

Please cite the Published Version

Grimm, Robert, Pollock, Gary and Ellison, Mark (2017) Eurosceptic youth: Interest, trust and ideology. In: The Routledge Handbook of Euroscepticism. Routledge, pp. 215-230. ISBN 9781315464008

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315464015>

Publisher: Routledge

Version: Accepted Version

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EUROSCEPTIC YOUTH

Interest, trust and ideology¹

Robert Grimm, Gary Pollock and Mark Ellison

Introduction

Euroscepticism moved from the margins to the centre in national and European politics and is now a persistent and potent feature of contemporary politics (Hooghe and Marks 2007). European integration has been rejected through plebiscite in recent years in a number of countries culminating in the so-called Brexit referendum in the United Kingdom (UK) in June 2016. Once a phenomenon of the opposition, Euroscepticism can now be found among parties in government and it also cuts across the left-right political spectrum. Moreover, an anti-integration bloc of parties is permanently present in the European Parliament and has been growing to unprecedented levels following the European Parliament elections in 2014 (Delanty 2015).

The EU has been primarily an economic project driven by the premise that creating a common market in goods, services, labour and capital will improve competitiveness and safeguard peaceful cooperation. Opposition against this consensus remained marginal until the 1990s. The Maastricht Treaty fundamentally changed the nature of the EU. The treaty transformed the European Union (EU) from a predominantly economic project into a political and socio-cultural one.

The Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) presupposed the implementation of a relatively rigid economic and legal framework. New supranational governing institutions had to be established and national competencies subsequently transferred from nation states to the supranational level of the EU. In other words, post-Maastricht the process of European integration encompassed a sociopolitical as much as an economic dimension. There has also been a concerted effort to create a European political space. With the establishment of the European Parliament citizens of EU member states have become entitled to participate in transnational European elections. The drive towards political union and the idea of European citizenship challenged the sovereignty of member states. Simultaneously the end of the cold war fundamentally altered the geopolitical situation of Europe. EU membership increased rapidly through enlargement in Central and Eastern Europe. Given these fundamental changes concerning the essence of the EU, its institutional underpinnings and its geography, it is not surprising that ever more citizens have become sceptical about the impact of further integration.

Euroscepticism refers to scepticism about the idea of Europe, the process of European integration (Hooghe and Marks 2007) or the unsettled and contested character of the EU (de Wilde and Trenz 2012). A wealth of political science literature explores and analyses the

phenomenon from different viewpoints. Many authors investigate Euroscepticism from a political party perspective, understanding it as a product of the competition between parties in government and parties in opposition (Sitter 2001; Szczerbiak and Taggart 2002, 2003). A significant effort has been made to conceptualise the multiplicity of positions and to develop classifications of the intensity of scepticism, which can range from outright rejection of the idea of Europe to subsets of negative attitudes about particular European policies.

Other scholars focus on the motivation for negative perceptions of the EU among the general population. Research differentiates between socio-economic groups: Leconte (2010), for instance, points out that there is a persistent gap between men and women where the latter are less supportive of European integration (see also Nelsen and Guth 2000). Utilitarian models distinguish between ‘losers’ and ‘winners’ of integration and suggest that education and skills may impact on the level of support for the EU (Gabel and Palmer 1995). Building on Inglehart’s work Janssen (1991) proposes that young people are more likely to be supportive of the EU because they are least likely to be attached to traditional materialist values. Most studies take into account the heterogeneous character of member states and explore variations of scepticism across nations.

This chapter provides a cross-national perspective on Euroscepticism among young people. It is based on survey data from the Framework Seven Research Project Memory, Youth Political Legacy and Civic Engagement (MYPLACE). Respondents were aged 16 to 25 at the time of the MYPLACE survey in 2012/2013. Most grew up in a post-materialist value system (Inglehart 1977) in post-socialist Europe and were born after the Maastricht Treaty was signed.

The chapter firstly explores young people’s trust in the European Commission and the perceived benefit of membership of the European Union. Secondly we use multivariate logistic regression to study the association of Euroscepticism with young people’s trust in national political institutions, satisfaction with democracy, left–right orientation, nativism and their socio-demographic characteristics. The primary analytic variable is regional location.

In this chapter we use the following wording to gain an indicator of support for European integration: ‘Consider the following statements and indicate whether you agree or disagree. Membership of the European Union greatly benefits this country’. This question and similar variants are commonly used, for example in the Eurobarometer surveys (see Chapter 16 in this Handbook), to measure Euroscepticism (Loveless and Rohrschneider 2011). We follow Eichenberg and Dalton (2007; see also Anderson 1998) who argue that EU membership represents an existential fact of the integration process, i.e. that the logic of being in the EU includes a broad acceptance of continued Europe-wide cooperation with the prospect of deeper integrating practices. Endorsing membership implies endorsing the process of integration itself. We categorised as Eurosceptic those young people who disagreed with the statement that membership of the EU benefited their country. This simple definition covers a range of ‘sceptics’ including those with ‘hard’ and ‘diffuse’ ‘Euroreject’ positions and those with ‘soft’, ‘specific’, ‘revisionist’ positions (see Chapters 1 to 3 in this Handbook for a review of these concepts).

Explaining Euroscepticism

Classifications and typologies present helpful tools to define Euroscepticism and to unpack variations in the intensity and the degree of citizens’ attitudes towards Europe. However, they say little about the motivation for political dissent. The literature proposes a number of explanations. Gabel (1998) for instance suggests that there are five individual-level theories about public support for European integration. These include cognitive mobilisation, political

values, utilitarian appraisals, class partisanship and support for national government. Sørensen (2008) proposes a typology of four motivators that underpin attitudes towards Europe: economic utilitarian perspectives, sovereignty-based critiques, democratic and social Euroscepticism. Leconte (2010) also differentiates between four varieties: utilitarian, political, value-based and cultural Euroscepticism – labelling the last ‘cultural anti-Europeanism’. In this chapter we will explore four theories: cognitive mobilisation, utilitarian explanations, trust in instructional performance, and the role of ideology in determining young people’s attitudes to Europe.

Cognitive mobilisation

Higher levels of cognitive mobilisation are associated with support for European integration. Increased access to information about the EU makes the EU appear less distant and threatening (Inglehart 1977). Skills and knowledge determine a person’s ability to process information at an abstract level, to understand political messages and the way in which an individual can relate these messages to their own personal situation (Janssen 1991). In post-Brexit-referendum UK an apocryphal story goes that the most frequent online search was ‘what is the EU’, and assertions that a great many voters did not fully understand the role of the EU. The education divide, or knowledge deficit, appears to be associated with populist and anti-Europe sentiment (Runciman 2016).

We hypothesise that Eurosceptics have lower levels of political interest, spend less time informing themselves about politics and lack basic political knowledge.

Utilitarian determinants

The utilitarian model builds on cost-benefit analysis: ‘citizens evaluate the economic consequences of European integration for themselves and for the groups of which they are part’ (Hooghe and Marks 2005: 420). Creating growth-oriented economic environments is a primary EU policy objective and the EU therefore promotes economic liberalisation and deregulation. EU policies aim to rebalance resource allocation towards knowledge intensive industries and discourage member states from subsidising uncompetitive economic sectors. The macroeconomic programme of the EU is based on anti-inflationary fiscal and monetary policies (Gabel and Palmer 1995) and the legal framework of EMU prevents countries from making monetary adjustments to encourage growth. Neo-liberal growth-oriented European economic policies have a major impact on labour market structures and participation. Individuals with high levels of human capital and specialised skill sets find it easier to adjust to deregulated labour markets while those population groups with lower qualifications will become marginalised. The utilitarian model implies a distinction between economic losers and winners of European integration and suggests that individuals benefitting from the EU’s economic policies will be more likely to support European integration (Hooghe and Marks 2005).

MYPLACE respondents were still in education during the time of the survey. Educational attainment is therefore not a robust measure for young people’s socio-economic status or their prospects in the labour market. The family is an important location of transmission of political values and political socialisation. We, therefore, use parental social class composed of parental occupational status and educational attainment as a proxy to assess the socio-economic status of our respondents. We complement this parental social class variable with a subjective measure of household income (‘Do you believe your household is coping on current income?’). Additionally, we assume that lack of socio-economic participation will negatively impact on young people’s general life satisfaction.

We hypothesise that young people from families with lower socio-economic status, who live in households that find it difficult to cope on present income, and who are dissatisfied with life in general, will be least likely to perceive membership in the EU as beneficial for their country.

Democratic performance

Trust in political institutions is a performance measure that evaluates the process of political participation and policy outcomes. Trust in European institutions is changing: EU citizens are no longer governed by a single layer of institutions; in addition to national governments supranational and subnational layers (increasing number of local governments and devolution) of governance now constitute the political system to which citizens lend their support. Trust in EU institutions is likely to be mediated through a mechanism of institutional proxy where national institutions provide citizens with a short cut towards trust in EU institutions. According to Anderson (1998), trust in domestic political institutions positively influences attitudes towards the EU and Hartevelde *et al.* (2013) suggest that satisfaction with national democracy is strongly associated with confidence in the EU. Other scholars came to different results. Sánchez-Cuenca (2000) argues that low levels of trust in national political institutions result in stronger public support for the EU because EU institutions are substitutes for ineffective and weak domestic institutions. Similarly Munoz *et al.* (2011), analysing European Social Survey data, conclude that trust in national institutions can have a negative and a positive effect on attitudes towards the EU. In situations of multi-level-governance people compensate shortcomings in one layer with trust in a higher or lower institutional layer. Citizens in countries suffering from poor democratic performance because of, for instance, high levels of corruption, lack of transparency and democratic accountability and low efficacy, have little to lose from transferring sovereignty to Europe. As Sánchez-Cuenca (2000: 151) puts it, 'the better the performance of the national political system, and the worse that of the supranational system, the greater the opportunity cost of supporting integration'. In this chapter, we will explore the relationship between attitudes to EU membership with trust in the European Commission, trust in national political institutions and general satisfaction with democracy.

We hypothesise that young people with low levels of trust in European and national political institutions and high levels of satisfaction with democracy are most likely to be Eurosceptic.

Ideological determinants

European nation states have historically rooted cultural identities and it would be naïve to think that people will give up on their national identities for a supranational one (Mouffe 2013). A considerable number of publications focus on feelings of cultural, political and social national attachments as important predictors of attitudes towards European integration. European integration may provoke a sense of loss of identity among citizens with strong national attachment. The transfer of power away from nation states to the EU makes it difficult for governments to pursue national interests; it blurs boundaries between distinct communities and questions exclusionary identities of 'us' and 'them' (Hooghe and Marks 2005: 423). The left-right dimension is an enduring marker of ideological positions and continues to structure political choice in domestic politics. Populist radical right parties share a core ideology that includes the combination of nativism, affinity to authoritarianism and populism (Mudde 2013). They are the most Eurosceptic party family (Hooghe *et al.* 2002)

and use the fear of political, cultural and economic nationalism as a defence against the loss of sovereignty and the centralisation of power in EU institutions. McLaren (2002) demonstrated that antipathy for other cultures stemming from nationalistic attachment is an important predictor of support for European integration. Similarly, De Vreese and Boomgaarden (2005) illustrate that anti-immigration sentiment is associated with Euroscepticism. Leconte (2010) emphasises the link between broader conservative attitudes towards women's and minority rights and individual liberties and public order and feelings towards Europe. Her cultural anti-Europeanism corresponds with Skinner's (2012, 2013) national-identity-based Euroscepticism, with both of them incorporating elements such as cultural threat, distrust of other countries' judicial systems and xenophobia. Vasilopoulou (2009), nevertheless, points out that populist radical right parties are far from a homogenous party family and that sentiments for Europe are nuanced even among the radical right. Some reject the EU outright and propagate a hard Euroscepticism, like UKIP for instance, while other parties such as Alternative for Germany may reject further European integration and EMU but support liberal common market policies (Grimm, 2015).

We hypothesise that youth who conceive of their national identity as exclusive of other territorial identities will have the tendency to be more Eurosceptic than citizens who understand national identity in more inclusive terms.

Furthermore, it can be argued that European integration has become a left-leaning project because it holds out the prospect of continent-wide regulation that acts as a constraint on markets (Hooghe and Marks 2005). The European radical left, however, shares a fierce anti-neo-liberalism (Charalambous 2011) and, because of the liberal economic doctrine at the heart of the EU, the radical left is traditionally Eurosceptic. Recent macroeconomic policies and externally imposed welfare reform are perceived as conflicting with the interests of the working people.

We hypothesise that there is a link between left-right self-placement and attitudes towards Europe. However, we do not expect a uniform picture concerning this association. Rather we suspect that the relationship will be determined by national context.

Country comparisons

Member states' national histories and cultures are intrinsically heterogeneous. Support for the EU varies significantly by countries reflecting differing baselines, produced by what Eichenberg and Dalton (1993) call 'national tradition'. Díez Medrano (2003), in exploring the cases of the UK, Spain and Germany, argues that national histories are important determinants of attitudes towards Europe. While British Euroscepticism is rooted in the legacy of empire for instance, German pro-Europeanism is embedded in the politics of *Westbindung* after the experience of National Socialism and the Second World War. Verney (2011) observed that, in Greece, Spain and Portugal, support of the EU is seated in the desire for democratisation. These countries (used to) rank among the most Euro-enthusiast in Europe because (until recently) integration was perceived as a road to modernisation. There are also border-spanning themes such as political transformations associated with post-socialism. Other authors argued that size of a country can play a role. Duff (2013) suggests that Euroscepticism would seem to be more prevalent in smaller central European countries because their national identity can be perceived as threatened in a large union whereas larger countries rely on national strength. However, the growing threat of Russia in recent years might have the opposite effect on smaller nations in the Baltics for instance and drive these nations closer towards the EU.

We hypothesise that while we may be able to discern commonalities among young people across Europe, national context will be an important determinant of attitudes towards Europe.

MYPLACE data

The MYPLACE questionnaire survey is a common research instrument administered to a representative sample of 16–25 year olds in 30 separate locations in 14 different countries. The data was collected between September 2012 and April 2013, with an achieved overall sample of 16,935.² Each participating country selected two contrasting locations (with four in Germany: two in the old East and two in the old West) where the criterion for selection was that there were a priori reasons to suggest that the attitudes, behaviour and experiences of the young people would be different in their propensity to have radical political opinions. This means that we have a range of research sites, each with distinct features which are unique to themselves and which require an understanding of local as well as national contexts to fully appreciate the reasons why young people hold the attitudes they do. It is important to reiterate that these are a series of local case studies and not nationally representative results.

Participating countries in MYPLACE reflect a broad range of European diversity in terms of their length of membership and their intensity of integration (for instance, EMU and Schengen membership). Contrasting welfare regimes and historic legacies (post-socialist, southern European dictatorships as well as long-established stable democracies) ensure that the many different experiences of which the EU is composed are represented. We can also differentiate between degrees of impact of the recent economic crisis and the sovereign debt crisis, with stable economies in the north (Germany, Finland) and economies struggling with austerity measures in the south (Greece, Portugal and Spain).

Data analysis

Firstly, we explore the level of trust in the European Commission and the perceived benefits of membership of the EU across the research locations of the MYPLACE study. Secondly, we conduct a series of multivariate logistic regression analyses, one for each of the 26 locations, to identify relationships between different sets of predictor variables and support for European integration. We use perceived benefit of membership in the European Union as the dependent variable. Perceived benefit is a rational-choice cost-benefit variable that has been used frequently to assess attitudes towards the EU (see for instance McLaren 2002). The measure is also included in Eurobarometer studies.

The descriptive data in Figure 17.1 is based on the Likert-scale-type item ('Do you think that EU membership benefits your country?').³ We created a binary variable for which we coded disagree and very disagree as '1' and all other responses as '0'. Figure 17.1 presents the percentages of respondents who disagree that membership of the EU benefits their country. In Bremen (GER-W), Jena (GER-E), Tartu (EST) and Odense (DEN) fewer than 10 per cent of young people disagreed that EU membership has been beneficial for their country. In contrast, respondents in Pescenica (CRO), Ozd (HUN), Podsljeme (CRO), and New Philadelphia (GRE) are more than three times as likely to be Eurosceptic.

Euroscepticism is particularly prevalent among youth in locations in southern and central European post-socialist countries like Croatia, Hungary and Slovakia, whereas in northern and central European locations – including in Germany and Denmark – Euroscepticism is less pronounced. Scandinavian countries are often considered to be traditionally Eurosceptic (Milner 2000; Raunio 2007), but our data suggests that young Danes in the Odense region

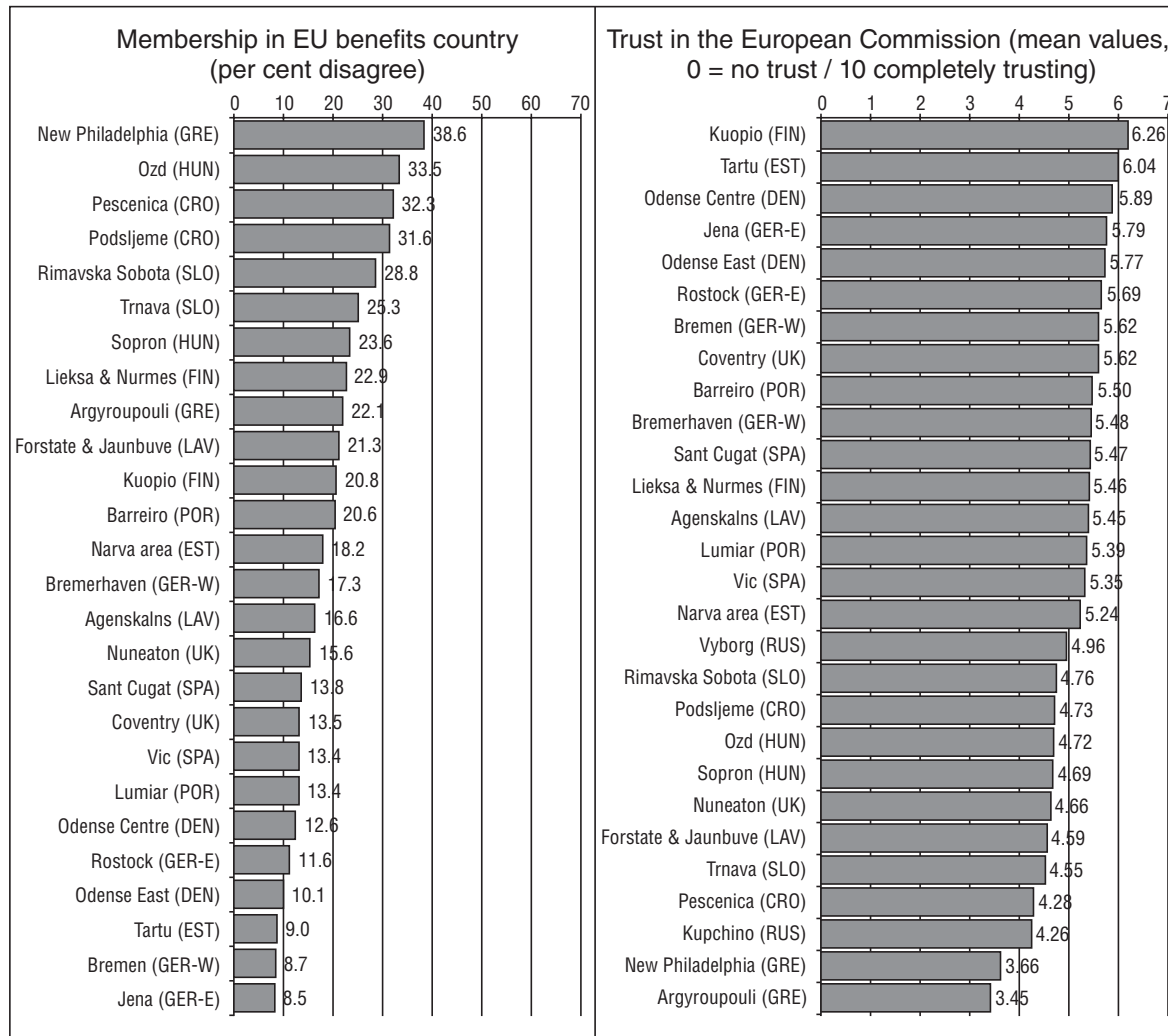


Figure 17.1 Perceived benefits of membership of the EU and trust in the European Commission by MYPLACE research locations

are among the least likely to be Eurosceptic. While young Finns in Kuopio and Liekša/Nurmes are nearly twice as likely as the Danes to be Eurosceptic, they, nonetheless, are still a lot less Eurosceptic than most of the young people from post-socialist countries. At the time of the survey the populist Finns Party (Perussuomalainen), an openly Eurosceptic party, was increasing in popularity and may be a partial explanation for this finding.

North–South and East–West differences in the data suggest that economic challenges, welfare regimes and historic legacies shape young people’s perception of Europe. Nonetheless, the picture is not homogeneous. For instance, only 9 per cent of respondents in Tartu (Estonia) were Eurosceptic compared with 21 per cent in Liekša/Nurmes (Finland). Euroscepticism among young people in locations in traditionally Europhile countries such as Portugal and Spain (Royo and Manuel 2003) remains relatively marginal despite externally imposed austerity policies. This is paradoxical given the pronounced Euroscepticism among young people in Greek research locations.

It should also be noted that, despite the proximity of attitudes towards the EU among respondents in research locations in the same country (Denmark for instance), there are also remarkable variations between regions within a single nation. For instance, the proportion of respondents having a negative view of membership in the EU is twice as large in Bremerhaven when compared to Bremen. The situation is similar in Greece where 22 per cent of young

Argyroupoulans but 39 per cent of New Philadelphians contest that membership in the EU is positive for Greece.

Figure 17.1 suggests that trust in the European Commission follows a similar regional distribution to the perceived benefits of membership. Young people in research locations in Greece have the lowest level of trust in the European Commission while locations in Germany, Denmark and Tartu in Estonia are among those with the highest mean values. Respondents in post-socialist research locations (with the exception of Tartu in Estonia) are among the least trusting, while those in locations in Northern European established liberal democracies are most trusting. The Iberian locations in Portugal and Spain have comparable scores and are mid-table. Despite these cross-national regional affinities reflecting similar welfare regimes, historic legacies and contemporary economic challenges, the data reveals again intra-national differences. Thus respondents in Nuneaton and Coventry in the UK are significantly different in their attitudes towards the European Commission.

Multivariate analysis

We use as our dependent variable perceived benefit of membership of the EU. The variable was originally a Likert scale item that we recoded to '0' = agree that membership benefits the country and '1' = disagree that membership benefits the country.

Following our theoretical discussion we explore the influence of four sets of predictors on the attitudes of young people towards Europe using binary logistic regression. Firstly we investigate the influence of respondents' socio-demographic characteristics on their attitude towards EU membership. Secondly we explore the European dimension through interest in Europe – an eleven-point scale variable (0 = no interest, 10 = maximum interest) that measures mobilisation and political confidence at the European level – and trust in the European Commission – an eleven-point scale that measures young peoples' evaluation of the democratic processes and policy outcomes associated with top-level European institutions (0 = no trust, 10 = maximum trust). Thirdly we explore the influence of trust in national political institutions, general political interest and political knowledge on the perceived benefit of membership in the EU. Fourthly we consider variables that measure the ideological position of our respondents. We include a left–right self-placement scale and respondents' attitude to nativism in this model. The research location is used rather than the nation or the pooled aggregated dataset for the analysis because this is the level at which the data is representative and we wish to identify similarities and differences in the data that cut across national boundaries and that are indicative of common political systems, contemporary challenges and historical legacies. We therefore present a series of models for each location and discuss the patterns in relation to that which is important *within* a location, but also patterns that appear to exist *between* locations. We tested four models for each location as described above and present in Table 17.1 the results of the model for each location with the best fit using the change in log-likelihood test (-2LL) to assess the contribution of further variables. This means that not all location models contain coefficients for each covariate as, during each of the four stages, we dropped those variables that did not contribute significantly to the model. We believe that this is the most robust way to proceed with the analysis as it is theoretically and not empirically driven. It also helps to differentiate between locations where simple models are as adequate as more complex ones.

Table 17.1 shows the results of the best fitting models for each location. The table is ordered such that the most Eurosceptic locations are presented first as shown by the percentage that disagree that the EU is of benefit to their country.

Table 17.1 Four models of Euroscepticism for each MYPLACE location, dependent variable = perceived benefit of membership in the EU

		New				Pesnica		Rimavska		Ljeka/		Forstade		Nava
		Philadelphia	Ozid	Zinjake	Podsljen	Sobota	Tmaava	Sopron	Nurnes	Agyroupouli	Jaubuave	Barreiro	Kuopio	Aanca
	% disagree EU is of benefit	38.8%	33.9%	31.8%	31.7%	29.4%	24.7%	23.8%	22.5%	22.1%	21.2%	21.1%	20.9%	18.6%
Model 1	Nagelkerke R squared	0.349	0.13	0.23	0.199	0.128	0.116	0.274	0.166	0.186	0.116	0.09	0.202	0.196
		exp(B)	exp(B)	exp(B)	exp(B)	exp(B)	exp(B)	exp(B)	exp(B)	exp(B)	exp(B)	exp(B)	exp(B)	exp(B)
	Gender (1=male)	1.035	0.652*	0.913	0.681*	1.054	1.287	0.789	2.650*	0.964	0.960	1.443	1.006	1.216
	Income (1=coping/comfortable)	0.652	0.907	0.582*	1.189	1.168	0.448*	0.479*	1.061	0.783	1.487	0.561*	0.771	1.017
Model 2	Parental class (3=high, 0=low)	0.950	0.795	0.924	0.938	0.802	1.345*	0.912	0.980	1.092	1.016	1.065	1.052	0.896
	Satisfaction with life (0=low, 10=high)	0.802*	1.023	1.052	1.045	1.041	0.782*	0.991	1.092	1.029	0.920	0.955	0.991	1.078
	Minority status (1=part of a minority, 0=else)	2.278*	1.768*	1.409	1.628	1.342	0.532	2.857	1.242	1.141	1.084	1.582	2.206	1.268
	Trust in the EC (0=low, 10=high)	0.806*	0.800*	0.904*	0.955	1.010	X	0.959	0.771*	0.796*	0.910	0.852*	0.725*	0.989
Model 3	Interest in Europe (0=not interested, 10=very interested)	0.860*	0.983	0.929	0.924*	0.897*	X	0.890*	0.996	0.891*	0.969	0.978	1.115	0.887*
	Political knowledge (3=high, 0=low)	1.124	0.856	1.151	0.982	0.883	X	0.862	X	1.757*	0.915	X	1.113	0.999
	Time spent using media to inform about politics	1.002	1.003	1.000	1.003*	0.999	X	1.005*	X	1.002	1.007*	X	1.001	1.005*
	Trust in national political institutions, index, high value = high trust	0.820*	1.040	0.844*	0.757*	0.923	X	1.077	X	1.017	0.798*	X	0.939	0.734*
Model 4	Satisfaction with democracy in own country (0=dissatisfied, 10=satisfied)	0.964	0.890*	0.830*	0.949	0.896*	X	1.043	X	0.867*	0.953	X	0.835*	0.871*
	“Politicians are corrupt” (1=agree, 0=else)	0.838	1.302	1.250	0.794	1.441	X	0.803	X	0.998	1.143	X	2.205*	0.840
	Left-right orientation (0-10 scale, 0=left, 10=right)	X	X	1.122	X	1.021	X	1.188*	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Nativism index (high score=high nativism)	X	X	0.959	X	0.905*	X	0.798*	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Constant	8.924*	1.569	1.615	1.242	2.243	3.111	1.424	0.234	0.408	1.016	0.689	1.813	0.740

Note: * significant at p=0.05

Table 17.2 Four models of Euroscepticism for each MYPLACE location, dependent variable = perceived benefit of membership in the EU

		Bremerhaven 17.5%	Agenskalns 16.7%	Nūmāton 16.1%	St Cugat de Vales 13.8%	Coventry 13.7%	Vic 13.6%	Telheiras 13.2%	Odense Center 12.5%	Rostock 11.3%	Odense East 10%	Tartu 9.0%	Bremen 8.5%	Jena 8.4%
	% disagree EU is of benefit	0.091 exp(B)	0.224 exp(B)	0.117 exp(B)	0.277 exp(B)	0.092 exp(B)	0.091 exp(B)	0.1 exp(B)	0.092 exp(B)	0.152 exp(B)	0.33 exp(B)	0.178 exp(B)	0.104 exp(B)	0.169 exp(B)
Model 1	Nagelkerke R squared													
	Gender (1=male)	1.322	1.345	2.422*	2.083*	2.037*	0.808	1.053	1.617	1.207	1.002	1.316	1.629	1.160
	Income (1=coping/comfortable)	0.945	0.403*	0.525*	1.971	1.469	1.117	1.145	2.002	1.087	0.930	1.317	1.175	0.751
	Parental class (3=high, 0=low)	1.038	1.086	0.862	0.973	0.992	0.818	0.843	0.899	1.101	0.869	0.881	1.048	1.013
	Satisfaction with life (0=low, 10=high)	0.982	1.074	1.002	0.804*	0.902	1.055	0.994	0.919	0.832*	0.818	0.976	0.951	1.020
	Minority status (1=part of a minority, 0=else)	0.665	0.899	0.939	0.729	1.853*	1.339	0.967	0.611	0.506	0.880	1.583	0.631	0.436
Model 2	Trust in the EC (0=low, 10=high)	0.759	0.901	0.809*	0.823*	0.823*	0.775*	0.866*	0.745*	0.973	0.639*	0.870	0.913	0.834
	Interest in Europe (0=not interested, 10=very interested)	0.950*	0.953	1.017	0.774*	0.996	0.963	1.052	1.056	0.861*	1.164	1.040	1.020	0.940
Model 3	Political knowledge (3=high, 0=low)	X	0.709*	X	0.874	X	X	1.127	X	1.280	3.064*	0.748	0.980	0.929
	Time spent using media to inform about politics	X	1.002	X	1.003	X	X	1.001	X	0.999	1.005	1.001	1.004	0.996
	Trust in national political institutions, index, high value = high trust	X	0.872	X	0.989	X	X	1.018	X	0.857	1.200	0.801*	0.795	1.172
	Satisfaction with democracy in own country (0=dissatisfied, 10=satisfied)	X	0.953	X	0.905	X	X	0.840*	X	0.888	0.758*	0.795*	0.871	0.705*
	"Politicians are corrupt" (1=agree, 0=else)	X	0.853	X	1.166	X	X	1.190	X	1.462	1.627	1.302	0.657	1.484
Model 4	Left-right orientation (0-10 scale, 0=left, 10=right)	X	0.877*	X	0.827*	X	X	0.993	X	1.007	0.750*	X	X	1.335*
	Nativism index (high score=high nativism)	X	0.911*	X	0.903*	X	X	0.883*	X	1.154*	1.059	X	X	1.110
	Constant	1.611	7.283*	0.504	29.706*	0.392	0.432	1.386	0.777	0.899	0.759	1.107	1.234	0.339

Note: * significant at p=0.05

Socio-demographic characteristics (model 1 variables)

Gender has a significant effect on young peoples' perception of European integration in six out of twenty-six locations including Coventry and Nuneaton in the UK, Ozd in Hungary, Podsljeme in Croatia, Lieksa and Nurmee in Finland and Sant Cugat in Spain. Of these, other than Ozd and Podsljeme, the odds for being Eurosceptic are higher for men than for women. These are strong relationships in that men are more than twice as likely as women to perceive membership of the EU as negative when all other variables are kept constant.

Based on the citizenship and ethnic belonging of MYPLACE respondents we computed a binary 'identity' variable to distinguish the majority population from minority groups. The data suggests that collective identity has an effect only in three out of twenty-six research locations (New Philadelphia in Greece, Ozd in Hungary and Coventry in the UK). In all three locations, being a member of a minority population increases the probability of being Eurosceptic.

We argued earlier that highly qualified citizens are more resilient in the EU's neo-liberal economic environment and that their status is least threatened by present economic policy directives. Citizens with lower or no skill sets find themselves increasingly excluded from full labour market participation and their social status has become precarious. On the basis of this argument one can distinguish between the winners and losers of European integration. We assume that those who benefit from EU integration will be less likely to be Eurosceptic than those who experience marginalisation. Many MYPLACE respondents were still in education at the time of the survey. We therefore use parental social class as a proxy to assess whether skills and occupational status have an association with support for the EU. For this purpose, we developed a parental social class classification based on parents' educational attainment and occupational status where 0 = least socio-economic status and 3 = maximum socio-economic status. We also use variables 'household coping on present income' (1 = coping, 0 = not coping) and a single eleven-point scale measuring young peoples' general satisfaction with life (0 = extremely dissatisfied, 1 = extremely satisfied) to explore the losers and winners of our European integration thesis.

Social class is shown to be significantly associated with Euroscepticism only in Trnava (Slovakia) where, against our assumption, for every additional increase in respondents' parental class position the likelihood of being Eurosceptic increases. For all other locations the association was not significant. The lack of a social class effect is, perhaps, surprising. Our view, however, is that this makes sense in relation to the overriding importance of local context and more-direct experiential variables such as income. Indeed, the question asking about respondents 'coping on income' shows a significant relationship with the dependent variable in six research locations including Pescenica Zitnjak (Croatia), Agenskalns (Latvia), Barreiro (Portugal), Nuneaton (UK), Sopron (Hungary), Trnava (Slovakia). In each of these locations not coping is associated with youth with a greater propensity for Euroscepticism. General satisfaction with life operates in a similar way with those least satisfied always being associated with Euroscepticism. It is significant in four out of twenty-six locations (New Philadelphia in Greece, Trnava in Slovakia, St Cugat in Spain, and Rostock in East Germany).

The data delivered significant results for a limited number of locations. When significant, the data behaved as suggested in existing theory (with the exception of social class), that is, young people who are socio-economically marginalised have a greater propensity towards Euroscepticism. Gender is an important predictor of attitudes towards Europe also among younger generations. Young men are more likely to be Eurosceptic than young women.

European dimensions (model 2 variables)

We use two predictor variables in this model: interest in Europe (an eleven-point scale where 0 = no interest and 10 = maximum interest) and trust in the European Commission (an eleven-point scale where 0 = no trust and 10 = complete trust). Interest in Europe is significantly associated with the dependent variable in eight research locations (Argyroupouli and New Philadelphia in Greece, Rimavska Sobota in Slovakia, Podsljeme in Croatia, Sopron in Hungary, Narva in Estonia, Sant Cugat de Vales in Spain and Rostock in East Germany). In these locations, those with lower interest in the EU are most likely to disagree that membership in the EU has been positive for their country. Trust in the European Commission is a strong predictor for attitudes towards Europe. We observe an association of scepticism towards the EU and (lack of) trust in the Commission in fourteen of the twenty-six research locations. The results show a greater propensity to disagree that membership in the EU benefited the respondents' country where levels of trust in the European Commission are low. There are some interesting geographic patterns in the data: in every research location in Scandinavia and in the UK, the association is significant suggesting that trust in the European Commission is an important determinant of (negative) sentiments towards the EU in traditionally Eurosceptic countries. However, lack of trust in this key European institution is also a significant driver of Euroscepticism in Greece, Portugal and Spain. Trust in the European Commission appears less relevant for Eastern European research locations where only data for Ozd (Hungary) and Pescenica (Croatia) is significant. Overall interest in Europe and trust in the Commission are important predictors of Euroscepticism. Low interest and low levels of trust increase the likelihood of Eurosceptic attitudes among MYPLACE respondents.

Cognitive capacity and national democratic performance (model 3 variables)

Political literacy presumes that people have a basic knowledge about political institutions, processes and ideological positions (Cassel and Celia 1997). Knowledge of politics is a direct measure of political literacy while time used informing oneself about politics is an indirect indicator of political literacy. Political literacy is instrumental for the understanding of abstract governmental structures and institutions (Deny and Doyle 2008), like the supranational EU, and lowers the costs of political mobilisation. We assume that knowledge of politics is an indicator of political confidence and, in line with the mobilisation thesis, we hypothesise that Euroscepticism will increase with a lack of political knowledge. We used a basic three-item knowledge question to develop a scale where 0 = no knowledge and 3 = maximum knowledge. Political knowledge is significant in only three research locations – Argyroupouli (Greece), Agenskalns (Latvia) and Odense East (Denmark). The variable's effect works both ways. In Argyroupouli (1.7) and in Odense East (3.064) the odds for respondents to be Eurosceptic increase with basic political knowledge while in Agenskalns in Latvia they decrease (0.79).

Time spent informing oneself using different media is associated with Euroscepticism in four research locations (Forstadte and Jaunbuve in Latvia, Narva in Estonia, Podsljeme in Croatia, Sopron in Hungary). Again, following the mobilisation thesis we assume that those who spend more time informing themselves about politics are the least likely to be Eurosceptic. In all four research locations, Euroscepticism increases with political media consumption. The effect sizes, however, are very marginal.

Trust in national political institutions (a composite variable constructed with measures of trust in national parliament, political parties and the head of government) show significant results in six research locations (New Philadelphia in Greece, Pescenica and Podsljeme in

Croatia, Forstadte and Jaunbuve in Latvia, Narva and Tartu in Estonia). In all locations, the odds of respondents being Eurosceptic decrease with falling trust in national political institutions. Respondents who are least trusting are the most likely to be Eurosceptic. Political cynicism or, more precisely, agreeing with the statement that politicians are corrupt has a significant relationship with Euroscepticism only in Kuopio in Finland. The lack of satisfaction with democracy is one of the most frequently associated variables with Euroscepticism. It shows significant results in ten locations (Ozd in Hungary, Pescenica in Croatia, Rimavska Sobota in Slovenia, Argyproupouli in Greece, Kuopio in Finland, Narva and Tartu in Estonia, Telheiras in Portugal, Odense in East Denmark and Jena in East Germany). The association is also consistent: Euroscepticism decreases with higher satisfaction with the way democracy works.

Overall political confidence and mobilisation measures (knowledge and time spent informing oneself about politics) are weak predictors of Euroscepticism amongst MYPLACE respondents. If significant, the relationship can go both ways. We can potentially explain these variations with different types of media consumption and media content to which our time-use scale was not sensitive. In terms of political knowledge we must perhaps accept that discomfort about the lack of democratic accountability for recent macroeconomic policies like the establishment of the European Stability Mechanism has been growing, particularly among educated elites. In other words, knowledge about politics may indeed increase resentment towards European integration in its current form. This type of specialist knowledge is not included in our basic knowledge scale. Important predictors of Euroscepticism are, however, trust in national governments and satisfaction with democracy. Particularly the latter draws a consistent picture where dissatisfaction with democracy increases the propensity towards Euroscepticism. This is in line with existing literature that argues that performance evaluations of national democracy determine attitudes towards supranational governmental structures.

Ideological dimension (model 4 variables)

Following current discussions of cultural Euroscepticism we assume that those who favour high barriers for full citizenship of foreign born and ethnic minorities are also more likely to be Eurosceptic. We computed a nativism variable composed of four items measuring attitudes to requirements for full citizenship and cultural assimilation (having at least one parent who was born in the country, respected its laws and spoke a national language). The nativism variable shows significant results in six research locations (Agenskalns in Latvia, Rimavska Sobota in Slovenia, Rostock in East Germany, Sant Cugat in Spain, Sopron in Croatia and Telheiras in Portugal). However, the relationship between nativism and Euroscepticism is not uniform. In some locations such as Rostock nativism increases the odds to be Eurosceptic by 1.15 while in Sopron it decreases the odds by 0.798 or 20 per cent. We speculate that there are important local reasons for these opposite effects. Rostock is a large German university city deep in Germany historically linked to xenophobia, rioting and hate crime whereas Sopron is a large Hungarian town very close the Austrian border. Sopron has long benefited from border trade and short-term migration. The picture is equally heterogeneous for the left-right self-placement scale. High values suggest proximity to the far right while low scores on the scale suggest that respondents place themselves on the far left of the political spectrum. The relationship between left-right scores and our dependent variable is significant in six research locations (Agenskalns (LAV), Odense East (DEN), Pescenica (CRO), Sopron (HUN), Sant Cugat (SPA), Jena (GER-E)). While Euroscepticism is associated with self-placement on the political right in Jena, it is associated with self-placement on the left in other research locations.

Conclusion

There are considerable variations in the propensity for Euroscepticism among young Europeans. Disagreement that membership of the EU is positive can range from 39 per cent in New Philadelphia in Greece to 8.5 per cent in Jena. Young people in Eastern European research locations and in Greece are most likely to harbour negative sentiment for the EU. Northern European youth, particularly in Denmark and Germany, are least likely to be Eurosceptic. There are, however, exceptions. There are also significant differences between research locations within countries. In other words the level and intensity of scepticism depends on local context; it is not homogeneously distributed across the EU or within individual nations.

Our data also confirms that the losers of globalisation theory have significant explanatory value in some locations. Young people who live in households that do not cope with their present income and who are generally dissatisfied with their lives are most prone to be Eurosceptics. Perhaps surprisingly, the socio-economic status of parents has no effect on scepticism about EU integration.

Measures of political confidence, political knowledge and time spent to inform about politics have a limited explanatory value. Variables determining young peoples' evaluation of national political institutions and democracy in general are more frequently significant and consistent with theory. In particular, satisfaction with democracy shows an association with Euroscepticism. The data is suggestive that a negative performance evaluation of national democracies acts as a proxy for Euroscepticism among young people.

Ideological values and attitudes have an effect on Euroscepticism in a number of locations but the effect can go in opposite directions and increase or decrease the propensity for Euroscepticism. In some respects this is in line with current scholarship and political realities. Opposition to European integration is a common phenomenon among the extreme right and the extreme left although for different ideological reasons.

Interest in Europe and trust in the European Commission are by far the most robust predictors for Euroscepticism among MYPLACE respondents. Scepticism is uniformly driven by lack of interest in the EU and lack of trust in the European Commission. The European Commission is the EU's executive body responsible for proposing legislation, implementing decisions and upholding the EU treaties, and represents the interests of the Union as a whole. Lack of institutional trust is indicative for young peoples' negative evaluation of democratic processes (possibilities for participation for young people, lack of transparency) and policy outcomes (in the interest of individuals and collectives) at EU level.

Acknowledgement

We would like to express our thanks to Hilary Pilkington for the relentless commitment and energy with which she supported the MYPLACE project.

Notes

1 Funding statement

Data presented in this chapter has been collected as part of Memory Youth Political Legacy and Civic Engagement research project. This project has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no. 266831.

- 2 For the purpose of the analysis here, the locations in Russia and Georgia were not included as they are not in the EU nor (unlike Croatia) were they about to join. The sample size for the remaining 26 locations is 14,329.
- 3 At the time of the survey, Croatia was not yet a member state so the wording of the question is hypothetical, and concerns the perceived future benefits of membership.

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