

# Predictors of Public Political Euro-scepticism in the EU in 2003-11

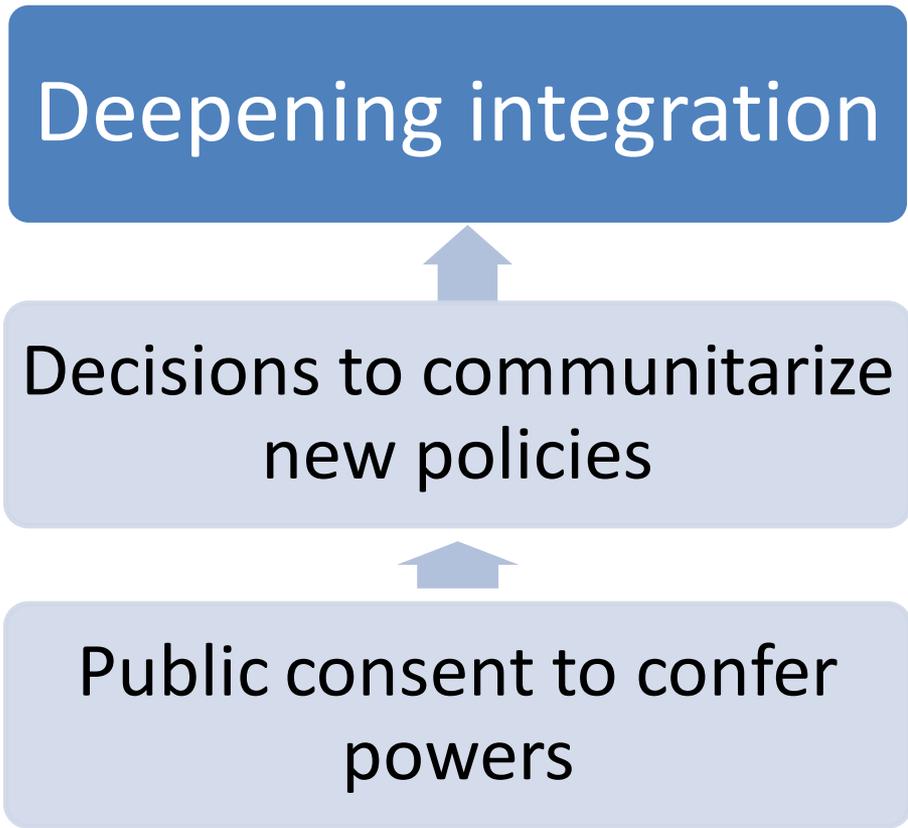
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# Research motivation

Forecasting the future of the EU



For example, in case of common immigration policy: European Pact on Immigration and Asylum in 2008 elaborated after the consent reached its peak

# Research questions

- Look for conditions under which people prefer not to make supranational bodies responsible for a policy
- **Research questions:** *what does the unwillingness to transfer powers to the supranational level depend on? If the unwillingness is driven by the same causes regardless of the policy area, in which powers are to be taken away from national government?*
- *Is the character of the relationship different for different policies? “National difficulty” hypothesis of Dalton and Eichenberg (1998)*

# Defining this “consent”

- Definition from studies of party-based, not public Euroscepticism
- “**political Euroscepticism**”. They defined it as “public refusals to provide more legitimate power to supranational institutions to deal with policy issues” (Lubbers and Scheepers 2005: 224)

# Previous studies of Euroscepticism and specific contribution

- Political (attitude to EU involvement in policy) addressed less often than instrumental (assessment of membership to the EU)
- Public addressed less often than party-based
- Explored on country level, rarely EU-wide  
“Desired speed of integration” (dependent variable in famous EU-wide study by De Vries and Edwards 2009) – unsuitable for us (imprecise about one policy area)

# Theoretical framework

- **Trust in institutions** (Luhmann, Giddens, Sztompka, Fukuyama, Coleman...)  
Condition for cooperation (Coleman, Deutsch, Gambetta)  
Quéré: trustworthiness and “entrustment” (i.e., cognitive and *active component* of trust)
- **Nationalistic feelings**
  - nationalism - common denominator of Eurosceptic positions (Halikiopoulou et al., 2010).

## Theoretical framework (2)

- **Securitization theory** (Buzan, Wæver):  
**threat** → people urge governments  
to seek for a solution

Unemployment, immigrant inflow,  
situation in European and national  
economies, household financial  
expectations, satisfaction with life

# Theoretical framework (3)

- **Risk of betrayal** (Baier 1986; Hardin 1998):
  - current command of power by the EU (unbeneficial /bad membership, transfers from EU budget)
  - overall image of the EU
  - information about the EU (Luhmann, Giddens, Lengyel), “cognitive mobilization” (Inglehart 1970): frequency of political discussions, education level, awareness of the European Commission
  - crime rate
  - satisfaction with democracy in country/EU

# Theoretical framework (4)

- Other:

type of community (a predictor of political trust - van der Veld and Saris 2011)

manual workers (De Vries and Edwards 2009)

# Dependent variable

Question: «For each of the following areas, do you think that decisions should be made by the (nationality) Government, or made jointly within the European Union?»

Answer: “Should be decided by the (national) Government”

Policy areas: defence, foreign policy (combined after 2004), health, welfare (combined before 2008), immigration, environmental protection, unemployment, agriculture and fisheries, regional support, education, scientific research, fighting terrorism.

# Dependent factors: “policy types”?

	Crossing borders		Competitiveness		Needy
Defence and foreign affairs	.704	Agriculture and fisheries	.583	Health and welfare	.739
Fight terrorism	.574	Environmental protection	.603	Unemployment	.631
Immigration policy	.583	Regional support	.601	Education	.673
		Scientific research	.587		

# Hypothesis (beginning)

- *H1: Respondents' level of political Euroscepticism about any policy is higher:*
- *the worse they assess situation in European economy in comparison to situation in national economy;*
- *the worse economic situation in the EU they expect in the year to come;*
- *the better the financial situation of their household is expected to be in the year to come;*
- *the less transfers from the EU budget their country gets;*
- *the less they trust in the EU;*

# Hypothesis (continuation)

- *H1: A respondent's level of political Euroscepticism about any policy is higher:*
- *the less they are satisfied with democracy in the EU;*
- *the worse and the less beneficial they assess the membership of their country in the EU;*
- *the more negative overall image of the EU they have;*
- *the less frequently they discuss politics with others;*
- *the less they are aware of the European Commission;*
- *the longer they studied full-time (that in the majority of cases means better education);*
- *the higher is crime rate in their country;*
- *the more migrants enter their country;*
- *the less they are satisfied with their lives.*

# Method

Grouping 12 DVs into  
3 dependent factors

Correlation matrix

Factor analysis of IVs

Multilevel regression  
analysis

CFA of “Caution  
about the EU

Eurobarometer 2003-11, 27 countries,  
14 waves, 283191 observations

# Choosing between separate and “delta” variables [EU minus national]

	Crossing borders	Competitiveness	Needy
Economic situation delta	<b>,093</b>	,018	<b>,097</b>
Bad situation in the national economy	-,014	,059	,048
Bad situation in the European economy	,089	<b>,089</b>	,054
Economic expectations delta	,060	,026	,056
Bad expectations about national economy	,052	,062	,038
Bad expectations about EU economy	<b>,105</b>	<b>,081</b>	<b>,088</b>
Pride delta	<b>-,166</b>	<b>-,156</b>	<b>-,125</b>
National pride	,051	,023	,014
European pride	-,134	-,145	-,120
Trust delta	,166	,123	,132
Distrust in national government	,020	,067	,010
Distrust in the EU	<b>,215</b>	<b>,213</b>	<b>,164</b>
Satisfaction with democracy delta	,164	,097	<b>,162</b>
Dissatisfaction with democracy in the country	-,006	,074	-,021
Dissatisfaction with democracy in the EU	<b>,187</b>	<b>,191</b>	,150

All the correlations are significant

# Other correlations with 3 factors

	Crossing borders	Competitiveness	Needy
Membership of the EU – bad thing	<b>,250</b>	<b>,266</b>	<b>,161</b>
Unbeneficial membership of the EU	<b>,223</b>	<b>,242</b>	<b>,158</b>
Negative overall image of the EU	<b>,247</b>	<b>,253</b>	<b>,203</b>
Good financial situation in the household	0.001 (.768)	,062	-,030
Better expectations about household's finances	,043	,056	,034
Satisfied with life	-,008	,052	-,041
Crime rate this year	<b>,143</b>	,032	<b>,189</b>
Migrant inflow this year	-,009	-,029	,041
Net transfers from EU budget	<b>-,094</b>	-,037	<b>-,161</b>
Frequent political discussions	-,048	-,075	-,013
Aware of the European Commission	-,062	<b>-,092</b>	-,021

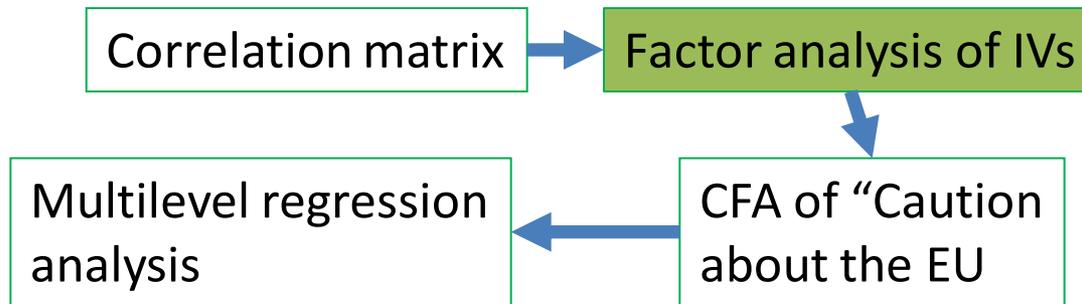
Same direction of relationships with 3 types of policy – not radical difference

# Other correlations with 3 factors (2)

	Crossing borders	Competitiveness	Needy
Ideology (right-left)	0.003 (sig. .253)	,015	-0.002 (sig. .435)
Marital status	,019	,025	-,005 (sig. .014)
Term of education	-,064	<b>-,082</b>	-,029
Gender	0.004 (sig. .053)	,034	,012
Age	<b>,080</b>	,062	<b>,089</b>
Size of community	0.003 (sig. .181)	-,025	-,015
Unemployed status (dummy)	-0.003 (sig. .128)	,008	-,021
Manual worker (dummy)	0.0003 (sig. .875)	,014	0.001 (sig. .494)

Same direction of relationships with 3 types of policy – not radical difference  
 P<.001 if not indicated in brackets

# Factor analysis of independent variables



	Crossing borders	Competitiveness	Needy
Distrust in the EU	,215	,213	,164
Dissatisfaction with democracy in the EU	,187	,191	,150
Membership of the EU – bad thing	,250	,266	,161
Unbeneficial membership of the EU	,223	,242	,158
Negative overall image of the EU	,247	,253	,203

Selected correlations with dependent factors; the IVs correlate up to .6 fictiously?

	Caution about the EU (enlarged) (52% of variance, sig.<.001)		Caution about the EU (reduced) (57% of variance, sig.<.001)		
	Loadings	Extracted commonalities	Loadings	Extracted commonalities	
2011					
2010					
2009					
2008	Membership of the EU – bad thing	<b>.801</b>	.641	<b>,823</b>	,677
2007	Membership of the EU - unbeneficial	<b>.748</b>	.56	<b>,762</b>	,581
2006	Negative overall image of the EU	<b>.794</b>	.63	<b>,766</b>	,587
2005	Distrust in the EU	<b>.654</b>	.427	<b>,662</b>	,439
2004	Dissatisfaction with EU democracy	<b>.574</b>	.33	-	-
2003					

# Correlations between independent and dependent factors

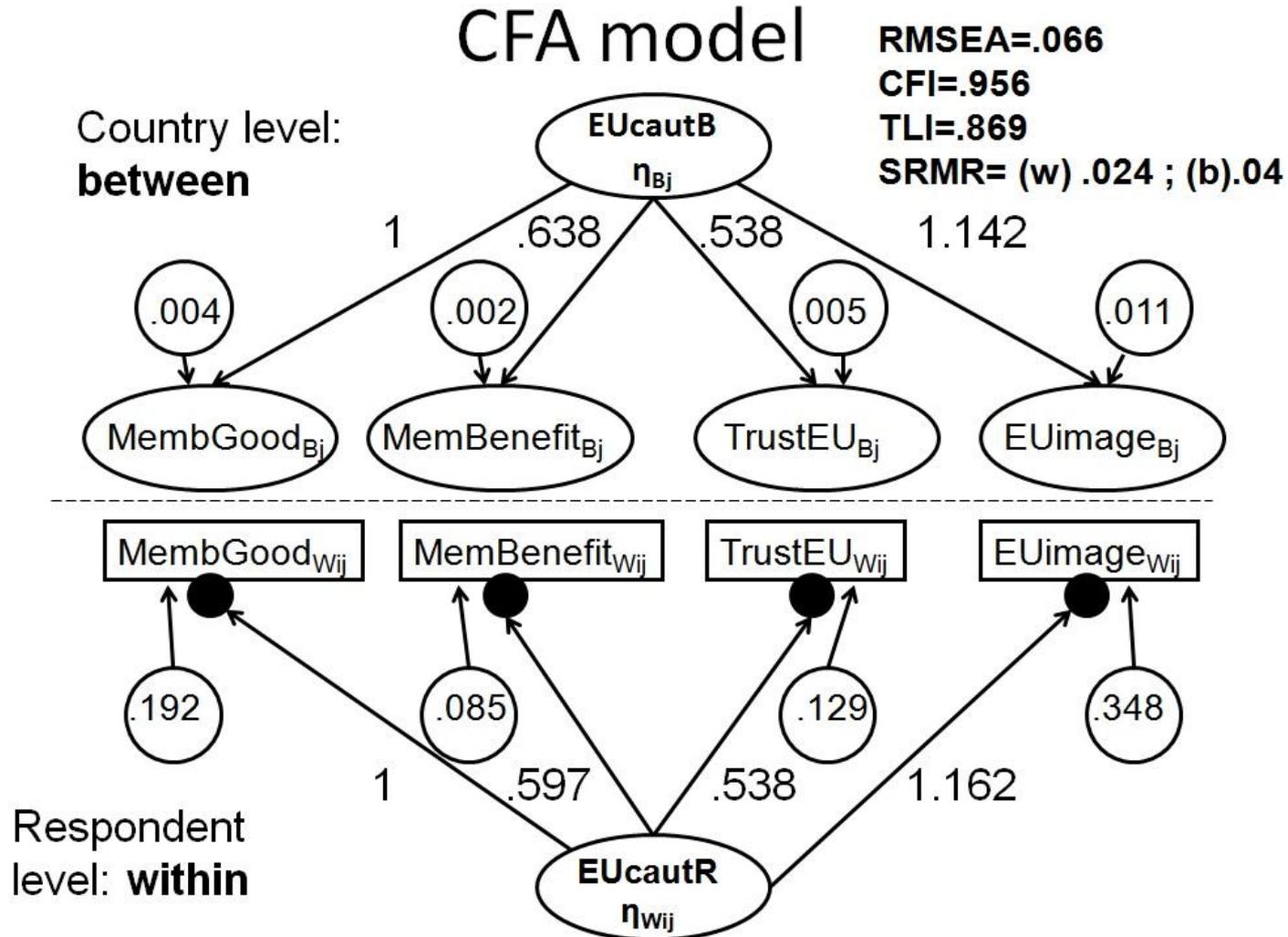
Significant correlations ( $p < .001$ ):

- .308 with “Crossing borders” (the strongest correlation before the factor analysis was .25)
- .316 with “Competitiveness” (was .253)
- .223 with “Needy” (was .203)

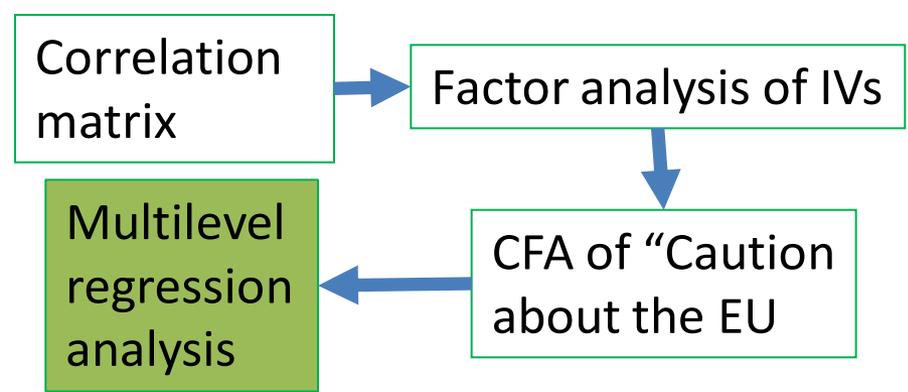
So, the distinction between “policy types” using factor analysis improved the model

# Configural invariance of “Caution about the EU (reduced)”

(without satisfaction with democracy, Eurobarometer June 2010)



# Multilevel regression analysis



## Crossing borders

$$PE\ 1 = -2,514 \quad 0,135 \quad 0,267$$

$$-2,627 \quad + \quad 0,123 \quad *Crime\ rate + \quad (0,304 - 0,034 * EU\ transfers) \quad *EU\ caution + r$$

## Competitiveness

$$PE\ 2 = -2,061 \quad 0,301$$

$$-2,286 \quad + \quad (0,316 - 0,029 * EU\ transfers - 0,014 * Migr.\ flow) \quad *EU\ caution + r$$

## Needy

$$PE\ 3 = -1,387 \quad 0,216 \quad (0,256 - 0,019 * Crime\ rate)$$

$$-1,452 \quad + \quad 0,207 \quad *Crime + \quad (0,27 - 0,029 * Crime - 0,034 * EU\ transfers) \quad *EU\ caution + r$$

Up - "Caution about the EU (reduced)", bottom - "Caution about the EU (enlarged)"

# Conclusion

New (hopefully) useful factor “Caution about the EU”

- good/bad membership of the EU;
- beneficial/unbeneficial membership of the EU;
- Overall image of the EU;
- trust in the EU;
- satisfaction with democracy in the EU.

# Hypothesis confirmed with exceptions for some policies

Respondents' level of political Euroscepticism about any policy is higher:

- the worse they assess situation in European economy in comparison to situation in national economy;
- the worse economic situation in the EU they expect in the year to come;
- the better the financial situation of their household is expected to be in the year to come;
- the less transfers from the EU budget their country gets;
- the less they trust in the EU;
- the less they are satisfied with democracy in the EU;
- the worse and the less beneficial they assess the membership of their country in the EU;
- the more negative overall image of the EU they have;

# Hypothesis (continuation)

Respondents' level of political Euroscepticism about any policy is higher:

- the less frequently they discuss politics with others;
- the less they are aware of the European Commission;
- the longer they studied full-time (that in the majority of cases means better education);
- the older they are;
- the higher is crime rate in their country;
- the more migrants enter their country (except for attitude to “Needy” policies);
- the less satisfied with life they are (not “Competitiveness”);
- if they are men (except for “Crossing border” policies” – insig.);
- unmarried (“Crossing borders”, “competitiveness”, not “Needy”).

Unclear: ideological orientation (left-right)

# Conclusion

Difference in **country-level** predictors of attitude to communitarization between 3 sets of policies:

- defence and foreign affairs, fighting terrorism, immigration (“crossing borders”);
- environmental protection, regional support, agriculture and fisheries, scientific research (“competitiveness”);
- health and welfare, unemployment, education (“needy”).

Partial confirmation of the “**national difficulty**” hypothesis (Dalton and Eichenberg 1998)? “Crossing borders” policy areas seem to be difficult to manage for one nation.

# Further steps

- Include attachment to country/EU
- Improve CFA: add democracy, waves and find scalar invariance
- Explain through risk perception: how likely to risk their taxmoney and send it to Brussels?
- Multilevel SEM: more predictors on individual level, even with multicollinearity
- Run joint ML SEM with combined versions of factors “Caution about the EU”

Thank you for your  
attention and comments!

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