

Seeking solutions for cross-border problems: intuitive functionalists and support for the European Union

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Abstract Most of the established predictors of individual-level support for the European Union (EU) concern externalities of the integration process, such as economic performance at the national level and the EU's effect on national identity, rather than any of the original motives behind the creation of the European project. In contrast, many of the elite-driven theories explaining European integration focus on what European countries actually gain from being members of the EU. This paper serves to connect these two bodies of scholarship, arguing that there is a functionalist dimension to support for European integration. Some individuals may perceive the EU as important for addressing certain cross-border problems (such as combatting pollution or organized crime) that cannot be resolved by any state acting in isolation. To test this possibility, the paper relies on survey data from Eurobarometer 72.4, conducted in the fall of 2009. The results suggest that, in addition to the established predictors, the perception that the EU fulfills essential noneconomic functions also drives EU support.

Keywords Euroskepticism · EU support · Public opinion · Functionalism

Introduction

Explanations of support for the European Union are well established within the behavioral literature. When evaluating the EU, most people consider the economic costs and rewards of European integration (Whitten and Palmer 1999; Anderson 2000; Duch and Stevenson 2008), the EU's potential effects on national identity and

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culture (Carey 2002; Christen and Trechsel 2002; McLaren 2002) or the quality of political representation at the European level (Sánchez-Cuenca 2000; Rohrschneider 2002; Rohrschneider and Loveless 2010). Interestingly, this research seldom accounts for the prevalent theories explaining European integration (such as functionalism); the public is not, for instance, thought to weigh the relative merits of interstate cooperation when assessing the EU. While scholars may have developed such theoretical frameworks with the actions of political elites in mind, the same basic ideas may be unknowingly adopted by average citizens. With that possibility in mind, this paper examines the effects of functionalist thought on variation in public support for the European Union.

Functionalism asserts that interstate cooperation allows countries to better address problems of mutual concern; generally, cross-border problems that require an organized international response. Such problems may include air and water pollution, an increasing number of immigrants and asylum seekers, terrorism, and human trafficking. While most of the public has likely never been exposed to functionalist thought in a classroom setting, a similar line of reasoning may influence (at least some) individuals when they develop a position on European integration. These 'intuitive functionalists' perceive a cross-border problem (such as pollution or high levels of immigration) as particularly salient, believe that such a problem requires coordinated international responses, and thus accept the EU as a mechanism for effectively addressing that problem. This line of reasoning does not obligate an individual to unreservedly support further European integration, but simply implies that an individual has accepted the EU as a viable solution to one or more cross-border problems. An individual's level of political knowledge may influence whether she adopts a functionalist view, as the task of recognizing the cross-border dimension of contemporary problems may require a relatively high level of cognitive sophistication.

This paper offers three contributions to the research on public opinion in the European Union. First, the paper serves to connect the old grand theories of European integration with research on public support for European integration. These theories were developed prior to the dissolution of the 'permissive consensus', under which European elites took public support for granted (Lindberg and Scheingold 1970; Van der Eijk and Franklin 1996, 2004). Today, the public has assumed a more active role in European integration, often constraining the actions of European elites (Schmitt and Thomassen 2000; Carrubba 2001; Steenbergen et al. 2007). Earlier theories of integration need to better account for public opinion to better understand and explain how the EU may evolve in the future. Second, the paper investigates a rationale for citizens developing positions on the EU that has not been considered in most of the public opinion literature: that the EU performs specific functions that cannot be effectively undertaken at the national level.

Third, the paper offers a potential strategy for improving the EU's relationships with the public. Angela Merkel once theorized that the proposed European Constitution was simply too ambitious (and threatening) for the public. In line with that interpretation, Taggart and Szczerbiak (2002) find that many Europeans adopt a soft form of Euroscepticism, opposed more to the EU's expanding powers than the European project itself. Rather than focus on the broader benefits of European



integration (such as achieving regional peace or improving human rights), advocates for the EU might draw on functionalist thought to more narrowly frame the EU as an effective mechanism for accomplishing specific objectives. Such a depiction may be more acceptable to the public. Particularly in light of the Brexit vote that appears to be partly motivated by perceived overstretch on the part of the EU, such a framing device may work to alleviate concerns about national sovereignty.

The paper proceeds by first reviewing the research on public opinion toward the EU, then discussing the tenets of functionalist thought, and finally by elaborating on the relationship between the functionalist paradigm and EU support. The expectations laid out in this discussion are tested with data from Eurobarometer 73.4, conducted in the fall of 2010. This survey has the advantage of having taken place after the start of the sovereign debt crisis, but still includes both the broad measure of EU support that was removed from later Eurobarometer surveys and measures of support for EU involvement in specific policy areas that have not been included as frequently in the Eurobarometer since 2009. The findings suggest that functionalism does correspond with greater support for the EU.

Public opinion on the European Union

Perhaps the most well-known explanation for public support of the EU draws on economic voting theory, arguing that most individuals assess the EU according to the financial costs and benefits of European integration. Some of this research focuses on the effects of macroeconomic conditions at the national level, finding that EU support varies along with both perceived and actual levels of economic growth, unemployment and inflation (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993; Gabel and Palmer 1995; Anderson and Kaltenthaler 1996). In addition, increasing levels of intra-EU trade, aid from the EU and economic development at the national level all correspond with higher levels of aggregate EU support (Anderson and Reichert 1995; Brinegar et al. 2004; Eichenberg and Dalton 2007). Other contributions emphasize the role of microeconomic conditions, arguing that the most likely EU supporters are those individuals with the knowledge, experience and skill sets to capitalize on the opportunities created by an expanded European marketplace (Gabel and Palmer 1995; Duch and Taylor 1997; Gabel 1998; Hooghe et al. 2007). Moreover, those individuals seeking to invest capital in other domestic markets appreciate the financial stability created by European integration (Scheve 2000; Gabel 2001).

The primary alternative to the economic argument contends that the strength of national identity influences attitudes toward the EU. Some of this evidence suggests that strong national attachments correspond with anxiety about the EU's effects on national culture and that such nationalism undermines support for the EU (Carey 2002; Christin and Trechsel 2002; McLaren 2002). However, other scholars argue that individuals are capable of holding allegiances to multiple political communities (Marks 1999; Habermas 2001; Bruter 2003; Diez Medrano 2003). In fact, a strong attachment to a particular political community suggests that an individual possesses the necessary affective and psychological predispositions to form bonds with other



political communities and that overlapping identities may serve to reinforce one another (Van Kersbergen 2000; Haesly 2001; Klandermans et al. 2004).

The political and economic context may condition the relative salience of economic or identity-based criteria. Some political elites seek to activate and/or aggravate fears about the EU's effects on national community to mobilize greater political support (Kopecky and Mudde 2002; Marks et al. 2006). In countries where there are more of these Eurosceptic elites or where such elites have greater media visibility, individuals are more likely to take into account concerns about the cohesiveness of their national community when formulating positions on the EU (Hooghe and Marks 2004). In the absence of Eurosceptic discourse, individuals resort to economic criteria. Additional research suggests that Eurosceptic claims may have greater appeal in wealthier countries that attract large numbers of migrants seeking economic opportunities (Garry and Tilley 2009).

Another line of research argues that individuals use national institutions as a baseline around which to develop opinions on the EU. The extent to which political institutions respond to public input and represent the public interest varies across Europe (Rohrschneider 2005). The quality of such political representation often serves as a frame of reference for individuals evaluating democracy at the European level (Sánchez-Cuenca 2000; Rohrschneider 2002). Those individuals accustomed to responsive national institutions are more likely to find the quality of democratic representation in the EU lacking by comparison and are, consequently, less likely to support European integration. In contrast, the EU is likely to appear democratic to those individuals living with unresponsive national institutions and, as a result, these individuals are less likely to oppose European integration on political grounds. Similarly, individual levels of trust in the European Union are largely determined by trust in national institutions (Harteveld et al. 2013; Armingeon and Ceka 2014). The likelihood that individuals use these political criteria depends on both the political and economic environment. In less-affluent economies, the public remains focused on the economy when evaluating the EU (Rohrschneider and Loveless 2010).

These approaches do not consider one of the primary motivations behind European integration: to manage problems of mutual concern that cannot be solved by any single state acting in isolation. The economic utilitarian rationale may most closely resemble this motive, in that the single market was created and continues as a project to generate economic growth across the region. However, in focusing exclusively on the economy, this line of reasoning ignores several other potential benefits (or drawbacks) of European integration. Those individuals who are motivated by identity and cultural-based fears are not really considering any of the reasons for creating or sustaining the EU, but instead focusing on a potential long-term drawback to European integration. Further, these fears appear to constitute an emotional reaction to the EU, more than a reasoned deliberation of the costs and benefits of European integration.

This discussion is not to cast doubt on prior research, which convincingly demonstrates that the economy, cultural-based fears, and institutional quality all have varying degrees of influence on EU attitudes. However, intellectual and political elites have long articulated motives for the European project that are focused on the benefits of interstate cooperation. Most public opinion scholars overlook such



elite-driven theories within the current body of research. Hooghe (2016) investigates whether functionalist attitudes influence EU positions, finding that elites are more likely than the public to support EU authority over policy areas concerning cross-border externalities. Since that study, the Eurobarometer has introduced questions that allow us to incorporate a measure for functionalist thought into the standard models of EU support¹ and to compare that measure with the other predictors of EU support.

Motivations for European integration

Most individuals who study the EU are aware of the major divide within the theoretical literature that seeks to explain European integration. On one side of this divide, the intergovernmentalists argue that the interests of individual states propel the integration process and that state governments retain control over that process and any institutions created as a by-product. On the other side, the neo-functionalists maintain that, over time, the process has granted the EU institutions a degree of autonomy and that the integration process is no longer under the exclusive control of the member states. Founded on the work of David Mitrany, functionalism serves as a middle ground between these two schools of thought.² Mitrany believed that the emphasis on state autonomy within the field of International Relations undermined efforts to address global problems, but that federalist solutions were unrealistic given the strong nationalist sentiments in most countries (Rosamond 2000).

For Mitrany, the goal was to maximize public welfare. In an increasingly interdependent world, the most efficient means of accomplishing this objective was through delegation of certain responsibilities to international organizations. However, Mitrany disavowed the idea of empowering regional political actors with far-reaching jurisdiction over many different policy areas. Indeed, he opposed the original European Community; believing that the early efforts to integrate Europe were pointed toward the creation of a new regional state and would thus perpetuate the state-based focus of international politics (Mitrany 1965). Instead, he argued that several international organizations should be created and tasked with fulfilling different functions³ (Mitrany 1966). Each organization should be allowed maximum flexibility to develop (and to change) its own internal decision-making structure and to pursue the activities necessary to complete the task at hand. In other words, these organizations should be completely defined by

¹ Rather than just comparing levels of elite and mass support for EU authority over different clusters of policy areas.

² Functionalism is often grouped together with supranational theories and, more broadly, liberal theories because functionalists argue that public welfare should take precedence over any concerns about state sovereignty—indeed, Mitrany argued that scholars fixated too much on the state (Rosamond 2000). However, Mitrany also sought to adopt a more pragmatic approach in discussing the possibilities for international cooperation and to avoid the normative and ideological objectives of liberal theories.

³ The management of intercontinental railway systems, aviation and broadcasting are three examples of functions that could be assigned to such organizations.



their primary functions. Mitrany believed that the benefits of this approach would become self-evident and that the public would eventually demand the formation of additional task-based agencies, resulting in a web of differentiated international organizations.

The larger public is likely uninformed about David Mitrany and the tenets of functionalist thought. If made aware of this approach, some individuals may be alienated by his rejection of the state's centrality. However, many individuals may also appreciate Mitrany's expressed opposition to the federalist motivations behind the European project. Indeed, existing public skepticism about the European Union appears to be founded more in anxiety about the speed of European integration and the increasing power of the EU institutions than in opposition to any form of international cooperation.

Moreover, some individuals may be drawn to the core ideas of functionalist thought: that political power should be exercised in service of public welfare; that power should not be centralized; and that certain functions are better performed by international bodies that are not constrained by territorial borders. That possibility informs the central argument of this paper: some individuals may believe that international bodies, such as the European Union, are necessary to perform essential functions concerning cross-border problems. Given that most of the public is likely unaware of the theory of functionalism, such individuals would have arrived at such attitudes as a result of their own reasoning process.

The first part of this reasoning process involves an individual attributing a relatively high level of importance to one or more cross-border problems, such as air pollution, human trafficking or immigration. Not all individuals will perceive such issues as salient; some may focus their attention more on issues that may more easily be interpreted as belonging entirely to the domestic arena, such as taxation, education or social policy. Those individuals who do not attribute salience to cross-border problems may be less likely to consider (let alone support) international solutions.

Of course, simply attributing importance to a cross-border issue does not mean that individuals will necessarily favor extra-territorial solutions. Some individuals may be skeptical of efforts to transfer power to regional decision-making bodies such as the EU. These individuals may perceive an erosion of national sovereignty as part of the problem and prefer national-based solutions. Such solutions would likely eschew efforts to address the origins of cross-border problems and instead seek to shield the country from potential harms by exerting stronger control at the borders.

In contrast, an intuitive functionalist (a person who thinks in functionalist terms without having been trained in functionalist theory) will believe that uncoordinated national-level policies cannot effectively protect the country from the negative externalities of a globalized world. Such individuals may adopt a 'genie out of the bottle' perspective in which a country cannot reverse the progression of globalization without incurring significant costs. Moreover, these individuals may perceive potential harms to nationalist solutions, such as increasing the potential for intra-group conflict within the country. These individuals will advocate for extra-territorial solutions in order to mitigate the harms of and preserve the gains made through greater global interconnectedness.



Beyond their support for extra-territorial solutions, some individuals may simply doubt the viability of the EU as a mechanism for addressing such issues. These individuals may question the EU's ability to effectively or legitimately address such issues; believing, for example, that too much gridlock exists at the European level or that regional policymaking should be subject to greater accountability than exists within the EU. In other words, while accepting the necessity of an international response, some individuals may prefer that the member state governments collaborate outside the EU arena.

However, other individuals may accept the EU as a practical mechanism for addressing cross-border issues. These individuals should not necessarily be classified as supporters of the EU or proponents of further European integration. EU supporters often appear to view European integration as an end in itself; a reflection and expression of deeper political harmony. The functionalist paradigm does not include any such aspirations. Rather, the EU simply offers an available and effective means to accomplishing certain objectives pertaining to cross-border issues and, through so doing, to maximizing human welfare. In fact, such thinking may be at the center of public opinion polls that indicate the majority still supports the EU, while opposing the current pace of European integration.

To summarize: while most individuals are not likely aware of David Mitrany or his work, some may unknowingly adopt the tenets of functionalism when evaluating the EU. If this theory is correct, two conditions must be met for an individual to support European integration: (1) cross-border issues must be highly salient to that person and (2) they must view regional or global rule-making as a viable response to such issues.

H1 Individuals who attribute greater salience to cross-border issues and who support extra-territorial policy responses will be more likely to support the European Union

Much of the public opinion research focuses on broad support for the EU. However, an intuitive functionalist may support EU authority in specific policy jurisdictions more than support for the European project as a whole. Their support lies more in a perception of the EU as a viable response mechanism to specific problems than ideological commitment to European integration. As such, support for extra-territorial policy responses may have a greater effect on support for the EU having jurisdictional authority over policy areas concerning cross-border problems.

H2 Individuals who attribute greater salience to cross-border issues and who support extra-territorial policy responses will be more likely to support EU jurisdictional authority in relevant policy areas.

Much as Hooghe (2016) finds, certain segments of the public may be more likely to adopt a functionalist line of reasoning. In particular, more knowledgeable individuals may be more likely to recognize certain problems as having cross-border



origins. In past research, these groups have demonstrated greater abilities for cognitively processing and interpreting political information (Price and Zaller 1993; Price and Czilli 1996; Aidt 2000). Such cognitive abilities may be essential to understanding the complex, multidimensional nature of cross-border issues, such as the environment and immigration. More knowledgeable individuals may be more likely to recognize the cross-border nature of such issues and consequently support the EU as a viable response.

H3 The level of political knowledge moderates the effect of cross-border issue salience on support for the European Union.

Data

This paper relies on data from Eurobarometer 73.4, conducted in the month of May 2010 by TNS Opinion & Social. Most interviews were conducted face-to-face in the respondent's home and in the national language of the respondent. Between 500 and 1500 respondents were interviewed in each country, with around 1000 respondents interviewed in 22 of the then 27 EU member states.

This survey was chosen for several reasons. First, as it was conducted after the start of the sovereign debt crisis, the responses should better account for the political and economic climate that has persisted in Europe since that time. Second, this was one of the last years to include the question asking respondents their opinion about their country's membership in the European Union. This question been included in nearly every Standard Eurobarometer survey before 2010 and has been used in much of the research on public support for the EU. This is also one of the few surveys since 2010 to ask respondents whether the EU should have any jurisdictional authority over several different policy areas. Finally, this survey includes several questions asking respondents about globalization and the management of global problems. As such, this survey data allows us to test the hypotheses of this paper.

This paper models two measures of EU support. The first measure of broad support for the EU uses the following survey item: "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." Respondents were also allowed to reply "do not know." For this paper, responses are collapsed into a dichotomous variable whereby those who responded "a good thing" are coded as 1 and all others are coded as 0. EU supporters are isolated from Eurosceptic and ambivalent respondents since the primary focus of the paper is to explain support.

Adopting a similar approach to Hooghe (2016), the second dependent variable captures support for European integration across 20 different policy areas. The following question was used to construct this measure: "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?" Respondents were provided a list of 20 different policy areas (the full list can be found in Appendix), each of which is entered as a separate variable within the Eurobarometer dataset. This more nuanced measure is better-suited to testing the functionalist theory, which asserts



that individuals are more likely to support integration in areas with clear cross-border problems rather than adopting wholly pro or anti-EU views.

Some difficulty exists in choosing how to analyze this data. Each of the different policy areas is surveyed in a separate question to the respondent and coded as a separate variable in the dataset. Creating an index of support for EU authority over cross-border issues would not allow a determination of whether respondents offer the same support for EU authority in policy areas that do not concern cross-border issues. Similarly, two separate indices would not allow a determination of whether the same individual supports EU authority in cross-border policy areas and opposes EU authority in non-cross-border areas. Instead, I treat each respondent's response for each policy as a separate observation, resulting in a dataset of $N=532,820$ (20 responses $\times$ 26,641 respondents). This measure is coded as 1 if the respondent supports EU authority over policy area i . This approach allows a single analysis of support within the separate policy areas.

These two formulations of the dependent variable measure different types of support for European integration. The first measure of broad support, which is used in much of the public opinion research, conforms more to the idea of hard Euroscepticism (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2002). Individuals are asked to evaluate the entire European project and are unable to express qualified support or opposition to different elements of that project. The second measure matches more with soft Euroscepticism, in which individuals might support European integration in some areas and oppose it in others.

Recall that the first hypothesis asserts that individuals who favor extra-territorial solutions are more likely to support the EU. To measure support for extra-territorial solutions, I use a four-point scale that asks respondents their level of agreement with the following statement: "Globalization requires common global rules ("worldwide governance")." This question is part of a battery focused on globalization. That battery has the advantage of clearly distinguishing the EU from globalization more broadly.⁴ Based on the phrasing of these questions, the EU would be better compared to a political actor than a strategic response to globalization.

The functionalist theory presumes that the salience of cross-border issues may moderate the effect of support for extra-territorial solutions. Both Hooghe (2016) and Wessels and Kielhorn (1995) distinguish certain issues as having externalities that cross borders inherently: the environment, immigration, defense, foreign policy, Third World aid, currency and agriculture. To this list, I add terrorism and energy, both items that were not as prominent and not included in the Eurobarometer at the time of the two prior studies.

For models that use the first dependent variable (the dichotomous measure of broad EU support), the measure of cross-border issue salience is constructed using the question: "what do you think are the two most important issues facing

⁴ Two of the survey items in this battery asks respondents for their level of agreement with the statements that the EU and the USA and China (respectively) have the same interests when dealing with globalization. Another item asks for the level of agreement with the statement that the EU has the sufficient power to defend its interests in the global economy.



(OUR COUNTRY) at the moment?” The Eurobarometer provides a list of 17 issue prompts. A respondent is coded as 1 if they identify one of the cross-border issue areas mentioned above. All others are coded as 0. In models using the second, policy-specific dependent variable, the measure of issue salience is coded as 1 when the policy area in question is on this list of seven. In addition, knowledge about the EU is measured with an index constructed from three true/false questions about the history and institutions of the EU, with higher values indicating more correct responses.

The models also include a number of controls that have been found to influence EU support in prior research. Proponents of utilitarianism argue that individuals may evaluate the economy based on both personal and national economic conditions. The Eurobarometer includes a question that accounts for both: “What are your expectations for the next 11 month: will the next 11 month be better, worse or the same, when it comes to your life in general (1), the economic situation in (OUR COUNTRY) (2), the financial situation of your household (3), the employment situation in (OUR COUNTRY) (4) and your personal job situation (5).” Based on this question, an index is created for perceptions of the national economy (2 and 4) and one’s personal economic situation (1, 3, and 5). Increasing values on each measure indicate that a respondent feels the economic situation will improve.

Identity-centric theories assert that individuals are less likely to support the EU due to anxiety about the effects of European integration on national culture. To measure such anxiety, I use the survey item asking respondents “what does the European Union mean to you personally?” One response option for this question is the phrase “loss of our cultural identity.” Respondents who identify with this prompt are coded as 1, while all others are coded as 0.

As increasing education corresponds with greater EU support (Karp et al. 2003). I control for years of schooling with the question asking respondents their age when they stopped full-time education. As the fringes of the left/right ideological spectrum appear to be more amenable to Euroskepticism, I also control for ideological extremity. Finally, I include controls for an individual’s sex (whether they are female), age and location (i.e., urbanity) as each have been found to influence attitudes in the broader literature on political behavior. Appendix offers greater detail on the construction of each of these individual measures.

Results

Since both versions of the dependent variable are dichotomous, I perform the following analyses using logistic regression models. The first analyses rely on multi-level logistic modeling to identify the predictors of broad support for the European Union. The results in Table 1 include the two variables of interest—cross-border issue salience and support for global rules—as well as controls for economic evaluations, cultural fears and socio-demographics.

The results suggest that support for global rules is positively related to EU support. However, the salience of cross-border issues does not appear to have a direct



Table 1 Predictors of support for EU membership. *Source* Eurobarometer 73.4

	Model 1	Model 2
National economic expectations	0.21 (0.02)**	0.21 (0.02)**
Personal economic expectations	0.1 (0.01)**	0.1 (0.01)**
Fear of culture loss	− 1.13 (0.06)**	− 1.13 (0.06)**
Issue salience	− 0.02 (0.05)	
Knowledge	0.31 (0.02)**	
Issue salience × knowledge		
Not salient/lowest knowledge		0.26 (0.12)*
Not salient/low knowledge		0.44 (0.11)**
Not salient/high knowledge		0.85 (0.11)**
Not salient/highest knowledge		1.18 (0.11)**
Salient/no knowledge		0.09 (0.25)
Salient/lowest knowledge		0.37 (0.16)*
Salient/low knowledge		0.45 (0.13)**
Salient/high knowledge		0.75 (0.12)**
Salient/highest knowledge		10.16 (0.13)**
Support for global rules	0.3 (0.02)**	0.3 (0.02)**
Education	0.22 (0.02)**	0.21 (0.02)**
Female	− 0.18 (0.03)**	− 0.18 (0.03)**
Age	− 0.01 (0.00)**	− 0.005 (0.00)**
Lives in Urban area	0.2 (0.04)**	0.2 (0.04)**
Ideological extremity	− 0.05 (0.01)**	− 0.06(0.01)**
Constant	− 2.82 (0.18)**	− 2.73 (0.2)**
Random effects parameters		
Variance (residual)	0.59 (0.08)	0.59 (0.08)
<i>N</i> individual-level observations	17,268	17,268
<i>N</i> macrolevel observations	27	27

Cells report coefficients with standard errors in parentheses from a series of multilevel logistic regression models. The dependent variable is the probability that a respondent indicates they support the EU

*Denotes significance at the 0.05 level

**Denotes significance at the 0.01 level

effect on support for European integration.⁵ Nearly all the control variables have the expected effect on the likelihood that a respondent will think EU membership is a good thing. An increasingly optimistic outlook for the country's economic situation and one's own economic situation both correspond with an increasing likelihood of expressing support for the EU. Those individuals who fear a loss of national culture

⁵ The models were analyzed with an alternative coding of the dependent variable where "a good thing" is coded as 3, "neither good nor bad" is coded as 2, and "a bad thing" is coded as 1 and a multilevel ordinal logit command. The results were largely unchanged, with the exception that there appears to be an even weaker interaction between cross-border issue salience and knowledge.



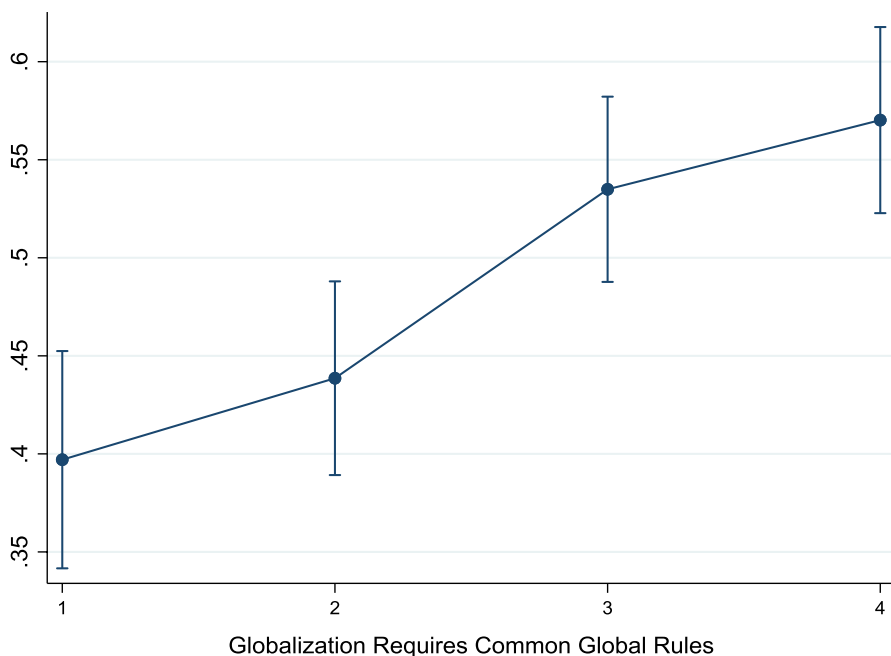


Fig. 1 Global rules and support for EU membership. The horizontal axis moves from those who strongly disagree with the statement that globalization requires common global rules to those who strongly agree with that statement. The vertical axis charts the predicted probability that a respondent will express support for the EU. *Source* Eurobarometer 73.4

due to the EU are less likely to agree that EU membership is a good thing. Higher levels of knowledge about the EU and education both correlate with a greater likelihood of supporting European integration. Younger respondents, males and city-dwellers are all more likely to approve of the EU. In addition, increasing ideological extremity corresponds with a lower likelihood of supporting the EU.

Figure 1 presents the estimates of the marginal effects of support for global rules, using the average value of each of the other covariates in the model. As shown in the graph, there is not a statistically significant difference between strong and moderate disagreement. However, the likelihood of supporting the EU increases noticeably when respondents start to express some agreement with global rules. The marginal effect of support for global rules on support for the EU moves from around 0.43 for those who do not support global rules to 0.53 for those who express moderate support and 0.57 for those who express strong support.

Given the prior research (Hooghe 2016), the possibility exists that knowledge may moderate the effects of cross-border issue salience on support. However, as displayed in Model 2 (in Table 1), cross-border salience appears to have the same effects regardless of the respondent's level of knowledge. These analyses offer tepid support for our expectations; support for global rules correlates with favorable impressions of EU membership, but placing greater emphasis on cross-border issues does not.



Table 2 Predictors of support for policy-specific EU authority.
Source Eurobarometer 73.4

	Model 3	Model 4
National economic expectations	−0.00 (0.01)	−0.00 (0.01)
Personal economic expectations	−0.00 (0.01)	−0.00 (0.01)
Fear of culture loss	−0.3 (0.05)**	−0.3 (0.05)**
Cross-border issue	0.61 (0.03)**	
Knowledge	0.09 (0.01)**	
CBI× knowledge		
Non-CBI/lowest knowledge		−0.02 (0.12)
Non-CBI/low knowledge		−0.03 (0.11)
Non-CBI/high knowledge		0.15 (0.11)
Non-CBI/highest knowledge		0.28 (0.11)
CBI/no knowledge		0.45 (0.16)**
CBI/lowest knowledge		0.62 (0.13)**
CBI/low knowledge		0.76 (0.12)**
CBI/high knowledge		0.77 (0.12)**
CBI/highest knowledge		0.77 (0.12)**
Support for global rules	0.18 (0.02)**	0.18 (0.02)**
Education	−0.01 (0.02)	−0.01 (0.02)
Female	−0.03 (0.03)	−0.03 (0.03)
Age	−0.01 (0.00)**	−0.01 (0.00)**
Lives in Urban area	0.07 (0.03)*	0.07 (0.03)*
Ideological extremity	−0.02 (0.01)	−0.02 (0.01)
Constant	−0.28 (0.12)**	−0.17 (0.15)

Cells report coefficients with standard errors in parentheses from a series of logistic regression models, with standard errors clustered by respondent. The dependent variable is the probability that respondent *i* support European authority over policy area *j*

*Denotes significances at the 0.05 level

**Denotes significances at the 0.01 level

Next, I analyze the effects of these predictors on support for EU authority over specific policy domains.⁶ Since these models include up to twenty responses per respondent, the standard errors in this model are clustered by individual. The results are displayed in Table 2. In contrast with the earlier findings, the cross-border nature of an issue domain appears to influence the likelihood that individuals support EU authority over that domain. The probability of supporting EU authority moves from 0.62 for cross-border issues to 0.47 for all other issues. The difference between the two analyses (Tables 1 and 2) may be due to the more nuanced nature of intuitive functionalism. Recall that the theory does not anticipate outright support for European integration so much as qualified support contingent upon the needs of the issue

⁶ Given the stacked nature of the data and the resulting necessity of clustering standard errors by individual, the models reported do not make use of multilevel modeling.



in question. The measure of broad EU support used in Table 1 concerns the former, whereas the dependent variable in Table 2 is more about the latter.

The results in Table 2 also suggest a substantial relationship between support for global rules and support for EU authority in specific policy domains. Interestingly, the economic measures are not correlated with support for EU authority in different domains. Separate analyses that focus on individual policy areas suggest that national economic perceptions influence support for EU authority over several policy areas, but perceptions of one's personal economic situation matter less for such support.⁷ Fears over a loss of national culture due to EU authority continue to have a significant, downward effect on EU support even in this model. Political knowledge, age, and location have the same effects as in the earlier model, such that younger, better-informed, city-dwellers are more likely to support EU authority. However, the controls for education, ideological extremity, and gender identity lose significance from Model 1.

Figure 2 plots the marginal effects of support for global rules against the likelihood of supporting EU authority over a given policy domain. While the confidence intervals overlap at the bottom (for those who totally and tend to disagree) and top (for those who totally and tend to agree), the overall picture is one in which moving from the left to the right-side of the scale increases support for EU policy authority by close to 15%.

Figure 3 illustrates the differential effects of knowledge given the type of issue domain. Notably, while low- and high-knowledge respondents differ in their support for cross-border issues, knowledge does not appear to have much of any effect on support for all other types of issues. Those respondents who can correctly answer 2 or more questions about the EU are around 7% more likely to express support for EU authority over a cross-border issue. In contrast, the broad confidence intervals around different levels of knowledge on the lower half of Fig. 3 suggest that there may be no difference at all between respondents unable to answer any questions and those able to correctly answer most questions about the EU. These results offer some support for the third hypothesis that knowledge may moderate the effect of cross-border issue salience on support for EU authority.

⁷ The measure of perceptions of the national economy actually has a significant, positive effect (meaning that increasingly positive perceptions correspond with a higher likelihood of supporting EU authority) on the following areas: Fighting terrorism, Immigration, Protecting the environment, Defense and foreign affairs, Energy, Support for regions facing economic difficulties, Agriculture and fisheries, Fighting crime, Fighting unemployment, The educational system, Pensions, Social welfare, Consumer protection, Competition, Transports, Economy, and Fighting inflation. The measure of perceptions of one's personal economic situation actually has a significant, positive effect (meaning that increasingly positive perceptions correspond with a higher likelihood of supporting EU authority) on the following areas: Fighting terrorism, Defense and foreign affairs, Support for regions facing economic difficulties, Fighting crime, Fighting unemployment, Scientific and technological research, and Economy.



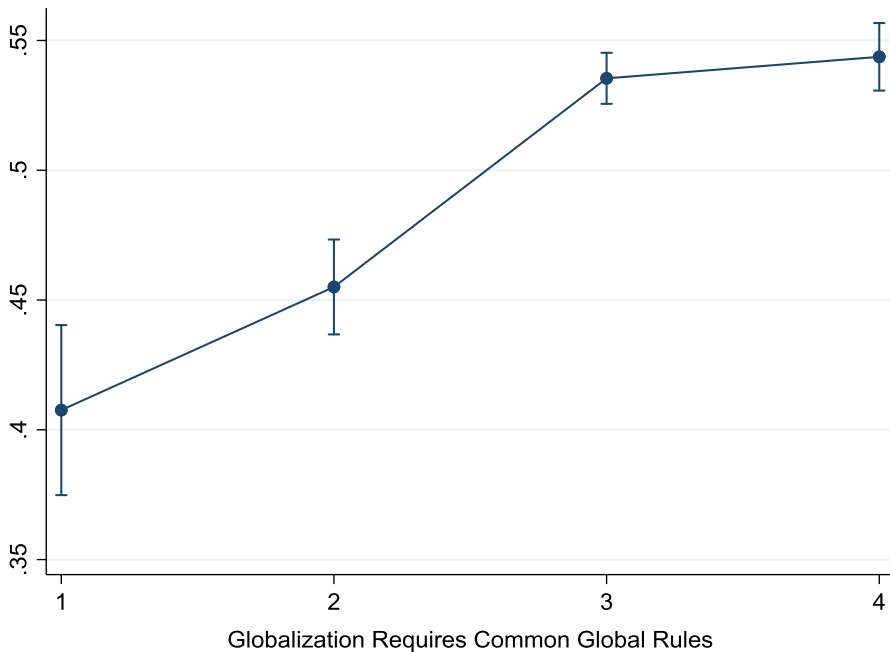


Fig. 2 Global rules and support for EU policy authority. The horizontal axis moves from those who strongly disagree with the statement that globalization requires common global rules to those who strongly agree with that statement. The vertical axis charts the predicted probability that respondent i will express support for EU authority over policy area j . *Source* Eurobarometer 73.4

Conclusions

The literature on political behavior in the EU has produced a large and robust collection of findings about public support for the EU. Much of this research asserts that one or both of two types of predictors explain EU support: individual-level evaluations of the economy and/or fears about the EU's effects on national culture and identity. Scholars have good reason to focus so much on this set of explanations; both clearly have a prominent role in explaining public attitudes toward the EU. However, just as at the national level, there are likely more than two explanations for public opinion. And, as has been found in the existing research, some predictors may hold with certain segments of the public more than others. This paper offers another possible explanation for EU attitudes: that some individuals may adopt a similar paradigm to that advocated by David Mitrany's functionalism, deciding whether to support the EU based on an assessment of the EU's ability to fulfill certain critical functions. The results support this theory.

After controlling for perceptions of the economy and cultural-related fears, an individual's support for global rules registers a significant effect on both broad and specific measures of EU support. Moreover, in the case of support for EU authority over specific policy domains, that relationship appears to be conditioned



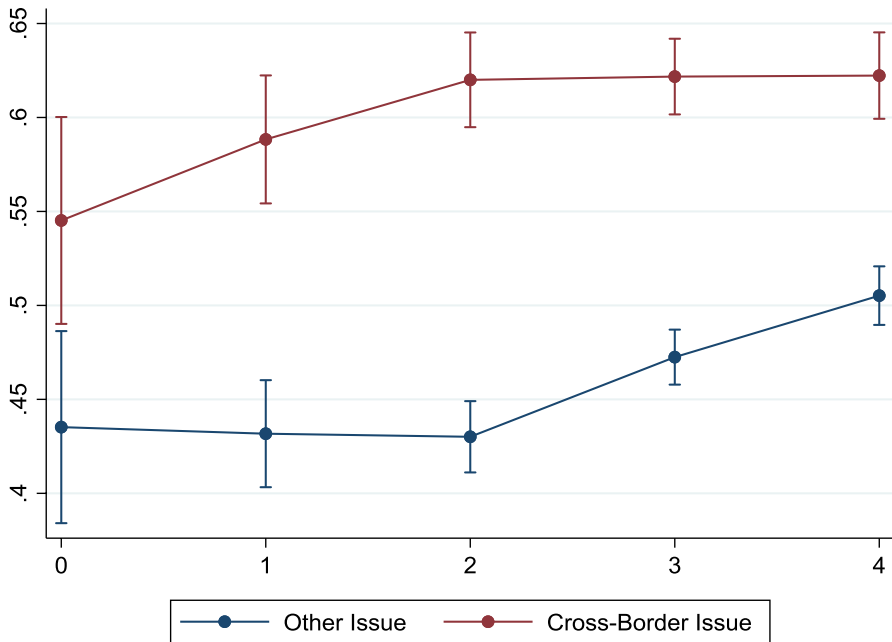


Fig. 3 Political knowledge, issue type, and support for EU policy authority across issue domains. The horizontal axis moves from those who are unable to correctly answer any questions about the EU to those able to correctly answer four questions about the EU. The vertical axis charts the predicted probability that respondent i will express support for EU authority over policy area j . The top line tracks this relationship for cross-border issue areas and the bottom line for other issue areas *Source* Eurobarometer 73.4

both by whether the domain concerns cross-border issues and by indicators of an individual's political sophistication. These findings suggest that functionalist thought may have a role in explaining the public's acceptance of the EU.

The implications of this paper concern efforts to both understand and promote the EU's public legitimacy. Regarding the academic literature, efforts to move beyond the predominant explanations of EU support may yield new insights into how the public interacts with regional and international governing bodies. For the most part, existing research incorporates predictors that have been found to explain behavior within countries. There may be alternative explanations that are unique to the multilayered political environment that typifies regional and global governance.

In addition, the current research agendas on both EU political behavior and political institutions may benefit from looking back to the old elite-driven scholarly debates about the origins and direction of European integration. Functionalism, for example, addresses the motivations to create a regional body like the EU and, in so doing, offers an explanation as to why the public does or should support the European project. The EU might also benefit by more explicitly and more frequently addressing functionalist ideas. In other words, European leaders might



better communicate to the public about the specific responsibilities executed by the EU institutions and their performance in doing so, rather than focusing on symbols of European unity. This paper suggests that such efforts might stem further declines in EU support.

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Appendix

The coding for each response metric that is used in this paper is noted in parentheses after each response.

EU broad support “Generally speaking,” do you think that (OUR COUNTRY)’s membership of the European Union is a good thing (1), a bad thing (0), neither good nor bad (0), or don’t know (0). 55% of respondents replied that membership is a good thing.

EU-specific support “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?” The areas include fighting crime, taxation, fighting unemployment, fighting terrorism, defense and foreign affairs, immigration, the educational system, pensions, protecting the environment, health, social welfare, agriculture and fishery, consumer protection, scientific and technological research, support for regions facing economic difficulties, energy, competition, transports, economy, and fighting inflation. *The issues identified as cross-border are fighting terrorism, defense and foreign affairs, immigration, protecting the environment, agriculture and fishery, support for regions facing economic difficulties, and energy.*

Support for global rules “For (each of) the following statement(s), please tell me whether you totally agree (4), tend to agree (3), tend to disagree (2), or totally disagree (1): Globalisation requires common global rules (“worldwide governance”).” 4.8% of respondents totally disagree, 14.8% tend to disagree, 51.6% tend to agree, and 28.7% totally agree.

Issue salience “What do you think are the two most important issues facing our country at the moment?” A maximum of two responses were allowed. Responses include “Crime, Economic situation, Rising prices/inflation, Taxation, Unemployment, Terrorism, Defense/foreign affairs, Housing, Immigration, Healthcare system, The educational system, Pensions, The environment, Energy, Other, DK, Spontaneous.” The issues identified as cross-border in nature include terrorism (mentioned by 4.2%), immigration (7.4%), the environment (3.8%), and crime (19.5%). Over 31% of respondents mentioned one or two of these issues.

Economic expectations “What are your expectations for the next 11 month: will the next 11 month be better (3), worse (1) or the same (2), when it comes to...” Expectations are measured for: “your life in general, the economic situation in (OUR COUNTRY), the financial situation of your household, the employment situation in (OUR COUNTRY), and your personal job situation.” To create the measure of national economic expectations, responses for the two country-based responses



were aggregated. 30% of respondents fall at the bottom of the scale (2), meaning they answered “worse” for both items. 17% fall at the top of the scale (6), meaning they answered “better” for both items. To create the measure of personal economic expectations, responses for the three personal-based responses were aggregated. 17% of respondents fall at the bottom of the scale (2 or 3), meaning they answered “worse” for at least two of the items. 18% lie at the top of the scale (8 or 9), meaning they answered “better” for at least two of the items.

Fear of culture loss “What does the EU mean to you personally?” One of the possible responses is “loss of our cultural identity (1).” 11% of respondents selected this possibility.

Political knowledge “For each of the following statements about the European Union could you please tell me whether you think it is true or false. The EU currently consists of twenty-five Member States. The Irish voted “yes” to the second referendum on the Lisbon Treaty held on October 02, 2009. The euro area currently consists of twelve Member States. (ONLY TO SPLIT A) Switzerland is a member of the EU. (ONLY TO SPLIT B) Iceland is a member of the EU.” Each respondent answered four questions. The number of correct responses was totaled each respondent. 19% of respondents were unable to correctly answer any of the questions. 25% correctly answered 1 question. 29% correctly answered 2 questions. 20.5% correctly answered 3 questions. 6.5% correctly answered all 4 questions.

Education “How old were you when you stopped full-time education?” Respondents who answered “still studying” were coded according to their current age. Responses that fell between the ages of 0 and 17 were coded as 1 (45% of the sample), between 18 and 22 were coded as 2 (39%), between 23 and 25 were coded as 3 (9%), and over the age of 25 were coded as 4 (7%).

Sex “Male” (0), “Female” (1). 53% identify as female.

Age “How old are you?”

Lives in Urban area “Would you say you live in a rural area or village (0), small or middle sized town (0), or large town (1)?” 30% report living in a large town.

Ideological extremity “In political matters people talk of “the left” and “the right.” How would you place your views on this scale? 1 (Left)...10 (Right).” Respondents who self-identified as “1” or “10” were coded as 1 representing the most polarized (10% of the sample). Those who identified as “2” or “9” were coded as 2 (7%); as “3” or “8” were coded as 3 (18%); and as “4” or “7” were coded as 4 (22%). Those who identified “5” or “6” were coded as 5 representing the least polarized (43%).

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