0.15	-1.08***	0.15
Malta	0.79***	0.16	0.79***	0.16	-0.56**	0.16	-0.56**	0.16
Slovakia	-0.99***	0.14	-0.99***	0.14	-0.89***	0.14	-0.89***	0.14
Slovenia	-0.31*	0.14	-0.31*	0.14	0.140	0.15	0.140	0.15
Sweden	1.18***	0.13	1.18***	0.13	0.5**	0.14	0.5**	0.14
Netherlands	0.41**	0.12	0.41**	0.12	-0.06	0.12	-0.06	0.12
woman*% of female MEP's			0.001	0.001			0.001	0.001
Nagelkerke R2	0.45		0.45		0.38		0.38	
Log-Lik	-8848		-8848		-7622		-7621	
N	6636		6636		6696		6696	

Notes: Reference category for education dummies = "high education". Reference category for country dummies = "United Kingdom" ***= $p < 0.01$, **= $p < 0.05$, *= $p < 0.1$

Source: *European Election Study Candidate Survey and Voter Survey 2009*

Similar to the voter analysis, figure 6.6 demonstrates that, at each level of religiosity, women have a greater probability than men of reporting 'very liberal' attitudes. Further, the probabilities suggest that the differences between attitudes of male and female candidates are larger than for men and women in the population, although differences in the size of the respective datasets mean that this finding should be interpreted conservatively. Overall, these findings offer some support for hypothesis 2.

The final test in this analysis is to consider hypothesis 3 and whether or not the policy congruence between female voters and the parties they vote for improves when those parties return more female representatives to the EP. To test for this hypothesis, Table 6.5 shows the regression results for voter-party policy congruence on same sex marriage and abortion issues.

The table demonstrates that, compared to men, women are more congruent with the parties that they vote for on the same sex marriage issue. However, on all other issues there are no significant differences in congruence²⁶. Further, the models show that, on each issue, when parties return a greater proportion of women to the EP, congruence with their voters improves²⁷. However, the interaction terms are not significant in any of the models, suggesting that the effect of an increased number of MEP's on policy congruence does not vary significantly between men and women. To illustrate this further, figure 6.7 reports the predicted probabilities of high congruence for men and women as the percentage of female MEP's per party increases.

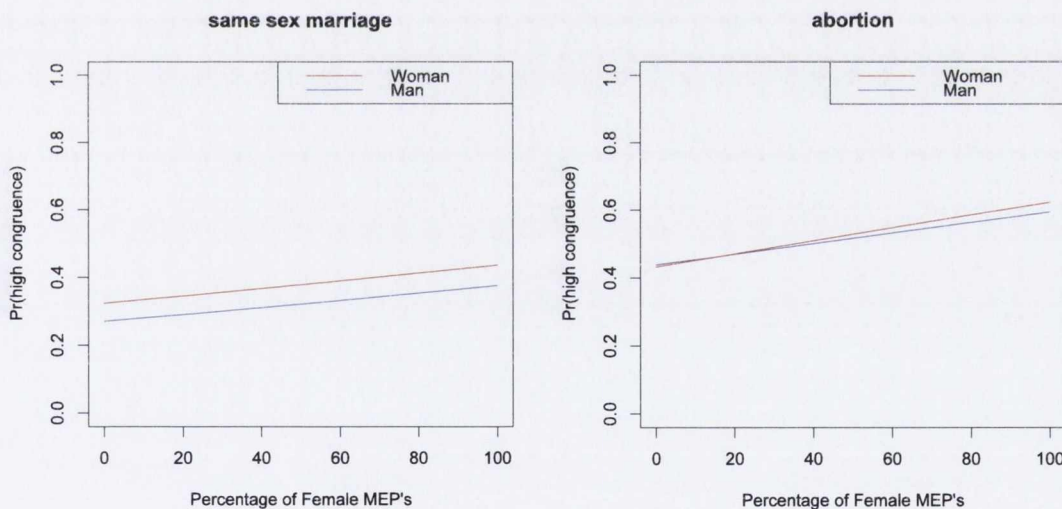


Figure 6.7 Predicted probabilities of Voter-Party Congruence – Same Sex Marriage and Abortion Issues.

Note: Probabilities calculated from models in table 6.5

²⁶ Only models for the same sex marriage and abortion issues are shown here. However, results for women and paid work and welfare state issues (not shown) were similar to models 19 and 20.

²⁷ The average proportion of women in the EP per party is 37.96%

In each case, increasing the proportion of female MEP's per party increases the probability of high voter-party congruence on those issues. For example, for a woman the probability of high congruence on the same sex marriage issue increases from 0.32 to 0.43 as the proportion of female MEP's per party increases from 0% to 100%. Further, while men are less likely to be congruent with their parties on this issue generally, the probability of high congruency between male voters and the parties they support also increases by 10% (from 0.27 to 0.37). Thus, hypothesis 3 is not supported since, although there is some evidence that increasing the number of female MEP's improves congruence in general, the effect is the same regardless of the voters gender.

6.7 Conclusion

Increasing the number of women in elected office is often justified on the basis that only women can adequately represent women's interests. Indeed one of the dominant arguments for descriptive representation is that it is important primarily because it can increase the substantive representation of women's and other minority preferences. This chapter argues that in order to test for this expectation in the EU, it must be shown first that men and women voters differ in their preferences over policy, second, that these differences are replicated between male and female policy-makers and finally, that female legislators are closer to female voters on these issues, than they are to male voters.

The findings here suggest that male and female voters in EP elections do differ in their attitudes, at least over same sex marriage issues, abortion issues and preferences on whether or not women should cut down on their paid work for the sake of family, with women being more likely to report liberal attitudes in each case. However, the magnitude of these differences should not be overemphasised, since, particularly in the case of same sex marriage and women and paid work issues, any residual differences between men and women appear to be absorbed by more dominant contextual factors such as religiosity or reported standard of living. Further, these results indicate that differences between female and male voters are somewhat replicated between male and female policy makers, with female candidates holding

more liberal policy attitudes compared to their male counterparts in each case, with the exception of preferences over wealth redistribution.

In terms of the third condition however, the results indicate that there is little difference between men and women in terms of improved policy congruence when more female politicians per party are voted into the EP. This suggests that the third condition necessary for descriptive representation to contribute to the substantive representation of women's interests is not satisfied in the EU case, since greater numbers of female legislators do not appear to improve party congruence with female voter preferences. Of course, these findings should be interpreted conservatively due to the absence of more detailed data that allows for the direct measurement of congruence between female candidates and female citizens who voted for them.

To conclude, these findings support the hypothetical expectation that men and women differ in their attitudes towards certain policy issues but such variation in attitudes is not necessarily reflected in the political space when the number of women in the EP is increased. Thus, the descriptive representation of women may not matter in terms of advancing the substantive representation of their interests specifically. However, the results here also offer a promising point of departure for future research, since increasing the number of women per party appears to improve voter party congruence on these issues irrespective of the voters gender.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

One of the key debates in recent scholarship on the EU's 'democratic deficit' is a discussion about the quality of the system in respect of the degree to which it represents its citizens' interests. For some researchers, the EU lacks mechanisms necessary for political accountability and they argue that decision-making suffers from a policy drift whereby legislative outcomes fail to reflect public preferences (Hix, 2008; Hix and Follesdal, 2006; Mair and Thomassen, 2010). For others, the EU's legislative process is not significantly different from national level structures, arguing that the EU merely suffers from a 'crisis of credibility' rather than, more fundamentally, one of democracy (Crombez, 2003; Majone, 2005, 1998; Moravcsik, 2002).

Further to this theoretical debate, empirical research reveals an image of the EU showing that it fulfils many of the structural preconditions necessary for representing the interests of its citizens (Hix and Lord, 1997; Hooghe and Marks, 2001; Marks and Steenbergen, 2004; Rosema and De Vries, 2011; Van der Brug and Van der Eijk, 1999;) and yet the existing literature is largely silent on whether or not it actually does so. Studies measuring representation in the EU have been mainly limited to reporting levels of mass-elite linkages on the traditional left-right dimension and EU integration dimension of party competition (Hooghe, 2003; Marks and Steenbergen, 2004; Mattila and Raunio, 2006; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2000).

A main argument of this dissertation is that empirical studies to date have offered only a narrow interpretation of what 'good' representation is, which largely ignore the multi-faceted nature of political representation and overlook several important questions such as what drives levels of policy congruence in the EU and what affect does varying perceptions of representation have on the legitimacy of the system?

Thus the current empirical literature does not adequately contribute to the theoretical debate on the quality of representation in the EU since identifying representative weakness in one area (e.g. voter-party positional congruence) may not necessarily preclude representation elsewhere (e.g. responsiveness of legislative outputs to changes in public opinion). A key contribution of this project is that it seeks to address this issue by taking a first step in empirically quantifying the ‘democratic deficit’ debate and building a more nuanced picture of the quality of representation in the EU.

The core conclusion to be drawn from the project is that the EU is neither an unresponsive technocratic bureaucracy that is unreflective of the wishes of its people nor is it a shining example of representative democracy at work in a multi-level setting. Instead, the results of the analysis demonstrate that the EU is reasonably effective in representing citizens preferences in some areas but weaker in others. For example, in terms of macro level responsiveness, decision makers in the EU do appear to alter their activity as public preferences towards EU policy-making change, but that citizens fail to complete the reciprocal link since changes in the level of policy outputs do not appear to impact on voter opinion (chapter 5). At the micro level, the project offers a more nuanced account of policy congruence in the EU showing that representation between voters and parties can vary considerably across different issue categories (chapters 3) and also that many parties do not emphasise those issues that their voters consider to be important (chapter 4).

Moreover, the dissertation places emphasis on exploring the role of individual level factors in measuring representation and the analysis herein shows that voter behaviour can affect levels of congruence. For example, chapter 3 demonstrates that whether or not a citizen voted in EP elections, whether or not they favoured different parties at national and EU levels, and the extent of their knowledge about the EU, can impact on overall levels of congruence. Also, how citizens perceive the quality of representation in the EU is an important predictor for the legitimacy of the system (chapter 2). In addition, chapter 6 shows that although men and women may vary in their preferences over certain policy issues, gender may have little direct impact on congruency between voters and parties.

7.1 Summary of the Main Findings

The goal of this project was to broaden the existing empirical assessment of the quality of representation in the EU in a manner that takes account of the complexity of the term. The dissertation does not offer a single comprehensive definition of representation, nor does it claim to address every potential operationalization of the concept. Instead I argue that by conducting analyses that account for a variety of lenses through which representation can be viewed, the literature can arrive at a more nuanced understanding of how and to what extent the EU represents its citizens.

Thus part of the difficulty in empirically assessing the extent to which the EU actually represents its citizens is due to a lack of conceptual agreement of the standards against which political representation should be judged. For example, is it important that the composition of the EP is a ‘microcosm’ of the main societal groupings in the population? Do party preferences need to reflect the issue positions of their voters in all policy areas or only those that supporters consider to be salient? Should representation be measured as voter-party policy congruence over issue preferences or as the responsiveness of decision-makers to changes in public opinion, or both? However, as noted, the bulk of empirical research to date has been restricted to reporting levels of issue agreement between voters and parties on the left-right and EU integration dimensions (but see Mattila and Raunio 2004). At its core then, the key question of interest for this dissertation is whether the EU is effective in representing the preferences of its citizens. The answer, from the foregoing study, is a contingent yes.

Chapter 2 demonstrates that citizens do not solely focus on the short-term utility of EU institutions but afford legitimacy to the system based on the perceived capacity of the political process to deliver benefits now and in the future. I find that while perceptions of the economy are indeed important in fostering feelings of EU support, perceptions of representation have an equally powerful effect. Further, findings here indicate that when an individual feels that the EU represents their interests, they are less likely to rely on their attitudes toward the economy in affording legitimacy towards the system. Thus chapter 2 confirms the expectations of democratic theory

and shows that ‘good’ representation is an important factor in maintaining the legitimacy of the EU system.

Chapter 3 finds that while parties appear to be somewhat (although by no means perfectly) representative of their supporters, inequalities in congruence exist. Results show that, with respect to EU integration issues, voters are better represented by the parties they support compared to non-voters. The chapter also demonstrates that on socio-cultural and socio-economic issues, citizens who switch party allegiances between national and EU levels are less congruent with the preferences of the party they vote for in the EP elections. This result supports earlier research that suggests voters often use EP elections to ‘punish’ national governments by voting away from the party they support nationally (Marsh and Hix, 2007) and demonstrates that voters who engage in this behaviour are at risk of being less well represented on cultural and economic issues in the EU space. Further, party level results show that the level of congruency between ideologically radical parties and their supporters varies across policy issues. Crucially the chapter finds that not only do individual and party level predictors impact on the level of representation, but that congruency also varies across issue area.

Chapter 4 builds on the findings in chapter 3 and asks whether or not parties are congruent with the issues that their voters deem to be important. The chapter concludes that parties show moderate to good positional congruence across socio-cultural and socio-economic policy areas, but vary considerably on the degree to which they prioritise the same issues as their voters. Further, using a test case of radical right parties, the study shows that voters who support these parties, and who prioritise immigration issues, are highly congruent on socio-cultural policy positions but less congruent over economic ones. The results thus demonstrate an important interplay between priority and issue congruence as the findings suggest that a lack of agreement on what issues are considered salient by voters and parties may compromise the representative quality of positional congruence.

Chapter 5 takes a different approach, conceptualizing representation as policy responsiveness, and testing whether decision-makers respond to changes in public opinion towards the EU or vice versa. The results show that changes in the volume of

legislative output in the EU are associated with changes in the electorate's opinions over towards EU membership. While it remains possible that politicians in the EU are concurrently reacting to some other unobserved effect, at the same time as voters, rather than actually paying attention public attitudes, the findings here are encouraging for the argument that the EU is responsive to changes citizen opinion at the macro level.

Finally, chapter 6 introduces an empirical discussion of descriptive representation and shows that, on specific policy issues relating to women's interests such as abortion, men and women in the population, and male and female candidates in EP elections, hold systematically different preferences. Although the magnitude of the differences between men and women are shown to vary across issue areas, the results suggest that female representatives in the EU may indeed be better placed to represent the interests of women on those issues compared to male politicians. However, there is little evidence to suggest that female candidates in EP elections actually do so but, in large part due to limitations in available data, a definitive answer to this question remains unclear.

7.2 Outlook

The dissertation constructs a more detailed picture of the EU system and demonstrates that it is somewhat, although imperfectly, representative of public preferences. The results of the project lead to the conclusion that the claim that the EU suffers from a 'democratic deficit', at least from the perspective of its representative role, is overstated. This implies that while political globalisation and advances in multi-level governance may be challenging our understanding of, and relationship with, popular sovereignty, it does not, of necessity, undermine it.

More specifically, one conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing analysis is that even taking account of the complexity of EU level governance and the multi-level structure of decision-making, in several respects models of representation that are typically associated with the national level appear to hold for the EU also. For example, the responsible party model of representation (APSA, 1950) stresses the importance of voter-party congruence on traditional policy areas such as economic

and socio-cultural issues and I find reasonable congruence on these issues in chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis. Further, if representation is understood from the perspective of 'delegation' (Miller and Stokes, 1963), then it is important that decision-makers respond to the preferences of the public such that the supply of policy outputs is reflective of voter demand for policy (i.e. policy inputs). At least in the aggregate, this dissertation finds that policy-makers do respond to changes in voter attitudes by restricting the volume of legislation produced at times when the EU lacks support and increasing it at times when public attitudes are more positive. Consequently, these findings suggest that the increased complexity of decision-making in the EU does not, of necessity, lead to a breakdown in the representative links between voters and political elites.

That being said, the dissertation also demonstrates that there are some limitations in the applicability of traditional models of representation due to the unique nature of the EU space. For example, chapter 3 suggests that at least some groups of voters approach EU elections differently to national ones (e.g. as being either first order or second order) and that this can have a significant impact on the degree of 'representativeness' present in the system. The findings of this chapter indicate that second order election effects can compromise the equality of representation, increasing the likelihood that some voters will be disenfranchised since those voters who switch parties between national and EP elections are likely to be less well represented at the EU level. Further, chapter 4 shows that, in many cases, parties poorly represent their supporters in terms of the issues that they prioritise. One can hypothesise that these effects would not be present at the national level where national elections are generally viewed as 'more important' and being of 'first order'.

Of course the preceding chapters herein do not (nor do they claim to) provide a complete analysis of EU representation from every possible perspective and consequently, there is much room for future research to advance the scholarship in this area further. For example, this dissertation follows existing empirical research in that representation is largely operationalized as being substantive. In this respect, a gap remains between the state of the theoretical literature and its empirical counterpart since recent developments in political representation theory have sought to elaborate on a broader typology of the concept.

Theoretical advances in representation research now conceptualise the idea as being formal, symbolic (Mansbridge, 2003, Pitkin, 1967), promissory, anticipatory, gyroscopic (Mansbridge, 2003) or even based on an understanding that the representative ‘makes claims’ about acting for or standing for the represented (Saward, 2006). These works argue that representation may not necessarily follow formal decision-making procedures, such that non-state actors or institutions that are removed from the direct accountability structures of electoral competition (e.g. the Commission), may nevertheless function as loci for the representation of public interests (Bellamy and Castiglione, 2011). Some of the findings of this project imply consistency with this theoretical account since, even if the institutional design of the EU lacks traditional electoral arrangements linking voters to policy-makers, changes in legislative activity do appear to be associated with changes in public opinion (chapter 5). Consequently, a point of departure for future research should be to consider these alternative conceptualisations in the EU case.

A related line of enquiry is to turn towards studies of political representation in the US. In large part due to the two-party structure of the American space, US scholars have typically focused on the link between public opinion and policy outcomes. In the EU, there is only fledgling research on the extent to which policy outputs actually reflect public opinion, or vice versa (e.g. Franklin and Wlezien, 1997; Toshkov, 2011 and chapter 5 of this dissertation). Yet, such research would contribute further to arguments in the democratic deficit debate that claim the EU suffers from a policy drift between public preferences and legislative outcomes.

Moreover, one further issue that remains puzzling is that while this project finds that the EU functions reasonably well as an instrument of political representation its democratic system continues to struggle to maintain a sense of legitimacy with many of its citizens (see Crombez, 2003; Majone, 2005, 1998; Moravcsik, 2002). In essence these results imply that representation is a necessary but not sufficient condition for democratic legitimacy. The introduction to the dissertation outlined two additional normative requirements for democratic legitimacy other than the representation condition, namely identity, and performance (Beetham and Lord, 2006) and arguments in the scholarship that the EU lacks a ‘thick’ collective identity

common to nation states (Scharpf, 2001) or that public support for the EU follows the ebb and flow of the economy (Anderson and Reichart, 1996; Gabel, 1998; 2003) may go some way to addressing this scholarly puzzle.

However, it should be noted that the decision-making and representative functions of the EU and national governments are not mutually exclusive and thus, the effect of EU level representation on the legitimacy of the system may be contingent on legitimacy derived at the national level. In this respect it would be useful to explore whether the degree of policy congruence at the national level impacts on public attitudes towards representation in the EU, as the systems 'crisis of credibility' may be symptomatic of a wider decline in public trust for political institutions and the changing nature of party competition across Europe (Held, 1996; Mair and Thomassen, 2010; Norris and Newton, 2000).

Further to this, an additional line of study may stem from the claim that it is not only important that democratic institutions satisfy the three normative requirements of legitimacy, but that voters must also perceive them as doing so, since a recent Eurobarometer²⁸ showed that fewer than 31% of citizens reported feeling that their voice counts in the EU. This demonstrates that even if the EU is actually responsive to the preferences of its citizens, the public are not necessarily aware of it. A large body of political behaviour literature has demonstrated that, individually, the average voter is politically unsophisticated, in some cases lacking even basic knowledge of politics and policy-making in national institutions (Converse, 1964; Dalton, 2013, chapter 2; Zaller, 1992). This is arguably an even bigger problem for the EU where the public shapes its attitudes towards supranational institutions from the cues it derives from the national level (Anderson, 1998; Hix and Hoyland, 2011, chapter 6; Rosema and De Vries, 2011). The finding that communications about the EU are typically dispensed by national political actors and the media compounds this problem (Risse, 2010) since studies have shown that national level politicians tend to depoliticise issues of EU unification (Mair, 2000) and often generate an 'us' and 'them' narrative on EU policy making, shifting blame for unpopular policies but

²⁸ Eurobarometer 78, autumn 2012.

taking credit for popular ones, even where such legislation generated from Brussels (Schmidt, 2013; 2006).

Consequently, if one were to prescribe a policy recommendation on the basis of the results outlined in this project, it would be to a) increase the direct involvement of national parliamentarians in EU affairs with the aim of socializing national level actors more effectively within the EU policy-making space and b) to give the EU legislative process greater visibility and transparency within member states, with the aim of generating greater public awareness of the interconnectedness of policy-making across levels. Similar suggestions have been put forth by scholars in the field, who argue that legitimacy problems faced by the EU should, fundamentally, be addressed by placing a greater emphasis on the involvement of domestic institutions (for a further discussion see Kroger, 2012). Of course such a recommendation does little to resolve the wider democratic problem of the unsophisticated voter but, as the literature outlined in chapter 5 demonstrates, even where individuals lack political knowledge, the aggregate preferences of the electorate are typically ordered, rational and consistent over time (e.g. Durr, 1993; Page and Shapiro, 1992; Stimson, 1991) and thus, increasing public awareness of EU policy-making may contribute to increasing the systems legitimacy at the macro level in the long term.

Note that the above recommendations are in contrast to strategies already undertaken by the EU such as increasing the powers of the European Parliament and the introduction of the citizen's initiative, which suggest that the cure for the ills of European democracy is more European democracy. Such an approach emphasises the development of representational structures at the EU level that are more consistent with national institutions, such that the threat of electoral sanction between national citizens and EU political elites is strengthened (Hix and Follesdal, 2006; Mair, 2010). However, given that the conclusions of this dissertation imply that the EU does, to at least some degree, represent the interests of its citizens, solutions to the systems ongoing legitimacy problem may not necessarily be found by complicating or advancing its representational structures even further.

Finally, one remaining point of note on identifying avenues for future research relates to a recurring issue that emerged throughout the course of the analysis in this project, specifically that it was often difficult to directly address research questions due to limitations in available data. Chapters 3,4 and 6 rely upon identifying voter and party policy positions across a range of issues and yet large-scale European surveys that collect respondents' opinions beyond the basic left-right and EU integration question are surprisingly rare. For example, while Euro-barometer surveys often ask respondents the level at which they would like various policies to be made at, they rarely ask for their opinion on their positional preferences towards such issues. Indeed little is still understood about how well political elites are congruent with the positions of voters on issues such as the environment, equality, international trade or foreign policy, in part due to limited available data on these policy areas.

Moreover, methodological scholarship argues that in order to take account of measurement error, that is common to survey based datasets, researchers should use a battery of policy questions with the aim of tapping into underlying dimensions of voter attitudes. However, this is frequently not possible with existing datasets as surveys such as the EES and Euro-barometer are often limited to asking one question per policy issue (see chapter 6). Consequently, future research should be aimed at the construction of datasets that specifically tap into a broader range of policy issues in order to understand more clearly, how public opinion and representation in the EU operates. Boomgaarden et al. 2011 offer a good example of this type of study in their original survey of voter opinion towards support for the EU.

Year upon year, the decision-making relationship between the EU and its member states becomes more intricately entwined, challenging traditional understandings of representative democracy through the development of multi-level governance structures. It is hoped that this project has advanced the scholarship on political representation and encouraged the opening of new lines of enquiry to explore more broadly how well, and in what capacity, the EU represents its citizens interests in an ever shifting political landscape

Appendix A

Question wording for variables in chapter 2.

Source: Euro-barometer 69.2

Dependent Variables:

Utilitarian Support –

- Taking everything into account, would you say that (our country) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the European Union?

0 = not benefited

1 = benefited

Affective Support –

- Thinking about this, to what extent do you personally feel you are European?

1 = Not at all

2 = Not really

3 = Somewhat

4 = To a great extent

Independent Variables:

EU Representation –

- Please tell me for each statement, whether you tend to agree or tend to disagree.

“My voice counts in the European Union”

“On European issues, my voice is listened to by members of the European Parliament”

0 = Tend to disagree

1 = Tend to agree

National Representation –

- Please tell me for each statement, whether you tend to agree or tend to disagree.

“My voice counts in (our country)”

“On European issues, my voice is listened to by my government”

0 = Tend to disagree

1 = Tend to agree

Household Economy –

- What are your expectations for the next twelve months: will the next twelve months be better, worse or the same, when it comes to...?

“The financial situation in your household”

“Your personal job situation”

0 = Worse

1 = Same

2 = Better

National Economy –

- What are your expectations for the next twelve months: will the next twelve months be better, worse or the same, when it comes to...?

“The economic situation in (our country)”

“The employment situation in (our country)”

0 = Worse

1 = Same

2 = Better

National Identity –

- Thinking about this, to what extent do you personally feel you are (Nationality)?

1 = Not at all

2 = Not really

3 = Somewhat

4 = To a great extent

Trust in Government –

- I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it.

“The (nationality) government”

0 = Tend not to trust

1 = Tend to trust

Attitudes to Immigrants –

- For each of the following propositions, tell me if you...

“Immigrants contribute a lot to (our country)”

1 = Totally Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Agree

4 = Totally Agree

Vote Intention –

- Can you tell me on a scale of 1 to 10 how likely it is that you would vote in the next Europeans elections in June 2009?

1 = Definitely not vote

10 = Definitely vote

Appendix B

Question wording for congruence variables in Chapter 3.

Sources:

For party positions - Chapel Hill expert survey dataset, 2006.

For voter preferences – European Election Studies voter survey dataset,
2009

Party Positions:

Economic Items -

- 1) Position public spending v reducing taxes
0 = strongly favours improving public services
10 = strongly favours reducing taxes

- 2) Position on deregulation
0 = strongly opposes deregulation of markets
10 = strongly favours deregulation of markets

- 3) Position on redistribution from rich to poor
0 = strongly favours redistribution
10 = strongly opposes redistribution

Cultural Items -

- 1) Position on civil liberties v law and order
0 = strongly promotes civil liberties
10 = strongly supports tough measures to fight crime

- 2) Position on social lifestyle (e.g. homosexuality)
0 = strongly supports liberal policies
10 = strongly opposes liberal policies

- 3) Position on immigration policy
0 = strongly opposes tough policy
10 = strongly favours tough policy
- 4) Position on integration of immigrants
0 = strongly favours multiculturalism
10 = strongly opposes multiculturalism

EU Items -

- 1) Orientation of the party leadership to EU integration
1 = Strongly opposed
7 = strongly in favour
- 2) Position of the party leadership on enlargement
1 = Strongly opposed
7 = strongly in favour
- 3) Party leadership's stance on whether or not the country has benefited from EU membership
1 = benefited
2 = neither benefited or lost
3 = not benefited

Public Preferences:

Economic Items -

"For each of the following statements, please tell me to what degree you agree or disagree with each statement. Do you 1 = 'strongly agree', 2 = 'agree', 3 = 'neither agree nor disagree', 4 = 'disagree' or 5 = 'strongly disagree'?"

- 1). Private enterprise is the best way to solve (our country's) economic problems
- 2). Major public services and industries ought to be in state ownership.
- 3). Politics should abstain from intervening in the economy
- 4). Income and wealth should be redistributed towards ordinary people

Cultural Items -

“For each of the following statements, please tell me to what degree you agree or disagree with each statement. Do you 1 = ‘strongly agree’, 2 = ‘agree’, 3 = ‘neither agree nor disagree’, 4 = ‘disagree’ or 5 = ‘strongly disagree’?”

- 1). Immigrants should be required to adapt to the customs of (our country).
- 2). Same-sex marriages should be prohibited by law.
- 3) People who break the law should be given much harsher sentences than they are these days.
- 4). Immigration to (our country) should be decreased significantly.

EU Items -

- 1). Generally speaking, do you think that (our country’s) membership of the European Union is a good thing, a bad thing, or neither good nor bad?
 - 1 - good thing
 - 2 - bad thing
 - 3 - neither
- 2). 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?
- 3). In general, do you think that enlargement of the European Union would be a good thing, a bad thing, or neither good nor bad?
 - 1 - a good thing
 - 2 - a bad thing
 - 3 - neither good nor bad

Appendix C

Question wording for policy congruence variables Chapter 4.

Sources:

For party positions – European Election Candidate Survey 2009

For voter preferences – European Election Studies Voter Survey 2009

For each of the following statements, please tell me to what degree you agree or disagree with each statement. 1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree.

1. Immigrants should be required to adapt to the customs of (our country).
2. Private enterprise is the best way to solve (our country's) economic problems
3. Major public services and industries ought to be in state ownership..
4. Politics should abstain from intervening in the economy
5. Income and wealth should be redistributed towards ordinary people
6. Immigration to (our country) should be decreased significantly.

Table C1: European Parties by Country

Country	English Party Name	Party Abbreviation
Austria	Greens	ATGrune
	Communist Party of Austria	KPO
	Social Democratic Party of Austria	SPO
	Young Liberals	Jliberale
	Austrian Peoples Party	OVP
	Freedom Party of Austria	FPO
	Hans Peter Martin's List	HPMartin
	Alliance for the Future of Austria	BZO
Belgium	Ecolo	Ecolo
	Green!	Groen!
	Socialist Party	PS(BE)
	Socialist Party Different	Spa
	Social Liberal Party	SLP
	Flemish Liberals and Democrats	OpenVLD
	Reformist Movement	MR
	Christian Democratic and Flemish Party	CD&V
	Humanist Democratic Centre	CDH
	List Dedecker	LDD

Denmark	National Front	FN
	Flemish Interest	VB
	New Flemish Alliance	N-VA
	Peoples Movement against the EU	FmodEU
	June Movement	Junibev
	Social Democrats	SD(DK)
	Socialist Peoples Party	SF(DK)
	Danish Social Liberal Party	RV
Estonia	Liberal Party	V
	Conservative Peoples Party	KF
	Estonian Greens	EERoh
	Social Democratic Party	SDE
	Estonian Centre Party	EK
	Estonian Reform Party	ER
	Estonian Christian Democrats	EKD
	Peoples Union of Estonia	ERL
Finland	Union of Pro Patria and Res Publica	IRL
	Green League	VIHR
	Left Alliance	VAS
	Christian Democrats	KD(FI)
	National Coalition Party	KOK
	Centre Party	KESK
	True Finns	PS(FI)
	Swedish Peoples Party	RKP
Germany	Alliance 90/The Greens	B90/Grunen
	The Left	Linke
	Social Democratic Party	SPD
	Free Democratic Party	FDP
	Christian Democratic Union	CDU
Latvia	All for Latvia	VL
	Union of Greens and Farmers	ZZS
	Latvian Social Democratic Labour Party	LSDSP
	Harmony Centre	SC
	For Human Rights in United Latvia	PCTVL
	New Era Party	JL
	Latvias First Party/Latvia's Way	LPP
	Society for Other Politics	SabCP
	People's Party	TP
	Civic Union	PS(LV)
Luxembourg	For Fatherland and Freedom	LNNK
	Communist Party of Luxembourg	KPL
	The Left	Lenk
	Luxembourg Socialist Workers Party	LSAP
	Alternative Democratic Reform Party	ADR
Malta	Christian Social People's Party	CSV
	Democratic Alternative	AD

The Netherlands	Labour Party	LP	
	Nationalist Party	PN	
	National Action	AN	
	Party for Animals	PvdD	
	Newropeans	Newropeans	
	Solidarity	Solidara	
	Dutch Whistleblowers Party	EKP	
	Green Left	GroenLinks	
	Socialist Party	SP	
	Labour Party	PvdA	
	Democrats 66	D66	
	People's Party for Freedom and Democracy	VVD	
	Christian Union-Reformed Political Party	ChristianUnie	
	Christian Democratic Appeal	CDA	
Slovakia	Party for Freedom	PVV	
	Green Party	SZ	
	Communist Party of Slovakia	KSS	
	Christian Democratic Movement	KDH	
	Direction - Social Democracy	SMER	
	Slovak Democratic and Christian Union	SDKU	
	Free Forum	SF(SK)	
	Conservative Democrats of Slovakia	KDS	
	Slovak National Party	SNS	
	People's Party - Movement for Democratic Slovakia	LS-HZDS	
	Party of the Hungarian Coalition	SMK	
	Slovenia	Social Democrats	SD(SI)
		For Real	ZARES
		Liberal Democracy of Slovenia	LDS
Slovenian People's Party		SLS	
New Slovenia - Christian People's Party		Nsi	
Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia		DESUS	
Youth Party		SMS	
Sweden		Pirate Party	Pirate
	Green Party	Miljo	
	Left Party	Vanster	
	Social Democrats	SD(SW)	
	Centre Party	C	
	June List	Junilistan	
	Moderate Party	Moderaterna	
	Christian Democrats	KD(SW)	
United Kingdom	Green Party	Greens	
	Labour	Lab	
	Liberal Democrats	LibDem	
	Scottish Socialist Party	SSP	
	Conservatives	Cons	

British National Party	BNP
Plaid Cymru	Pcym
UK Independence Party	UKIP

Appendix D

Tables of forecast error variance decomposition (FEVD) and unit root tests for time series stationarity.

Note on Johansen test table D2: the null hypothesis for the test statistics is that there are r co-integrating vectors against the alternative that there is more than r . In the total policy model the test rejects the null hypothesis $r=0$ but fails to reject the null $r=1$, indicating that there is one co-integrating vector. By contrast, the redistributive policy model fails to reject the null $r=0$ and so regression results must be interpreted conservatively

Table D1: Forecast Error Variance Decomposition for bivariate VAR(1) Models

<i>Response Variables</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Impulse Variables</i>	
		<i>Public Opinion</i>	<i>Policy</i>
Total Policy	1	0.001	0.99
	2	0.21	0.79
	3	0.29	0.71
	4	0.33	0.67
	5	0.36	0.64
Redistributive Policy	1	0.01	0.99
	2	0.18	0.82
	3	0.35	0.65
	4	0.44	0.56
	5	0.49	0.51

Table D2: Unit Root and Co-integration Tests.

<i>Unit Root Test</i>		Public Opinion	Total Policy	Redistributive Policy	Misery	Economic Expectations
<i>Augmented Dickey Fuller Test (H1=stationary)</i>						
Level		-1.8205	-2.2621	-2.9043	-2.2436	-0.4667
First Difference		-3.9115***	-5.3322***	-5.0699***	-4.5426***	-3.29.15**
N		31	31	31	31	28
Start		1977	1977	1977	1977	1980
End		2008	2008	2008	2008	2008
Co-integration Tests						
		Opinion/Total Policy	Opinion/Redistributive Policy	Critical Values		
<i>Engle Granger 2 step approach</i>						
Augmented Dickey Fuller test statistic		-4.4	-4.15	1%	5%	10%
				-3.9	-3.34	-3.04
<i>Johansen test</i>						
$\lambda: r=0$						
λ Max		29.32	29.25	32.14	27.14	24.78
λ Trace		60.57	66.28	55.43	48.28	45.23
$\lambda: r \leq 1$						
λ Max		16.81	20.75	25.75	21.07	18.90
λ Trace		31.25	37.04	37.22	31.52	28.71
$\lambda: r \leq 2$						
λ Max		14.17	16.05	19.19	14.90	12.91
λ Trace		14.44	16.29	23.52	17.95	15.66

Standard errors in parentheses ***= $p < 0.05$

Appendix E

Question wording of policy position variables in Chapter 6.

Sources:

For party positions – European Election Candidate Survey 2009

For voter preferences – European Election Studies Voter Survey 2009

Now I will read out some statements to you. For each of the following statements, please tell me to what degree you agree or disagree with each statement. 1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree.

1. Same-sex marriages should be prohibited by law
2. Women should be free to decide on matters of abortion
3. Income and wealth should be redistributed towards ordinary people
4. A woman should be prepared to cut down on her paid work for the sake of her family

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