The transformative power of Europe reconsidered: Euroscepticism, Europhilia and democratisation in Europe's periphery

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Abstract

Since the end of the Cold War, the political development and democratisation of the post-communist countries to the east of the EU has drawn considerable attention from academic scholars. Initially, this was characterised by optimism, with scholars praising the EU for exporting institutional democracy through its mechanism of conditionality. This research, however, has given little attention to the micro-level foundations of the process. Yet the recent increase in Euroscepticism and anti-democratic, extremist tendencies have pointed to the importance of individual attitudes, even leading academics to argue that a democratic backsliding is taking place in Central and Eastern Europe. This thesis intends to re-examine the case of the EU's transformative power, focusing specifically on its micro-level impact on the political attitudes of citizens and elites. The research question thus asks: *to what extent does the EU have a transformative power on political attitudes*? The thesis consists of three research papers that use quantitative and qualitative methods to examine EU influence on two types of actors, the general population and bureaucratic elites, focusing on two types of attitudes: support for democracy and support for the EU. The overall findings show that the Union does have a micro-level impact on attitudes both at the elite and citizen levels, though this is contingent on the nature of the relationship with the EU, as well as individuals' support for the Union.

In the first paper, the thesis demonstrates that the EU can affect attitudes towards democracy among the post-communist population, although this is contingent on the state's association with the Union: when this is simply economic or political, the effect is positive; however, when the association involves integration as a candidate or member state, a rise in Euroscepticism among the population can in fact lead to lower levels of democratic support. This finding shows that Euroscepticism has an important role in altering the EU's transformative influence on individuals in states integrated within the EU.

Indeed, the consequences of this could be highly significant, especially when it comes to political and bureaucratic elites whose daily job affects the politics and policy of their countries. As a result, the second paper examines the EU's effect on the attitudes of civil servants working in the national bureaucracies of the new member states. Using international socialisation theory, the paper shows that civil servants generally tend to support the EU, and this is higher among officials whose daily work brings them into contact with it. In addition, the analysis further explores the scope conditions that facilitate socialisation, revealing that both the quantity and quality of contact with EU-related issues – in terms of prolonged exposure as well as interpersonal contact – matter in explaining the sources of variation in levels of support.

Lastly, to examine more closely how bureaucrats see the EU, the third paper uses a more in-depth qualitative study to explore the perceptions of Brussels-based diplomats on the economic, political and security dimensions of the Union. Through a comparative analysis, the paper once again shows that the

state-level relationship with the EU can affect the perspectives formed by elites. Using original interview data, the research develops a typology of four types of "perspectives of the EU", based on two dimensions: expectations from the EU and evaluation of the EU. The paper's main argument is that the state-level relationship between the Union and the home country can greatly affect how elites representing those states perceive the Union.

The main contributions of the thesis relate to a deeper understanding of the EU's individual-level transformative power, through a discussion of its objects (citizens and elites), its mechanisms (direct and indirect), its scope (internal and external) and its outcomes (attitudes towards democracy and the EU). First, it demonstrates that the EU has a real and measurable effect in changing the perceptions of both citizens and elites in post-communist states. Second, it highlights that its impact works both through indirect mechanisms of a state-level political association, as well as direct mechanisms of international socialisation. In addition, it also reveals that Euroscepticism can act as a moderator, turning the EU's positive democratising effect into a negative one, thus bringing together the literature on the transformative power of Europe with research on attitudes towards the EU and Euroscepticism. Third, it demonstrates that the EU has a transformative power both internally and externally, including non-accession third states. Lastly, it shows that the EU's transformative power can influence attitudes towards democracy and the EU. Ultimately, the overall findings show that the Union has an impact on the attitudes of both elites and citizens, though this is contingent on the nature of the relationship with the EU, as well as individuals' support for the Union.

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List of abbreviations

AMEs	Average marginal effects
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CEECs	Central and Eastern European countries
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CIs	confidence intervals
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EP	Eastern Partnership
EVS	European Values Study
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OLS	ordinary least squares
PCA	Partnership and Cooperation Agreements
WVS	World Values Survey

Chapter 1. Introduction

"The union and its forerunners have for over six decades contributed to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe… The stabilizing part played by the EU has helped to transform most of Europe from a continent of war to a continent of peace."

- Press Release*: The Nobel Peace Prize 2012 to the European Union (EU)* Oslo, 12 October 2012

In 2012, the European Union (EU) was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for delivering peace, democracy and stability to the European continent, bringing to an end the division between East and West (Nobel Media AB 2014). Certainly, this "transformative power" of the EU has for long attracted considerable attention from academics and practitioners alike, particularly since the end of the Cold War. In the two decades that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall, the EU's key influence in the democratic consolidation of the newly independent post-communist states has been singled out for providing "a clear sense of direction, a momentum and a positive dynamics" (Pridham 2007: 18).

This research, however, has given much less attention to the micro-level foundations of the process. Yet the recent increase in Euroscepticism and anti-democratic, extremist tendencies in post-communist states has pointed to the importance of individual attitudes. This thesis thus intends to re-examine the case of the EU's transformative power, shifting the focus to the underlying micro-level processes, asking: *to what extent does the EU have a transformative power on political attitudes*? Consisting of three research

papers, the thesis uses quantitative and qualitative methods to examine EU influence on two types of actors, the general population and bureaucratic elites, towards two types of attitudes: support for democracy and support for the EU.

The notion of a "transformative power" has been used to refer to the EU's ability to influence policies, interests, identities and institutions through the diffusion of ideas across time and space (Börzel & Risse 2009: 5–6). Nevertheless, this research has tended to place more emphasis on the macro-level institutional impact, whilst a lot less is known about the underlying micro-level processes of EU influence. Yet sociologists have argued that processes at the macro-social level do not happen in a vacuum, but "move down" to the micro-level of individual actions and then back again (Coleman 1986, 1990); in other words, the structure affects the agency and vice versa. Accordingly, this thesis is particularly interested in the micro-level mechanisms of the EU's transformative power: how does the EU affect the attitudes of citizens and elites? What are the conditions that facilitate and limit its impact? What are the outcomes of EU influence on individuals' political attitudes?

The relevance of this research is accentuated by recent events in the new member states, where a democratic backsliding seems to be taking place (Bermeo 2016; Epstein & Jacoby 2014; Sedelmeier 2014). Even before the completion of the first round of the Eastern enlargement in 2004, a number of scholars had already warned that the top-down nature of the accession process – which favoured efficiency in the implementation of reforms over democratic

deliberation that could legitimise the process – would fail to establish a base of democratic culture among the wider population, and could thus exacerbate problems of democratic consolidation (Grabbe 2001; Raik 2004; Whitehead 2001). Despite this, the Europeanisation research has paid very little attention to the individual-level impact of the accession process. Recent events, however, demonstrate that a democratic consolidation that only addresses the institutional level is insufficient for ensuring a democratic regime against erosion; rather, efforts of democratisation should also address support for democracy among citizens and elites (Herman 2016).

Accordingly, the first paper of the thesis investigates how a relationship with the EU has affected democratic support in the general population in post-communist states, directly testing the transformative power on the population's "hearts and minds". The findings indicate a significant link between association with the EU and increased support for democracy, though this is moderated by increasing Euroscepticism among citizens, suggesting that support for the EU can be an important moderator of democratic support in post-communist states.

These findings raise another interesting research puzzle: whilst the study of EU attitudes among the general public has been a popular subject in academic circles, there is very little known about what elites think about the Union. Yet research has shown that elite perceptions of the EU tend to differ from those of the general population (Best et al. 2012; Hooghe 2003; Mattila & Raunio 2006). Given that these are the individuals who "speak for the country", their

perceptions and opinions about the EU can have significant consequences for democracy, as indicated by the findings of the first paper. Consequently, the second and third papers of the thesis concentrate on exploring support for the EU among bureaucratic elites at home by focusing on civil servants in national bureaucracies, and abroad by investigating the perceptions of diplomats based in Brussels.

The main contributions of the thesis relate to a deeper understanding of the EU's transformative power at the micro-level, through a discussion of its objects (citizens and elites), its mechanisms (direct and indirect), its scope (internal and external) and its outcomes (attitudes towards democracy and the EU). Ultimately, the overall findings show that the Union can have a real, measurable micro-level impact on the attitudes of both elites and citizens, though this is contingent on the nature of the relationship with the EU as well as on individuals' support for the Union.

First, regarding the objects of the EU's transformative power, the thesis empirically demonstrates that EU activities are able to influence the perceptions of individuals, including those of the general population (chapter 2) as well as bureaucratic elites (chapters 3 and 4). The focus on both of these groups is deliberate. On the one hand, their perceptions can have important consequences for policy-making in a democratic state, either because of pressures from the general population, or because civil servants are directly involved in the daily running of state affairs. On the other hand, ordinary citizens would have a different interaction with the EU than civil servants; by

expanding the research to both of these groups, the thesis is able to demonstrate not only that the EU affects both types of individuals, but it also allows to explore the different mechanisms of interaction through which EU impact works.

Hence, the thesis' second contribution to the research on the EU's transformative power relates to the multi-method exploration of the direct and indirect mechanisms of EU influence. Indirectly, the thesis demonstrates that the EU is able to affect individual perceptions through its state-level political association with another country (chapters 2 and 4). More specifically, it argues that the nature of the relationship between a state and the EU – whether this involves economic or political association, or deeper integration in the form of candidate and member state status – matters in determining the strength and outcome of its transformative impact at the individual level. On the other hand, the thesis also demonstrates that the EU affects attitudes more directly, through the international socialisation of individuals (chapter 3). In this case, the thesis shows that interaction with the EU, through contact with its representatives, institutions, rules and legislation, triggers processes of social learning that are able to influence individuals' perceptions.

Additionally, chapter 1 also highlights that Euroscepticism can act as a negative moderator on the institutional mechanism of its transformative power. In this way, these findings further existing research on the influence of the EU by linking the literature on the transformative power of Europe with research on attitudes towards the EU and Euroscepticism. Though these bodies of literature

have produced a rich variety of studies, so far the research on the Union's macro-level impact has failed to consider the significance of micro-level processes of support for the EU, particularly the role of Euroscepticism in limiting the EU's influence.

Third, the thesis also elucidates the scope of the EU's transformative power, contributing to the few comparative studies on EU influence both within and outside its borders, demonstrating that both internal and external dimensions of integration are successful in influencing micro-level attitudes (chapters 2 and 4). This finding is significant because it contradicts the conventional wisdom in the academic literature that the EU's most effective democratising tool is a credible promise of membership, and that without it, it has little impact on third countries (Schimmelfennig 2009; Sedelmeier 2011). In addition, the thesis also combines theories on support for the EU within its borders with a growing strand of literature on the external perceptions of the EU, allowing it to formulate new hypotheses and present new insights into the determinants of EU attitudes.

Fourth, the thesis' last contribution is related to the outcome of the EU's transformative power, demonstrating that it is able to change perceptions not only towards its own entity (i.e. attitudes towards the EU), but also towards other concepts such as democracy and democratisation. The thesis intentionally choses to focus on these two outcomes; first, given that the focus of this research is on the new democracies of post-communist states, perceptions on democracy – especially a supportive attitude towards this

system of governance – is a crucial factor that contributes towards the regime's consolidation and ultimate survival (Almond & Verba 1965: 366). Consequently, this highlights why the EU's ability to affect democratic attitudes forms an integral part of an investigation into its transformative power capabilities. On the other hand, perceptions of the EU itself are a crucial element in the EU's ability to have a micro-level influence; as discussed previously, EU perceptions can not only be seen as an outcome of its transformative power, but also as a moderating mechanism of it. Indeed, chapter 2 demonstrates that negative attitudes towards the EU have the potential to turn the EU's positive influence on perceptions of democracy into a negative one. Noting the importance of this finding, the thesis consequently choses to complement its research on perceptions of democracy with an investigation into how the EU influences perceptions of itself, showing once again that the nature of the interaction – whether direct (chapter 3) or indirect (chapter 4) – is key in explaining individual attitudes towards the EU.

As a consequence of the contributions outlined, the thesis also presents three innovations in the research on the transformative power of Europe. First, analytically the thesis expands previous research by broadening its scope horizontally, through a comparative analysis of the post-communist region, and vertically, by studying both the level of the masses and the elites. Though there has been a large body of research on EU impact in candidate and new member states, and an expanding interest on third states in the Eastern periphery, few studies have conducted a systematic regional comparative analysis that included member and non-member states equally (except Oshri

et al. 2016). Similarly, the thesis' focus on individuals – which considers EU influence on ordinary citizens, as well as elites working in domestic bureaucracies and foreign embassies – attempts to contribute towards filling the gap of the relatively under-researched area of the EU's micro-level influence.

Second, methodologically the thesis incorporates quantitative and qualitative methods in its analyses, to uncover both generalised, overarching patterns, as well as detailed, in-depth explanations of the data findings. This allows the thesis to provide a broader understanding of the research problem and to draw more comprehensive conclusions in answering the thesis questions.

Lastly, empirically the thesis presents findings from original materials, as well as new analyses of existing datasets. The first paper uses an integrated dataset of the World Values Survey (WVS) and the European Values Study (EVS), presenting a new analysis of citizen attitudes from 25 post-communist states and covering the period between 1995 and 2014. The second paper analyses data collected as part of a project funded by the Sigma Programme of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on the sustainability of civil service reform in Central and Eastern Europe (Meyer-Sahling 2009). The full dataset has not been previously used for the systematic regression analysis of civil servants' attitudes towards Europe, as presented in this thesis. Lastly, the third paper presents original qualitative data collected through two rounds of fieldwork, consisting of semi-structured interviews with diplomats and EU officials based in Brussels.

1.1 Literature review

In the academic literature, the EU's transformative influence has been a central research puzzle for students of European politics, particularly in the wake of the EU's Eastern Enlargement. This research has examined the EU's "transformative power" on two levels: at the macro-level, focusing on the Europeanisation of policy and institutions, and to a lesser extent at the micro-level, with emphasis on the impact on individuals through international socialisation.

First, at the macro-level the focus has been on the EU's diffusion of ideas through policies and regulatory practices by processes of coercion and instrumental rationality, both of which are covered by the Europeanisation literature (Börzel & Risse 2009). This research has mostly concentrated on the impact of European integration on the polity, politics and policy of "long-term" EU member states (Bulmer & Burch 2005; Goetz & Meyer-Sahling 2008; Ladrech 2009), as well as the effect of conditionality on institutional change in candidate and new member states (Börzel 2011; Grabbe 2006; Schimmelfennig et al. 2005; Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2005). These studies have found evidence of policy and value change in European states attributed to EU impact, particularly its instrument of accession conditionality (Grabbe 2006; Schimmelfennig et al. 2003; Sedelmeier 2011). The endurance of EU-driven reforms, however, shows a somewhat less optimistic picture: whilst post-

accession compliance with EU law had intitially been better than expected (Dimitrova & Toshkov 2009; Toshkov 2008), more recently there have been some worrying signs of democratic backsliding that have called into question the durability of the EU's transformative power (Epstein & Jacoby 2014), although in some cases the EU was successful in halting these negative tendencies (Iusmen 2015; Sedelmeier 2014).

Concurrently, Europeanisation research has expanded beyond member and candidate states to study third countries that do not have credible membership prospects. This research has found that Europeanisation in these cases is weak and inconsistent, attributed both to the absence of the "golden carrot" of membership, as well as a lack of endogenously driven process of change (Börzel 2010; Börzel & Hüllen 2011; Schimmelfennig 2009).

Beyond its impact on institutions and policy, a number of Europeanisation studies have pointed to the perils of the EU's handling of the accession and integration process, which they warned to have favoured efficiency and speed of reforms at the expense of democratic legitimisation and democratic deliberation (Grabbe 2001; Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2011; Raik 2004; Whitehead 2001). This research has highlighted the fact that the EU's top-down strategy of political conditionality – whilst it may have been successful in contributing towards the establishment of formally functioning democracies in the post-communist states of Eastern Europe –, effectively privileged only a small group of central government executives, leaving out parliamentarians and the wider society (Grabbe 2001); as a result, the reform process in these

countries lacked the underpinnings of a democratic culture and civil society (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2011).

Despite warnings from these studies, the research into the EU's micro-level influence has been more limited; in recent years, however, there has been an increased interest on the potential transformative impact on roles and identities. Although Börzel and Risse (2009) identify socialisation and persuasion as the EU's two key mechanisms for the diffusion of ideas at the micro-level, in fact most of the literature refers to these under the combined heading of international socialisation.

In its classical definition, international socialisation is the process of inducting actors into the rules and norms of an international community (Checkel 2005: 804). Its outcome is the internalisation of new norms either through changed behaviour by adopting new roles (Type I) or through a deeper change in values and interests (Type II) (Checkel 2005: 808). In terms of the EU's transformative power, the theory has been mostly used in a number of empirical studies to examine how EU institutions affect the identities of elites, exploring whether and how a shift from a logic of consequences to a logic of appropriateness might occur in these sites (Beyers 2005; Hooghe 2005; Lewis 2005; Schimmelfennig 2005). In particular, a focal point of this research has been the effect on the supranational identities and roles of EU bureaucrats working in EU institutions, such as the Commission (Hooghe 2005; Trondal 2006; Trondal & Veggeland 2003), the Committee of Permanent Representatives (Lewis 2005), or the Council working parties (Beyers 2005; Beyers & Trondal 2004;

Egeberg et al. 2003). The findings show that the EU is capable of inducing a certain degree of supranational identity, which tends to be stronger in officials working in the Commission rather than the Council (Egeberg et al. 2003). However, the strength of the impact is subject to debate, as studies have suggested that the new supranational identity in general does not replace national identities (Lewis 2005; Trondal 2002), nor is it permanent (Trondal et al. 2008).

Contrastingly, others have argued that the degree of supranational orientations is not so much a consequence of international socialisation by the EU, but rather that of the different national domestic structures (Beyers 2005; Beyers & Trondal 2004; Hooghe 2005; Zürn & Checkel 2005). Nevertheless, there is very little known about the attitudes of national officials working in public administrations, though their views could be highly significant, considering that their bureaucracies play a crucial part in the transposition of law formed at the EU-level. Certainly, the literature on the domestic implementation of EU policies has highlighted the significance of the efficiency and quality of bureaucracies in ensuring the timely and effective transposition of supranational laws into national legislation (Hille & Knill 2006; Toshkov 2007, 2008; Treib 2006).

In fact, the perspectives of the bureaucratic officials themselves can be highly significant to this process: if they have negative views of the EU, they can become de facto veto players, as their attitudes could impact their readiness to implement and uphold the laws enacted from Brussels. Certainly, there are

studies that have drawn attention to the influence of actors' preferences by looking at the impact of political and administrative veto players in delaying or modifying the implementation of EU policy (Dimitrova 2010; Haverland 2000; Steunenberg 2006; Treib 2006).

Nonetheless, studies of EU impact on the identities of domestic officials have been largely neglected. Two exceptions are the studies by Freyburg (2015) and Meyer-Sahling et al. (2016), which look at EU socialisation on public officials in national bureaucracies in Morocco (Freyburg 2015) and the new member states of Central and Eastern Europe (Meyer-Sahling et al. 2016). Both papers find positive though limited evidence of the EU's transformative power on bureaucrats, specifically in their attitudes towards democratic (Freyburg 2015) and merit-based civil service governance (Meyer-Sahling et al. 2016).

While the above review of the literature demonstrates that scholars increasingly understand more about the EU's transformative influence, its potential and limitations, there is clearly room for the advancement of knowledge on its impact on individual identities and attitudes, particularly at the nation-state level. In addition, whilst most of the literature has tended to treat states and individuals as "takers" of the EU's transformative power, there has been little attention given to a potential resistance to EU ideas and policy. In this regard, the thesis proposes that the literature on the transformative power of Europe would greatly benefit from considering the research on attitudes towards the EU and Euroscepticism.

Certainly, the research on attitudes towards the EU has constituted another wide-ranging body of literature in European politics. There have been numerous studies examining the rise of Euroscepticism in the European member states, with a focus on political parties (Hooghe et al. 2002; Taggart 1998), public opinion (Boomgaarden et al. 2011; Clements 2009; Lubbers & Jaspers 2011) and political and economic elites (Best et al. 2012).

Such studies have identified three main dimensions driving opposition towards the EU. First, economic or instrumental cost-benefit calculations (Gabel 1998; Hooghe & Marks 2005) consider that people's support for the EU is contingent on how integration impacts their socioeconomic backgrounds. Second, cultural or identity-based factors can also affect EU support, to the extent that EU integration is perceived as a threat to these (Carey 2002; Marks & Hooghe 2009; McLaren 2002). This is closely related to a more recent avenue of research that focuses on anti-immigration sentiments as a key variable for understanding public scepticism towards the EU (de Vreese & Boomgaarden 2005).

Lastly, domestic political factors can also determine European support (Franklin et al. 1995; Marsh 1998). This research argues that citizens are relatively uninformed about matters of European integration, and thus they use proxies such as approval of domestic governments and parties to form their opinions about the EU (Anderson 1998; Franklin et al. 1995). The public also takes cues from elites, as domestic political partisanship has been demonstrated to be a strong predictor of citizens' attitudes (Cichowski 2000).

Geographically, though initially the focus was on the old member states (Anderson 1998; Boomgaarden et al. 2011; Clements 2009; de Vreese & Boomgaarden 2005; Taggart & Szczerbiak 2004), the research on EU attitudes quickly expanded to cover new member and candidate states of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), as well as the Balkans (Cichowski 2000; Garry & Tilley 2009; Stojic 2006). These studies have found that in fact Eurosceptic elements within parties and the population had already started to emerge even in CEE candidate states during the accession process (Oguzlu 2004; Stojic 2006; Taggart & Szczerbiak 2002, 2004), and also in other candidate states such as Serbia (Stojic 2006) or Turkey (Oguzlu 2004). In fact, one study found that the closer a state was to imminent accession to the EU, the more "hard" Euroscepticism there could be found in the domestic parties, a concept referring to the outright rejection of the whole European project of economic and political integration (Taggart & Szczerbiak 2004). This implies that the EU's transformative power, especially when it comes to implementing change through its instrument of conditionality, can create a strong pushback from elites and the population alike.

Concurrently, there has also been an increasing interest on the external perceptions of the EU, especially in third states outside of the European continent. This research has revealed that the EU is not seen as a particularly central actor in global relations, and seldom as a leader (Chaban & Elgström 2014), though these perceptions are contingent on issue-specificity and regional perspectives: while the EU's hard power is seen as a non-issue, the EU's leadership in economic affairs, in contrast, has been greatly recognised

(Chaban et al. 2013). Indeed, the literature has highlighted that there is a general agreement about the EU's image as a powerful economic actor (Chaban et al. 2013; Chaban & Elgström 2014; Elgström 2007), and a model for regional integration (Fioramonti & Poletti 2008; Lucarelli & Fioramonti 2008).

It has also been considered a normative power – capable of promoting norms and values, thus shaping what is considered as "normal" in international relations (Manners 2002) – especially in the areas of democracy promotion, human rights and environmental policy (Bayoumi 2007; Chaban et al. 2006, 2013; Kilian & Elgström 2010), though this normative dimension is seen as secondary to its image as an economic power (Larsen 2014), and is often accompanied by criticisms about double standards, lack of effectiveness and a Eurocentric view that in some parts of the world is seen as akin to neo-colonialism (Chaban et al. 2013; Larsen 2014; Lucarelli & Fioramonti 2008). Interestingly, however, this strand of research has remained separate from the literature on EU attitudes inside the member states, despite the obvious connections between the two traditions.

1.2 Outline of thesis

The thesis thus revisits the question of the transformative power of Europe in a bid to examine the extent to which it affects political attitudes, considering in particular the explanatory role of opinions on the EU. In its three research papers, the thesis combines both qualitative and quantitative research

methods to answer the thesis question. In this regard, the thesis subscribes to the view proposed by King, Keohane and Verba (1994) who argue that qualitative and quantitative traditions of research are connected under a unified logic of inference that underlies both methods, and that any difference between them can be restricted to one of style and specific technique.

The choice of using both methods in the thesis has been a deliberate one, as together they are "suited to answering different questions about the same or related topics […] providing a distinctive kind of evidence and, used together, they can offer a powerful resource to inform and illuminate policy or practice" (Ritchie & Ormston 2014: 40). By generating data through multiple methods, the thesis can answer the research question from different angles, thus combining the benefits of both traditions: the overarching, global view of quantitative studies, built on objective observations that allow for generalisations to be made, and the more detailed, in-depth analysis of qualitative enquiry, based on rich data that aids the formulation of comprehensive and detailed explanations. This is especially important in the second and third papers of the thesis, which investigate the more under-researched group of elites: whilst the former is able to assess civil servants' overall patterns of support and opposition to the EU, the latter tells a qualitative story of how diplomats frame their perceptions.

The first paper thus starts by investigating the EU's mass-scale influence on post-communist populations, asking how has association with the EU affected popular support for democracy in the region? Following the end of the Cold

War, the European Union has been praised for its role in the institutional democratisation of the post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. However, this institutional-level analysis has mostly ignored the micro-processes of democratisation. To bridge this gap, the paper examines an integrated longitudinal dataset from the World Values Survey and the European Values Study to investigate how state-level association with the EU has affected support for democracy among post-communist populations.

The study covers the new member states as well as non-member states from the Balkans and the former Soviet Union between 1995 and 2014. Using multilevel mixed-effects ordered probit regression, the thesis paper demonstrates that the EU can influence democratic support among the population, although this is contingent on the state's association with the Union: when this is simply economic or political, the effect is positive; however, when the association involves integration as a candidate or member state, a rise in Euroscepticism among the population can in fact lead to lower levels of democratic support. This finding shows that Euroscepticism has an important role in altering the EU's transformative influence in individuals in states integrated within the EU, highlighting a previously unexplored link between support for democracy and Euroscepticism, and showing that scepticism towards the EU in these states has the potential to be translated into scepticism towards the entire democratisation process.

Given that the first paper's findings reveal the link between attitudes towards the EU and support for democracy in ordinary citizens, this raises the question

of how elites see the EU. After all, these are the people who hold the power to create and implement policy, thus "speaking for the country and to the country". Consequently, if the conclusion of the first thesis paper reveals the moderating effect of attitudes towards the EU on support for democracy, then elites' perceptions of the EU can have significant consequences for the regime. Yet the research on elite attitudes towards the Union has been much more limited (except Best et al. 2012), despite general acceptance of the argument that there is a gap between elite and mass opinions on the EU, with the former tending to show more supportive attitudes (Cotta & Russo 2012; Hooghe 2003; Mattila & Raunio 2006).

Consequently, the second and third papers of the thesis investigate the effect of the EU on two types of bureaucratic elites: civil servants working in the domestic bureaucracies of new member states, and diplomats working in Brussels. In both papers the thesis shifts its focus on the EU's transformative impact from individual support for democracy to support for the EU. Both groups perform crucial roles as links between the EU and their home states: the former through the implementation of supranational laws and regulations, whilst the latter represent a communicative link between the Union and their home states. Consequently, their attitudes towards the EU will presumably have a major impact on the performance of their duties, highlighting the significance of an inquiry into this particular dependent variable.

The second paper thus examines the nature and determinants of national civil servants' attitudes towards the EU. Though Euroscepticism in Europe among

political parties and the general population has been on the rise in recent years, there has been considerably less attention given to the study of elite attitudes, with the exception of the IntUne project (Best et al. 2012), which explores the approach of political and economic elites towards the EU within the member states. However, this project's focus on political elites is limited to members of parliament and a small number of politicians, excluding an investigation into domestic civil servants' attitudes towards the EU. Nevertheless, their opinions are significant, as their daily jobs involve the implementation and upholding of the laws and regulations enacted from Brussels. As such, they are potential veto-players, capable of affecting the pace and success of the adaptation of national legislation to EU requirements. Consequently, this study asks: what is the nature and determinants of national civil servants' attitudes toward the EU?

To address this research question, the paper uses international socialisation theory to examine a web-based survey conducted in 2008 with civil servants from seven new member states of Central and Eastern Europe. Using OLS multivariate regression, the paper investigates the extent to which social learning acts as mechanism capable of socialising bureaucratic officials into more positive attitudes towards the EU. The findings show that civil servants generally tend to support integration and membership in the EU, and this is higher among officials whose daily work is affected by it. In addition, the analysis further explores the scope conditions that facilitate socialisation, revealing that both the quantity and quality of contact with EU-related issues matter in explaining the sources of variation in levels of support.

If contact with the EU is capable of influencing domestic bureaucrats' perceptions, then presumably it will also have a significant impact on elites working in Brussels. The third thesis paper thus conducts an in-depth qualitative study to investigate how post-communist elites perceive the EU. To address this question, the paper develops a typology of four types of "elite perspectives of the EU", based on two dimensions: expectations from the EU and assessments of the EU. The paper tests this typology using original empirical material collected through 25 interviews with post-communist elites from 13 different countries working in a range of institutions in Brussels – including officials from the Commission, Permanent Representations and diplomatic missions to the EU –, as a group of state officials who are highly exposed to the EU, and will therefore have a profound understanding of its functioning.

The paper's main argument is that the state-level relationship between the EU and the home country can greatly affect how elites representing those states perceive the Union. To illustrate this, the typology is applied to investigating the political, economic and security dimensions of the EU, showing that officials will have idealistic, pragmatic, disillusioned or sceptic views, depending on the nature of their states' relationship with the EU. The typology shows a sort of "progressivity" in post-communist views: as states progress "from the outside in", their perceptions change from an idealised image of the EU to a more realistic one, which nonetheless is still supportive of the EU, recognising the advantages of an integrated European community.

The concluding chapter summarises and discusses the overall findings, thereby answering the research question of the thesis. This section also addresses the theoretical and policy implications of the findings, discusses the limitations of the research and provides avenues for future research.

Chapter 2. The Eurosceptic moderator: EU effects on support for democracy in post-communist states

***Abstract**. Following the end of the Cold War, the European Union has been praised for its role in the institutional democratisation of the post-communist states of Central and Eastern Europe. However, this institutional-level analysis has mostly ignored the processes of democratisation happening at the individual level. To address this gap, this paper examines how association between the EU and 25 post-communist states has affected popular support for democracy in the region. The paper uses multilevel mixed-effects ordered probit regression on an integrated longitudinal dataset from the World Values Survey and the European Values Study. It covers the new member states as well as non-member states from the Balkans and the former Soviet Union between 1995 and 2014. The findings show that association with the EU can promote popular support for democracy, particularly in states that have economic or political ties with the EU, refuting previous arguments that the EU's democratising power is ineffective in the absence of a promise of membership. On the other hand, the research also highlights the importance of perceptions of the EU, showing that the effect of association is dependent on the "Eurosceptic" moderator: this is most critical in candidate and member states, where low levels of trust in the EU can reverse the EU's democratising effect, so that Eurosceptics in these states display lower levels of support for democracy. The study thus highlights the significance of the link between democratisation and Euroscepticism, showing that scepticism towards the EU in these states has the potential to be translated into scepticism towards the entire democratisation process.*

2.1 Introduction

Following the end of the Cold War, the role of the European Union (EU) in spearheading the democratisation of the former Eastern bloc has been praised for providing "a clear sense of direction, a momentum and a positive dynamics" (Pridham 2007: 18). Less than three decades later, developments in countries such as Hungary, Poland or Romania are showing a worrying trend of gradual, institutional-based backsliding (Bermeo 2016; Sedelmeier 2014). This paper thus seeks to revisit the study of democratisation by the EU from a micro-level perspective to address the question: to what extent do different types of association with the EU affect popular support for democracy in post-communist states?

Democratic consolidation in post-communist states has been at the centre of Europeanisation studies, most of which have found that the EU's tool of conditionality has effectively promoted democratic practices in the region (Pridham 2002; Schimmelfennig et al. 2005; Sedelmeier 2011). While these works have concentrated primarily on the effects at the institutional and elite levels, there has been a lot less attention given to the impact on mass attitudes (except Oshri et al. 2016). Conversely, the literature on EU attitudes has explored opinions at the mass level in post-communist states (Rohrschneider & Whitefield 2006; Szczerbiak 2001; Taggart & Szczerbiak 2002), though these studies have fallen short of exploring the consequences of attitudes towards the EU on the promotion democratic value change among the population. This paper seeks to bridge this gap, linking the Europeanisation literature's focus on

EU-driven democratisation with the individual-level view of Eurosceptic studies. This research agenda builds on the study of Oshri et al. (2016), who provide evidence of the EU's ability to socialise member state citizens into democratic attitudes. This paper takes their argument further, by considering how different *types* of association (not just membership) affect support for democracy in post-communist states, including how Eurosceptic attitudes modify this effect.

This micro-level analysis has important consequences for democratic consolidation: though the institutional makeup of a state is crucial for its consolidation as a democracy, the development of a stable and effective regime depends also upon the orientations that people have towards the political process, without which the chances of success are slim (Almond & Verba 1965: 366). From this perspective, the presence of a society that overtly supports the new democratic system is crucial; though it has been argued that such endorsement is not a sufficient condition for democracies to flourish (Inglehart 2003), it is undeniably a necessary one for their continued survival.

The paper uses multilevel mixed-effects ordered probit regression on an integrated survey data obtained from the World Values Survey (WVS) and the European Values Study (EVS), comprising 25 post-communist states and covering the period between 1995 and 2014. The results highlight that the EU can promote support for democracy among citizens, though this effect is moderated by Euroscepticism: in states with economic and political ties with the EU, the research uncovers an increase in popular support for democracy,

provided that there is some level of trust in the EU itself; in candidate and member states, however, distrust of the EU will have a negative effect on democratic support among the population. As such, the Eurosceptic moderator acts to alter the association effect, depending on the individual's attitude towards the EU. The result is that in countries where membership is not part of the association agreement, citizens who have some trust in the EU will see the Union-driven institutional developments in a positive light and will therefore respond with increased support for democracy; when integration is part of the relationship, however, individuals who are suspicious of the EU will see it as a threat and react with lowered levels of support for the democratic polity.

The contributions of this paper to the literature on EU democratisation are threefold. Theoretically, it explores a new mechanism in the relationship between EU association and democratisation, showing the importance of the mediating effect of trust in the EU. This previously unexplored effect that Euroscepticism has on popular support for the democratic political system has important consequences for EU policy in in the region, especially considering worries over democratic backsliding, highlighting another dimension fuelling the problem. Analytically, the study provides a different level of analysis from traditional Europeanisation studies by concentrating on the individual-level, thus uncovering the micro-processes of democratisation. Empirically, the study extends the scope of previous research – which has tended to focus predominantly on candidate states, especially the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) – by examining most post-communist states in its

analysis. This broader perspective gives a more accurate comparison between the different types of associations that the EU has with its neighbours.

2.2 Democracy and democratisation in post-communist Europe

Since Huntington's seminal work on the Third Wave (1991), a large body of scholarly literature has concerned itself with the study of democratisation in post-communist countries (e.g. Linz & Stepan 1996; Nagle & Mahr 1999; Pridham & Vanhanen 1994; Rose et al. 1998). Many of these acknowledge the role of the European Union as having been key in helping along this process (Pridham 2002; Sadurski 2004; Vachudova 2010). Given its record in shaping the institutions of the new democracies of post-communist Europe, this study examines the impact on the population, asking: to what extent do different types of association with the EU affect mass support for democracy in post-communist states?

Based on previous academic studies, the paper formulates two competing albeit equally plausible hypotheses that link relations with the EU to democratisation at the individual level. The first takes an "institutionalist approach", using theories of Europeanisation (Featherstone & Radaelli 2003; Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2005; Sedelmeier 2011) and diffusion (Börzel & Risse 2012a; Brinks & Coppedge 2006) to predict that closer ties with the EU helped the institutional democratisation of the region, encouraging the growth of popular support of the democratic system. Alternatively, based on the

"sceptical Europeanisation" literature (Gallina 2007; Pridham 2006; Schimmelfennig et al. 2003) and research on Euroscepticism (Guerra 2013a; Taggart & Szczerbiak 2002, 2004), a second hypothesis would predict a negative effect on popular opinion, resulting from increasingly deeper integration.

2.2.1 The institutional perspective: Europeanisation and diffusion at work

One side of the debate proposes that EU-backed institutional democratisation implemented in post-communist states has led to the emergence of a democratic political culture, reflected in an increased support for the democratic system of governance. This argument takes a sociological institutionalist approach that sees institutions as the rules, procedures and norms that provide "frames of meaning" guiding human action (Hall & Taylor 1996: 947). In this view, institutions structure the rules and norms of the state, which can affect the preferences, identities and behaviour of individuals, by socialising them into adopting particular institutional roles and thus internalise the norms associated with these (Hall & Taylor 1996: 948). Consequently, once democratic institutions are in place, people can learn democratic orientations and thus be "shaped" into democratic citizens (Maher 1997; Rohrschneider 1994). Institutions set the "rules of the game", and all actors play within these rules, so that a democratic "civic culture" emerges as the product of the structure (Rohrschneider 1994; Schmitter & Karl 1991: 83). Democracy is imposed from above, putting the state's institutional makeup at the centre of

this argument, providing the source from which people learn, adapt and support democratic ideals.

Certainly, the economic, political and diplomatic strategies adopted by the EU in dealing with the newly formed post-communist states suggest a rather institutionalist approach, particularly in their heavy focus on democratic transition at the institutional level. This has been more thoroughly studied by the Europeanisation school, concerned with "the impact of policy outcomes and institutions at the European level on domestic polities, politics and policies" (Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2005: 5), which has studied the EU's impact on democratic transition at the institutional level. In researching the EU's impact on post-communist states, early Europeanisation studies have emphasised that the EU's record of success is contingent on the tool of accession conditionality; without it, EU impact is low and inconsistent (Schimmelfennig 2009; Sedelmeier 2011). Accordingly, those studies that have focused specifically on CEECs have emphasised the mostly positive relationship between democratisation and Europeanisation, praising the EU's extensive and pervasive influence on candidate states (Pridham 2001, 2006; Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2005). This literature, however, has mostly limited itself to the study of the EU's effect at the institutional and elite levels, and has not systematically taken into account mass attitudes either theoretically or empirically. Nevertheless, based on a sociological institutionalist approach, it could be surmised that EU impact on these states – through its political relationship with them – would also presume an impact on the attitudes of individuals within those states.

On the other hand, scholars have found weaker evidence of the EU's effect, if any, on the institutional democratisation of the rest of the post-communist region (Börzel 2010). In the case of the candidate states of the West Balkans – except for Croatia – studies have found that the conditions are much less favourable for EU influence, in part due to more distant and less credible prospects of membership (Epstein & Sedelmeier 2008: 799). Elsewhere, the conditions are even less conducive to any EU influence on states for which the EU has explicitly ruled out membership, at least for the foreseeable future (Sedelmeier 2011: 31). To remedy this, the EU has launched initiatives such as the European Neighbourhood Policy, intended to offer a more substantial political and economic relationship to these states. This new form of association employs a "governance" model of democracy promotion, designed to promote democratic principles through policy-specific, functional cooperation with third states (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2011). Nevertheless, Europeanisation studies have found that "the far reaching-benefits on offer have remained in the realm of possibilities [… whilst] the policy lacks any substantial incentives" (Whitman & Wolff 2010: 3; 12-13).

More recently, a group of scholars have suggested embedding Europeanisation research in the larger body of diffusion theories (Börzel & Risse 2012a, 2012b), allowing a better examination of external influences on institutional change in new democracies, even where there are no prospects of accession. Diffusion is conceived as a process through which ideas, normative standards, policies and institutional practices spread across time and space (Börzel & Risse 2012a: 5). Some scholars have used this concept to empirically test the idea that

democracy is “contagious”. In fact, empirical studies have found strong evidence that diffusion by spatial proximity is a highly robust predictor of democratic growth in a region (Brinks & Coppedge 2006; O’Loughlin et al. 1998; Wejnert 2005), in addition to networks and media communication, under certain circumstances (Wejnert 2005). The theory of diffusion thus complements Europeanisation studies and is useful for understanding the EU’s effect on democratisation in post-communist states: on the one hand, it provides a “democratising link” not only with the candidate states of Central and Eastern Europe but also with other formerly communist states further to the East; and on the other hand, it addresses democratisation at the institutional level, but it also goes further in arguing that diffusion can have an effect on practices, ideas and norms, applicable also at the individual level.

2.2.2 Sceptical Europeanisation and Euroscepticism: an alternative view

The alternative view on the EU’s democratising effect is provided by theories of sceptical Europeanisation and Euroscepticism, which argue that integration in the EU was not only ineffective in implementing lasting democratic change, but it also instigated a backlash from the general population.

On the one hand, studies sceptical of the powers of Europeanisation emerged even before the first round of enlargement in 2004, critical of Europeanisation and its effectiveness in bringing about democratic consolidation (Bideleux 2001; Gallina 2007; Pridham 2006; Raik 2004). Some case studies have highlighted that the extent to which conditionality was successful was heavily

dependent on domestic factors (Dabrowski 2012; Pridham 2006; Schimmelfennig et al. 2003); others criticised the top-down, elitist nature of the process, which placed more emphasis on speed and efficiency than on democratic deliberation in its implementation (Grabbe 2001; Raik 2004; Whitehead 2001: 436–7). This argument highlighted that whilst integration did speed up reforms, the top-down nature of the accession process privileged only a small number of government executives, leaving out crucial agents for sustainable democratic change such as parliamentarians and the wider civil society (Grabbe 2001). As a result, key democratic processes such as deliberation and dialogue were missed, failing thus to legitimise the process whilst missing the opportunity to foster a democratic culture and civil society (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2011). Ultimately, too much was done too quickly, undermining the quality of the democracy that emerged in these countries (Raik 2004: 592). Consequently, this suggests that not only did Europeanisation fail to address democratisation at the individual level, but it may also have undermined the emergence of a democratic political culture supportive of the newly emerging political system.

On the other hand, the research on Euroscepticism can also provide an insight into the negative impact of EU integration on popular opinion. The scholarly literature has produced numerous studies examining the rise of Euroscepticism in Western Europe, mainly focusing on political parties (Hooghe et al. 2002; Taggart 1998) and public opinion (Boomgaarden et al. 2011; Clements 2009; Lubbers & Jaspers 2011). However, the rise of negative attitudes towards the EU are by no means a phenomenon found only in the old member states; in

fact, the literature has discussed the emergence of Euroscepticism in the CEECs already during their accession process and beyond (Guerra 2013a; Taggart & Szczerbiak 2002, 2004), but also in other candidate states such as Serbia (Stojic 2006) or Turkey (Oguzlu 2004). In fact, it has been argued that the closer a state was to imminent accession to the EU, the more "hard" Euroscepticism emerged in the domestic parties, referring to the outright rejection of the whole process of integration (Taggart & Szczerbiak 2004).

This research suggests that integration involves processes that trigger a surge of distrust in the EU in certain parts of the population. Certainly, whilst in the 1990s opinion on the EU was largely positive and hopeful in the CEECs (Haerpfer 2002: 117–8), the mood eventually turned more distrustful as the accession process progressed. The research has identified three main reasons why popular opinion may become Eurosceptic: first, economic or instrumental cost-benefit calculations would mean that the "losers" of the process would turn against the EU (Gabel 1998; Hooghe & Marks 2005); second, cultural or identity-based explanations would predict that fears over a loss of national identity can increase Euroscepticism (Hooghe & Marks 2005; McLaren 2002); and lastly, explanations based on domestic political factors would suggest that disapproval of the EU is related to disapproval of national politics (Franklin et al. 1995; Marsh 1998).

From these explanations, the research has found that in post-communist states, economic factors seem to be the strongest predictors of support for integration (Garry & Tilley 2009; Guerra 2013b). Indeed, the EU-driven

transformation to a capitalist system would have invariably produced "winners" and "losers" who would have different attitudes towards the integration process. However, this paper intends to go beyond the reasons behind the emergence of negative attitudes towards the EU, focusing instead on the consequences of Euroscepticism, specifically on individual-level democratisation. The argument proposes that in post-communist states the processes of Europeanisation and democratisation are intrinsically interconnected, to such a degree that negative perceptions of the one will affect opinions on the other. This line of reasoning can be explained by the specific historical context: in the post-1990 era, the relationship between the EU and the newly democratised states of the East was being formalised roughly at the same time as they were implementing considerable economic and political reforms, in an effort to become democracies with free market economies. In fact, the EU itself was an active driver behind these reforms, to the extent of tying its relationship with these states to economic and political requisites, designed to aid and encourage their post-communist transformation.

In this context, it is not surprising that in the minds of post-communist citizens, wider European unity became conceptualized in terms of stabilizing democratic norms as they developed in their societies, so that integration became synonymous with strengthening the institutional base for democracy and capitalism (Cichowski 2000: 1249). Consequently, the process of democratisation became inherently linked to the process of integration. This is particularly true in the case of those states that were offered the prospects of

becoming member states, where citizens started to link accession to the continuation and permanence of their new democracies, so that European integration became “the bridge to democratic dreams as symbolized in the West” (Cichowski 2000: 1250).

In fact, this argument has been made regarding the accession of other states that have experienced accession side-by-side with democratisation; including Spain, where “Europe became almost a symbol of democracy for most Spaniards” (Tsoukalis 1981: 122), and Turkey, where “Europeanization is treated as synonymous to 'democratization' or pressure to enhance and deepen liberal democracy and to activate appropriate citizenship rights” (Sofos 2001: 248). In all these cases, the common thread is that democratisation and accession to the EU were concurrent processes that – in the eyes of the population – became synonymous with each other.

It follows from this discussion that if democratisation is seen as interconnected with integration, then a rise in Euroscepticism can also negatively affect democratisation at the individual level. Here, the important factor is the role of perceptions: if the EU is perceived in a negative light, so will the process democratisation that it promotes. In this way, it might be expected that positive evaluations of the EU will be tied to favourable perceptions of the development of democracy; conversely, Eurosceptic attitudes may lead to the development of more negative attitudes towards democracy.

2.3 Hypotheses

This paper's core hypothesis proposes that association with the EU affects popular support for democracy in post-communist states; however, Euroscepticism acts as a "moderator", thereby modifying the effect, depending on the association type. Given the complex nature of the argument, this section first discusses the main predictor and its conceptualisation: the different types of association with the EU. Subsequently, the paper provides a step-by-step description of the underlying correlations of the relationship, based on the discussion of the literature above, before formulating the main hypothesis. Thus, it considers hypotheses on: the effect of EU association on support for democracy; the effect of association on Euroscepticism; and the effect of association and Euroscepticism *together* on support for democracy.

First, the crucial element of the puzzle is the *type* association that a state has with the EU. Four categories are identified: economic association, political association, candidate state and member state status. These categories are based on Schimmelfennig and Scholtz's (2008) index of political conditionality, though this paper's hierarchical classification concentrates on the increasingly closer nature of the association and its impact on democratisation: each category represents a different degree to which the EU's transformative power is effective in implementing democratic reforms.

First, states with economic association with the EU would have a formal cooperation agreement in place, but the relationship would be mainly based

on economic terms, such as preferential access to the internal market and eventual establishment of a free trade area. In most states this was done in the framework of Trade and Cooperation Agreements, which lacked political elements, with EU efforts focusing on facilitating trade and economic development through financial aid and technical assistance. In terms of the EU's transformative power, this category involves only limited assistance towards economic reforms for the newly independent post-communist states of the East.

As democratisation and market liberalisation progressed in post-communist states, they quickly established various forms of political association with the EU. These comprise any cooperation or association agreements that are formally signed with the EU, involving various forms of economic, political and cultural cooperation. In practice, this involves the EU's use of political conditionality, but – importantly – without a concrete promise of EU membership. In terms of the democratising effect of the EU, agreements in these categories involve the setting of democratic rules and practices as conditions that the signatory state would have to meet to receive rewards from the EU, in the form of financial assistance or institutional association (Schimmelfennig & Scholtz 2008: 190). The transformational power of the EU in encouraging democratic reforms in this category can potentially be significant: emphasis is placed on commitment to democratic values, and rewards are tied to advancements in democratic and economic reforms. The EU has at its disposal a number of different resources to encourage these, including financial instruments (such as the former PHARE and the current IPA),

and instruments of technical assistance (such as the Twinning and TAIEX programmes). However, success of their implementation depends entirely on the partner country's initiative, as the EU's political conditionality relies broadly on a positive approach, meaning that the EU offers and withholds carrots but does not carry a big stick (Schimmelfennig & Scholtz 2008: 190; Youngs 2001: 192).

On the other hand, the last two categories of candidate state and member state are set apart because they involve deeper integration, either through membership or with a tangible promise of it. In candidate states, the EU's transformative impact is achieved through accession conditionality, considered to be extensive and significant (Schimmelfennig 2009; Sedelmeier 2011). Whilst once again this instrument relies on the partner state's compliance, accession negotiations are highly structured and comprise of a series of chapters that need to be met for the candidate country to join as member state. These involve the implementation of substantial economic, political and societal reforms that are often costly to the partner state; yet given the expected benefit at the end – that is, achieving the member state status in the EU – states are mostly willing to endure the high costs.

The final category is of member state status, which reflects a total integration within the European Union. On the one hand, states that are in this category are assumed to have completed their economic and political reforms to have met the Copenhagen criteria of being a stable democracy and a functioning market economy; hence, the EU's transformative power is assumed to have

reached its culmination. On the other hand, having achieved the ultimate goal of membership, the EU's ability to influence reforms in these states becomes severely limited. Particularly in cases of democratic violations, the EU's leverage is much reduced, though not entirely ineffective (see for example Iusmen 2015; Sedelmeier 2014).

These four categories of association with the EU are naturally an oversimplification of the complex bilateral relationships that exist between the Union and the post-communist states of the region. In particular, it must be noted that within each category there are a large number of variations in the pace, extent and pressures of EU-driven reform. For example, the political association category includes a wide range of agreements, such as the Europe Agreements with the CEECs, which carried high expectations of eventual membership (though importantly, this was not yet offered in concrete terms), but also including the European Neighbourhood Policy states, which – as it currently stands – are not likely to progress to candidate state status. Similarly, within the candidate state category, the conditions for accession are to a certain extent different not only when comparing the current candidate states of the West Balkans with the CEECs, but also within the CEECs, as certain states – such as for example Hungary – were better prepared for the transition to democracy and capitalism, and so were under less pressure for reform from the EU. Nevertheless, the categories presented in this paper all intend to encompass a simple, measurable relationship with the EU, which can be identified by broad, basic features of increasingly closer association: first, a non-political, economic only relationship; second, a political relationship with

political conditionality but without the promise of membership; third, political conditionality with the promise of membership in the form of candidate state status; and finally, member state status. For the purposes of parsimony, the paper also treats these relationship categories as ordinal, with each representing increasingly closer association with the EU.[1] Importantly, the paper argues that each of these have different consequences for citizen-level democratisation – the focus of this research.

In fact, the extent to which each association type can affect democratisation in post-communist states has already been indicated by the degree of transformative influence that the EU can exert in each type of relationship. Accordingly, the strength of the EU effect in each association category will increase as the "carrot" offered becomes more attractive: from economic, to political to candidate state status. However, it is also expected that at the member state status, the strength of EU impact decreases again, given the diminished availability of EU leverage against a state, once this has achieved the "ultimate carrot" of membership status. In this way, the pattern of correlation between EU association and democratisation is assumed to be U-shaped.

Consequently, the paper can now turn to formulating its hypotheses with respect to the individual-level democratisation of citizens. First, a sociological institutionalist perspective on theories of Europeanisation and diffusion expect

[1] The examined states are also treated as theoretically able to progress from the lowest to the highest category, though in practical terms this is not true for all countries.

a positive relationship between association with the EU and democratisation: through Europeanisation and diffusion, the EU has had an instrumental role in the development of democratic institutions in post-communist states, and these institutions created the conditions where people could be socialised into supporting democratic values. In fact, previous research by Oshri et al. (2016) has already provided evidence of the EU's ability to socialise member state citizens into democratic attitudes. This paper takes their argument further, by considering how the different types of association affect support for democracy in post-communist states. Considering that the sociological institutionalist perspective established a positive relationship, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

Hypothesis 1: *Association with the EU has a positive effect on popular support for democracy in post-communist states.*

Conversely, an alternative view provided by the sceptical Europeanisation literature would predict an opposite, negative relationship, suggesting that previous studies have overestimated the EU's effect on post-communist states, which was shallow and undermined the emergence of a democratic civil society. Notably, the accession process has been criticised for its excessive top-down nature, in which efficiency was given priority over ensuring the democratic nature of the progress (Raik 2004: 591); thus the lack of democratic consultation with societal and political groups denied these the opportunity of social learning and to internalise the democratic principles that were being implemented at the institutional level (Dabrowski 2012; Raik 2004), thereby

failing to encourage the emergence of a democratic political culture. In this way, there was no learning of the democratic "rules of the game", as the institutionalist perspective would predict, because the "game" was never fully democratic in the first place.

This lack of democratic quality to the accession process is part of a larger problem of a democratic deficit in the EU (Raik 2004: 592), which places the EU's claims to democratic legitimacy on shaky grounds. Certainly, it seems ironic that whilst the EU is setting standards for democracy that the candidate states must meet for accession, it is failing to meet those itself (Mair 2003: 63). As explained above, in post-communist states, where democracy is a relatively new phenomenon, the idea of democratisation has become intrinsically tied to the EU: in the CEECs in particular, EU membership is viewed as a means to improve economic living standard whilst strengthening democracy and stabilising democratic norms (Cichowski 2000: 1249). Such interlinking of EU integration with democratic consolidation would mean that doubts about the democratic legitimacy of the EU can lead to doubts about the democratic system that it is promoting.

Together, the undemocratic character of the accession process and the democratic deficit of the EU could weaken popular faith in democracy and unsettle the development of a democratic political culture, making support for democracy less likely among the population.

Hypothesis 2: *Association with the EU has a negative effect on popular support for democracy in post-communist states.*

Here, it must be noted that in the case of both hypotheses 1 and 2, the institutional perspective taken in this paper assumes that the direction of the relationship is one of institutions – and therefore the EU – affecting citizen attitudes, rather than the EU establishing ties with the state because of an already existing popular support for democracy, thus ruling out the reverse causality argument. Indeed, other studies have already demonstrated that institutional changes have the ability to affect individual attitudes towards democracy; for example, research on Moroccan state officials who participated in EU functional cooperation programmes has demonstrated that such transgovernmental policy networks can yield subtle processes of democratisation that shape elites' inherent attitudes towards democratic governance (Freyburg 2012, 2015). Consequently, these findings suggest that institutional democratisation could have a positive effect on citizens' attitudes too, even if their interaction with democratic processes is not as frequent as in the case of elites.

In terms of the relative strength of the effect of each association category on democratic attitudes, it has already been pointed out that this is contingent on the size of the "carrot", which is the strongest in the case of candidate states. Accordingly, both the institutionalist explanation as well as the sceptical Europeanisation literature would theorise a U-shaped relationship with the strongest effect at candidate state, given the loss of leverage power after a country becomes a member state. In the case of the former, it is during accession that institutional reform is at its most intensive phase, thus the democratising effect on the population should also be at its strongest. On the

other hand, sceptical Europeanisation argues that "the closer a candidate country comes to accession, the more strongly it becomes subject to those aspects of enlargement/integration that constrain democracy instead of strengthening it" (Raik 2004: 594). Hence the negative effect on support for democracy should also be at its strongest during accession, as negative effects emanating from the top-down pressures of enlargement would ease off after achievement of member state status. Accordingly, from the point of view of both theoretical perspectives the following would be hypothesised:

Hypothesis 3: *The effect of association with the EU will become stronger as a country's association with the EU becomes closer, peaking at candidate state status.*

On the other hand, association with the EU is also correlated with Euroscepticism. The literature argues that integration is accompanied by a surge of distrust in the EU, driven by those who are disadvantaged by the process. Certainly, whilst in the 1990s opinion on the EU was largely positive and hopeful in the CEECs (Haerpfer 2002: 117–8), the mood eventually turned more distrustful as the accession process progressed. On the one hand, this change can be explained by the gap between expectations and reality: for the newly independent countries of the post-Cold War era, the EU represented well-being and prosperity (Gallina 2007: 82), but this was often unrealistic. On the other hand, whilst joining the EU had many benefits for these states, inevitably there were disadvantaged groups who would become distrustful of integration. The realities of membership which may have fallen short of

expectations, and hostility towards the EU driven by the "losers" of integration together predict a negative impact on popular opinion:

Hypothesis 4: *Popular trust in the EU in post-communist states will decrease as a country's association with the EU becomes closer.*

Finally, the central argument of this paper is that association with the EU and trust *together* are correlated with support for democracy in post-communist states. The assertion is that both the positive effect of institutional democratisation and the negative effect of Euroscepticism are concurrently and conflictingly at work; however, Euroscepticism acts as a moderator on the effect of association with the EU on an individual's support for democracy, making it conditional on the extent to which the person is Eurosceptic.

The logic assumes that as association with the EU becomes deeper, rising Euroscepticism will lead to increasing levels of distrust in the EU, as stated by hypothesis 3. Because post-communist populations see processes of democratisation as interconnected with Europeanisation, it is assumed that negative attitudes towards the EU will also trigger negative attitudes towards democracy itself. However, the effects of integration will not be felt equally across the whole population; in fact, the process will produce both "winners" and "losers" (Tucker et al. 2002), and so it is reasonable to assume that not

everyone will lose trust in the EU.[2] Accordingly, support for democracy in these two groups would be affected in opposite ways: those who trust the EU will see further integration in a more positive light, and equally will be more open to supporting democratic ideals; in contrast, those who distrust the EU will see integration as a negative step, thus becoming less supportive of democracy as a political system. In both cases, the strongest effect would be felt in candidate states, decreasing in member states:

Hypothesis 5: *Popular support for democracy in post-communist states will be higher among those who have high levels of confidence in the EU and as the country's association with the EU becomes closer, peaking at candidate state status.*

2.4 Data and modelling

The research uses an integrated dataset constructed from the European Values Study (EVS 2011) and the World Values Survey (WVS 2015). The data was collected between 1995 and 2014, covering in total 6 waves of the EVS/WVS surveys. Geographically, it includes most countries that were formerly part of the Communist Bloc, with the exception of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, due to non-availability of usable data.

[2] Though the argument about "winners" and "losers" may suggest a rationalist argument, in fact the sociological institutionalist perspective does not suggest that individuals are not purposive, goal-oriented or rational. Instead, they emphasise that individuals' rational action is socially constituted, conceptualised in much broader terms than for rationalists, defined and expressed in socially appropriate ways (Hall & Taylor 1996: 949). Sociological institutionalism is thus compatible with discussions about "winners" and "losers" of Europeanisation, though the way individuals define their interests is assumed to be socially constituted.

Additionally, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) was also excluded, as its reunification with West Germany immediately integrated it into the EU, setting its democratisation process apart from all other ex-communist states. Consequently, 25 countries are included in the analysis: ten Central and Eastern European countries, comprised of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia; five Western Balkan states, made up of Albania, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia; and ten former USSR states, including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

2.4.1 Dependent variable

The dependent variable measures popular support for democracy, based on the question: “I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country? Having a democratic political system.” The response categories were recoded on a four-point scale of 1 to 4, where 4 denotes maximum support for democracy.

Arguably this measurement may be problematic, as respondents may endorse an abstract idea of such a political system, even if their own values are not themselves strictly aligned with what one would call a “democratic political

culture". With a mean of 3.181 and a relatively small standard deviation of 0.756,[3] the variable reflects a world where the majority of the population endorses the democratic ideal, even if sometimes this is purely lip service than the genuine embracement of a democratic norms and values (Inglehart 2003: 53–4).

Nevertheless, this measurement is still appropriate for answering the research question. Firstly, from a logistical point of view, this was the only question asked in all 25 countries in both the EVS and the WVS, which allowed for the analysis to span from 1995 until 2014.[4] Secondly, the preamble of the question refers to "various political systems", only one of which is a democratic political system. By setting this survey question against other non-democratic systems successively, this allows for respondents to think about democracy as compared to other regime-types, rather than as an evaluation of the empirical status of one's own government, thus giving a meaningful answer for the purposes of this research. For this reason, the frequently used "satisfaction with democracy" indicator was dismissed as a dependent variable, as this question has been criticised for potentially being unreliable, tapping into multiple dimensions of political support (Canache et al. 2001).

2.4.2 Independent variables

The analysis uses two independent variables. The first is a categorical variable denoting five different types of association with the EU: no association,

[3] For summary statistics see appendix C.
[4] For a country-year table of response rates see appendix D.

economic association with the EU, association that covers political policy areas, candidate state status, and membership. For the coding, a list was made of all formal association agreements concluded between a state and the EU, using records taken from the European Commission's Neighbourhood and Enlargement website (European Commission 2016b, 2016a) and the External Action Service's EU Delegations website (European Union External Action Service 2016). Each association type was then compiled into one of the aforementioned five categories, based on Schimmelfennig and Scholtz's (2008) index of political conditionality, with the difference that whilst their paper focuses on the size and credibility of the incentives, this paper's hierarchical classification concentrates on the increasing strength and nature of the association, providing thus clear criteria of observed, mutually exclusive categories.[5]

Accordingly, a state was coded as having no association if it had no formal agreements with the EU, even if dialogue or diplomatic relations were in place. Economic association applied to agreements that involved only economic policy. In practice, this covered the EU's Trade and Cooperation Agreements. Political association with the EU included agreements that had political elements to them: Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA), European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) with Action Plan, Europe Agreements, Stabilisation and Association Agreements, Accession Partnerships and European Partnerships. Countries having Formal Accession Negotiations and

[5] For a list of all formal relations agreements used see appendices A and B.

Acceding Country status were classified as candidate states, and lastly states that had formally become members of the EU were coded as member states. These five categories constituted the categorical variable of EU association, treated as a factor variable with "no association" as the reference category.

The second independent variable measures attitudes towards the EU, particularly levels of Euroscepticism. Traditionally, this item has been measured by survey questions asking about general membership support, or whether membership in the EU was perceived as a good or a bad thing (for example, Anderson 1998; Bølstad 2015; McLaren 2002). However, given that these "classic" measurements of EU attitudes were not measured in the WVS/EVS survey questionnaires, this paper instead relies on an alternative measure, operationalising the dependent variable of EU support by considering individuals' trust in the EU.

Indeed, a number of more recent studies have pointed to the multidimensional nature of European attitudes, highlighting that support for the EU and Euroscepticism can be measured with a multitude of different survey questions, each tapping into different dimensions of public support (Boomgaarden et al. 2011; McLaren 2007). Among these, trust or distrust form an integral part of Euroscepticism studies; in fact, it has been argued that Euroscepticism can be charted as a sliding scale of political attitudes, ranging from trust, over scepticism, to political distrust, cynicism and alienation (Krouwel & Abts 2007). Similarly, one paper investigating the conceptualisation and measures of Euroscepticism has demonstrated that survey items

measuring trust in the EU and in the European Commission form part of a robust scale that reflects diffuse support for the EU (Beaudonnet & Di Mauro 2012). Certainly, empirical research has confirmed that distrust in the EU and its institutions can be a strong predictor of negative attitudes towards integration (Boomgaarden et al. 2011; Lubbers 2008; McLaren 2007). Given that Euroscepticism is generally taken to mean doubt or disbelief in Europe and European integration in general (Hooghe & Marks 2007: 12), survey questions on trust thus provide an ideal measurement for assessing such doubts or disbeliefs. Consequently, the second dependent variable used in this paper is based on a survey question that asks: "Please look at this card and tell me, for each item listed, how much confidence you have in them, is it a great deal, quite a lot, not very much or none at all? The European Union". The variable was coded into an ordinal categorical variable on a 1 to 4 scale, with higher scores associated with higher levels of trust. [6]

2.4.3 Control variables

Two sets of control variables were included in the data analysis, to increase efficiency, avoid omitted-variable bias, and to account for spurious correlations. The first set controlled for demographic between-individual variation: education,[7] age, gender, unemployment and cohort effects. The last

[6] In addition to the theoretical justification provided here, this measurement was also chosen due to pragmatic reasons, as this variable allows for the most extensive period of analysis, from 1995 to 2014.

[7] Measured on an 8-point scale: incomplete elementary; completed elementary; incomplete secondary: technical/vocational; complete secondary: technical/vocational; incomplete secondary: university-preparatory; complete secondary: university-preparatory; some university; university degree.

one was included as citizens in post-communist states may differ in their political attitudes depending on the regime under which they were socialised, leading to generational differences that affect how people perceive and evaluate politics (Neundorf 2010). Accordingly, values inherited from the previous regime could represent an impediment to the development of support for democracy by older generations (Finkel et al. 2001: 340) The categorical variable thus identifies each respondent as having been socialised prior, during or after the Cold War.

In addition, to control for between-country variation, the regressions also include GDP, Polity IV scores, GDP growth, misery index, and a time variable. Firstly, as the correlation between GDP per capita and democracy is well documented (Lipset 1959), logged per capita GDP at current prices (in US dollars) (United Nations Statistics Division 2013) was included, to exclude bias caused by rising levels of wealth in the respondent's country. In addition, a control for the quality of democracy at the institutional level was added, measured by polity scores on a scale from -10 (hereditary monarchy) to +10 (consolidated democracy) (Polity IV 2013). In the context of post-communist countries, democratisation has not been a smooth or unidirectional process, with some regimes becoming deficient democracies or "hybrid regimes" (Morlino 2004: 5). Polity IV scores thus control for divergence in levels of democracy at the institutional level, whilst also allowing differentiation between individual-level support for democracy and institutional-level democratisation. Thirdly, since the analysis covers the period up to 2014, yearly GDP growth and logged misery index values (which combine measures of

unemployment and inflation) were included to control for the effects of the 2008 global financial crisis. Lastly, a variable that measures years since 1990 controls for any historical effects that would influence the public, such as the emergence of a communist nostalgia.

2.4.4 Methods and modelling

The dataset performs the longitudinal analysis of 25 countries in 16 individual years between 1995 and 2014. Individual responses are cross-classified, nested within countries and years, so that each unit could potentially belong to any combination of levels of the different factors (Rabe-Hesketh, Sophia Skrondal 2008). Consequently, the analysis uses multilevel mixed effects models, which account for both the fixed effects of the variables as well as the random effects of the country and year variations. Since the dependent variable of support for democracy is ordinal measured on a 4-point scale, ordered probit regression[8] was used to analyse the dataset using maximum likelihood estimations.

Once the cross-classified nature of the dataset is taken into account, it is possible to estimate how an individual *i*'s (*i* = 1, …, *I*) declared level of support for democracy (Y_{ijt}) is affected by their country's association with the EU (*EUassoc*) in a given country *j* (*j* = 1, …,16) and survey year *t* (*t* = 1995, …,2014), whilst controlling for *q* individual characteristics (*q* = 1, …,*Q*) X and *r* country-level variations (*r* = -9, …,*R*) Z. The model is thus:

[8] Due to computational problems, it was not possible to run an ordered logistic regression in Stata. Nevertheless, ordered probit regressions show very similar results, with the only difference being that logistic regressions have flatter tails.

$$Y_{ijt} = \propto_{0jt} + \beta_1 EUassoc_{jt} + \sum_{q=1}^{Q} \beta_q X_{qi} + \sum_{r=-9}^{R} \gamma_r Z_{rt} + \varepsilon_{ijt}, \quad \varepsilon_{ijt} \sim N(0, \sigma^2)$$

(1)

This model tests the main effects of association with the EU on popular support for democracy, considered in hypotheses 1 and 2. If hypothesis 1 is correct, it is expected that β_1 would be positive, thus indicating that increasing cooperation with the EU would also encourage higher levels of support for democracy among the population. Conversely, if the opposite is true, as set out in hypothesis 2, then the coefficient for β_1 would be negative, showing that increased cooperation leads to lower support for democracy.

However, the paper also conjectures that the EU effect on democratic support is related to and conditional on individual *i*'s level of confidence in the EU as an organisation. Accordingly, as outlined in hypothesis 4, it is expected that as cooperation with the EU becomes more integrated, there will be an observable increase in Euroscepticism. This is measured in terms of a decrease in trust in the EU:

$$EUtrust_{ijt} = \propto_{0jt} + \beta_1 EUassoc_{jt} + \sum_{q=1}^{Q} \beta_q X_{qi} + \sum_{r=-9}^{R} \gamma_r Z_{rt} + \varepsilon_{ijt}, \quad \varepsilon_{ijt} \sim N(0, \sigma^2)$$

(2)

Thus, if hypothesis 4 is correct, it is expected that the coefficient for β_1 would be negative.

Lastly, model 3 tests whether association with the EU is conditional on an individual's trust in the EU:

$$Y_{ijt} = \propto_{0jt} + \beta_1 EUassoc_{jt} + \beta_2 EUtrust_{ijt} + \beta_3 EUassoc_{jt} * EUtrust_{ijt} + \sum_{q=1}^{Q} \beta_q X_{qi} + \sum_{r=-9}^{R} \gamma_r Z_{rt} + \varepsilon_{ijt}, \quad \varepsilon_{ijt} \sim N(0, \sigma^2)$$

(3)

where support for democracy is determined not only by the main effects of association with the EU and the individual trust in the EU, but also by the interaction between these two variables. Hypothesis 5 thus expects that β_3 would be positive and statistically significant.

2.5 Results

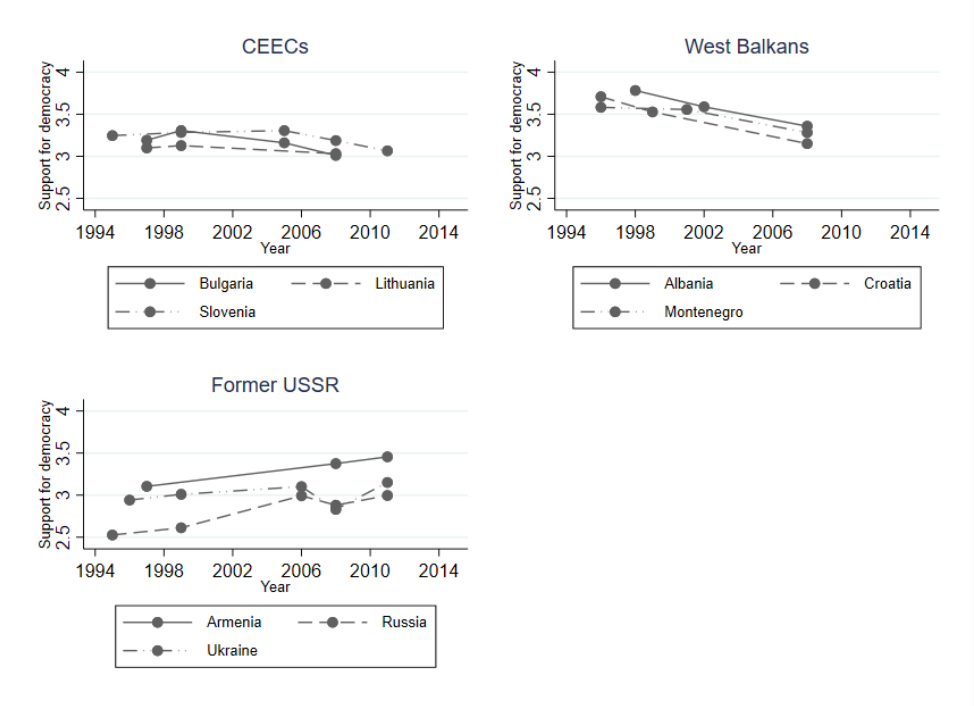
Since the end of the Cold War, the empirical evidence has shown that a clear majority of the world's population endorses democracy (Inglehart 2003: 52); Figure 2.1 thus examines the average support for democracy in a selection of nine post-communist countries.[9] The patterns on the graphs indicate that support for democracy has not been consistent across all regions. In the case of CEECs and the Western Balkans, there is a general decline in democratic support, though the lines are flatter in the case of the former, implying a smaller average change. In the Western Balkans, the negative trend is more significant, though the movement does not approach a full score drop in the support for democracy scale, signalling that the negative effect should not be overestimated. Conversely, in the former USSR states there is a positive trend denoting an increase in support for democracy over time, though the average

[9] For graphs of all 25 countries see appendix E (E.1, E.2 and E.3).

change similarly does not achieve a full point on the scale. In addition, the average support is lower in the former Soviet states and highest in the West Balkans, even though the former increase and the latter decrease over time.

The descriptive statistics suggest that post-communist states have no apparent single trend that can be discerned in terms of support for democracy. However, when separated into the three regional groups, noticeable trends emerge. In fact, the paper argues that the heterogeneity between the regions can be explained by the role of the EU and the different types of cooperation that it has had with the states of each of these groups: whilst the CEECs all became member states, most of the Western Balkans are still only candidates, and the states from the former Soviet Union have only loose agreements with the EU, at most in the context of the ENP.

Figure 2-1: Average support for democracy in post-communist states (selection of 9 countries)



2.5.1 Association with the EU and support for democracy

The regression analysis starts by testing hypotheses 1 to 3, on the effect of association with the EU on support for democracy. Table 2.1 shows the results of the ordered probit regression on four models. The first is an empty model without any predictor variables. Model 2 reports individual levels of support for democracy when only the demographic controls (age, cohort, gender, education, and unemployment) are applied. Model 3 includes the main independent variables of association types with the EU, whilst Model 4 also controls for country-level variation (Polity 4 scores, GDP, GDP growth, misery index and time trend since 1990). As the four models are nested, variance components are reported at the bottom of Table 2.1. Though these show that introducing further variables increases the general variance across countries and years, the changes however are so small that the problem is not likely to be significant. In fact, the most significant jump is in country variance once country-level controls are introduced into model 4 (+0.031), but this is understandable given that there is a large variation in the countries included in the analysis, and controlling for this allows for a better variance of the dependent variable. In addition, likelihood-ratio tests show that in each of the expanded models introducing further variables resulted in a statistically significant improvement over the previous nested model.

Model 2 shows that being male, employed and having higher levels of education are correlated with higher levels of support for democracy. Interestingly, whilst age does not appear to have a statistically significant impact, those who were politically socialised in the period after the end of the

Cold war are less likely to support democracy than those were socialised during the communist regime's rule, contrary to expectations. Being socialised before the Cold War does not appear to have a statically significant impact when compared to the Cold War cohort.

Introducing EU association fixed effects in Model 3 provides some interesting predictions. No association with the EU is the reference category, so each of the association categories are compared to the absence of any relationship with the EU. Accordingly, in countries that have a purely economic relationship with the EU, the population is more likely to support the democratic political system. Conversely, in those states that are on the path to accession or have already become member states, the population is less supportive of democracy than if no relationship had ever been established with the EU. Lastly, in the case of political association, though the coefficient shows a negative trend, this fails to meet the conventional level of statistical significance of alpha 0.05 (p=0.066).[10] The demographic controls show roughly the same direction, magnitude and statistical significance as in Model 2.

[10] Interpretation of the coefficients' magnitude in probit regressions is not simple, and it is not possible to compute odds ratios. Nevertheless, the sign and statistical significance still provides enough information to be able to test the hypotheses. The substantive effects of Model 4 are discussed in the Average marginal effects table (Table 2.2).

Table 2-1: Multilevel mixed-effects ordered probit regression of EU association on support for democracy: cross-classified random effects

	Model 1: Empty Model	**Model 2: Demographic Controls**	**Model 3: EU Association**	**Model 4: Full Model with Macro Controls**
Individual Fixed Effects				
Age		-0.000	-0.000	-0.000
		(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Cohort				
Pre-Cold War		0.010	0.008	0.008
		(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)
Post-Cold War		-0.026*	-0.028*	-0.025
		(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Female		-0.044***	-0.043***	-0.044***
		(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Education		0.064***	0.064***	0.064***
		(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Unemployment		-0.041***	-0.044***	-0.044***
		(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
EU Association Fixed Effects (Reference: No Association)				
Economic Association			0.111***	0.221***
			(0.031)	(0.037)
Political Association			-0.044	0.066*
			(0.024)	(0.028)
Candidate State			-0.092**	-0.035
			(0.031)	(0.034)
Member State			-0.259***	-0.133**
			(0.040)	(0.043)
Country-level Fixed Effects				
Polity 4 score				0.007**
				(0.003)
Log GDP				0.139***
				(0.026)
GDP growth				-0.006***
				(0.002)
Log Misery Index				-0.108***
				(0.010)
Time since 1990				-0.021*
				(0.010)
Cut point 1	-1.992***	-1.727***	-1.799***	-1.221***
	(0.078)	(0.084)	(0.086)	(0.228)
Cut point 2	-1.215***	-0.945***	-1.016***	-0.436
	(0.078)	(0.084)	(0.086)	(0.228)
Cut point 3	0.301***	0.583***	0.514***	1.095***
	(0.078)	(0.084)	(0.086)	(0.228)
Variance components				
Country [N = 25]	0.098	0.109	0.103	0.129
	(0.028)	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.038)
Year [N = 16]	0.034	0.035	0.037	0.041
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.015)

Data: European Values Study and World Values Survey (1995-2014).
Dependent variable: *support for democracy* [1 "very bad" – 4 "very good"].
Significance levels: * p<0.05, ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001. Standard errors in parentheses. N obs.: 96,288.

Model 4, the full model, introduces country-level variables to control for the different economic and political experiences of the countries studied. Evidently, the magnitude change of the coefficients of the independent variables indicates that between-country variation is an important factor that needs to be included for accurate results. Whilst economic association still correlates with more positive popular support for democracy than in the absence of a relationship, the effect is stronger. Political association, on the other hand, turns from a statistically non-significant negative effect, to a statistically significant positive effect on democratic support ($p<0.05$). Both findings confirm hypothesis 1, which predicts that association agreements with the EU will encourage the institutional democratisation of a country, fostering thus the emergence of a political culture supportive of democracy.

Conversely, living in a member state still correlates with lower support for democracy, however the effect is weaker than in Model 3. Nevertheless, this still validates the alternative hypothesis 2, which suggests that Europeanisation and integration in the EU have had negative consequences that can precipitate the emergence of a backlash against democracy. In the case of candidate states, this is more ambiguous: though the coefficient indicates a negative effect, the statistical significance test indicates that the null-hypothesis that support for democracy in candidate states is not affected by the relationship with the EU cannot be rejected ($p=0.313$).

The results thus partially validate both hypothesis 1, in the case of economic and political association, and the alternative hypothesis 2, in the case of

member states. In terms of the strength of the effects, the results are inconsistent with hypotheses 3, as they do not take a U-shape but decrease in magnitude all the way to member state status.

It is worth noting that in Model 4 all four categories of the predictor variable become slightly more encouraging for support for democracy than in Model 3, either by becoming stronger if they were positive, or weaker if they were negative. This makes sense considering that the longitudinal analysis spans until 2014, including the 2008 global financial crisis and its immediate aftermath. As mentioned, the relationship between the economy and democracy is hardly disputed, so that experiences of economic hardship could reasonably lead to the "watering down" of enthusiasm for democracy. Controlling for factors such as GDP levels, GDP growth and the misery index eliminates these confounders. In fact, all country-level control variables are statistically significant in Model 4. Notably, the passage of time since 1990 has a very small but negative effect on popular support for democratic systems. This is consistent with studies that have looked at the phenomenon of a "communist nostalgia": as memories of the old Communist system fade over time and the expected rapid transition and economic prosperity falter, a nostalgia for the former political system could occur (Mishler & Rose 1996: 575), dampening support for the new democratic system.

In nonlinear models such as ordered probit regressions, the interpretation of the magnitude of the coefficients is problematic because the ordinal variables are categorical, not continuous; as a result, the variance of the underlying

latent variables is not identified and can differ across models. However, to interpret the substantive effect of the variables, it is possible to calculate the average marginal effects (AMEs) of the model, which show the change of probability for an outcome of interest, when the independent variable changes by one unit. Table 2.2 shows the AMEs for the main independent variables and the statistically significant control variables from Model 4 in Table 2.1 above.[11]

The AMEs of the EU association independent variables reflect the results displayed in Model 4, showing the absolute (rather than relative) change in probabilities. When compared to a state that has no association with the EU, a respondent living in a state that has an economic association with the EU is 7.9% more likely to think that democracy is a very good way of governing the country, whilst they are 4.1% less likely to think it is fairly good, 2.5% less likely to think it is fairly bad, and 1.2% less likely to think it is a very bad system of governance.[12] Similarly, respondents in states with a political association are 2.3% more likely to fall into the category of evaluating democracy as a very good system, as opposed to any other category. On the other hand, respondents from candidate states do not have a significantly different opinion from respondents who live in a no association state, whilst respondents from member states are 4.6% less likely to think that a democracy is a very good system, when compared to respondents living in a state with no association

[11] For a more detailed table showing the average marginal effects of all variables from Model 4, see Appendix F.

[12] Note that the aggregate change in probabilities across all 4 categories of the dependent variable balance to a total sum of 0. In other words, respondents are 7.9% more likely to fall in the "very good" category of democratic support, as opposed to any other category.

with the EU. These two AMEs reflect the non-significant and the negative coefficient of the corresponding variables in Model 4.

Table 2-2: Significant average marginal effects on support for democracy (Model 4)

	SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY			
	Very bad	***Fairly bad***	***Fairly good***	***Very good***
EU Association				
(Ref. cat: No association)				
Economic association	-0.012**	-0.025**	-0.041**	0.079**
Political association	-0.004*	-0.008*	-0.011*	0.023*
Candidate state	0.002	0.004	0.005	-0.012
Member state	0.010**	0.017**	0.019**	-0.046**
Demographic Controls				
Female	0.003**	0.006**	0.007**	-0.016**
Education	-0.004**	-0.008**	-0.010**	0.022**
Unemployment	0.003**	0.006**	0.007**	-0.016**
Country-level Controls				
Polity 4	0.000*	-0.001**	-0.001**	0.002*
Log GDP	-0.009**	-0.017**	-0.022**	0.049**
GDP growth	0.000**	0.001**	0.001**	-0.002**
Log Misery Index	0.007**	0.013**	0.017**	-0.038**
Time since 1990	0.001*	0.003*	0.003*	-0.007*

Data: European Values Study and World Values Survey (1995-2014).
Dependent variable: *support for democracy* [1 "very bad" – 4 "very good"].
Significance levels: * p<0.05, ** p<0.01. Standard errors in parentheses. N obs.: 96,288.

In terms of the magnitude of the effect, it is evident that the EU association effects are stronger, or at the very least comparable in impact to the control variables. For example, only three of the demographic controls are significant. These show that women and the unemployed are only 1.6% less likely to think that democracy is very good. In terms of education, for every unit increase in qualifications (on an 8-point scale), the respondent is 2.2% more likely to absolutely support democracy. The country-level controls reflect similar results, with three in particular that show interesting patterns. First, for every

unit increase on the Polity IV scale, the highest category of support for democracy increases by 0.2%; this means that respondents living in an absolute democracy (Polity IV of +10) would only be 2% more likely to think that democracy is a very good system, when compared to respondents from an absolutely autocratic state (Polity IV of -10), which is a very small rate of change (though statistically significant), and reflects previous empirical evidence of world-wide support for this system of governance (Inglehart 2003: 52). Second, as shown in Model 4, it is interesting to see that for every unit increase in GDP growth, opinions that democracy is a very good system actually decrease by 0.2% - a small change, but a significant one nonetheless. Lastly, for every year that has passed since 1990, post-communist respondents are 0.7% less likely to think that democracy is very good; meaning that over the period studied here, people are 13.3% less likely to fall into this category in 2014 than they did in 1995, which reflects a significant fall in absolute support for democracy over the years studied.

2.5.2 The Eurosceptic moderator

Based on Table 2.1, hypotheses 1 and 2 are both partially confirmed; whilst economic and political-type associations with the EU are correlated with higher popular support for democracy (confirms hypothesis 1), being a member is associated with more negative views (confirms hypothesis 2). In the case of candidate states, the null hypothesis that there is no effect cannot be rejected. However, hypotheses 1 and 2 were alternative, indeed opposing hypotheses,

so that finding evidence that confirms both seems to be a contradiction in terms. In fact, hypotheses 4 and 5 argue that the above models are missing an important element: the level of Euroscepticism of the respondent. This is measured as trust in the EU, which acts as a moderator to the EU association independent variable, so that the direction and magnitude of the effect is dependent on the respondent's confidence in the EU.

First, to test hypothesis 4 on the effect of a state's relationship with the EU on Euroscepticism, Model 5 in Table 2.3 shows a multilevel mixed-effects ordered probit regression where trust in the EU is used as the dependent variable, whilst association with the EU is the independent variable. The coefficients demonstrate that all types of association are correlated with a decrease in trust in the EU, when compared to having no cooperation at all. In the case of economic association this effect is statistically non-significant ($p=0.605$), however all other types of association have a significant negative effect, demonstrating a divide between an economic relationship and those that have a political element to them. This suggests that while a basic economics-based relationship with a country does not affect the populations' views on the EU, once the relationship acquires a political character, there is an observable surge in Eurosceptic views. Interestingly, though the coefficients show a negative effect, as predicted in hypothesis 4, the effect actually is strongest at the political association level, and decreases as the relationship gets closer to accession. Nonetheless, the results still confirm that Euroscepticism could be the key variable missing from the analysis presented in Table 2.1.

Model 6 introduces trust in the EU as an additional independent variable in the main regression predicting levels of democratic support. The results show that distrust in the EU was indeed the confounding variable that is needed to explain the model. Increasing trust in the EU, as theorised, has a positive and significant effect on popular support for democracy ($p<0.001$). For the association variables, the coefficients for economic and political association with the EU are positive and stronger than in Model 4, remaining statistically significant ($p<0.001$). In the case of candidate states, the magnitude of the effect has become almost negligible and decidedly non-significant ($p=0.927$). Importantly, being a member state in the EU shows a similar change, as the coefficient – though still negative – is now statistically non-significant ($p=0.114$). From this model, it could be argued that the drivers of the negative effect in the member state category of Model 4 were the "losers" of the integration process; those who distrusted the EU in the first place. When controlling for this emergence of Euroscepticism, integration-type association with the EU does not correlate with changes in democratic support.

Table 2-3: Multilevel mixed-effects ordered probit regression of EU association on trust in the EU, and EU association and trust in EU on support for democracy: cross-classified random effects

	Model 5: Trust in the EU	**Model 6: Association with EU and trust in EU**	**Model 7: Interactions**
EU Association Fixed Effects (Reference: No Association)			
Economic Association	-0.019	0.260***	-0.135
	(0.037)	(0.040)	(0.082)
Political Association	-0.193***	0.108***	-0.045
	(0.029)	(0.032)	(0.044)
Candidate State	-0.168***	0.003	-0.232***
	(0.035)	(0.038)	(0.055)
Member State	-0.099*	-0.078	-0.283***
	(0.045)	(0.049)	(0.060)
Euroscepticism Fixed Effect			
Trust in EU		0.188***	0.123***
		(0.005)	(0.010)
Interaction Fixed Effects			
Economic Association x EU Trust			0.153***
			(0.026)
Political Association x EU Trust			0.068***
			(0.013)
Candidate State x EU Trust			0.101***
			(0.017)
Member State x EU Trust			0.087***
			(0.015)
Demographic controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country-level controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cut point 1	0.291	-0.686**	-0.815**
	(0.241)	(0.249)	(0.253)
Cut point 2	1.287***	0.118	-0.011
	(0.241)	(0.249)	(0.252)
Cut point 3	2.616***	1.658***	1.529***
	(0.242)	(0.249)	(0.253)
Variance components			
Country [N = 25]	0.157	0.086	0.085
	(0.048)	(0.027)	(0.027)
Year [N = 16]	0.040	0.048	0.048
	(0.016)	(0.018)	(0.018)

Data: European Values Study and World Values Survey (1995-2014).
Dependent variables: Model 5 *trust in the EU* [1 "none" – 4 "a great deal"]; Models 6/7 *support for democracy* [1 "very bad" – 4 "very good"]. Significance levels: * p<.05, ** p<.01 *** p<.001.
Standard errors in parentheses. N obs.: 83,302 (Model 5) 75,527 (Models 6/7).
For a table with full output, including control variables, see Appendix F.

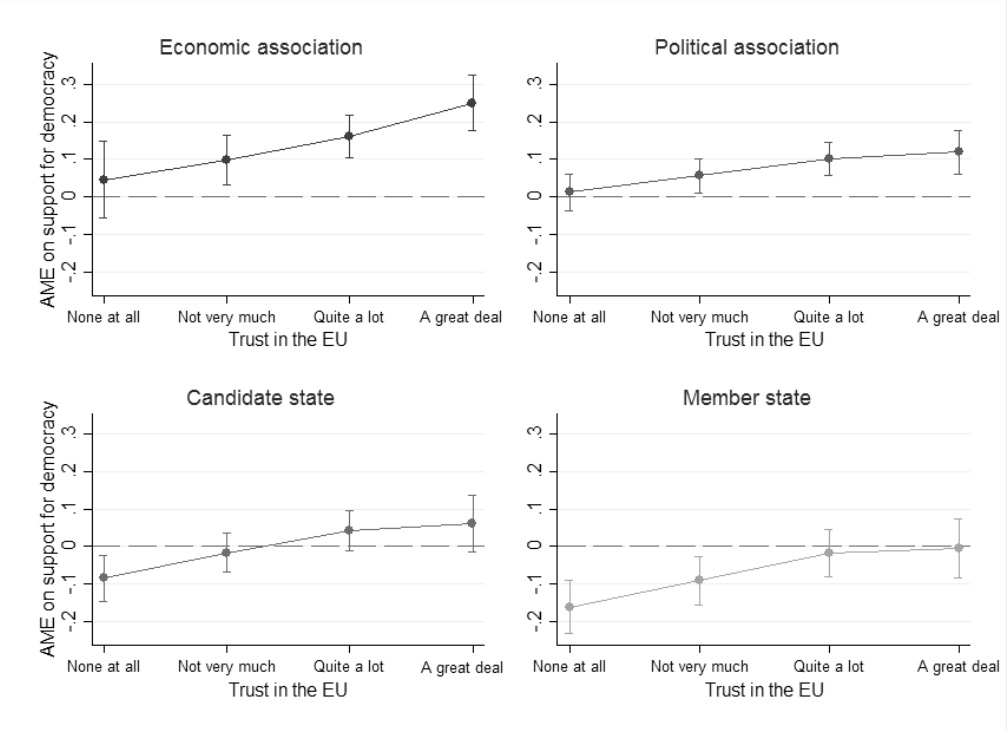
Model 7 explores whether the effects of EU association and Euroscepticism on support for democracy may not be additive, but the effect of the former differs depending on the latter. This is tested by introducing two-way interaction variables between association with the EU and trust in it.[13] Certainly, since all interaction coefficients are statistically significant, the effect of association with the EU is indeed different at each level of trust. A Wald test further supports this conclusion, confirming the overall significance of the interactions (Chi-sq=64.97, df=4, $p<0.001$). Regarding the main effects, the coefficient for trust in the EU is clearly significant. Though economic and political association are not significant on their own, a Wald test demonstrates that when taking all categories of EU association together, they are significantly different from zero and each other, rejecting the null hypothesis of no difference between the association types (Chi-sq=38.85, df=4, $p<0.001$).

Figure 2.2 illustrates the results from model 7, graphing the average marginal effects of each type of association on support for democracy, at different levels of trust in the EU.[14] Consistent with the findings that interactions matter, the graphs are not parallel, with trust levels moderating the effect of the EU on support for democracy, at different types of association.[15] The y line of 0 represents the absence of association with the EU, when there is no effect at all: if a marker is below this level, it indicates that the predicted support for democracy is lower than if the EU had never established a relationship with

[13] For parsimony, Model 7 treats the trust in the EU variable as continuous. For results where it is treated as categorical, see appendix H.
[14] For ease of interpretation, the graph displays predictive margins for the linear regression, which is similar to that of the probit regression (see robustness section below).
[15] For a table of average marginal effects, see Appendix I.

that country; if the marker is above, association with the EU is predicted to have increased support for democracy.

Figure 2-2: Average marginal effects (AMEs) of association with the EU on support for democracy (by trust levels) with 95% confidence intervals



In figure 2.2, the estimated effect of both economic and political cooperation with the EU correlate with increased popular support for democracy, whilst the slopes' steepness shows that the effect is strongest in the case of economic-type associations. This is consistent with the corresponding coefficients in Model 4, which highlighted the positive effect of economic/political association-types. The only exception is when there is complete distrust in the EU, in which case the tails of the 95% confidence intervals (CIs) indicate that it cannot be determined whether the EU effect is statistically different than in the absence of any relationship. This illustrates that non-integrationist relationships with the EU can be successful in fostering popular support for

democracy, except in those individuals who are already extremely Eurosceptic, in which cases there is no measurable attitude change.

In contrast, introducing the interaction proves to be a crucial factor when it comes to candidate and member states. Model 4 in Table 2.1 predicted a negative effect on support for democracy in candidate and member states, though this was not significant in the case of the former. Figure 2.2 however highlights that this influence is dependent on the level of trust towards the EU: the Eurosceptic moderator. In candidate states, the predicted support for democracy is dependent on individual trust in the EU: none or not very much trust is estimated to have a negative effect, whilst a lot and a great deal of trust is likely to have a positive effect. However, the 95% CI tails indicate that it is only in the case of a complete lack of trust when the negative effect is significant; in all other cases, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. Contrastingly, in member states the predicted effect is always negative, though approaching zero as trust in the EU increases. The 95% CI, however, indicates that this is only significant when there is none or not very much trust in the EU.

Figure 2.2 thus provides an interesting take on hypothesis 5: although it confirms that support for democracy is higher among those who have high levels of confidence in the EU, closer relationship with the EU however has the opposite effect, lowering support for democracy in a linear manner. There is also an interesting divide between more loose associations (economic and political) and those that are based on integrationist policies (candidate and member states): in the case of the former, association with the EU will lead to

increased popular support for democracy, providing there is *some* trust in the EU; for the latter, there is no significant effect on popular opinion on democracy, except for those individuals who are Eurosceptic, in which case there is a negative effect. The figure hence demonstrates that it was the distrustful groups, the "Eurosceptics" who were the drivers behind the negative effect found in the full model (Model 4, Table 2.1).

2.5.3 Robustness tests

The analysis presented involved complex calculations, thus further tests were run to confirm the robustness of the results.[16] First, the two main models, Models 4 and 7, were tested using a multilevel mixed effects linear regression. This treats the dependent variable as continuous, which was problematic for the study as this only ranges from 1 to 4; hence the more complicated probit model was presented in the paper. However, for robustness purposes, the linear regression still confirms that the slope coefficients of the independent variables for association with the EU, trust in the EU and their interactions match the probit coefficients in their direction and significance.[17]

In addition, to ensure that there were no hidden confounders, three set of further probit regressions were conducted with additional control variables. The first one included a logged version of the KOF index of globalisation, which covers economic, social and political integration (Dreher 2006). This index allows to distinguish between "EU effects" and "globalisation effects", but was

[16] See appendix J for robustness test tables (J.1, J.2, J.3 and J.4).
[17] The magnitude of the coefficients cannot be compared.

not included in the original analysis as it would have limited the results to a period up to only 2012, due to non-availability of KOF scores for 2014.[18] However, including this variable shows that the main effects of EU association are not significantly affected, still having the same direction and significance whilst remaining largely unchanged in their magnitude. This demonstrates that the effects on democratic support are indeed those of the EU, and not a consequence of globalisation. In addition, a second robustness test included further demographic control variables covering religiosity and marriage status, which were not included in the original analysis because of non-availability of data. Nevertheless, the robustness check again shows that these were not variables that would have substantially altered the results.

Lastly, model 7 was re-analysed to control for the possibility that the Eurosceptic variable measuring trust in the EU could be driven by individual distrust towards domestic institutions. In fact, it has been shown that Eurosceptic attitudes are often tied to a second-order election effect, where negative EU evaluations are linked to dissatisfaction with national politics (Franklin et al. 1995; Lubbers 2008). Hence a robustness check was performed on Model 7 – which includes the variable on EU trust and its interactions with EU association types – by including an additional measure of individuals' trust in their national Parliaments. The results of the test show that whilst trust in Parliament has a positive, significant effect on support for democracy, including this variable as a control only slightly weakens the explanatory power of the EU

[18] At the time of writing.

trust variable, and none of the main independent variables or their interactions are meaningfully altered in their significance or magnitude.

2.6 Conclusions

This paper has examined the effect that association with the EU at the state-level could have on popular support for democracy in post-communist states. Based on survey data obtained from 25 states between 1995 and 2014, there are two main conclusions that can be drawn from the results.

Firstly, the research confirms the EU's ability to affect popular support for democracy in post-communist states. This points to an important lesson for the EU's future role in democracy building: people matter, not just institutions. Indeed, though the EU has been praised for encouraging institutional democratisation in post-communist states, stable democracies in the region will only emerge if this top-down approach is coupled with bottom-up efforts to engage the public, teaching them about the merits of a society that is based on democratic values. In fact, the importance of this finding is revealed in the case of those states that have economic or political association with the EU. The paper reveals that in these countries not only does the EU have a significant effect – contrary to previous research which has been sceptical about the EU's transformative power in the absence of a promise of membership – but this is indeed positive, fostering support for democracy among the population. The results support Freyburg's findings (2012, 2015) that collaboration with other states can plant the seeds of democratic change in people's minds.

On the other hand, this paper has also revealed the importance of perceptions of the EU, particularly regarding the potential of Euroscepticism to undermine democratic support, acting as a moderator of the EU's association effects. The results have shown that this is most critical in the case of candidate and member states, where democratic support among those who distrust Europe is lower than if the EU had never had any relationship with the state. This further highlights the "vulnerability" of these states to the detrimental effects of Euroscepticism, which can be explained by the high demands on their governments in terms of the conditions that candidate states need to meet, as well as the elitist, top-down and non-democratic nature of the accession process (Gallina 2007; Raik 2004).

Ultimately, these findings reveal a previously unexplored link between support for democracy and Euroscepticism, showing that the emergence of hostility towards the EU has the potential to translate into scepticism towards the entire process of democratisation. This is an important lesson for the EU when it deals with the candidate and member states of Eastern Europe; their fundamentally different experience of democratisation still sets them apart from the old member states of the West, and their reaction to the democratic deficit or the EU's notoriously elitist nature is also different and potentially much more detrimental. Indeed, recent developments in many post-communist states have shown a worrisome backsliding of democracy in the region, not only in states such as Russia and Belarus, but even in current member states of the EU, such as Hungary, Poland or Romania. This backlash against democratic values is equally developing in politics and civil society: an increasingly larger

proportion of the populations of these countries is turning towards extremist views that go starkly against the principles of democracy. Consistent with the findings of this research, these developments have been accompanied by an increase of Euroscepticism both in the political and the public spheres. In this context, it is now more important than ever for the EU to realise its potential in influencing the democratic aspirations of individuals and to launch programmes that target the bottom-up democratisation of citizens.

Chapter 3. Socialisation, support and the civil service: perceptions of the EU in Central and Eastern European bureaucracies

***Abstract**. Euroscepticism in Europe among political parties and the general population has been on the rise in recent years, drawing considerable academic interest. By comparison, there has been a lot less attention given to domestic civil servants' attitudes towards the EU. Nevertheless, their opinions can be highly significant, as their daily jobs involve the implementation and upholding of the laws and regulations enacted from Brussels. As such, they can act as potential veto-players, capable of affecting the pace and success of the adaptation of national legislation to EU requirements. Consequently, this study asks: what is the nature and determinants of national civil servants' attitudes toward the EU? To address this research question, the paper uses international socialisation theory to examine a web-based survey conducted in 2008 with civil servants from seven new member states of Central and Eastern Europe. Using OLS multivariate regression, the paper investigates the extent to which social learning acts as mechanism capable of socialising bureaucratic officials into more positive attitudes towards the EU. The findings show that civil servants generally tend to support integration and membership in the EU, and this is higher among officials whose daily work is affected by it. In addition, the analysis further explores the scope conditions that facilitate socialisation, revealing that both the quantity and quality of contact with EU-related issues matter in explaining the sources of variation in levels of support.*

3.1 Introduction

The research on attitudes towards the European Union (EU) has focused primarily on Euroscepticism and Europhilia among citizens (Anderson 1998; Boomgaarden et al. 2011; Cichowski 2000; Clements 2009; Lubbers & Jaspers 2011) and political parties (Hooghe et al. 2002; Kopecký & Mudde 2002; Meijers 2017; Taggart 1998; Taggart & Szczerbiak 2013). The findings of these studies point to a number of factors that act as drivers of support towards the EU: economic or instrumental cost-benefit calculations (Gabel 1998; Hooghe & Marks 2005), domestic political factors (Franklin et al. 1995; Marsh 1998), and cultural or identity-based factors (Hooghe 2005; McLaren 2002).

Much less is known about the attitudes of bureaucratic elites. Research on this group has mainly been restricted to the study of supranational identity-change among officials working at EU institutions, such as the Commission or the Council (Beyers 2005; Egeberg et al. 2003; Lewis 2005; Trondal 2011; Trondal & Veggeland 2003). With few exceptions (Meyer-Sahling & Van Stolk 2015), a discussion on the nature and determinants of EU support among civil servants in member states has been notably absent from these studies.

Nevertheless, there are significant reasons why the study of bureaucratic officials in their domestic settings merits further scrutiny. Firstly, existing research has highlighted the importance of bureaucrats' previous experiences in the national context in determining their support for supranational norms (Beyers 2005; Hooghe 2005), suggesting that domestic politics are an important factor that contributes towards understanding elites' attitudes

towards the EU. Secondly, the research on the implementation of EU policies in member states has shown that domestic bureaucracies play an important role in the transposition process, though this discussion has tended to focus on their administrative capabilities (Hille & Knill 2006; Toshkov 2008; Treib 2006), rather than on the attitudes of civil servants. However, their perspectives can be equally significant: bureaucratic officials who have negative views of the EU can become de facto veto players, as their attitudes could impact their readiness to implement and uphold the laws enacted from Brussels. Certainly, there are studies that have drawn attention to the influence of actors' preferences by looking at the impact of political and administrative veto players in delaying or modifying the implementation of EU policy (Dimitrova 2010; Haverland 2000; Steunenberg 2006; Treib 2006). Moreover, other findings have shown that domestic transposition and compliance with EU law are positively affected by governmental support of integration (Toshkov 2007, 2008). Consequently, it would be reasonable to assume that bureaucratic support for the EU would be equally correlated with the implementation of EU policy.

However, there is very little known about support among civil servants for EU integration. This paper thus aims to contribute towards closing this gap, explaining the nature and determinants of national civil servants' attitudes towards the EU. To address this research question, the paper uses international socialisation theory to investigate support for the EU among civil servants. This theory is particularly suitable for researching this group of bureaucrats,

because it concentrates on the study of preference formation and change, particularly through contact with international institutions such as the EU.

The empirical analysis uses a web-based survey conducted in 2008 with civil servants in seven Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs): Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. The study explores variation in attitudes on two levels: first, it analyses aggregate levels of support, examining the effect that contact and social learning have on bureaucrats' attitudes towards integration and the benefits of membership; and second, the paper focuses on a sub-section of only those civil servants whose daily work is affected by the EU, analysing thus the effect of different types and lengths of exposure relative to each other.

The paper presents three main findings. First, civil servants generally hold positive attitudes towards the EU, which is significant given their role in the transposition of supranational legislation into domestic politics. Second, the results show that EU-related daily work can be a strong driver behind these positive attitudes, providing evidence for the constructivist argument of the socialising effect of EU contact. Third, the sub-sample analysis shows that scope conditions such as sustained and intense contact can facilitate the process of social learning, thus triggering stronger socialisation in terms of attitude change. In this way, this paper joins other studies that have found support for the transformative impact of contact with the EU on the attitudes of bureaucratic officials, whether it be through more direct, interpersonal contact

(Freyburg 2015), or indirectly, through contact with EU rules and procedures (Meyer-Sahling et al. 2016).

3.2 Euroscepticism and Europhilia in the member states

Whether studying support for European integration or focusing on patterns of Euroscepticism, the research on attitudes towards the EU has been wide-ranging not only its thematic but also in its geographic focus. In fact, though initially the attention was primarily on the old member states (Anderson 1998; Boomgaarden et al. 2011; Clements 2009; de Vreese & Boomgaarden 2005; Taggart & Szczerbiak 2004), the research has since expanded its geographic scope to cover new member and candidate states of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the Balkans (Cichowski 2000; Garry & Tilley 2009; Stojic 2006).

Thematically, one strand of the research has studied the attitudes of political parties, with a particular focus on the emergence of Eurosceptic parties and their effects (Hooghe et al. 2002; Kopecký & Mudde 2002; Meijers 2017; Stojic 2006; Taggart 1998; Taggart & Szczerbiak 2004, 2013). These studies have found that major political parties are usually supportive of the EU, whilst Euroscepticism is mainly limited to parties on the periphery of their party system, used to differentiate themselves from the more established parties (Taggart 1998). In fact, this extends to the left-right spectrum, where parties on the extremes are significantly more likely to be Eurosceptic (Hooghe et al.

2002). However, being on the periphery does not make the influence of these parties any less important: research has shown that under certain conditions, support for the Eurosceptic challenger can generate mainstream position shifts on European integration (Meijers 2017). A prime example of this is the UK's "Brexit" referendum of 2016, which was in large part a consequence of pressure on the Conservative Prime Minister from the Eurosceptic party UKIP (Helm & Boffey 2016).

On the other hand, citizens' attitudes (Anderson 1998; Cichowski 2000; Gabel 1998; Gabel & Palmer 1995) have also been highlighted as an important area of research, not only because public opinion acts as a constraint on states in the international arena (Anderson 1998: 569), but also because the public can influence the development of the EU and provide legitimacy for the European project (Gabel 1998: 333; Garry & Tilley 2009: 547). Among the determinants of citizen support identified by the literature, one of the earliest – and perhaps most prominent – addresses the role of economic interests and material well-being (Cichowski 2000; de Vreese & Boomgaarden 2005). This argument proposes that support for the European project is based on individuals' cost-benefit calculations of the personal benefits they can derive from integration (Gabel & Palmer 1995). In other words, people with different socioeconomic backgrounds will be impacted in different ways by the consequences of joining the single market, which will in turn inform their opinion on the EU and the European project in general. In the CEECs this evaluation based on personal material interests is also strongly related to the support for a free market

economy, which equally influences public opinion about the EU (Cichowski 2000).

Other studies, however, highlight the importance of domestic political factors (Anderson 1998; Cichowski 2000; de Vreese & Boomgaarden 2005; Franklin et al. 1995). This research argues that citizens are relatively uninformed about matters of European integration, and thus they use proxies based on domestic political considerations – such as support for and approval of governments and parties – in forming their opinions about the EU (Anderson 1998; Franklin et al. 1995). The public also takes cues from political elites, as domestic political partisanship has been demonstrated to be a strong predictor of citizens' attitudes (Cichowski 2000). In fact, the importance of domestic politics is also highlighted by researchers who argue that even the previously identified relationship between economics and support for EU integration is essentially mediated by domestic political attitudes (Anderson 1998).

Lastly, another factor identified in the literature as affecting citizen support for the EU is the national identity of individuals and the extent to which EU integration is perceived as a threat to one's culture (Carey 2002; Marks & Hooghe 2009; McLaren 2002). This is closely related to a more recent avenue of research that focuses on anti-immigration sentiments as a key variable for understanding public scepticism towards the EU (de Vreese & Boomgaarden 2005). This has been highlighted by the Brexit referendum in Britain in June 2016, a result that was strongly – if not exclusively – driven by public concerns over immigration (Goodwin & Heath 2016; Goodwin & Milazzo 2015).

Unlike the attitudes of political parties and the public, much less is known about the attitudes of bureaucratic officials towards the EU. One strand of research on this this group has focused on the study of 'Eurocrats' working in the EU institutions, mainly in the Commission and the Council. Among others, these include studies on permanent Commission officials (Hooghe 2005), seconded national experts in the European Commission (Trondal 2006; Trondal et al. 2008), the Committee of Permanent Representatives (Lewis 2005), Council working parties (Beyers 2005; Beyers & Trondal 2004; Egeberg et al. 2003; Trondal 2000, 2002, 2007) and Commission expert committee members (Trondal 2000, 2001; Trondal & Veggeland 2003). Insofar as addressing questions about their opinions on the EU, this literature has tended to limit itself to a narrower definition of "attitudes", to study only the extent to which officials have internalised supranational identities. Their findings show the presence of some degree of supranational role identity, though this does not replace national identities (Lewis 2005; Trondal 2002), nor is it permanent (Trondal et al. 2008). Predictably, supranational role conceptions were also found to be stronger in officials working in the Commission rather than the Council (Egeberg et al. 2003). In addition, others have argued that the degree of supranational orientations is not so much a consequence of international socialisation by the EU, but rather that of the different national domestic structures (Beyers 2005; Beyers & Trondal 2004; Hooghe 2005; Zürn & Checkel 2005).

More recently, research conducted within the framework of the IntUne project (Best et al. 2012) has looked at the attitudes of national elites towards the EU

within the member states, focusing specifically on political elites (mainly members of Parliament and a smaller number of politicians) and economic elites (top business leaders). These studies have explored – among other things – attitudes towards European citizenship (Cotta & Russo 2012), Europeanisation, including attitudes towards various policy areas (Real-Dato et al. 2012), supranational institutions (Gaxie & Hubé 2012) and opinions on integration in general (Lazić et al. 2012). The overall findings of these studies "provide a rather solid backing to the process of European integration, […] [including] quite substantial support for a continuation of European integration by the national elites (Cotta & Russo 2012: 41). At the same time, the research also reveals that far from being a coherent "Eurelite", the extent of elites' "Europeanness" varies based on cognitive, emotive and conative dimensions, showing differences not only between elites and the general population, but also between and within elite groups, and even among European countries (Best 2012).

Nevertheless, despite this body of research on political elites, there is not much known about the attitude formation of bureaucratic officials in their domestic settings: the research on attitudes towards the EU has been mostly silent when it comes to officials working in national public administrations. Yet their views are important, especially when considering that their bureaucracies play a crucial part in the transposition of law formed at the EU-level. Certainly, the literature on the domestic implementation of EU policies has highlighted the role of bureaucracies in ensuring the timely and effective transposition of supranational laws into national legislation, emphasising the importance of

administrative capacity, that is, the resources and characteristics of national bureaucracies, such as administrative efficiency and financial means (Hille & Knill 2006; Linos 2007; Mbaye 2001; Toshkov 2007, 2008; Treib 2006). In the new member states in particular, studies have shown that bureaucratic strength, efficiency and regulatory quality all had significant positive influences on the implementation of the *acquis communautaire* in the domestic legislative makeup of the CEECs (Hille & Knill 2006; Toshkov 2007, 2008).

Whilst the administrative capacity argument provides a plausible structural explanation for successes and failures in the transposition of EU law, it falls short of considering the impact that actors' preferences can have on the process. This has been addressed elsewhere by discussions on the role of veto players, that is, individual or collective actors whose agreement is needed for policy change (Tsebelis 1995). These actors – which are often seen to be political factions, but in fact can also be administrative or non-state players (Dimitrova 2010; Steunenberg 2006) – have been shown to have a substantial capacity to affect the pace and success of national adaptation to EU requirements (Haverland 2000; Linos 2007). In this way, it is expected that civil servants who have negative attitudes towards the EU by implication can undermine the administrative capacity of their bureaucracies, and thus become de facto veto players. Certainly, given that attitudinal factors such as having a pro-European government in CEECs is beneficial for the timely transposition of EU laws (Toshkov 2008), then it can also be expected that the attitudes of the bureaucrats in new member states towards the EU will matter as well.

Nevertheless, as noted already, the literature on EU support has tended to focus on the mood of the population, political parties and to a lesser extent the bureaucratic officials working in EU institutions, but has so far neglected to look at the attitudes of civil servants in their national bureaucracies. One exception is the study by Meyer-Sahling & Van Stolk (2015), which in comparing the Europeanisation of central government in four CEECs – Estonia, Latvia, Poland and Slovakia – it finds that civil servants in general tend to show support for EU membership and integration. However, this study only finds a weak association between support and the Europeanisation of the ministries, which does not explain the drivers behind the positive attitudes of the civil servants. Given that these are young democracies and new member states in the EU, the importance of a pro-European mentality held by the civil service cannot be underestimated. This paper thus seeks to contribute towards closing this gap.

3.3 International socialisation and its mechanisms

To explain bureaucratic officials' attitudes toward the EU, this paper draws on international socialisation theory, the process of inducting actors into the norms and rules of a given community, inducing a switch from a logic of consequences to a logic of appropriateness (Checkel 2005: 804). This outcome denotes the internalisation of new norms, which manifests through changed behaviour by adopting new roles (Type I) or a deeper change in values and interests (Type II) (Checkel 2005: 808). International socialisation lends itself to the study of domestic civil servants' attitudes because it provides a conceptual

framework that concentrates on preference formation and change, including norm transfer through contact. In fact, in recent years the theory has been employed by an increasing number of studies that examine how international institutions could become sites inducing change in individuals' behaviour. In particular, a number of empirical studies have specifically looked at socialisation in EU institutions, exploring whether and how a shift from a logic of consequences to a logic of appropriateness might occur in these sites (Beyers 2005; Hooghe 2005; Lewis 2005; Schimmelfennig 2005).

More recently, there has been an emerging interest in examining the EU's socialisation impact in the domestic context, particularly in two studies by Freyburg (2015) and Meyer-Sahling et al (2016). Similarly to this paper's research focus, these studies examine the impact of EU contact on public officials in national bureaucracies, in Morocco (Freyburg 2015) and CEECs (Meyer-Sahling et al. 2016), though addressing different dependent variables. On the one hand, Freyburg examines attitudes towards democratic governance in Moroccan state officials, finding that interpersonal and structured contact through governmental networks can socialise officials into more democratic attitudes. On the other hand, Meyer-Sahling et al. look at the extent to which public officials in CEECs are socialised into supporting merit-based civil service governance. Though their study finds a positive effect by the EU, the authors show that – contrary to Freyburg's findings – this is not achieved through activities that involve interpersonal contact, but rather more indirectly through daily work involving the transposition and implementation of EU policies. Nevertheless, both studies indicate that contact with the EU, either direct or

indirect, has a positive socialising effect on bureaucrats. Accordingly, this paper applies socialisation theory to examine its effect on a new outcome variable, support for the EU.

To investigate how international socialisation affects civil servants' support for the EU, this paper takes a constructivist approach to attitude change.[19] Constructivism questions the rationalist notion that actors' preferences are rigid, considering instead the possibility that international environments can become sites of socialisation, having transformative effects on the attitudes and identities of actors (Checkel 2005: 807; Lewis 2005: 940–1). The EU institutions, in particular, are hypothesised to have "thick" or "strong" socialising effects, providing a normative and institutional setting where prolonged exposure and interaction can induce changes leading to the internalisation of norms and rules (Beyers 2005; Hooghe 1999; Lewis 2003). This argument echoes Allport's (1954) psychological studies on the "contact hypothesis", which proposes that interpersonal contact, under certain conditions, can change attitudes by reducing prejudice between groups, through increased knowledge and acquaintance with others. This hypothesis is further underpinned by social psychological studies that maintain that – beyond purely personal contact – "mere exposure" to any stimuli has the potential to positively influence a person's affective attitudinal response to it: essentially, the idea is that repeated, simple exposure to an object will breed

[19]Rationalist explanations such as the mechanism of strategic calculation are not discussed in this paper, as the survey does not provide a measurement to test such hypotheses. In any case, it is not clear whether EU integration provides any costs or benefits specific to civil servants in their professional capacity beyond those already discussed in the more general "economic interests" argument.

familiarity, resulting in the development of positive feelings and attitudes towards it (Maio & Haddock 2009: 112–3; Petty et al. 1997: 623–4; Zajonc 1968).

Europeanists have applied these principles to study the socialising effects of EU institutions, operationalising them in terms of duration of contact with the EU (Checkel 2005: 807). In this regard, the evidence for the contact hypothesis has shown mixed results, with recent studies finding weak (Hooghe 2005) or no evidence (Beyers 2005) that prolonged contact with EU institutions affects individual identities. Accordingly, in discussing the mechanisms of EU socialisation, this paper complements and expands on the contact hypothesis with the theory of social learning, a broad concept that cuts across disciplines, but can be generically defined as "learning that is facilitated by observation of, or interaction with, another individual (or its products)" (Hoppitt & Laland 2013: 15). In social psychological studies, social learning posits that human thought and behaviour is acquired through observation, imitation and modelling, that is, through informative functions acquired from the social context, which serve as coded information on new behaviour, guiding future action (Bandura 1977). Beyond behaviour, social learning also explains the transmission of ideas and preferences through abstract modelling: when observing a response to a situation, individuals can extract common attributes exemplified in the model, allowing them to respond to new situations in a way that is stylistically similar to the original response's disposition (Bandura 1977: 41–2). In fact, this function of social learning is central to constructivists interested in explaining normative compliance in international institutions such

as the EU. For them, the emphasis is on the role of social interaction in providing the context within which communication and persuasion generate cognitive deliberations that can lead to normative preference change (Checkel 2001). In this regard, social learning – like the contact hypothesis – is used to study structure-agent interaction with or within the EU: beyond interpersonal relations, the focus is on learning through social interaction with an environment, comprised of specific people, institutions, rules, norms and policies.

Consequently, both the contact hypothesis and social learning predict that attitude change is a result of contact that facilitates a deeper understanding of an object. However, the former only describes the first step, the treatment, in which change is a result of increased familiarity through contact, triggering an affective response that needs no "cold cognitive processes" (Zajonc 1980: 160). In contrast, social learning - as the mechanism of international socialisation – goes further in inferring that interaction also leads to conscious deliberation about that object. In this regard, these two mechanisms together are ideal tools for studying the international socialisation of civil servants, as they capture conscious learning processes as well as unconscious affective responses that result from their interaction with the EU, both of which can lead to a change in attitudes towards it.

3.4 Hypotheses

Despite their domestic settings, civil servants working in CEECs experience frequent exposure to the European community's norms. However, contact with the EU can start before joining the civil service in the context of various transnational experiences, particularly international education, which has been demonstrated to have a measurable norm-changing effect (Atkinson 2010; King & Ruiz-Gelices 2003). Scholars studying the socialising effect of intercultural contact within the EU have been particularly interested in the potential transformative impact of Erasmus and Socrates "year abroad" education programmes. Among these, some studies have indicated that intercultural experiences show a positive effect in providing students with a more European identity and consciousness (King & Ruiz-Gelices 2003; Mitchell 2012, 2015), whereas others found no evidence that there was an influence on students' support for the EU (Sigalas 2010b) or their European identity (Sigalas 2010a; Wilson 2011). Nevertheless, in line with international socialisation theory, it is reasonable to surmise that civil servants' international education could have a "pre-socialising effect", through interpersonal and intercultural contact abroad that facilitates social learning: by being exposed to European people, languages, practices and ideas, students have the opportunity to become more familiar with and learn about this environment, developing positive attitudes towards it. For civil servants in particular, prior familiarity with other European cultures and practices would predispose them to more

positive attitudes when dealing with the EU institutions and laws in their bureaucracies.

Hypothesis 1: *Civil servants with prior transnational experiences of international education will display higher levels of support for the EU.*

In their professional capacity, civil servants are responsible for the implementation of policies and laws domestically. At times, this may include rules enacted by the EU, depending on the official's policy area and responsibilities; however, not all civil service work will be affected by the EU. When it is, the socialisation theory would hypothesise that being exposed to European issues creates an environment where they can be inducted into the supranational norms of the community, which are then internalised through social learning. This internationalisation can happen both through personal and non-personal contact; as explained earlier, the focus of social learning is on the process of learning through social interaction with an environment, represented by people, institutions, rules, norms and policies (Bandura 1977; Hoppitt & Laland 2013: 15). Civil servants who are exposed to the EU in their daily work will acquire new knowledge about "appropriate" behaviour through two mechanisms. On the one hand, new norms can be learnt by observing behavioural models, that is, the actions and behaviour of an actual person (Bandura 1969, 1977). For example, interpersonal interaction can allow civil servants to observe and imitate the supportive attitudes of their colleagues in EU institutions. On the other hand, new norms can be learnt though verbal models – behaviour coded into words (Bandura 1969, 1977) –, such as EU

policies and communications. In this case, EU legislation transmits the norm of serving the wider EU interests, thus affecting civil servants' perceptions of the EU, leading to the adoption of attitudes that reflect positivity, endorsement and support towards the wider European community. In both cases, the assumption is that interaction with EU-related matters leads to a cognitive reflection on the observed behaviour, norms and ideas transmitted by the EU, prompting the development of positive views toward integration, either learnt from the supportive behaviour of their EU-level colleagues, or from the supranational rules and regulations which are designed to serve the general interests of the EU member states. Consequently, the socialisation theory would hypothesise that contact with the EU leads to increased support:

Hypothesis 2: *Civil servants whose daily work brings them into contact with the EU will display higher levels of support for the EU.*

Whilst contact alone may have a transformative effect on civil servants' attitudes, presumably not all types of exposure have equal effects, and scope conditions such as the quantity and quality of contact could impact the extent to which EU socialisation takes place. The significance of these factors is debated, with some studies arguing for the importance of intense, sustained and extensive contact when it comes to the internalisation of new norms and attitudes (Gheciu 2005; Lewis 2005), whilst others finding no effect regarding density and intensity of contact, and only limited correlation between duration of exposure and socialisation (Beyers 2005). Given the new, domestic focus of

this paper, it is hence important to investigate the extent to which scope conditions affect the socialisation of civil servants in national bureaucracies.

Certainly, the contact hypothesis and social learning theory both emphasise the importance of the temporal dimension of contact in facilitating international socialisation. Civil servants whose work involves more prolonged exposure to EU-related matters will become more familiar with EU norms and policies, thus increasing the development of a positive affective response. Additionally, social learning through abstract modelling – the process of extracting general features from past observed behaviour which allows the transmission of ideas and preferences – is most effective through repeated exposure to a modelled response (Bandura 1977: 41). Hence, the more civil servants are exposed to EU contact, the more they will learn positive attitudes towards EU integration and membership:

Hypothesis 2a: *Civil servants whose contact with the EU is more prolonged will display higher levels of support for the EU.*

On the other hand, the nature of contact with the EU can be qualitatively different, depending on the task to be performed. In this regard, one can distinguish between two types of contact: one which involves two-way communications, in which civil servants participate and provide input into EU-level processes; and another, that is best described as unidirectional, consisting of receiving and implementing policies, instructions and laws from Brussels. Following previous studies on the Europeanisation of the civil service, this paper will define the former type as 'projection-related' activities, whilst the

latter will be referred to as 'reception-related' tasks (Bulmer & Burch 2005; Meyer-Sahling & Van Stolk 2015). Importantly, projection-type activities distinguish themselves in that they are more intense, dominated by tasks that require interpersonal communication, such as participating in meetings or consultation with colleagues; in contrast, reception-type activities consist of impersonal tasks of "downloading" policy from the EU-level, such as the transposition and application of EU law. The mechanism at work in both cases is one of social learning, which recognises that both behavioural and verbal modelling can be sources of observational learning. However, because the theory emphasises the importance of social interaction, it is assumed that contact with the EU which involves a direct, interpersonal exchange of ideas will be more successful in developing positive attitudes than contact through indirect, impersonal means such as laws, acts and regulations.

Hypothesis 2b: *Civil servants whose daily work involves more intense, projection-related activities will display higher levels of support for the EU than those whose work involves more reception-related activities.*

3.5 Data and variables

The empirical analysis is based on a survey conducted in the spring and summer of 2008 with civil servants in the ministerial bureaucracies of seven CEECs. The survey was conducted as part of a project funded by the Sigma Programme of the OECD on the sustainability of civil service reform in Central and Eastern

Europe (Meyer-Sahling 2009). Responses were collected through a web-based survey in the local language, distributed via email. This was achieved through research missions to each country, whose task was to explain the purpose of the survey to the heads of central civil service management institutions. They were then requested to send the survey link to the responsible HR managers of preselected ministries, asking them to distribute it to all civil servants employed in the core structure of their ministry (Meyer-Sahling et al. 2016).

In total, the dataset contains 2553 observations, covering 10 groups of ministries across seven countries: Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. On average, there are 333 respondents per country,[20] with a modal age bracket of 21-30 years, and a gender distribution of 63 percent female and 37 per cent male. Though it is impossible to specify the exact response rate, given that it is not known how many civil servants were on the email distribution lists, data on the size of ministries indicates that between 10 (Hungary) and 30 (Slovakia) percent of the staff employed in the targeted ministries completed the survey (Meyer-Sahling et al. 2016). To minimise the effects of survey non-response, the analyses include control variables for the individual-level demographic backgrounds of the respondents.

To test the hypotheses presented above, the paper uses multivariate ordinary least squares (OLS) linear regressions with country fixed-effects on individual responses from civils servants. The analysis proceeds in two sections: first, the overall sample of civil servants is tested for a general overview of attitudes

[20]See Appendix K for the distribution of responses by countries and ministries.

towards the EU and the mechanisms of socialisation; subsequently, a second section tests a sub-sample of only those civil servants who confirmed that their work is affected by the EU, in order to test how scope conditions such as the quantity and quality of socialisation affect the extent to which attitude change is brought about.

3.5.1 Dependent variable

To measure civil servants' attitudes towards the EU, an index was constructed measuring support for the EU by aggregating two variables. These ask the respondent's agreement with the statements "It is good that my country has become a member of the European Union" and "I am in favour of further European integration". The response categories for both variables are measured on a five-point Likert scale, where 1 denotes strong disagreement and 5 denotes strong agreement. The index was constructed by taking the mean of the respondent's scores on both questions, so that the new variable's scores also range from 1 to 5 in 0.5 increments, giving a 9-point response scale. A Mokken scale analysis shows that the two variables together create a very strong scale with a Loevinger's H coefficient of 0.82.[21]

Using the index as the dependent variable – instead of either of the items that form its components – has two main advantages: first, it allows for more variation in responses, as the scale of the variable runs on a 9-point response scale, rather than the 5 categories that each allow. This makes it appropriate

[21] To determine the scalability of the index, Mokken scale analysis was used (see Appendix L for output), which is more appropriate than factor analysis to determine the latent structure of a set of non-parallel items, as is often the case when measuring preferences and attitudes (van der Eijk 2007; van Schuur 2003).

for a linear regression analysis, which allows for easier interpretations regarding the magnitude of the coefficients. Secondly, the two variables together are a more accurate measurement of "attitudes" towards the EU: on the one hand, the variable covers the classical conceptualisation of EU perceptions by allowing for the respondent to provide a normative assessment of the EU's "mission", the integration project (Loveless & Rohrschneider 2011: 7); on the other hand, it also taps into a more self-interested dimension regarding whether membership is considered to be a good thing for the respondent's country, a question that is made more relevant when considering that the focus of this study is on the new member states of CEECs, which at the time of the survey were only 4 years after their accession.

3.5.2 Independent variables

To test the hypothesis on transnational socialisation (H1), the analysis uses a dummy variable measuring whether the respondent has ever studied abroad. Such an opportunity, either as a full-time student or in the context of a year-abroad programme, would provide an ideal site for intercultural experiences and an exchange of ideas, especially given that the students partaking in these programmes tend to be younger and therefore still more open to new ways of thinking. This hypothesis is supported by empirical evidence that has found that Erasmus and Socrates programmes have the potential to foster pro-European sentiments and more European identities (King & Ruiz-Gelices 2003; Mitchell 2012, 2015). Accordingly, it is expected that officials who have had

contact with other European cultures through studying abroad prior to joining the civil service would have more positive views of the EU.

However, it must be noted that there is an inherent assumption that the respondents studied in an EU country, since the survey question asked about all types of education abroad, without asking where; therefore, the dataset does not provide information on whether this was within the EU or elsewhere. Nevertheless, this paper assumes that most of the respondents conducted their studies within the EU, not only because of geographical reasons, but also because most of the bureaucratic officials surveyed declared that they had joined the public sector after 1993, so they would have been unlikely to have conducted their studies in the East, which was more common in the period before the end of the Cold War.[22]

On the other hand, to test the effect of socialisation at work (H2), the analysis uses a binary variable measured by the question: "is your daily work affected by the European Union?" This allows for a distinction to be made between those who have any contact with the EU in their day-to-day work, and those who do not. The social learning mechanism suggests that civil servants who are exposed to European ideas in their daily work would have opportunities to learn about the EU, and thus display more pro-European attitudes than their colleagues whose work is completely insulated from EU matters. Consequently, it is expected that if contact with the EU in public administration work provides

[22] 82.61% of respondents declared that they had worked in the public sector for 15 years or less, whilst only 17.39% indicated that this was more than 15 years.

the platform for social learning, then day-to-day work on EU matters will be positively correlated with support for the EU in general.

To test the hypotheses on the scope conditions of socialisation (H2a and H2b), a sub-sample of the dataset is used, comprised only of those respondents who answered affirmatively as to whether their daily work is affected by the EU. By restricting the regressions in such a way, the analysis is able to mitigate the possible bias arising from civil servants self-selecting themselves to work on EU-related matters. Here, three new variables are introduced to measure how scope conditions such as length and type of contact affect the extent to which exposure and social learning can lead to the effective socialisation of civil servants into more pro-European attitudes.

First, the time-variant variable of contact measures how many hours a week the respondent works on EU matters. This has been recoded so that the variable shows what percentage of a normal 40-hour workweek is spent working on the EU. The scale thus runs from 1.25 to 100 percent, with no scores of 0 as the analysis focuses only on a sub-sample of civil servants who do work on EU-related matters.[23]

Second, to distinguish between different types of contact, the paper uses two multi-item aggregate variables to measure the intensity of projection-type and reception-type activities in their daily duties (Bulmer & Burch 2005). The projection index is an aggregate of four variables that constitute activities that

[23] Respondents who declared that they work more than 40 hours a week (41-60 hours) were coded as 100%.

involve direct, interpersonal communication and exchange of ideas: preparation of national input into EU-level meetings; participation in meetings organised by the European Commission or working groups gathered by the Council of Ministers; consultation with colleagues from one or more other member states outside the formal EU framework; and exchange of experts, bilateral or multinational cooperation programs. By contrast, reception-type activities are impersonal, one-sided, and involve the "downloading" of EU-level directives. This index includes three items: transposition of European policies into national legal measures; practical application or enforcement of rules and policies that originated in the EU; and having to take into account EU policies during national policy making.

For each item, responses were measured on a five-point level Likert scale, scoring 1 if the activity was very unimportant and 5 if the activity was very important to the daily work of the respondent, so that higher scores indicate more intense exposure to that type of activity in the context of the respondent's daily professional duties. For each index, the mean value of all its items was calculated, so that each variable can only take values between 1 and 5. Mokken analyses show that the items making up the two indices are both strong in their scalability, with a Loevinger's H coefficient of 0.58 for the projection index and 0.60 for the reception index.[24]

[24] See Appendix M and N for output.

3.5.3 Control variables

Two sets of control variables were included to control for spurious relationships and omitted variable bias which could be caused by differences in the background of the respondents, as well as to mitigate any possible effects from survey non-response. On the one hand, the analyses include individual-level controls for gender, age, education, years worked in public administration and managerial responsibilities.[25] The first three of these are standard demographic characteristics that could affect attitude formation and perception in individuals: it has been widely accepted that younger generations, men and people with higher education levels are also more likely to support European integration (e.g., Gabel 1998; Nelsen & Guth 2000). The analyses also include a variable measuring number of years working in public administration, so that any socialisation effect found is not biased by the length of civil service that the respondent may have accrued. Similarly, the regression also includes a control variable for having a managerial position, as presumably bureaucrats in higher positions and with more responsibilities may be exposed to socialisation effects in a qualitatively different way than their colleagues.

[25] Gender is a dummy variable with a score of 1 if female; age is an ordinal variable with 6 categories (less than 21, 21-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51 to 60 and 60+); education is an ordinal variable with 4 categories (school/vocational/other, BA degree, MA degree, PhD degree); years worked in public administration is a 6-category ordinal variable (less than 1, 1-2 years, 3-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years and 15+ years); managerial responsibilities is a dummy variable.

Furthermore, the regressions include fixed effects for countries and macro-level dummy control variables for ministries.[26] The purpose of these is to account for possible correlations that may arise from varying levels of support by different governments (countries) or working environments (ministries). In addition to being qualitatively different, research on Europeanisation has also shown that some member states and policy areas have become more Europeanised than others (Nanou et al. 2017); it is thus possible that civil servants who are from more Europeanised countries, or alternatively work in ministries that deal with policy areas that are more Europeanised, will have different attitudes towards the EU than their colleagues from other states or ministries. The fixed effects for these two variables thus ensures that these factors are controlled for in the analysis.

3.6 Results

To address the research question about the nature of bureaucratic support for the EU, Figure 3.1 provides a histogram of civil servants' distribution of attitudes measured by the dependent variable, the index of respondent support for the EU, grouped by countries.

[26] Given that responses from ministries were not uniform in all countries, to enhance the comparability of results eight policy sectors are distinguished, largely consistent with the analysis presented by Meyer-Sahling & Van Stolk (2015): Foreign Affairs; Agriculture; Economic, Regional, Transport and Labour; Environment; Education and Culture; Finance; Interior and Justice; Health; Prime Minister's Office; and Other.

The graphs show different modes and means in opinions about the EU. Comparing the mean response of civil servants across countries, Latvia shows the lowest average score with 3.51, whilst Poland shows the highest support for membership in the EU with a mean of 4.52. The figure also uncovers relatively large differences among countries, which can be explained by the diverging patterns of citizen support from each state (Meyer-Sahling & Van Stolk 2015: 241). Indeed, previous research has shown that there is a connection between national elite and mass attitudes towards the EU, with each group taking cues from one another in forming their opinions (Sanders & Toka 2013). For example, from the CEECs studied in this paper, the highest level of popular support for the EU at the time was in Poland, where 62.5% of people considered EU membership of their country a good thing, rather than bad or neither (European Commission 2012); this is reflected in the dataset on civil servants, where the Polish have the highest percentage of respondents scoring the maximum score of 5 on the index variable (56.81%). In addition, the graph also shows that there are different patterns of convergence in attitudes: whilst for example Poland displays the highest peaked normal distribution curve, Latvia on the other hand is much more spread out on the index's scale, indicating more inconsistent patters of EU support.

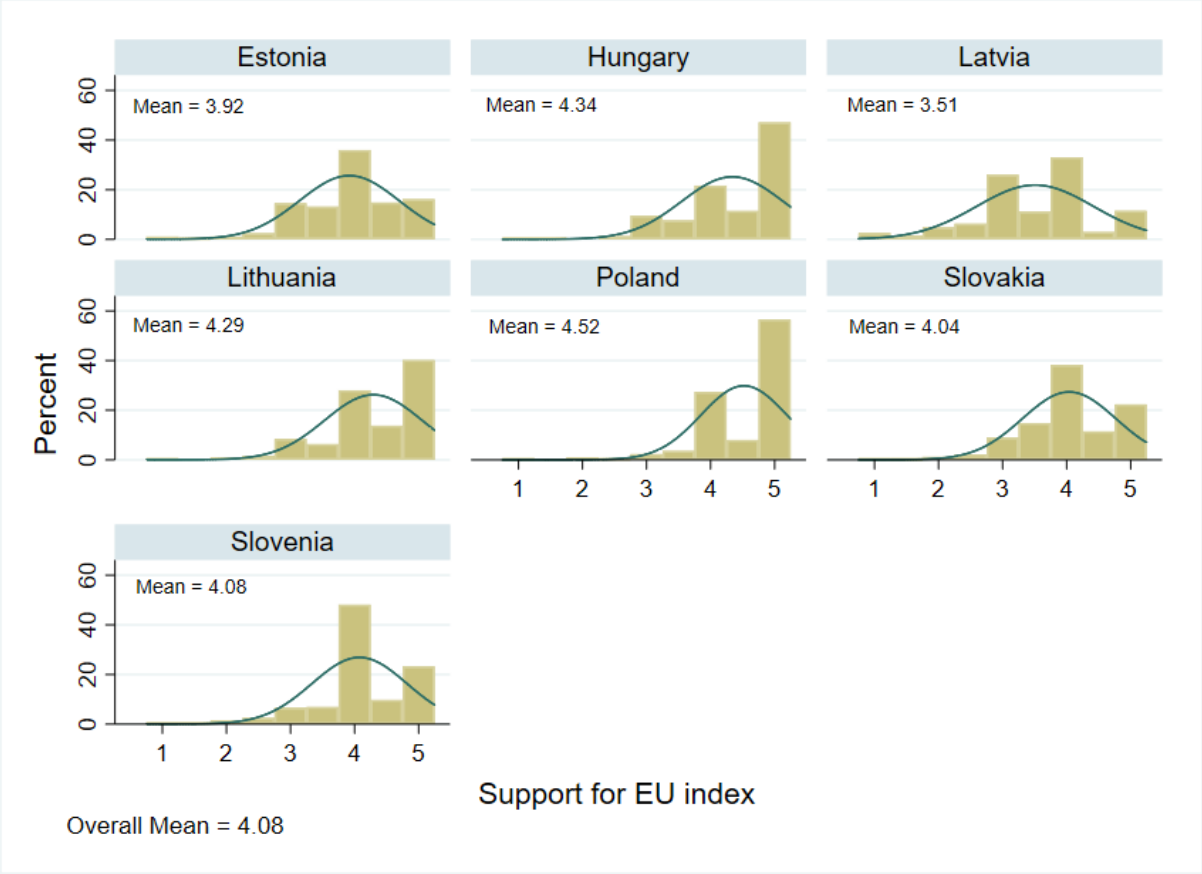
Despite the differences between countries, it is apparent that the graphs of all countries skew to the left, to a greater or lesser degree, indicating that support for the EU among CEE civil servants is generally high, with an overall mean of 4.08 on the dependent variable. Though such a high average might be surprising, this is in fact consistent with previous literature, which has found

that generally political elites tend to be more supportive of integration than the public (Hooghe 2003; Mattila & Raunio 2006).

It is possible that the high rate of support reported may have resulted from a skewing of responses caused by social desirability bias, a drawback of survey methods that can never be completely ruled out. Nevertheless, there are a number of factors that indicate that this bias may not have significantly affected the results. First, the survey's original purpose was to gauge the sustainability of civil service reforms (Meyer-Sahling 2009) and not to evaluate European integration; thus, the survey invitations only referred to research on civil servants' management practices, and the vast majority of survey questions addressed this topic; questions on the EU only made up only around 8% of the survey (10 out of 123 questions). The surveys were also conducted online, providing participants with anonymity that facilitates honest answers. Second, the surveys were conducted within the OECD Sigma framework, hence there was no reference to any involvement from the EU or the Commission; although it is true that civil service reform initiatives were supported by the EU in these states during their candidacy, this was no longer the case at the time that the survey was conducted in 2008, years after their accession. Consequently, both of these factors suggest that it is unlikely that respondents would have felt pressured to overstate their sentiments toward the EU.[27]

[27] Even if support for the EU was indeed skewed by social desirability bias, it is assumed that this would have been consistent across all civil servants, thus creating a systematic regression error in the measurements. Given that the core focus of this paper is not to discuss descriptive support levels, but rather to identify patterns of association measured through regressions, such a systematic error would at most only affect the coefficients by decreasing their size, thus revealing results that would at worst underestimate the strength of the association.

Figure 3-1: Distribution of civil servants' support for EU by country



However, the question arises as to why bureaucratic officials seem to be so positive about the EU? Accordingly, this paper turns to an assessment of the common factors that can be identified as driving support behind the EU in the civil service of each of these CEECs: what are the determinants of civil service support for the EU? To answer this question, the research uses international socialisation theory to test the hypotheses on transnational socialisation through education abroad (H1), and socialisation at work (H2).

Table 3.1 shows the results for the OLS linear regressions, testing the effects of different types of socialisation on the support for the EU index variable. Model 1 tests the effect of international education on attitudes towards the EU (H1). The model shows that the coefficient of 0.098 for studying abroad is positive and significant, lending support to the idea that contact with other cultures can elicit transnational socialisation, resulting in positive affective attitudes towards the EU.

Table 3-1: Simple OLS regression analyses of civil service support for EU (full sample).

	Model 1: Pre-socialisation	Model 2: Social learning at work	Model 3: All effects	
			β	B
Studied abroad	0.098*		0.081	0.040
	(0.043)		(0.044)	
Daily work affected by the EU		0.139**	0.130**	0.080**
		(0.035)	(0.036)	
Individual-level controls				
Female	-0.079*	-0.058	-0.055	-0.033
	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.035)	
Age	0.048*	0.058**	0.059**	0.085**
	(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.020)	
Education	0.092**	0.089**	0.083**	0.085**
	(0.021)	(0.022)	(0.022)	
Years worked in public administration	-0.014	-0.018	-0.018	-0.035
	(0.014)	(0.015)	(0.015)	
Managerial responsibilities	0.125**	0.119**	0.118**	0.068**
	(0.039)	(0.040)	(0.040)	
Ministry controls (Reference category: Foreign Affairs)				
Agriculture	-0.254**	-0.310**	-0.281**	-0.102 **
	(0.098)	(0.100)	(0.102)	
Economic, Regional, Transport and Labour	-0.231**	-0.272**	-0.247**	-0.136**
	(0.086)	(0.088)	(0.090)	
Education and Culture	-0.068	-0.078	-0.056	-0.013
	(0.118)	(0.122)	(0.123)	
Environment	-0.339**	-0.365**	-0.337**	-0.117**
	(0.101)	(0.102)	(0.104)	
Finance	-0.139	-0.167	-0.135	-0.066
	(0.090)	(0.091)	(0.093)	
Health	-0.247*	-0.287**	-0.258*	-0.081*
	(0.104)	(0.106)	(0.108)	
Interior and Justice	-0.265**	-0.325**	-0.300**	-0.121**
	(0.099)	(0.100)	(0.102)	
Other	-0.232	-0.251	-0.220	-0.042
	(0.137)	(0.140)	(0.141)	
Prime Minister's Office	-0.104	-0.134	-0.112	-0.038
	(0.099)	(0.101)	(0.102)	
Constant	3.947**	3.908**	3.881**	
	(0.121)	(0.125)	(0.126)	
Observations	2,098	1,997	1,989	
R-squared (overall)	0.050	0.058	0.059	

Dependent variable: Support for EU index (1 [low support] – 5 [high support]).
OLS regression with country fixed effects.
Significance levels: ** p<0.01, * p<0.05. Standard errors in parentheses.

Model 2 tests the effect of EU-related work in the national ministries. The positive and statistically significant coefficient of 0.139 supports the second hypothesis (H2) that those civil servants whose daily work is affected by the EU are more likely to support EU membership and integration, when compared to their colleagues who are not exposed to EU-related matters at work. Model 3 puts the predictors together in the same model to test the validity of the two main hypotheses. The coefficients for both the study abroad and working on the EU variables are still positive, with 0.081 and 0.130 respectively, though in the case of the former this is no longer statistically significant. In addition, the magnitude of the standardised beta coefficients indicate that the socialising effect of the work variable is twice stronger than that of the education abroad variable (0.080 compared to 0.040).

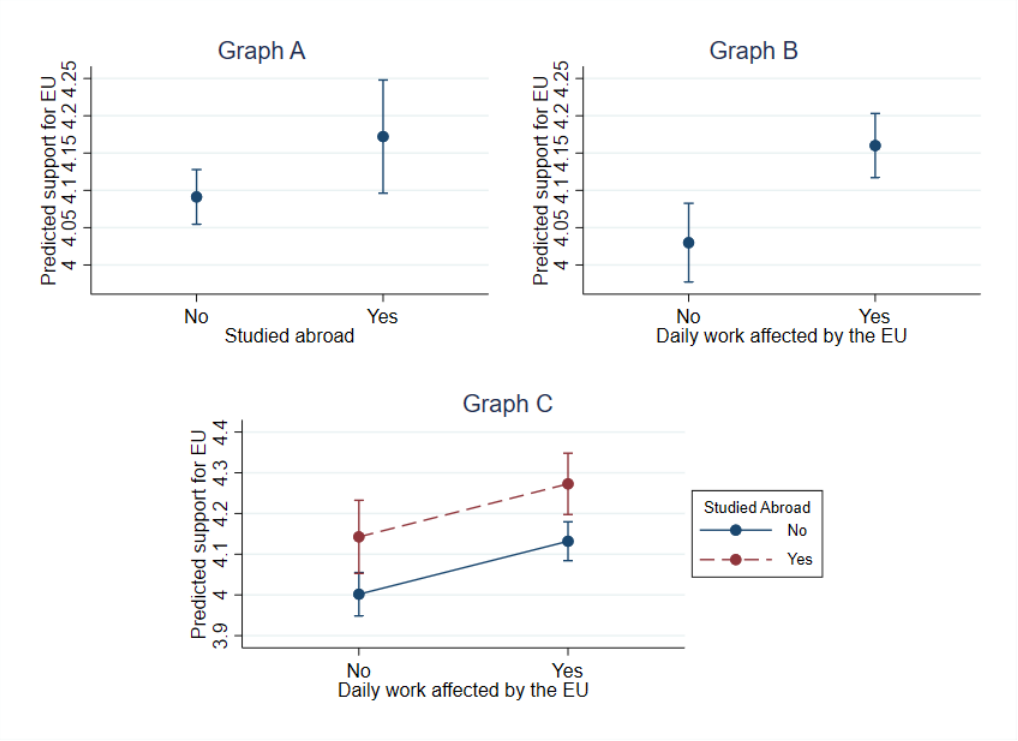
These effects are illustrated in Figure 3.2 on the predictive margins of the two variables on EU support. Graphs A and B clearly show that both studying abroad and working on EU-related matters are associated with higher levels of predicted support for the EU, and that the increase is much more significant for the work variable than the education variable. Moreover, the confidence intervals (CI) indicate that the work effect is significant, whereas this is not true in the case of the study variable, which has overlapping CI tails.

Based on these results, hypothesis 1 is partially confirmed. Although Model 1 shows that study abroad, on its own, has a positive and significant effect on support for the EU, when including civil servants' experiences at work in the equation the null-hypothesis can no longer be rejected, though the regression

coefficient only just misses conventional levels of significance (p=0.065). This suggests that the effect of international education is actually mediated through the work on EU-matters variable. In other words, civil servants who have previously studied abroad will be more likely to work in policy areas affected by the EU, which in turn also increases their support for the EU. In this regard, hypothesis 1 cannot be rejected, because education abroad still has an indirect effect on EU support. Graph C in Figure 3.2 reflects this logic, showing that whilst an international education does not affect EU support among those civil servants whose daily work is not affected by European affairs, shown by the overlapping CI tails, public officials who do work on the EU are in fact more supportive of it if they do have such prior transnational experiences.[28] On the other hand, the analysis finds clear support for the argument that contact with EU-related matters at work is a significant source of socialisation that can change civil servants' attitudes towards the EU, thus upholding hypothesis 2. The explanatory power of this variable is further evidenced by the improved model fit in models 2 and 3, which explain 5.8% and 5.9% respectively of the overall variation in civil servants' attitudes towards the EU, as opposed to only 5% in model 1.

[28] However, there is no interaction between the two predictors, confirmed by a non-significant interaction term when added to the regression of Model 3.

Figure 3-2: Predictive margins of studying abroad and daily work affected by the EU, Model 3.



It is also worth noting the control variables in Table 3.1, which give further insights into the determinants of EU support among civil servants. Consistent with the research on public attitudes towards the EU, support tends to be lower among women and the less educated (Lubbers & Jaspers 2011; Nelsen & Guth 2000), though in the case of the gender variable this is not significant once contact with the EU at work is introduced in the models. However, contrary to previous findings on the positive correlation between Euroscepticism and age (for example Goodwin & Milazzo 2015), being older is significantly associated with being more supportive of the EU. Perhaps the key to this peculiarity is that this study focuses on civil servants instead of the public, specifically in CEECs: older generations would have spent more significant periods of time living and

working during the Soviet regime, and therefore they may hold the EU in higher esteem, being able to directly compare the democracy and prosperity it has brought to the conditions prior to democratisation. Furthermore, though the time spent working in public civil service is not significant, holding a managerial position is positively and significantly correlated with more support for the EU. One reason for this could be that – given that hypothesis 2 about the positive effects of work-place contact with the EU is supported by the data – bureaucrats working in managerial positions have more extended and meaningful interactions with EU-level policies, creating favourable conditions for their socialisation. Hence, to explore this possibility, the paper turns to a second analysis, which tests how scope conditions of quantity of quality of contact with the EU can affect actors in the context of national bureaucracies.

Table 3.2 analyses the scope conditions of socialisation at work, testing only a sub-sample of civil servants who have declared that their daily work is affected by the EU. Model 1 tests the effect of prolonged contact with the EU, measured in the percentage of a 40-hour weeks' time that is spent on EU-related issues. The coefficient of 0.002 in this case indicates a positive and significant effect, supporting the hypothesis that the more time a civil servant spends working on EU-related matters, the higher their support for EU membership and integration. Models 2 and 3, in turn, test the effect of the type of EU contact: projection and reception-type activities. Though the coefficients in both models show a positive effect on EU support, with 0.076 and 0.046 respectively, only projection-related activities are a statistically significant, whilst in the case of reception-related activities the null hypothesis cannot be

rejected. These results suggest that increasing intensity of projection-type activities is associated with more positive attitudes towards the EU; in contrast, reception-type activities do not have such an influence.

Lastly, model 4 includes all scope condition variables to examine their combined socialisation effect on civil servants. The magnitude and significance of the time variable remains the same, showing that prolonged contact creates conditions that result in more positive attitudes towards the EU (H2a). Similarly, the projection index also continues to be positive and significant, though slightly lower with a coefficient of 0.071. In contrast, not only does the coefficient for the reception variable remain non-significant, but its magnitude practically disappears (0.004), indicating that among officials who are already exposed to the EU, there is no apparent correlation between performing reception-type work and higher EU support. The standardised beta coefficients confirm these findings, showing that the reception variable is negligible in its size and significance (0.004), whilst the projection index has a much stronger effect in influencing support for the EU (0.93), thus confirming the second sub-hypothesis (H2b). In addition, the standardised betas also show that when compared to the time variable, the intensity of contact – specifically interpersonal, projection-type contact – is a more powerful condition facilitating the socialisation effect than prolonged contact (0.077).

Table 3-2: Simple regression analyses of civil service support for EU (sub-sample: civil servants whose daily work is affected by the European Union).[29]

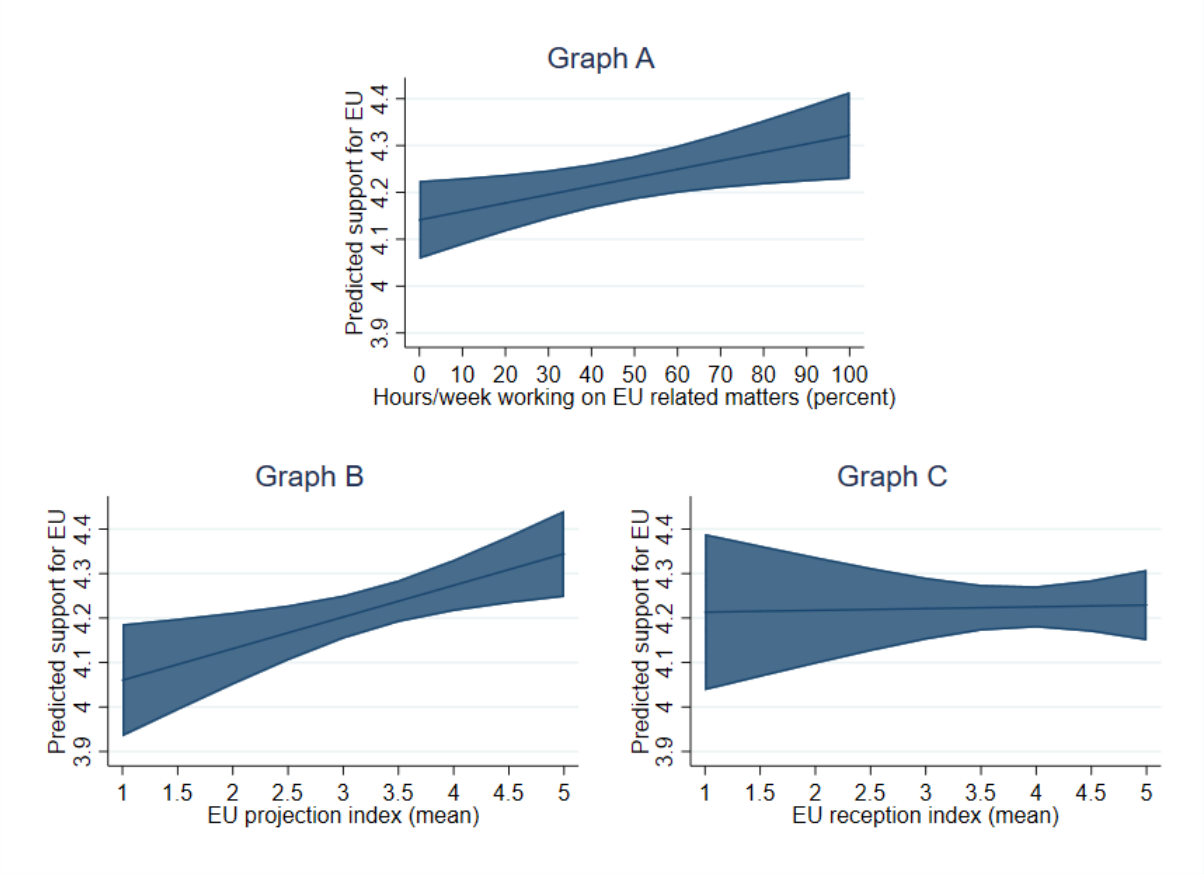
	Model 1: Length of contact	Model 2: Projection-type contact	Model 3: Reception-type contact	Model 4: All effects	
				β	B
Hours/week working on EU related matters (percent)	0.002**			0.002*	0.077*
	(0.001)			(0.001)	
EU projection index (mean)		0.076**		0.071**	0.093**
		(0.021)		(0.026)	
EU reception index (mean)			0.046	0.004	0.004
			(0.025)	(0.030)	
Individual-level controls					
Female	-0.127**	-0.103*	-0.105*	-0.130**	-0.080**
	(0.049)	(0.045)	(0.045)	(0.049)	
Age	0.060*	0.036	0.033	0.049	0.067
	(0.029)	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.030)	
Education	0.089**	0.102**	0.097**	0.085*	0.080*
	(0.033)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.034)	
Years worked in public administration	0.020	0.013	0.013	0.021	0.040
	(0.022)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.022)	
Managerial responsibilities	0.081	0.077	0.094	0.060	0.036
	(0.056)	(0.051)	(0.051)	(0.057)	
Ministry controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Constant	3.902**	3.675**	3.835**	3.685**	
	(0.181)	(0.176)	(0.177)	(0.203)	
Observations	996	1,160	1,172	979	
R-squared (overall)	0.070	0.080	0.066	0.081	

Dependent variable: Support for EU index (1 [low support] – 5 [high support]).
OLS regression with country fixed effects. Significance levels: ** p<0.01, * p<0.05. Standard errors in parentheses.

[29] For full table see Appendix O.

These findings are illustrated in Figure 3.3, which depicts the predicted EU support levels among civil servants whose work is affected by EU-related matters. Consistent with the regression results, Graph A and B show that increased time and intensity of projection-type activities, respectively, will result in higher predicted levels of support. Moreover, the steeper slope of the projection variable in Graph B also highlights that the old adage about "quality over quantity" is true, showing that more intense, interpersonal contact is a more effective socialisation tool than simply longer periods of exposure. In contrast, the nearly horizontal slope of Graph C illustrates the lack of association between reception-type contact and higher support for the EU.

Figure 3-3: Predictive margins of quantity and quality of work on EU



3.7 Discussion and conclusions

This paper has set out to examine the nature and determinants of civil servants' attitudes toward the EU, arguing that officials are socialised into more positive attitudes towards integration by social learning facilitated through EU contact. The analysis reveals three main findings.

First, the descriptive statistics show that support for the EU among civil servants tends to be relatively high. This lends credence to the paper's contention that research into attitudes towards the EU should expand its focus to study public servants, who see a different image of the Union than political parties or citizens. Considering that civil servants are at the heart of the operation and administration of the executive branch of the government, the need to understand their attitudes, motivations and processes becomes clear. In particular, these officials have a central role in implementing laws and regulations from the EU at the national level, and as such their attitudes towards European integration can have a considerable role in shaping how EU politics and policies are implemented domestically.

Second, this paper joins previous studies (Freyburg 2015; Meyer-Sahling et al. 2016) finding significant evidence supporting the constructive argument that EU contact can have a socialising effect that produces attitude change among civil servants. Specifically, the quantitative analysis has shown that study abroad and EU-related work can positively affect the extent to which officials support integration and their country's membership in the EU. On the former, the analysis has highlighted that studying abroad has a transnational

socialisation effect, though this is mediated through contact with the EU at work. Namely, civil servants with an international educational background will be more familiar with the norms, languages and cultures of the EU in general, and hence likely to be more comfortable and qualified to work on international matters pertaining to the wider European community. This way, though international education may not directly encourage positive attitudes towards integration, it does so indirectly by providing officials with competences that make it more likely for them to be involved with EU-related matters in their professional capacity. On the other hand, the findings have also highlighted that exposure to the EU in the civil service has an important socialising effect, suggesting that there is something significant about the setting of domestic bureaucracies, which create conditions where exposure can successfully instigate transformative processes in the attitudes of individuals. The analysis shows that the crucial factors at play are the opportunity for contact with the EU in a professional context, which breeds familiarity that evokes an unconscious positive affective response, resulting in a more positive opinion of it. In addition, officials also have the chance to learn about how the EU functions, the ideas and norms that it upholds, and judging these in a positive light, they become more supportive of the EU. Thus, whether it is a conscious or unconscious response, the analysis shows that workplace contact indeed results in the socialisation of civil servants.

Thirdly, the study also uncovers a significant effect of scope conditions such as length and type of contact that can qualify the extent to which attitude change takes place. Specifically, the paper shows that more prolonged and intense

contact creates conditions that facilitate learning about the EU and thus lead to the development of more positive attitudes towards it. Regarding the first, the findings show that the more time officials spend working on EU matters, the more supportive they become of European integration, pointing to the significance of "quantity" in contact with the EU. However, the analysis also indicates that "quality" is more important as a scope condition, when this is intense in the sense that it involves direct, interpersonal contact with EU colleagues, rather than indirect and impersonal exposure to EU-level legislation. The relative strength of such "projection-type" contact also suggests that social learning is a more effective mechanism of international socialisation than mere contact, since such activities emphasise social interaction and reciprocal communication, providing officials the opportunity to become more "deeply involved" in the everyday functioning of the EU. In such circumstances, it is probable that the observed attitudinal change is not simply due to increased familiarity, but rather there is a conscious learning process involved, facilitated by interpersonal communication. In this sense, whilst the significance of duration of exposure confirms that even simple familiarity can increase support levels, it is in fact the process of learning that is a more powerful driver of international socialisation among civil servants.

Finally, some caution must be called for regarding the results presented in this paper. On the one hand, it is important to note that the time period when the data was collected provides an important contextual backdrop within which the results must be interpreted, given that the surveys were conducted in the spring and summer of 2008, just before the global onset of the financial crisis

in September 2008, and the subsequent Eurozone crisis from 2009. As such, the perceptions of civil servants – as reflected in the dataset – would not yet have been influenced by the economic, social and political consequences of the recession that followed. Yet studies have shown that the financial crisis has increased Euroscepticism among both the general public (Clements et al. 2014; Serricchio et al. 2013) and political parties (Rohrschneider & Whitefield 2016). Though there has been no research specifically looking at the financial crisis' impact on bureaucrats' perceptions, it is reasonable to assume that this could have equally affected civil servants, so that the results presented here may have been "watered down" by subsequent global events. At the same time, with the EU bouncing back from the crisis almost 10 years on, it is uncertain to what extent the recession's effects on perceptions are lingering in the long term. Ultimately, the important point is that context matters, and the results presented here must be considered in light of their historical and social backdrop, exercising caution when making generalisations applicable to today's context. This also highlights the need for further research on the socialisation of civil servants, using more up-to-date data. However, given that such dataset is not yet available, the findings of these paper are still valuable in that they present a first look at the mechanisms of elite socialisation in domestic bureaucracies, which could serve as a stepping stone for further research on bureaucrats' perceptions of the EU.

A second potential issue with the findings that could be raised is regarding the possible self-selection of civil servants: it could be surmised that those officials who work on EU-related matters in the civil service are also the ones who are

already more supportive of the EU, thus biasing the results presented here. Though this problem cannot be completely ruled out, there are a number of factors that suggest that this may not have an overly significant effect on the findings in this paper. First, the nature of national bureaucracies is rarely one where employees have the luxury of choosing which aspects of a policy area they would like to work on, and which they would like to ignore. It may be conceivable that a civil servant may freely choose the ministry and even the policy area or department that they want to work in, based on their interests, background and expertise. However, it is much less likely that their choice will be based on whether the policy area is more or less Europeanised, in accordance to their pre-existing attitudes towards the EU. Second, the basic principles of socialisation assume that attitude change happens as a subliminal process, and in fact the processes discussed here are effective precisely because contact with the EU is not intended with the main purpose of influencing civil servants' attitudes; this comes about as a side effect of the interaction, thus constituting a socialisation of the actors. Considering this, it is unlikely that civil servants would knowingly get involved in one particular area of work, rather than others, because of the potential to work (or not) on issues that involve the EU. Finally, even if such endogeneity bias may have a real bearing on the results, this is mitigated in the second set of analyses which restrict the sample to only those civil servants who declared that their work is affected by the EU. Additionally, given that the time variable is significant in this sub-sample analysis, one could extrapolate to conclude that officials who

work 0 hours on EU-related work are also the least supportive of the EU, which in fact is consistent with the findings in the first analysis, with the full sample.

Having attempted to curb the limitations of the dataset, this paper's conclusions can be treated with cautious optimism. With the findings suggesting a discernible association between knowledge of the EU and support for it, given the current rise of Euroscepticism across Europe – which has led to serious consequences, including the looming of a "Brexit" –, the implications of these conclusions are clear: to improve attitudes towards the EU, perhaps the recipe for success is as simple as providing more opportunities for people to learn about the European project.

Chapter 4. Perceptions of the EU from Brussels: a typology of perspectives

***Abstract**. Studies on attitudes towards the European Union have examined how it is perceived both inside and outside its borders, though there have been no comparative studies unifying the two fields of research. This paper thus investigates how Brussels-based post-communist elites from member and non-member states perceive the EU. Given that they represent the principal link between the EU and their states, their views on the EU can have an important impact on how they portray the Union towards their home countries, which could affect domestic perceptions and policy-making. Thus, to study elites' perceptions, the paper develops a typology of four types of "elite perspectives of the EU", based on two dimensions: expectations from the EU and assessment of the EU. The main argument is that these perceptions are to a large extent determined by the state-level relationship between the Union and the respondent's home country. To empirically test this, the paper uses original empirical material collected through 25 interviews with post-communist elites from 13 different countries working in Brussels – including officials from the Commission, Permanent Representations and diplomatic missions to the EU – as a group of state officials who are highly exposed to the EU. The interviewed elites represent states with four different types of political relations with the Union: member states, candidate states, Eastern Partnership states, and bilateral relations with the EU. The typology is applied to investigating the political, economic and security dimensions of the EU, showing that officials have idealistic, pragmatic, disillusioned or sceptic views, depending on the nature of their states' relationship with the EU. The typology shows a sort of "progressivity" in post-communist views on the EU: as states progress "from the outside in", their perceptions change from an idealised image of the EU to a more realistic one, which nonetheless is still supportive, recognising the advantages of an integrated European community.*

4.1 Introduction

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in the study of perceptions of the EU, both in terms of internal support from the member states (Boomgaarden et al. 2011; Garry & Tilley 2009; Taggart & Szczerbiak 2002), as well as external perceptions from third countries (Chaban et al. 2006, 2013; Chaban & Kelly 2017; Lucarelli 2007). There have been, however, no studies comparing perceptions from member states with those of non-member states.

There are significant reasons why studying perceptions of the EU, both from within and outside the Union, merits further scrutiny. First, the EU's transformative power within and beyond its borders has drawn considerable interest from scholars (Börzel & Risse 2009; Diez et al. 2006; Grabbe 2006). However, the extent to which the EU's external policies may have an effective impact depends, to a certain degree, on how other relevant actors evaluate these policies (Elgström 2007: 952). This is particularly significant in the case of new member states of Central and Eastern Europe (CEEs), where perceptions can greatly influence the extent to which the EU can continue to have a transformative impact in their countries. Second, though negative perceptions may risk damaging the relationship between a state and the EU, perceptions that are *too* positive may have equally negative consequences: when expectations from the EU are too high and are not met by its capabilities, the resulting gap could lead to dangerous and unrealistic policies that could produce disproportionate disillusionment and resentment, diverting attention

away from more realistic projects that may otherwise be pursued (Hill 1998: 23). From this perspective, knowing how the EU is perceived would be crucial condition for managing expectations. Lastly, perceptions of the EU also affect European identity formation. Given that post-communist states have historically been the battleground for an ideological struggle between Russia and Western Europe, the extent to which a "European consciousness" is developed in these states can have important geostrategic consequences.

This paper thus aims to provide a comparative perspective of EU perceptions, by examining the views from both member and non-member states, answering the question: how do post-communist elites perceive the EU? In particular, the paper investigates the perceptions of Brussels-based diplomats and officials. The question of elite perceptions is a significant one, because these are individuals who hold positions of power in their states, effectively "speaking for the country and to the country", giving them considerable influence over political developments in their states. More specifically, officials based in Brussels represent the principal link between the EU and their states; hence *how* they perceive the EU can affect how they portray it towards their home country, which can impact domestic perceptions and policy-making.

To investigate how elites perceive the EU, the paper uses original empirical material collected through interviews with post-communist elites working in Brussels – including officials from the Commission, Permanent Representations and diplomatic missions to the EU – as a group of state officials who are highly exposed to the EU. The interviewed elites represent states with four different

types of political relations with the Union: member states, candidate states, Eastern Partnership (EP) states (Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine), and Russia, which has a bilateral relationship with the EU. The research develops and empirically tests a simple two-dimensional typology of "elite perspectives of the EU", based on expectations from the EU (high or low) and assessment of the EU (positive or critical). Based on a constructive approach of structure-agent identity formation, the paper shows that a state's political relationship with the EU can greatly affect how its elites perceive the Union, and consequently, each of the four types of perspectives proposed by the typology reflect a different type of country-level relationship with the EU.

Accordingly, member state elites are considered to be "pragmatics", having a positive view of the EU but low expectations from it, whilst EP elites display more "idealistic views" in that they will also see the EU in a positive light, but this will be coupled with high expectations about its capabilities. On the other hand, elites from candidate states have high expectations about EU impact in their states but have more critical assessment of the EU, giving them a "disillusioned" perspective, whilst the Russian relationship with the EU provides its elites with a "sceptic" viewpoint, characterised by being low in its expectations and critical in its assessments. Using elite interviews conducted in Brussels, the empirical section applies the typology developed in the theoretical discussion to the EU's economic, political and security dimensions, confirming that the state-level political relationship influences how elites working in Brussels perceive the EU.

The paper contributes to existing theory by connecting the literatures on the perceptions of the EU from inside and outside of its borders, presenting a typology that unifies the two traditions of research. In addition, it tests the typology by applying it to original data collected from Brussels-based officials. In this way, the paper presents a new way of conceptualising post-communist views: as states progress "from the outside in", their perceptions reflect a "progressivity" in perspectives, changing from an idealised image of the EU to a more realistic one.

4.2 Internal and external images of the EU

Research on perception of the EU can be placed in two broad camps: the first, which examines perceptions of the EU from an "internal" point of view, largely concentrates on the question of support for European integration and Euroscepticism *within* member states, occasionally expanding the research to candidate states; and a second strand of literature, which examines "external" perceptions of the EU, is more squarely placed in the field of studies of European foreign policy, and concentrates on exploring perceptions and views from the EU's strategic partners and other regions *outside* of Europe.

4.2.1 The "internal" view

The literature on internal attitudes towards the EU has tended to have a rather specific geographical focus, predominantly on the old member states of

Western Europe (Franklin et al. 1995), though with the Eastern Enlargement these studies have expanded their scope to the member and candidate states of Eastern Europe (Garry & Tilley 2009; Kopecký & Mudde 2002; Lecheler & De Vreese 2010; Taggart & Szczerbiak 2004), with studies conducted both with a micro-level focus, studying the general public (Boomgaarden et al. 2011; Gabel 1998), and a meso-level analysis, taking a closer look at political parties (Cichowski 2000; Kopecký & Mudde 2002; Taggart 1998; Taggart & Szczerbiak 2002).

Support and opposition to the EU within its member states has been categorised in a number of different ways. For example, one study classified support for the EU as diffuse support, consisting of support for the general ideas of European integration, and specific support, which denotes support for EU integration in its practice, meaning the EU as it is and how it is developing (Kopecký & Mudde 2002). Accordingly, these yield four types of attitudes, positive and negative, which can be classified into Euro-enthusiasts, Europragmatics, Eurosceptics and Eurorejects (Kopecký & Mudde 2002). On the other hand, a study examining public attitudes in the Netherlands has revealed a more nuanced way of understanding the conceptual and empirical dimensions of support for the EU, categorising EU attitudes into five distinct dimensions: performance, identity, affection, utilitarianism and strengthening (Boomgaarden et al. 2011).

More recently, however, the literature has turned towards a focus on opposition to the EU, exploring the question of Euroscepticism, defined as “the

idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration" (Taggart 1998). In particular, scepticism towards the EU has been classified into two types: "hard" Euroscepticism, which implies the outright rejection of the entire idea of the EU and integration, including an opposition to its membership; and "soft" Euroscepticism, which in turn is a contingent or qualified opposition to the EU, opposing not European integration as a whole, but only certain policy-areas, or a perceived threat to certain national interests (Taggart & Szczerbiak 2002, 2004).

Beyond classifying support and opposition to the EU, the "internal" attitudes literature has also devoted a large part of its analytical efforts to investigate why and how positive and negative attitudes towards the EU are likely to emerge. Three of these determinants stand out in particular: material interests, domestic politics and identity. First, material interests have been identified as a key determinant of support for the EU project. This utilitarian model argues that people with different socioeconomic backgrounds such as education, employment or economic wealth will either experience economic benefits or costs to European integration, which in turn will have a direct bearing on their level of support for the EU (Clements 2009; de Vreese & Boomgaarden 2005; Gabel 1998). Second, domestic politics has also been shown to be an important determinant of support for the EU. In the absence of a thorough knowledge of the EU, citizens use proxies to show their support towards integration, such as support for the system and established parties; in this way, support for the EU in reality reflects support for domestic politics (Anderson 1998; Franklin et al.

1995). Third, a number of studies have demonstrated that identity can also be an important predictor of EU support, showing that a strong national identity, a perceived cultural threat and the consequent anti-immigration sentiments can all impact negatively on popular evaluations of EU integration (Carey 2002; de Vreese & Boomgaarden 2005; Marks & Hooghe 2009; McLaren 2002).

4.2.2 External perceptions

Whilst the literature on "internal" attitudes of the EU has provided some useful insights as to who supports the EU and why, much of the discussion – with the exception of works such as those by Boomgarden et al. (2011) and Kopecký & Mudde (2002) – is one-dimensional in its conceptualisation, presenting a dichotomous approach between Euroscepticism and Europhilia. This argument lacks a qualitative distinction between support for (and disapproval of) the EU. However, given that the EU is a very complex entity, it is certainly possible to support some aspects of it, whilst being more sceptical about others. In addition, in studying attitudes towards the EU, it is possible to go beyond an analysis on support, to examine how the EU is perceived, and what "images" it evokes in people's minds.

In fact, this is explored in the literature that examines the external perceptions of the EU, specifically on how the EU is perceived outside of its borders. The focus of these studies has been geographically varied, including individual case studies of key strategic partners, (Bayoumi 2007; Chaban & Kauffmann 2007; Jain & Pandey 2010) and larger-scale, comparative transnational studies

(Chaban et al. 2013; Chaban & Elgström 2014; Fioramonti & Poletti 2008; Zhang 2010). This research has thus provided a broad overview of perceptions of the EU, covering most of the key strategic and economic powers across the world, from North and South America to Africa, Asia and the Pacific. The main target groups of these studies were primarily elites (including political, business, civil society and media cohorts), though there has also been some more limited interest in non-governmental actors and public opinion.

This empirical research has revealed that the EU has a relatively low profile outside of the European continent, with few people who understand or even know of it, especially among the general population (Jain & Pandey 2010; Lucarelli & Fioramonti 2008). Nevertheless, the literature has uncovered certain "images" that are recurrent in the external perceptions of the EU. In general, the picture has not been of a significant role: the EU is not seen as a particularly central actor in global relations, and seldom as a leader (Chaban & Elgström 2014). Some studies have highlighted perceptions of the EU's potential to be a global power, especially as a counterbalance to US hegemony, though this was often coupled with significant scepticism about its capability to do so (Bayoumi 2007; Lucarelli & Fioramonti 2008). Indeed, the existing external perceptions research has very little to say about the EU's hard power capabilities, and when this is addressed, the broad conclusion is that other states see the EU as weak, limited (Chaban et al. 2006, 2013) and non-threatening (Portela 2010) in military and security issues. Nevertheless, it has been argued that the EU's power and leadership-capabilities cannot, and indeed should not be reduced to a one-dimensional polar question: instead,

this perception is contingent on issue-specificity and regional perspectives, so that while the EU's hard power is seen as a non-issue, the EU's leadership in economic affairs, in contrast, has been greatly recognised (Chaban et al. 2013).

Certainly, the literature has highlighted that there is a general agreement about the EU's image as a powerful economic actor (Chaban et al. 2013; Chaban & Elgström 2014; Elgström 2007), and as a result, it is also seen as an important source of economic opportunity, primarily as a trading partner (Lucarelli & Fioramonti 2008: 3). In a similar vein, the EU is also widely acknowledged as a model for regional integration, often openly praised as the most successful one in the world (Fioramonti & Poletti 2008; Lucarelli & Fioramonti 2008). However, this image is not without its weaknesses: the EU's economic strength has been impaired by perceptions of inconsistent policies, internal division, and a lack of perceived legitimacy (Chaban et al. 2006; Elgström 2007). In addition, it has been denounced for its protectionist policies, which are perceived as a sign of Western domination (Fioramonti & Poletti 2008: 177–8; Lucarelli & Fioramonti 2008: 4).

On the other hand, there has been more debate about the EU's soft power capabilities– the ability to shape the preferences of others through the power of attraction (Nye 2004: 5) –, especially regarding its image as a normative power. This concept describes the EU's "ideational impact", capable of promoting certain norms and values externally, thus shaping what is considered as "normal" in international relations (Manners 2002). Though the concept has become popular in academic circles, the external perceptions

research has uncovered mixed findings: whilst some studies have found very little evidence that the EU is seen as a normative power at all (Lucarelli 2007), others have found that the EU is seen as an important norm promoter, especially in the areas of democracy promotion, human rights and environmental policy (Bayoumi 2007; Chaban et al. 2006, 2013; Kilian & Elgström 2010). This disparity in empirical findings has been attributed to geographical factors, with the perception of the EU's normative power being much more prominent in the EU's southern and eastern neighbourhood and much weaker or non-existent in the rest of the world (Larsen 2014). Consistently, however, the normative dimension of the EU is never seen as a dominant characteristic but – at best – only secondary to its perception as an economic power (Larsen 2014), and is often accompanied by criticisms about double standards, lack of effectiveness and a Eurocentric view that in some parts of the world is seen as akin to neo-colonialism (Chaban et al. 2013; Larsen 2014; Lucarelli & Fioramonti 2008).

In sum, the literature has shown that external perceptions of the EU are not entirely positive, consistent or even existent – as mentioned before, there is a large degree of ignorance about the EU outside of the continent. An interesting by-product of these findings is the revelation that there exists a significant gap between the EU's self-image and the perceptions of external actors (Bengtsson & Elgström 2012; Fioramonti & Poletti 2008). This is most notable regarding the image of the EU's "distinctiveness", which is often accused of Eurocentrism, and scepticism of whether being "different" is a positive aspect (Lucarelli & Fioramonti 2008).

Explanations about the *why* of these images, however, has been much lacking. Unlike the "internal attitudes" literature, studies on the external perceptions of the EU have tended to focus on descriptive analyses of attitudes, remaining largely under-theorised and with limited efforts to explore the determinants behind these views, only to the extent of contextualising the images within the relations between the EU and that specific country studied (Lucarelli 2014: 12). There are two notable exceptions to this. The first is the analytical framework developed by Tsuruouka (2008), which explores the "exogenous" and "endogenous" sources of perceptions of the EU: the first describing views that are a result of the actions of the EU, its successes and failures; whilst the latter looks at perceptions that are formed due to circumstances outside of the EU's control, often related to the makeup of the state that forms the perception. Accordingly, exogenous sources – those emanating from the EU – can be actions such as the establishment of the EU's foreign and security policy or enlargement (Tsuruoka 2008), the type of role the EU plays in each region or how the EU chooses to project itself (Chaban et al. 2013). In contrast, endogenous sources – those that are independent of the EU's actions – can derive from political, social and security cultures, differentiated normative understandings and different types of regimes (Chaban et al. 2013). In a similar vein, a second attempt at explaining the formation of external perceptions was proposed in a quantitative study by Schlipphak (2013), who argues that non-EU citizens' feelings towards the EU can be explained through contextual variables at the country level – which is similar to Tsuruoka's concept of exogenous sources – and individual-level conceptions of supranationalism.

4.3 A typology of perspectives

Constructivist theory assumes that the world is socially constructed, providing the interests and identities of agents within it (Checkel 1998; Wendt 1992). Material structures are therefore given meaning by the social context. In this way, the same object, action or declaration can be interpreted very differently, depending on the agent doing the interpretation. Usually, these differences in perspectives are driven by the historical, cultural, political and social context, which contribute to the construction of the agent's identity (Flockhart 2016: 87).

Thus, to analyse how elites working in Brussels perceive the EU, one must first think of the different perspectives that they can take, and what informs these perspectives. Consequently, this paper first develops a typology of elite perspectives on the EU, explained by a constructivist understanding of identity formation, arguing that elites' views are influenced by the political relationship between the EU and the country that they represent.

Based on previous literature on the internal and external attitudes towards the EU, the paper proposes that elite perspectives can be broadly categorised into a simple two-dimensional typology: expectations from the EU and assessments of the EU.

The first dimension looks at whether elites' have high or low expectations of what the EU can deliver for their states. This classification is based on Hill's (1993, 1998) capabilities-expectations gap, describing a dissonance between

external demands on the EU, and its ability to deliver on these. On the one hand, Hill argued that demands on the EU, both internally and externally, had been "talked up […] to a point where it is not capable of fulfilling the new expectations already (and often irrationally) held of it" (Hill 1993: 315). Specifically, Hill (1993) listed four functions that the EU had been performing: stabilising of Western Europe; managing world trade; acting as a voice for the developed world; and providing a second Western voice in international diplomacy. In addition, he also speculated on another six functions that the Union would conceivably be expected to fulfil in the post-Cold War and post-Maastricht era: a replacement for the USSR in the global balance of power; a regional pacifier in Eastern Europe; a global intervenor; a mediator of conflicts; a bridge between rich and poor; and a joint supervisor of the world economy. In contrast, Hill argued that the EU's capabilities, in terms of its cohesiveness, resources and instruments, fell short of being able to meet the heavy demands that such high expectations place on the EU (Hill 1993). Though in revisiting the issue five years later Hill (1998) found that the gap may have somewhat narrowed, he reiterated his warning that such a gap between capabilities and expectations could be dangerous, as it could lead to unrealistic policies both internally and externally, and produce disproportionate disillusionment and resentment, both of which would divert attention away from more realistic projects that may otherwise be pursued (Hill 1998: 23).

In the typology presented here, the spotlight is on the *demandeurs*, hence the focus is on elites' expectations, classifying them as either having high or low hopes from the EU. The emphasis is on what the EU *is expected to be able do*.

Those with high expectations will tend to have very ambitious hopes for the EU's impact in their countries and indeed in the region, which could often be quite beyond the Union's capabilities. On the other hand, those with low expectations may not be completely devoid of anticipation about what the EU can achieve, but these will be more reserved and cautious.

Regarding the second dimension of the typology, it is also possible to classify perspectives according to how the EU is assessed, taking the classic dichotomous classification which sees people as broadly designated into having supportive or critical attitudes towards the EU. People who are categorised as having a positive assessment of the EU will generally be supportive of the Union. In contrast, those who have a critical assessment of it will see the EU generally in a more negative light, though this could signify a qualified distrust or the resistance to certain policies or activities of the EU, rather than an outright rejection of the entirety of the European project. Consequently, it must be noted that the classification in the typology shows general trends rather than absolutes: those who assess the EU positively may not think that the EU is perfect, but will in general tend to be supportive of it, especially regarding their assessment of its policies and actions; in contrast, critics will not necessarily reject EU integration, but will be more critical of EU policies and activities on the ground, mostly when these directly affect their countries.

Table 4-1: Typology of perspectives on the EU

		Expectations from the EU	
		High	***Low***
Assessment of the EU	***Positive***	IDEALISTS	PRAGMATICS
	Critical	DISILLUSIONED	SCEPTICS

Together, the two dimensions of EU expectations and assessment yield four ideal-type categories of perspectives on the EU, as illustrated in Table 4.1. *Idealists* have high expectations and a positive assessment of the EU, whilst *pragmatics* have low expectations and positive views of the EU. On the other hand, *disillusioned* elites are more critical of the EU but still have high expectations about its potential future role, whilst *sceptics* are both critical and have low expectations of past and future EU policies. It is hypothesised that these four perspectives thus constitute the "lens" through which elites in Brussels view the EU. Depending on the category that elites belong to, each of them will form a different image of the EU.

Based on this typology, it is theorised that there are four ideal-type respondents, corresponding to each perspective, based on how they are expected to see the EU's image and role in the region. These views are tested by considering three aspects of the EU: its economic, political and security dimensions. These categories have been chosen because they largely correspond to the images that existing literature on the EU's external perceptions has discussed. The description of each ideal-type typology is illustrated in Table 4.2.

First, idealists perceive the EU to already have had a positive impact in their countries, whilst also having ambitious, and sometimes unrealistic expectations about its role both in their countries and in the region as a whole. Economically, they see the EU as a global trading partner and a guide in helping them to transition to a free market economy, whilst in the long run they expect that their relationship with the Union will improve living standards and deliver a "Western-style" prosperity. Politically, the EU would be praised for helping to build institutional democracy in post-communist states, regarded as a "normative power" in international relations, especially for its role in spreading democratic values, changing the "hearts and minds" of the population. In terms of international security, idealists consider the EU to have been instrumental in bringing peace and stability in the region, and to balance Russian and American influence in global relations. Additionally, the EU is seen as a key partner in ensuring the security of the region, for example in anti-terror cooperation, and to take an active role in crisis management, which will be achieved with the development of a European military force.

Similarly, *pragmatics* consider that the EU has made a positive difference in their states, though they also tend to be cautious about their expectations, acknowledging the somewhat limited capabilities of the EU. In economic terms, they still see the global benefits of a trade partnership with the Union and its role in helping them to transition to a free market economy, however they are also aware that this process involves significant sacrifices on their part. Similarly, whilst they expect an improvement in their living standards, pragmatics are also aware that this will be slow and limited. Politically,

pragmatics see the EU as a normative power but with more limited capabilities than idealists, crediting it with helping to introduce democratic institutions and values in post-communist Europe, though aware that this change is slow and limited, especially when it comes to changing mentalities. In security terms, the EU is credited with maintaining peace internally within its member states and its role in ensuring stability and security cooperation in the region, though acknowledging shortcomings, for example during the Bosnian War. Pragmatics also consider the creation of an EU military power a beneficial step, but one that is not realistic, at least in the short to medium term.

In contrast, *disillusioned* elites have high expectations about the potential benefits that the EU could deliver to their countries, but they frequently are critical about the EU's current policies and demands on their states. Disillusioned elites will enjoy the benefits of trade with the EU but will criticise it for protectionist measures such as the common agricultural policy (CAP). Additionally, they will also expect that their relationship with the EU will bring economic prosperity and improved living standards, though resentful of what they will consider a liberal market template imposed on their economies. Similarly, they will expect the EU to be a major power in balancing Russian and American influence globally, and to maintain stability and peace regionally, whilst being critical of the EU's capabilities and commitment in crisis management, especially during the Bosnian War. Politically, though the building of an institutional democracy and the dissemination of democratic values will be seen as a positive contribution from the EU, these may also be interpreted as an attempt to impose a "liberal"-style democracy.

Lastly, *sceptics* are not only critical of the EU, but also have low expectations about the EU's capabilities. Economically, they criticise trade with the EU for creating an unequal relationship as well as the EU's protectionist policies, such as the CAP. Politically, the EU's role as a normative power is seen as a covert cultural and political expansion to the East, and an American-style attempt to export liberal democracy. In addition, the EU is criticised for its double standards in expecting democratisation from post-communist states, whilst itself struggling with internal shortcomings. The EU's influence in global security would be dismissed as irrelevant next to NATO, whilst the development of Europe's military power is seen as unrealistic due to a lack of consensus and unwillingness among member states.

Table 4-2: Characteristics of ideal-type categories of EU perspectives

Dimensions	Perspectives			
	High expectations, positive	***Low expectations, positive***	***High expectations, critical***	***Low expectations, critical***
Economic	➢ global trade partner ➢ help with transition to free market economy ➢ improved living standards ➢ prosperity	➢ global trade partner ➢ transition to free market economy but involves sacrifices ➢ improvement in living standards but limited/slow	➢ access to trade but protectionist measures ➢ prosperity ➢ improved living standards ➢ imposing liberal market template	➢ unequal relationship in trade ➢ trade inhibited by protectionist policies
Political	➢ build institutional democracy ➢ normative power ➢ democratic values, changing "hearts and minds"	➢ introduce democratic institutions ➢ limited normative power ➢ democratic values, but slow and limited change	➢ build institutional democracy ➢ introduce democratic values ➢ imposing liberal democracy	➢ Normative power is covert cultural and political expansion ➢ US-style exporting of liberal democracy ➢ Double standards
Security	➢ stability and peace in the region ➢ balance of power: Russia, USA ➢ security cooperation and crisis management ➢ military force	➢ maintain peace internally ➢ (limited) regional stability ➢ Security cooperation ➢ Military power would be beneficial but not realistic	➢ stability and peace in the region ➢ balance of power: Russia, USA ➢ mishandled crisis management in the past	➢ military power not relevant due to NATO ➢ military power not realistic
	IDEALISTS	***PRAGMATICS***	***DISILLUSIONED***	***SCEPTICS***

The typology thus suggests that elites' perceptions of the EU can be categorised into a simple two-dimensional typology of EU perspectives. In addition, the paper also argues that a key determinant for understanding what particular perspective elites take is the political relationship between their states and the EU.

This contention is based on a constructivist understanding of structure-agency interaction. Constructivists emphasise the mutually constitutive nature of agent-structure relationship, so that interest and identity formation emerge from and are endogenous to interaction between agents (such as individuals, states or non-state actors) and the structures of their environment (Checkel 2008: 73; Jupille et al. 2003: 14). From this perspective, institutions can have deeper effects on the core properties of agents (Jupille et al. 2003: 14–15), providing them with collective identities. People can have many identities linked to the many institutional roles that they belong to – such as brother, son, teacher, citizen – and these identities form the basis of their interests (Wendt 1992: 398).

Consequently, based on a constructivist view of elite interest-formation, the paper argues that the interests (and therefore perspectives) of elites are heavily informed by the state interests of the countries that they belong to. In particular, their interests will be shaped by their state's relationship with the EU, which can be classified into four broad types: member states, candidate states, Eastern Partnership states and bilateral relations.

First, member states include the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) that joined in the Eastern enlargements of 2004 and 2007. Bureaucratic elites from member states work in the EU institutions, such as the Permanent Representations, the Council or the Commission. Second, there are the elites who work in non-member state diplomatic missions, which represent three further types of relationship with the EU. On the one hand are the candidate and potential candidate countries from the Western Balkans, which are currently in the process of aligning their domestic legislation with the EU *acquis communautaire* and negotiating their future accession to the EU. Third, post-Soviet states are currently part of the Eastern Partnership, a joint initiative involving the EU that "aims at building a common area of shared democracy, prosperity, stability and increased cooperation" (European External Action Service 2016). Fourth, the last category involves those states that have bilateral relations with the Union, but there is no major framework in place governing their relationship with the EU. In the research focus of this study, Russia is the only state that fits this category, which despite being formally engaged in a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the EU since 1997, its relationship with Europe has significantly "cooled down", especially since the events of the Ukrainian crisis in 2013-14.

Each of these four types of relationships essentially creates dynamics between a state and the EU that are hypothesised to influence the frame of reference of elites. First, elites from member states will have an in-depth view of the inner workings of the EU. These elites are more likely to understand the capabilities and limitations of a Union of 28 member states, whilst a sense of belonging is

also likely to encourage in-group favouritism and a protective attitude towards the European project. Consequently, elites from member states are most likely to fit the category of pragmatics, with a positive assessment but relatively low expectations from the EU. On the other hand, both candidate states and Eastern Partnership states have expressed their desire to join the EU, though in the case of the latter this is a more long-term aspiration. Regardless, similarly to the trends seen in the current CEEC member states before their accession, it can reasonably be assumed that these states want to join the EU because they anticipate significant benefits from doing so, creating a climate of optimism and expectation. However, whilst candidate states will be closer to their goal of joining the EU, this will also entail higher adaptation costs, which – paradoxically – may make elites from candidate states more critical of EU demands. Elites from Eastern Partnership states, on the other hand, will be more likely to enjoy the benefits of EU assistance provided in the context of their partnership, whilst demands on them will be less stringent. In this way, elites from Eastern Partnership states will fit the category of idealists, having high expectations and a positive outlook on the EU, whilst those from candidate states will fit the category of disillusioned elites, with high expectations but of a more critical disposition towards the EU. Lastly, elites from Russia – which represents the "bilateral" relationship type – are to fit in the "sceptics" category of the typology, having low expectations and a more critical attitude of the Union. This is explained by a relationship that is completely devoid of a desire to integrate on both sides, whilst frequently characterised by a competitive relationship.

In sum, it is hypothesised that the state-level political relationship can serve as the determinant to understand the particular perspectives that post-communist elites take. This argument is illustrated in Table 4.3, which shows the paper's typology of perspectives with the corresponding theorised political association of the countries they represent. This table thus serves as the main hypothesis, which will be tested in the empirical section.

Table 4-3: Typology of perspectives on the EU with country-level political association

		Expectations from the EU	
		High	***Low***
Assessment of EU	***Positive***	IDEALISTS *Eastern Partnership states*	PRAGMATICS *Member states*
	Critical	DISILLUSIONED *Candidate states*	SCEPTICS *Bilateral relations*

4.4 Data and sampling

To examine how post-communist elites perceive the EU, the paper uses qualitative data collected in 2015 during 25 interviews with post-communist elites from 13 countries working in Brussels, including diplomats working at Embassies accredited to the EU, officials working at Permanent Representations, and Commission civil servants. Altogether, interviews were conducted with officials working at the Permanent Representations of Bulgaria

and Hungary; diplomats from all candidate states of the Western Balkans, including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina[30], The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia; diplomats working at non-candidate state Embassies, including Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine; and officials working at the Commission, with nationalities covering the Czech Republic, Hungary and, Slovakia.[31] In total, this covered four member states, five candidate states, three EP states, and one bilateral state.

Data collection was conducted in April and June of 2015, during two separate fieldwork visits. The aim was to interview officials from post-communist states covering member, candidate and non-candidate states from Central and Eastern Europe, the West Balkans and the Caucasus. In total, 25 interviews were conducted with 28 respondents.[32] There were 12 female and 17 male participants and they were mostly younger, with around 75% being under 50 years old. They comprised 3 high-level officials (Ambassadors), 3 low-level officials (Attachés and Third secretaries) and 23 mid-level officials (such as First secretaries and Counsellors in the Embassies, or Team Leaders and Project Managers in the Commission). Respondents were selected through convenience sampling, by emailing their respective Embassies or Permanent Representations asking for interviews, and by snowball sampling, through contacts within the Hungarian Permanent Representation and the Commission.

[30] While Bosnia and Herzegovina was only a potential candidate state at the time of the interviews, for simplicity's sake it should be understood to be included whenever the category of "candidate states" is referred to throughout this paper.
[31] See Appendix P for a full list of interviewees (anonymous).
[32] On four occasions the interviews were conducted with two respondents at the same time; one respondent was interviewed twice as the first time the interview had to be cut short due to a staff meeting.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the use of an interview script[33], and took place at the Embassies and offices of the interviewees, lasting on average around 55 minutes. The conversations were recorded[34] with the consent of the respondent(s), who were guaranteed anonymity.

Data collected was transcribed and coded using a thematic analysis approach, "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke 2006). The analysis was substantive and cross-sectional, in that the aim was to understand and interpret meanings in the text, using a common system of labels applied to the whole dataset (Spencer et al. 2014: 272–3), based on the typology developed and presented in the theoretical section.

Though the interviews provided rich qualitative data for answering the research question, as with all research there were a number of limiting factors that could affect the analysis. Most importantly, the sample's size and representativeness were limited by a difficulty in accessing elites working in Brussels.

On the one hand, although emails were sent several times to all Embassies that were part of the geographical area of interest, not all responded to the request for interviews. In addition, whilst it was requested that interviews be conducted with as many of the staff as possible, often the number of interviewees that acceded to the request were one or two from an Embassy.

[33] See Appendix Q.

[34] Except in the case of the Macedonian candidate, who preferred that the conversation was not recorded on tape, only that notes were taken.

This was particularly problematic in the case of elites representing states with bilateral relations with the EU, where it was only possible to conduct one interview: with the Russian respondent. The availability of a single case provides some severe limitations for the discussion of the "sceptics" section of the typology, though ultimately it was decided to include the discussion of this category, as it still provides some useful data for the objectives of this research. Paradoxically, where respondents were recruited through personal contacts or snowball sampling, there was a tendency for overrepresentation from a single country. This was highlighted in the member states category of the typology, where 5 out of the 6 Permanent Representation officials and 5 out of the 7 Commission officials were of Hungarian nationality. As a result, the discussion of the "pragmatic" elites perspective is liable to be biased towards a Hungarian view, though every effort was taken to balance the argument with the viewpoints of the three non-Hungarian respondents, whilst being careful not to over-emphasise the Hungarian perspective. Such difficulties in sample recruitment highlight the inherent difficulties of qualitative research, which is often characterised by an unsatisfactory sample size – especially when the targeted population consists of elites –, despite the researcher's best efforts. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this paper, the data generated from the interviews still provides some interesting insights, though particular caution should be taken not to over-interpret the conclusions, in the absence of further research.

In addition, the interviews themselves were sometimes limited due to time constraints, which either resulted in shorter interviews, or occasionally in

interviews where two participants were present at the same time. While this could have affected their responses, sometimes this also yielded interesting dynamics where a perception of one respondent would be challenged by the other, creating an environment that was reminiscent of a focus group. In addition, because of time constraints and the nature of semi-structured interviews – in which there are a limited number of set questions but allowing room for open discussion and a free flow of ideas from the respondents – occasionally not all questions could be asked during the interviews.

4.5 Images of the EU: the view from the Brussels elites

How do post-communist elites working in Brussels perceive the EU? In this section, the paper considers each of the four perspectives described in the typology, and how each of these view the EU's economic, political and security dimensions. The empirical data collected shows that in general, elites' views are consistent with the hypothesised typology, though views tend to be more in agreement when it comes to the Union's economic image, and less so in the case of its political and security dimensions. In addition, the discussion also shows that – consistent with a constructivist explanation of structure-agency interaction – the different perspectives that elites adopt reflect the interests of the states that they represent, particularly regarding the state-level relationship with the EU.

4.5.1 Idealists: Eastern Partnership states

Elites from European Partnership states were generally very positive about EU achievements in their countries, especially in its transformative power, whilst also having high expectations about its future impact, particularly in regional security. Yet these assessments were characterised more by optimism about the EU's potential than naivety about its capabilities: as one respondent put it, though the EU "shows its remits, it's a project which is still in the making; it's changing and it's evolving, which is a good thing because it shows that it is alive" (Georgian diplomat). This image of the EU being "alive" was echoed by other respondents (the Moldovan diplomat called it "a Leviathan, […], a monster in a good sense, a beast that formed itself"), which indicates an expectation that the EU can grow, learn and improve.

Economically, though the EU was seen as an "economic powerhouse" (Moldovan elite), its attractiveness went beyond the perception of a simple trade opportunity; instead, there was more emphasis on the role of economic integration in enhancing development and prosperity. In this way, though the economic benefits of association with the EU were acknowledged, more importantly these were perceived to be a conduit to political reform, that is, a way to reform government and society, moving away from the previous socialist system. Similarly, the freedom of movement that the single market and Schengen ensured was also highlighted as an important achievement of the EU (Moldovan diplomat), and indeed all three interviewees mentioned visa liberalisation as an important instrument that not only encourages their states

to fulfil political benchmarks, but also as a means of allowing exchange of ideas that can bring transformation at the societal level.

In its political dimension, all respondents confirmed that the EU has had a positive transformative influence in their states. Interestingly, this contradicts the prevailing belief in the academic literature that the EU has a low impact in third countries in the absence of its most effective democratising tool, the promise of membership (Schimmelfennig 2009; Sedelmeier 2011). Certainly, EP elites agreed that it helped to have an "endgame" (Georgian diplomat), or at least a stronger political signal ("a political light") of membership prospects, which could provide an impetus for costly and "hurtful" reforms (Ukrainian elite). Nonetheless, the perception was that "at least in Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, the EU's efforts towards achieving greater democratisation and instilling or sharing best practices […], a lot of it is working" (Moldovan diplomat). One reason why EU-driven reforms may have been successful is that the perception was that these were not imposed; rather, the EU was seen as "mentoring" and "monitoring" the implementation of policies (Ukrainian diplomat), adopted in a consensual way without any dictating (Moldovan diplomat). Altogether, the general perception was that the EU can be called a normative power, which "aims at generating change in the way it is considered to be good, morally good in terms of law, good governance, democratisation, etc., and these are […] in all [the EU's] instruments" (Georgian diplomat).

The EU's normative power was also seen as an important instrument in the international security dimension, particularly in the way that the Union

maintained its integrity when facing Russia after the Ukrainian crisis, despite it being a costly move (Georgian diplomat), showing that it is "prepared to work not as a club that is interested only in its own interest but [as a] power which looks beyond" (Ukrainian diplomat). Despite this, all three interviewees expressed a keenness for the EU to move beyond its role as a soft power and to establish itself as a more forceful actor in its external relations, by consolidating and developing a more unified voice (Moldovan diplomat). In fact, the Ukrainian respondent speculated that the events of the Ukrainian crisis will push the EU to become a stronger power and a defender of democratic values in the region: he remarked that while he didn't necessarily see a willingness on the EU's part towards this path, "real life" was pushing the EU in this direction, and that it was slowly, probably rather unconsciously, moving to become a regional power (Ukrainian diplomat).

These optimistic perceptions were generally consistent with the hypothesised "idealist" perspective, and as theorised, they could be linked to the desire that the EP states have of becoming part of the EU. Indeed, all three representatives interviewed – from Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova – noted that their states had ambitions to join the EU in the future, though they admitted that they would "have to be realistic about it" (Moldovan diplomat), and that this would have to be a "long-term path" (Georgian diplomat).

4.5.2 Pragmatics: member states

Officials from member states were generally quite positive in their attitudes towards the EU, though this could be expected due to the general feeling that they represented the EU and so formed a part of it. At the same time, these elites were also more "grounded" in their expectations from the EU, and their views often displayed a strong awareness of the limitations of its capabilities.

The pragmatic perspective of these elites was clearly illustrated by a sense that they were conscious of and freely acknowledged the shortcomings of the EU: that it was slow, bureaucratic, operated on double standards or was based on compromises and lowest common denominator decisions. Tellingly, elites frequently described their opinion of the EU as being "realistic". However, respondents also defended the system in implying that these were the inevitable consequences of it being a regional organisation rather than a sovereign state. Thus, the widespread conclusion was that whilst the EU was not perfect and had its limitations, it was a worthwhile project that has had an unequivocal societal and economic transformative impact on the member states (Hungarian diplomat). This was also compounded with a cautious optimism about the future of the EU, which – despite recent crises – was seen as resilient and "particularly famous for finding unprecedented solutions" (Hungarian diplomat).

Economically, the EU was perceived as an "economic giant" (Hungarian diplomat), and indeed its global influence and soft power were considered to be rooted mainly in its economic strength. At the same time, elites acknowledged that the financial crisis had damaged the EU's international soft

power, along with the conflict in Ukraine and the refugee crisis, but this was considered "a moment in history" that will pass, though it clearly had affected the EU's global influence (Bulgarian diplomat). Internally, the freedom of movement ensured by its single market and the economic prospects of membership were both highlighted as important parts of the EU's attraction. In fact, the freedom of mobility within the EU was considered to have had a great impact on CEEC citizens, especially in encouraging the development of relationships between people and to establish a European consciousness (Hungarian diplomat).

On the other hand, similar to the expectations described by EP elites, officials described the idealistic sentiments that characterised the mood in their own countries during the accession negotiations. However, respondents also admitted that accession was achieved at the cost of painful social and economic reforms, and the expected wealth often did not live up to expectations. In this respect, member state elites had a more "sober" opinion of the EU's impact than EP elites did. Nonetheless, there was also an unequivocal sense that their countries were better off than they otherwise would have been without having joined the EU. One Commission official pointed out that the EU's greatest impact in fact was not in delivering economically, but rather in its social and political impact:

> In 2004, when there were big expectations, people asked in a half-joking way, how our lives would be improved. And then we said jokingly: "don't worry, from May 1st [2004, the date of accession] everything will be different. From your bank account, to the roads..." of course. At that time, I spoke at several conferences and I said then – and I am still of the same opinion – that the most of what EU membership has

> contributed was in this European consciousness, in the adaptation of the legal environment. Not in money. The money is unimportant, everyone thought […] that those billions would solve anything... they will solve nothing, and often they only made the situation worse. I think that money will not improve the situation, but democracy, the legal framework will (Hungarian Commission official).

Indeed, in political terms the EU was regarded as having had an important normative role in the implementation of democracy in the CEECs, especially leading up to accession. One elite remarked that the "process of integration […] shaped the entire understanding of my generation […] of what it really means to live in a democratic state" (Bulgarian diplomat). At the same time, many respondents conceded that their states had perhaps too high expectations from the EU prior to accession, and that membership did not deliver all that was anticipated. In this regard, elites from member states were positive about the transformative normative power of the EU, though having the benefit of hindsight they were also more realistic about the extent of its impact. For example, several respondents also remarked on the apparent slowdown of reforms after accession, and even the apparent democratic backsliding in some of the new member states. This also raised the question about double standards and the lack of mechanisms to measure democracy in the member states, because "it is nonsense that what can be enforced in the candidate states cannot be enforced in the member states at all" (Hungarian Commission official).

Regarding the EU's international security dimension, there was much more scepticism about the EU's influence in world politics. Globally, it was seen as a soft power with influence only in "soft issues" such as development, climate

issues or disaster reduction (Bulgarian diplomat). The EU's geopolitical success was recognised regionally in its normative efforts in the context of accession, by pushing for its Eastern neighbours to become part of the EU sphere of interest, rather than a Russian one (Slovakian Commission official), or by bringing stability to the region, such as for example facilitating dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo (Hungarian diplomat). On the other hand, it was also clear that the Union was not expected to become a hard power in the near future. One elite explained that this was due to being "terribly afraid of war" (Hungarian Commission official), whilst another described it as still a very sensitive topic for the member states, though she noted that "for harmonious development to be present you need these two parts of being a world actor [hard and soft powers] to be more on par… I won't say being absolutely equal, but still being on par" (Bulgarian official).

In sum, member state elites working in the EU displayed positive and cautiously optimistic views of the EU, whilst being careful to acknowledge its limitations and shortcomings, fitting the hypothesised "pragmatic" perspective, and a view that can be explained by their status as member states. On the one hand, this was because they had the experience of accession behind them, seeing that expectations of the EU's transformative power were not unfounded, but also not as far-reaching as originally hoped for, and that the EU provided "not only opportunities but also responsibilities" (Hungarian Commission Official). On the other hand, these officials working in Permanent Representations and the Commission had the privilege of seeing the "inner workings" of the EU, which provided them with a more realistic point of view of its potential and

capabilities. As one official described it, “seeing it from the inside, everything gains more ‘shades’” (Hungarian Commission official).

4.5.3 The disillusioned: candidate states

Elites from candidate states had a disillusioned perspective of the EU, characterised by high expectations of the benefits that joining the EU could bring to their states, whilst being disappointed and critical of the process of accession, which – according to one diplomat – was too bureaucratic, “without soul” and consisting of the procession of an endless benchmarks and conditions, lacking in vision or a clear idea of how to become part of the EU (Bosnian diplomat). Notably, there was also a shared resentment against the way the CEECs were “absorbed and pushed down the pipeline” (Macedonian diplomat), whereas the Balkans are always “under a stern light of European observation” (Albanian diplomat). This perception drew frequent criticism from elites who accused the EU of having political motivations for enlargement and imposing double standards. Yet even when these negative assessments were brought up, joining the EU was consistently seen as being “the only path […] to take forward” (Macedonian diplomat), in fact, “the future of not only [the] country but also of all the region of the Western Balkans” (Montenegrin diplomat).

Most unambiguously, it was the economic prospects that the EU could offer which constituted the highest expectations for candidate state elites. Certainly, elites highlighted the benefits of accession for boosting their global trade

capabilities and domestic economies, as well as having access to a much larger open market. More importantly, there was also a dominant perception that accession was the means of improving their citizens' standard of living and prospects for the future, a view apparently shared by the domestic population: "when you are in Serbia you see this higher standard of life, better condition for employment [in the EU]… That's what we think about when we talk about the European Union, and it's normal" (Serbian diplomat). At the same time, it was acknowledged that such prospects would be accompanied by sacrifices in their countries, and there would be a need for both economic and political reforms moving "along the same direction… two tracks but not different tracks, they have to go at the same time" (Bosnian diplomat).

Certainly, support in the implementation of political reforms in the West Balkans was also highlighted as an achievement of the EU, in matters such as "institutional building, legislative building and also building of the administrative capacities" (Montenegrin diplomat). Additionally, elites hoped that the implementation the EU *acquis* would help not only the institutional democratisation of their countries, but it could also "change the mind of the people" (Bosnian diplomat). In this respect, EU membership was seen as a crucial factor in changing the old Soviet political culture into a more democratic one. Despite these high expectations, however, there were multiple aspects of the relationship with the EU that were seen critically by candidate state elites. On the one hand, there was often scepticism about the implementation process. Some Serbian elites, for example, questioned whether it is necessarily appropriate for the EU to use its normative power to impose Western, liberal

values on the Balkans. On this issue, one diplomat argued that it would be difficult to “copy-paste” the same tactics used on the CEECs 10 or 15 years before, and that the EU should “impose the norms and the rules in a different way, having in mind the specificity of some countries” (Serbian diplomat). According to him, part of the problem was that the EU was out of touch, and it “doesn't understand that what they decide in Brussels is not the same as what is happening on the ground" (Serbian diplomat). Interestingly this sentiment was echoed by one Hungarian Permanent Representative who actually sat on the EU’s side of the table, yet still felt that sometimes his colleagues from the older member states did not fully appreciate the Balkans context.

On the other hand, the EU was also criticised for being politically motivated in its treatment of the Western Balkans. This was a major grievance mentioned by the Macedonian diplomat, whose country had been repeatedly blocked from opening accession negotiations by the Greek vote in the Council. Other elites also complained about the EU being driven by political considerations, referring to the CEECs, which were seen to have been rushed through accession due to strategic reasons, whilst the Western Balkans were being put through what was perceived as a lengthy, tedious and bureaucratic process of meeting benchmarks and frameworks. This created a sense of the EU imposing double standards, and only allowing accession when this suited its geopolitical interests. Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker’s 2014 declaration of an “enlargement fatigue” in the EU and the halting of further accessions for 5 years only drew more criticisms from elites, who saw this as an unhelpful – and disappointing – attitude from the EU (Macedonian diplomat).

Interestingly, the EU's security dimension was not mentioned as an important aspect of its image in the eyes of candidate state elites. In fact, in global terms, one respondent surmised that even for the EU itself, "it's not so important to be a global leader [but rather] it's very important to be consolidated internally, in itself, and to guarantee the safeguards of values and achievements of states and people of the European Union" (Montenegrin diplomat). However, it was also recognised that the EU's regional security interests had shifted as a consequence of conflicts at its borders, such as civil war in Ukraine and the refugee crisis (Albanian diplomat). In fact, the EU's role in the Ukraine crisis was remarked upon by several respondents, though contrary to EP elites, who praised the EU's response to Russia, candidate state elites seemed more resentful that the EU's attention and funds were drawn away from the question of the accession of the Western Balkan countries.

The perception of candidate state elites thus fitted the typology of disillusioned states: their expectations of the benefits that membership could bring them were quite high, similar, in fact, to the idealistic sentiments described by member state elites prior to their accession; on the other hand, they also criticised many aspects of the integration process. Certainly, there were many aspects of EU influence that were regarded as having been very positive, but they were comparatively more critical of their assessment of the EU than others. The disillusioned perspective of these elites can be explained by their countries' status as candidates: this involves the implementation of the EU *acquis communautaire*, a process that is slow, tedious and often costly, and hence can quickly disappoint states that may not have expected such high costs

to accession. In fact, this was best illustrated in the interview with the two Bosnian respondents, one that had worked in Brussels less than a year, and another that was more veteran with more than three years of experience. When asked about their opinions of the EU, the "novice" diplomat was hopeful and optimistic about the future of his country's accession, whereas the senior diplomat declared that she was "disappointed with the EU, especially after three years […] spent in Brussels" (Bosnian diplomat). Evidently, this interview exemplified the disillusioned perspective of candidate state elites after years of accession negotiations.

4.5.4 Sceptics: Russia

Lastly, the Russian perspective was the only one that could be characterised as sceptic, given that it was not only fairly critical of the EU, but was also characterised by low expectations in terms of the Union's capabilities in foreign policy. In fact, it was often the very aspects that were praised as positive by other groups of respondents, such as exporting democratisation, which were criticised by the Russian respondent. Interestingly, however, whilst the Russian perspective was critical, it was not entirely negative: officially, he regarded overall EU-Russian relations as a "very cooperative and value-added exercise", whilst he also declared that his personal views also became "more nuanced" in that he did not "fall in love" with the EU but came to understand that there are misconceptions that prevailed in Russia.

The respondent's economic assessment of the EU was the most positive, which was seen as an important and successful model of economic integration, and one of the most advanced in the world, to the extent that the EU's institutional structure had been the model for the Eurasian Economic Union. However, the attractiveness of the EU economy, which was perceived by both candidate and EP states as a way of attaining a "European standard of living", was seen much more negatively. In fact, the Russian respondent argued that much of the EU's appeal came from "the Eiffel Tower, German beer or German cars", cumulatively adding up to Europe's appeal, but not synonymous with the EU's attraction: "it's not the institutions which are appealing, but the way of life of Europeans" (Russian diplomat). In this regard, he noted that the EU project should not be looked at "through pink glasses", and argued that the EU should actively work to dispel any sort of illusions about where its appeal comes from.

The EU's political dimension received much stronger criticism from the respondent, particularly regarding a "philosophical difference" between the EU and Russia on democratisation. For them, EU promotion of democracy abroad was perceived as an American-style attempt to impose regulation from outside with a "certain political agenda", a strategy that the Russian respondent considered "not helpful" and one that can send these emerging democracies "spiralling downwards". Instead, the Russian view was that democracy "is a political evolution, […] something that grows in the country, [and should be] simply [left] alone and [it will] stabilise and grow" (Russian diplomat). The EU's normative power was similarly criticised, not only seen as being imposed on Russia and other nations, but also as an expression of "European exclusivity

and European superiority", by implying that these values were something that the EU has and others do not, which comes across as "confrontational and divisive" (Russian diplomat).

The EU's security dimension also received heavy criticism, paradoxically both for being weak and becoming more ambitious. On the one hand, the EU's normative and soft powers were seen as an expression of the EU's inability to establish a forceful presence in international affairs:

> The reason why they [the EU] are so politically correct, why they place such an emphasis on values, it's because they can't do it otherwise, because that's the common foundation for European integration, and if they were to move away from that and start to speak about strategy and interests then those things would start coming apart (Russian diplomat).

At the same time, the EU's normative power was also seen as a veiled attempt to encroach on the Russian sphere of influence in the region. This was particularly noted with reference to the ENP states in the East, particularly Ukraine, Moldova, and the three Transcaucasian republics, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia. According to the Russian diplomat, these "have to become a common conduit, a gateway between the two parts of our continent, not a kind of *cordon sanitaire* between Russia and Europe". In this respect, the EU was criticised for turning from an introspective peace project to its image as a normative power, an "outward looking project […] that seeks to change the behaviour of other countries". For the respondent, these were two identities that may not necessarily be compatible, and the EU should remain a peace project that is "constructive", in the sense that it does not interfere with

the business of other nations but “respects the diversity of nations around the globe [and] the autonomous way in which countries and nations evolve” (Russian diplomat).

Such sceptical views of the EU from the Russian respondent fit well within the developed typology, and can be explained by a relationship that is characterised by a power struggle between the two entities in international politics. Indeed, the overall Russian perception indicates a desire to be treated as equals and to cease what has been seen as “interference” from the EU. This was clearly reflected in both the perceptions of the EU’s political and security dimensions, but also in the respondent’s repeated emphasis on needing equality and a dialogue “where there is no preaching involved or mentoring involved from the EU about what should be done by us, but rather [a] bilateral flow of ideas and a two-way channel” (Russian respondent).

4.6 Discussion and conclusions

The paper developed and presented a typology of post-communist elite perspectives on the EU. Based on previous studies on internal and external perceptions of the EU, the two-dimensional classification categorised perceptions on whether elites have high or low expectations from the EU, and whether their assessment of it is mostly positive or critical. Using a constructivist approach, the paper argued that this typology of elite perceptions can be explained by focusing on the interests of the countries that

the elites represent, particularly with regard to the state-level relationship between the EU. Subsequently, the empirical section tested the theoretical argument, demonstrating that each perception type matches elites coming from countries with specific types of political association with the EU. Although there were some within-group variations, the prevailing views were in accordance with expected ideal-type perspectives. Elites from EP states had an "idealist" perspective characterised by a positive view of the EU and high expectations about what it could deliver, whilst member state elites were equally positive, though more cautious in having lower expectations of the EU, thus making their perceptions more "pragmatic". Candidate states elites seemed to be "disillusioned", with high expectations but often critical of the EU's behaviour, and lastly the Russian view was "sceptical" in that it was both critical and had low expectations of EU capabilities.

An important point to note regarding these findings on elites' perceptions is the context at the time of data collection, involving several events that had significant consequences for the states in the region. The interviews were conducted in April and June of 2015, a period when the EU was just starting to emerge from the Eurozone crisis, whilst still in the middle of the European refugee crisis. Additionally, the events of the Ukrainian crisis – including the Euromaidan and the Russian annexation of Crimea – were still fresh in the minds of the respondents from the year before. Interestingly, it was this that was frequently highlighted by the respondents and placed as a central issue affecting the diplomats' perceptions of the EU's security dimension. Discussions of the financial and refugee crises however – though acknowledged

by a few respondents –, did not feature prominently in the interviews. Though these two events had an important impact on the social, political and economic aspects of the EU, the discussion of the elites' perspectives showed that these were seen only as "stumbling blocks" in the EU's development; as the Bulgarian official put it, a "moment in history that will pass". Nonetheless, even if it was only the Ukrainian crisis that was explicitly seen to have affected elite perspectives, it is highly likely that the other two crises contributed towards the general support for a "united Europe", clearly seen in the account of member states officials, but also reflected in their desire to join the EU as expressed by elites from the West Balkans and the EP states. The findings of this paper must therefore be considered with this historical context in mind, which undoubtedly affected the perspectives of the respondents.

Hence, looking at the overall discussion on elites' "images of the EU", it is interesting to note that a pattern emerges from the typology, where the link between perceptions of the EU and state-level political association suggests a progression of perspectives correlating with the progression of the relationship with the EU. First, when the relationship with the EU is characterised by a degree of political association which could involve reforms with EU aid, but which are very much dependent on the initiatives of the home state, as is the case in EP states, then elite perceptions tend to be very positive and high in expectations. When the relationship progresses to the candidate state stage,[35] elites retain their high expectations of what their country's relationship with

[35] For EP states this would be a "theoretical" progression, but candidate states and current member states would have gone through these phases.

the EU could achieve, but their views of the EU become more critical. This change from a highly idealised to a more disillusioned perspective could be explained by demanding reforms resulting from the implementation of the *acquis communautaire*.

Although candidate states are also expected to exercise their own initiative, often EU standards are perceived as being imposed, since meeting these are the condition for achieving accession to the EU. In other words, having the prospect of membership on the table raises the stakes of the relationship with the EU, as well as the cost of non-compliance: in the case of EP states, there is nothing lost if reforms are not implemented to the standards of the EU, which in effect has a more hands-off attitude towards them; in the case of candidate states, however, accession involves intense negotiations, evaluations of progress and yearly reports, and when benchmarks and frameworks are not met to the EU's satisfaction, the consequences could be costly for the state in its progress to become a member state. In this way, whilst still having high hopes for the benefits of membership, it is understandable that elites can become frequently frustrated and critical of the EU, explaining their disillusionment.

Once a state becomes a member of the EU, elites' attitudes seem to return to being positive, though their expectations also become lower. This pragmatic view can be explained by an appreciation of the benefits of being a full member, whilst being able to see the EU "from the inside", which gives elites a

more realistic perspective of what the EU really could achieve, given its limitations.

The above explanation thus illustrates a certain pattern of "progressivity" of EU attitudes "going from the outside in", with expectations negatively correlated with levels of integration, whilst evaluations of the EU's performance showing more of a U-curve, with a dip during the difficult years of accession. This means that EU perceptions change from an idealised image of the EU to a more realistic one, and whilst assessments turn critical, in the end member state elites are supportive of the EU, recognising the advantages of an integrated European community.

It must be noted, however, that these patterns only apply to states that have expressed an interest in becoming members of the EU, as the sceptic perspective of Russia does not pave the way for an evolution of the relationship, or at least not one that would be characterised by integration. This then raises an interesting twist on the conventional wisdom in the academic literature, which maintains that the EU's most effective democratising tool is a credible promise of membership, and that without it, it has little impact on third countries (Schimmelfennig 2009; Sedelmeier 2011). Instead, based on the findings of this paper, it should be added that a demand for membership could also be an effective instrument for EU influence.

In addition, these findings raise significant implications for post-communist perceptions of the EU inside and outside of its borders. The idealistic views of non-member states can have serious and dangerous social and political

consequences when the Union cannot deliver. The emergence of critical assessments among candidate state elites has already hinted at these risks. Although this paper has shown that eventual progression to member state status gives these bureaucrats insights that allow them to really understand and appreciate the benefits of integration in a pragmatic way, the question is whether this turn to a more positive view would happen equally among domestic political elites – and indeed the population – who may not have the same insights into the inner workings of the EU as the officials who work in Brussels. Certainly, the emergence of populist, Eurosceptic political forces in some of the new member states is suggestive of the dangers of unrealised expectations. The EU should therefore take care to conduct its relations with external states in a manner that is optimistic, but also practical, sensible and pragmatic.

Chapter 5. Discussion and conclusions

The European Union's (EU) transformative power in the region has for long been of central interest to European scholars. From its ability to transform border conflicts (Diez et al. 2006), to the democratisation and Europeanisation of policy (Grabbe 2006; Pridham 2006; Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2005; Sedelmeier 2011), to the diffusion of normative values through the socialisation of states and elites (Beyers 2005; Risse & Sikkink 1999; Schimmelfennig 2000), the EU has been credited with a far-reaching transformative impact in the European continent and beyond.

More recently, however, there has been an alarming increase in Euroscepticism and anti-democratic, extremist tendencies taking place in post-communist states – some of which are EU member states –, which has led to discussions about a democratic backsliding in the region (Bermeo 2016; Epstein & Jacoby 2014; Sedelmeier 2014). The thesis thus aimed to re-visit the less-researched area of the EU's influence at the micro-level of society, asking: *to what extent does the EU have a transformative power on political attitudes?*

In three research papers, the thesis approached the research problem by investigating how the Union can affect support for democracy and support for the EU among the general population and bureaucratic elites. The first paper examined the EU's influence on support for democracy in the general population of 25 post-communist states. Using an integrated longitudinal

dataset from the World Values Survey and the European Values Study, it investigated how state-level association with the EU has affected support for democracy among the population. This paper demonstrated that the state-level relationship with the EU can influence democratic support at the micro-level: when association with the EU is economic or political, the effect is positive; however, when the association involves integration as a candidate or member state, a rise in Euroscepticism among the population can in fact lead to lower levels of democratic support.

The findings of the first paper of the thesis demonstrated that attitudes towards the EU have an important role in altering the EU's transformative influence in individuals, highlighting a previously unexplored link between support for democracy and Euroscepticism, and showing that scepticism towards the EU in these states has the potential to be translated into scepticism towards the entire democratisation process. This finding has serious implications for the attitudes of elites towards the EU, though existing literature has so far given little attention to their opinions. Consequently, the second and third papers of the thesis concentrated on exploring support for the EU among bureaucratic elites at home and abroad, by investigating the perceptions of domestic civil servants as well as Brussels-based diplomats.

The second thesis paper examined the nature and determinants of national civil servants' attitudes towards the EU. Although Euroscepticism in Europe among political parties and the general population has been on the rise in recent years, there is very little known about support for the EU among civil

servants, despite their role in the transposition and implementation of supranational law. Consequently, the study answered the question: what is the nature and determinants of national civil servants' attitudes toward the EU? Using international socialisation theory, the paper examined a 2008 survey conducted of civil servants from seven new member states of Central and Eastern Europe. The findings show that civil servants generally tend to display high levels of support for the EU, particularly those officials whose daily work brings them into contact with the EU. The analysis further explored the scope conditions that facilitate socialisation, revealing that both the quantity and quality of contact with EU-related issues – in terms of prolonged exposure as well as interpersonal contact – matter in explaining the sources of variation in levels of support.

The third thesis paper conducted an in-depth qualitative study to present a typology of elite perspectives on the EU, based on two dimensions: expectations from the EU and assessments of the EU. The analysis used original data obtained through semi-structured interviews with post-communist officials working in a range of institutions in Brussels, including officials from the Commission, Permanent Representations and diplomatic missions to the EU. The interviewed elites represented states with four different types of political relations with the Union: member states, candidate states, Eastern Partnership states, and bilateral relations with the EU. The paper's findings showed that these state-level relationships between the Union and the home country can greatly affect how elites representing those states perceive the EU. To illustrate this, the typology was applied to investigating the political,

economic and security dimensions of the EU, showing that officials will have idealistic, pragmatic, disillusioned or sceptic views, depending on the nature of their states' relationship with the Union. The typology shows a sort of "progressivity" in post-communist views: as states progress "from the outside in", their perceptions change from an idealised image of the EU to a more realistic one, which nonetheless is supportive of the EU, recognising the advantages of an integrated European community.

In its three research papers, the thesis has contributed to a deeper understanding of the EU's transformative power in four areas. First, it demonstrated that the EU has a real and measurable effect in changing the perceptions of both citizens and elites in post-communist states. Second, it highlighted that the nature of the relationship is crucial, as impact works both through indirect mechanisms of a state-level political association, as well as direct mechanisms of international socialisation. In addition, it also revealed that Euroscepticism can act as a moderator capable of turning the EU's positive democratising effect into a negative one, thus bringing together the literatures on the transformative power of Europe with research on attitudes towards the EU and Euroscepticism. Third, by broadening the scope of the research horizontally, it also demonstrated that the EU has a transformative power both internally and externally, including non-accession third states. Lastly, the three papers have showed that the EU's transformative powers can influence attitudes towards democracy and the EU. Ultimately, the overall findings show that the Union can have a real, measurable micro-level impact on the attitudes

of both elites and citizens, though this is contingent on the nature of the relationship with the EU as well as on individuals' support for the Union.

5.1 The transformative power of the EU: mechanisms, scope conditions, outcomes

The thesis started off with the research question: t*o what extent does the EU affect political attitudes*? Subsequently, the three papers of the thesis investigated the influences that the EU can have on individual attitudes and perceptions, uncovering the mechanisms at play and the conditions that facilitate as well as limit the EU's impact. To answer the thesis question, there are three further sub-questions – as outlined in the introduction – which must be answered, regarding the mechanisms, scope conditions and outcomes of the transformative power of the EU.

5.1.1 How does the EU affect the attitudes of citizens and elites?

As outlined in the introduction, the aim of the thesis was to shift the debate on the EU's transformative power on institutions and policy to investigate its micro-level impact on the general population and elites. This research focus builds on the "macro-micro-macro model" of sociological explanation (Coleman 1986, 1990), which theorises that macro-level events and conditions can influence the micro-level behaviour of individuals, who assimilate this impact and then, by their actions and behaviour, generate new macro-level outcomes (Hedström & Swedberg 1996: 296).

The link between these levels, the *how,* is explained by mechanisms: the intermediate steps that describe sequences of causally linked events between a set of initial conditions and a certain outcome that follows (Mayntz 2004: 241). In particular, this thesis investigated "situational mechanisms", that is, the macro-to-micro transitions that link in a systematic way the macro-sociological state to the beliefs, desires, and opportunities of individual actors (Hedström & Swedberg 1996: 297). Accordingly, the thesis discussed two such mechanisms that explain how the EU affects the attitudes of citizens and elites: political association and international socialisation.

On the one hand, the political association mechanism looks at how the state-level relationship with the EU can indirectly influence attitude-formation at the micro-level. This mechanism is based on a sociological institutionalist approach that sees institutions as the rules, procedures and norms that provide "frames of meaning" guiding human action (Hall & Taylor 1996: 947). In this view, institutions provide the "rules of the game" within the state, which can affect individuals' preferences, identities and behaviour. Consequently, when the EU – through its political relationships – affects institutional structures in third states though Europeanisation (Goetz & Meyer-Sahling 2008; Grabbe 2006; Schimmelfennig 2009; Sedelmeier 2011), this also impacts the attitudes of individuals within those states.

International socialisation, on the other hand, has a more direct impact on attitude-formation. Because this mechanism describes the process of inducting actors into the norms and rules of a given community (Checkel 2005: 804), it

requires a direct interaction between the actor and the normative environment. Preference change happens as a consequence of following the norms of the community, switching from a behaviour based on the logic of consequences to a logic of appropriateness.

Both mechanisms reveal the effective linkages between EU-driven macro-processes and micro-social experiences, though they are based on different approaches. On the one hand, political association is based on an institutionalist approach and works indirectly, mediated through the EU's institutional impact at the state level. On the other hand, international socialisation is based on a more normative approach and works directly, with EU impact being the result of exposure to EU norms, whether it is through the people who represent the Union, or through its laws and institutions.

And yet, there is a normative element to both mechanisms, which suggests that they are not altogether different from each other. Both mechanisms impact attitude formation by altering the "rules of the game". Political association does this formally, through laws and institutions, whereas in international socialisation this happens on an informal level, through unwritten "community rules". In both cases, individuals find themselves in environments with specific norms and rules of appropriate behaviour, where deviation from these may be costly, and even accrue punishments. Individuals, therefore, have to adapt their behaviour, attitudes and preferences to the specific environment.

The thesis thus showed that the transformative power of the EU works through the norm-changing effect of the two mechanisms discussed. The first paper

described how political association – through the democratisation of the state – aided state-transformation from a socialist to a democratic regime, thus encouraging the emergence of democratic attitudes among the population. The second paper, on the other hand, showed how daily work with the EU exposed civil servants to the norms and values of the EU, which had a social learning effect that strengthened their support for the Union. Lastly, the third paper returned to a qualitative analysis of the effect of political association, which showed that the elites' perspectives are influenced by state-level interests, depending on the type of relationship the state has with the EU.

5.1.2 What are the conditions that facilitate and limit the EU's impact?

Whilst political association and international socialisation have outlined two pathways through which the EU micro-level effects operate, the thesis also revealed that there are certain conditions that facilitate or limit the success of these mechanisms: contact with the EU and Euroscepticism.

First, the research into the socialisation of civil servants in the second thesis paper showed that exposure to the EU was an important condition affecting the extent to which the EU could impact elites. On the one hand, the paper showed that education abroad could create opportunities for transnational impact, which altered the attitudes of civil servants. However, the analysis also showed that for civil servants, this effect was mediated through workplace exposure to the EU, indicating that professional contact with the Union is a more important attitude-changing condition. This is logical, since an

international education consisted only of exposure to European culture, whereas contact with the EU through civil service work directly exposed individuals to EU officials, its institutions and its laws. Moreover, the paper also highlighted the importance of the quantity and quality of contact, so that the transformative power of the EU was shown to be stronger when elites had longer contact with the EU, and when this was based on direct, interpersonal relationships.

The findings of this paper bring up significant questions about the importance of contact for the third paper of the thesis, which investigated how Brussels-based diplomats perceive the EU. Although the scope of this paper did not cover a discussion on the effects of EU contact on diplomats, undoubtedly their exposure to the EU would have had certain effects on their attitudes towards it. In fact, the perspectives of member state and Commission officials hinted at its significance: the paper argued that their pragmatic views of the EU were in large part due to their ability to see and understand the inner workings of the EU. This ability to "see behind the curtain" was available to them because of the intense contact that they had working with the EU, as member state officials.

On the other hand, though individual attitudes towards the EU were investigated as the outcome of the EU's transformative power in the second and third papers of the thesis, in fact the first paper revealed that this can equally be a condition that can limit the EU's transformative power. More specifically, this paper showed that Euroscepticism in the population can be an

important factor in reversing the EU's positive effect on democratic attitudes. In states where the relationship with the EU is one of economic or political association, Euroscepticism would cancel out the EU's democratising influence, so that no change was measured in the attitudes of individuals who did not trust the Union. However, in candidate and member states, where there is a deeper level of integration in the EU and therefore the Union has a stronger influence, deep distrust in the EU in fact turned individuals against democracy itself. These findings demonstrate that Euroscepticism is an important condition that can limit the EU's transformative influence, particularly when integration reaches the depths of candidacy and full accession. Certainly, this suggests that the political attitudes of the "losers" of integration are particularly vulnerable and liable to display a pushback against not only the EU, but the values and norms that it stands for.

If Euroscepticism can have such a negative effect on the EU's transformative power on ordinary citizens, then going beyond the discussions of the first paper, the question arises as to whether Eurosceptic elites in candidate and member states would be equally negatively affected in their political attitudes, particularly their views of democracy. Certainly, the third paper described how some officials expressed some doubt about the adequacy of the liberal-style democratisation that some perceived to be imposed on their countries, though admittedly none of the respondents questioned the value of the democratic system in itself. However, as the second research paper suggested, elites tend to have relatively high opinions of the EU. Hence, while elites could potentially lose some faith in democratisation, the effect is probably not likely to be as

significant as in the case of the general population, simply for the fact that Euroscepticism will be less prevalent among them. In fact, the third paper showed that member state elites have the privilege of being able to see the EU "up close" and "from the inside", giving them insights into the inner workings of the Union that is not available to ordinary citizens, which allows them to be more familiar with and understand the processes of the EU better. As the second paper on the civil servants showed, such close contact allows for social learning that will socialise elites into more positive views. Consequently, it is likely that Euroscepticism will have less of a limiting role in case of the EU's transformative power in elites, though further research could confirm this conjecture.

5.1.3 What are the outcomes of EU influence on individuals' political attitudes?

Lastly, the thesis also discussed the EU's transformative power on two specific types of political attitudes: support for democracy and support for the EU. The thesis shows that EU impact on these political attitudes can be confirmed by its measurable findings, that it can be either positive or negative, and it can be effective beyond accession conditionality.

First, all three thesis papers have found positive evidence of the EU's transformative impact on political attitudes. In this regard, the thesis contributes to existing literature about the EU's transformative power on individuals, which has so far found evidence of EU effects on attitudes towards democratic governance (Freyburg 2015), democratic values (Oshri et al. 2016),

merit-based civil service (Meyer-Sahling et al. 2016), as well as supranationalism in elites (Beyers 2005; Hooghe & Marks 2005; Lewis 2005). The thesis adds two further dimensions: support for democracy and support for the EU. Notably, the distinct contribution of the thesis is its horizontal scope, as all studies mentioned have focused on states with one specific type of relationships with the EU; the thesis, however, incorporates a study of member, candidate and non-member states, thus allowing not only for conclusions on *whether* the EU has a transformative impact, but also on the geographical *extent* of it.

Second, existing literature has pointed both to the positive effects of the EU on the institutional democratisation of post-communist states (Grabbe 2006; Schimmelfennig & Scholtz 2008; Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2005), as well as the detrimental consequences of negative Europeanisation (Bideleux 2001; Gallina 2007; Pridham 2006; Raik 2004). The discussion in this thesis indicates that the EU's influence at the micro-level of democratic attitudes can equally be both positive and negative.

In the case of the second paper, the outcomes of EU influence were unequivocally positive: bureaucratic elites were shown to have more positive views of the EU, directly as a result of work-place contact with the Union. The first and the third papers show more ambiguous outcomes. In the case of the former, the state-level association with the EU has the potential to increase support for democracy among states outside of the EU; however, this effect disappears in candidate and member states – and indeed can even turn

negative when Euroscepticism is strong enough. In the third paper, the Union's influence seemed to be received the most positively by elites in member states and Eastern Partnership states, though the views of the latter were more unrealistic, especially regarding their expectations. Candidate state elites, on the other hand, were paradoxically both critical and hopeful about the EU's influence in their states. The only case where the EU's transformative power was seen critically and negatively was in the case of the Russian elite, though this seemed to be driven by Russia's international standing and its desire to establish its power in the region as much as by the EU's actions.

Lastly, the literature on the EU's impact on post-communist states has for long emphasised the importance of the EU's instrument of conditionality, and its low impact when it is unable to offer credible prospects for membership (Schimmelfennig 2009; Sedelmeier 2011). However, the findings of the first and third papers, both of which are based on regional comparative analyses, show that the EU's impact beyond membership is not only real, but sometimes more effective. This is certainly confirmed in the first paper, where the general public in states that have economic and political relationships with the EU display higher levels of support for democracy, as a result of EU-driven institutional impact. The third paper, on the other hand, shows that bureaucratic elites are highly positive and optimistic about the EU, simply because they *hope* to one day join the EU, despite the absence of any *promises* to this. These findings thus qualify the previous literature on EU effects, showing not only that EU can have a significant effect on non-accession states, but that this can actually be a positive one.

5.2 Re-visiting the EU's transformative power: findings, limitations and implications

Having examined the lessons learned from the research findings, the thesis can return to the original research question: t*o what extent does the EU affect political attitudes*? The overall findings show that the Union does have a micro-level impact on attitudes, though this is contingent on the nature of the relationship with the EU as well as on individuals' support for the Union. Specifically, the thesis confirmed the EU's transformative power with regards to support for democracy and attitudes towards the EU, which has been shown to be very effective on elites, and to certain extent on the general population as well. The thesis showed that the EU's influence works through the mechanisms of political association and international socialisation, and is facilitated by contact (especially prolonged and interpersonal contact), whilst it is limited by Euroscepticism, which is a particular vulnerability of the integration process.

These findings have important implications for theoretical debates on the EU's transformative power. First, it furthers existing research on the influence of the EU inside and outside of its borders by linking the literatures on the transformative power of Europe with research on attitudes towards the EU and Euroscepticism. The thesis highlighted that attitudes towards the EU can have an important impact on the extent to which the Union can influence third states, particularly emphasising the role of Euroscepticism in limiting the EU's effect. In fact, this could provide important insights for the growing body of

research on the democratic backsliding of post-communist states, pointing to the potential causes of the phenomenon, and potentially providing solutions for policy-makers.

Second, as already indicated, the thesis findings also qualify Europeanisation research, especially in their emphasis on the importance of the EU's instrument of conditionality. Whilst this may have proven to be the only effective tool in the institutional impact of the EU on non-member states, the thesis confirms findings in other studies (Freyburg 2015) that show that a credible membership promise is not a pre-requisite for the EU's micro-level impact in non-member states. This has important implications not only for theoretical research, but also for policy-making in the EU, which should direct its attentions towards bottom-up efforts that impact individuals, rather than institutional-level reforms.

Third, the findings carry a lot of importance for the post-communist states of Eastern Europe as a whole, considering that the thesis has highlighted that the EU has a real and measurable influence on individual-level attitudes, not only in member and candidate states, but also in third states. Indeed, the extent to which the EU is able to shape domestic perceptions in these countries can have important implications for the democratic consolidation of the Eastern periphery. However, it must also be noted that the EU relies mostly on offering and withholding carrots in these relations; as a result, the extent of the EU's transformational impact is limited by the target state's willingness to take the initiative. In the case of countries that have ambitions to join the EU in the long

run, such as Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, the impetus is present and – as the third paper demonstrated – encourages the development of attitudes that are open to change and reform aided by the EU. On the other hand, in third states that do not have this ambition – such as Russia – the EU's transformative power is much more limited. This, in turn, cautions against an overly optimistic interpretation of the generalisability of the findings beyond the post-communist region: whilst the thesis has shown that a promise of membership is not necessary for the EU to have a transformative impact, it has certainly suggested that a desire for it can be a powerful motivator for the implementation of reforms. Nonetheless, there is no reason to "throw the baby out with the bath water" and dismiss the relevance of the findings for the EU's relationship with third states outside of the European continent; after all, the Eastern Partnership reflects a highly complex arrangement, and it's likely that there is more than just a vague, long-term desire to become members that is motivating these states to continue to participate in the relationship. Instead, the findings here can be cautiously expected to be relevant for the EU's relationship with third states outside of Europe, though further research should be conducted to confirm the extent of their significance elsewhere.

As with all social science research, the findings of the thesis are qualified by certain limitations, which should be addressed in future research projects. Theoretically, the thesis focuses on only two of the five mechanisms of the EU's transformative power (Börzel & Risse 2009). Analytically, the thesis examined "situational mechanisms" that describe how the macro-level of the EU impacts micro-social processes, though Coleman's model (1986, 1990) argues that the

micro-level also impacts the macro-level structures. Consequently, future research could broaden the research agenda to investigate how and to what extent other mechanisms – such as coercion, persuasion and emulation (Börzel & Risse 2009) – could enhance our understanding of the EU's micro-level impact. In addition, the inquiry could also expand the research from an investigation of how top-down mechanisms work to include bottom-up processes, that is, how individual attitudes impact the system. In particular, the first paper indicated that Euroscepticism could create negative tendencies in the EU's impact on democratic support. How does this then impact the regime-level of these states? Could this explain the rise of extremist tendencies in new member states, where populism and democratic backsliding threaten to reverse two decades of EU-led democratisation?

Empirically, the thesis was limited by the availability of data both in its quantitative and qualitative analyses. Quantitatively, the first two papers suffered from limitations in the survey questions, which in both cases restricted the predictors and outcome variables to be addressed. In the first paper, this was due to the non-availability of more meaningful survey questions about individual attitudes towards democracy that would have covered the entire time-span of the surveys. In the second paper, the research could have benefitted from more survey questions – which would have allowed the testing of other mechanisms of EU influence, such as instrumental calculations – as well as repeated survey testing over time. The qualitative data in the third paper, on the other hand, was limited by access to research subjects, particularly in the case of the Russian embassy, where only one person

responded to the interview request. The limitations of both the quantitative and qualitative data could be addressed to a certain extent in the context of a postdoctoral research, where larger funding and more developed networks would make it possible to conduct surveys with more participants. This would allow generalising further the research findings, especially in the case of the qualitative paper, whilst also potentially embarking on further quantitative research to elucidate findings.

Finally, a note on the implications of these research findings for the future of the EU. The thesis started by referring to the remarkable accomplishments of the Union in transforming the European continent after the Second World War. These achievements were recognised in 2012 when the Norwegian Nobel Committee decided to award the Nobel Peace Prize to the EU. Yet the findings of this paper suggest that the Union could pay a high price for its transformative power. Particularly in its promotion of democratic attitudes, the thesis showed that the EU's top-down approach can actually elicit a Eurosceptic backlash, potentially undermining democracy within its borders. Consequently, the important lesson for the Union is that it needs to direct more attention towards the nurturing of democratic attitudes in new member and candidate states. At the same time, it will also need to rethink its approach towards third states who are still "on the outside", yet may – at some point in the future – become candidate countries. Above all, for the EU to recover from its current state of crisis and to continue to prosper, it will need to recognise the fundamental importance of winning the "hearts and minds" of the people.

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Appendices

Appendix A: EU association types used to construct the four categories of the independent variable

Category 1: No Formal Association

Category 2: Economic association

- Trade and cooperation agreements

Category 3: Political association

- Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA)
- European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) with Action Plan
- Europe Agreement
- Stabilisation and Association Agreements
- Accession Partnership
- European Partnership

Category 4: Candidate status

- Formal Accession Negotiations
- Acceding Country

Category 5: Membership in the EU

Definitions

No formal association agreement between the European Union (EU) and another country does not exclude dialogue, or any form of economic, diplomatic, political or other form of relations; however, none of these are conducted in the framework of a formal association agreement signed by both entities.

Trade and Co-operation Agreements take various forms and have been concluded with a variety of states, notably those in Central and Eastern Europe before the negotiation of Europe agreements. Such trade and co-operation agreements form part of the common commercial policy and normally involve preferential access to the European Union's internal market and the eventual establishment of an industrial free trade area. This is supplemented by co-operation in areas of mutual interest, often focused on facilitating trade and the economic development of the signatory state (McGowan et al. 2013: 189).

Partnership and Co-operation Agreements (PCAs) provide a framework for closer political, cultural and economic relations between the European Union

(EU) and former republics of the USSR. In some cases, the agreements make reference to the possibility of eventual free trade with the EU. In all cases, emphasis is placed on the commitment of the contracting parties to human rights and democracy. PCAs have been concluded, initially for a ten-year period, with Russia (June 1994), Ukraine (June 1994), Tajikistan and (October 1994) and Moldova (November 1994). Similar agreements were concluded with Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in 1995, with Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in January 1996, with Uzbekistan in July 1996 and with Turkmenistan in 1998 (McGowan et al. 2013: 157).

The **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)** is the European Union's (EU) initiative to place relations with neighbouring regions (i.e. Eastern Europe, the Middle East and the Southern Mediterranean, but not South-Eastern Europe or Russia), on a new footing following enlargement in 2004 and 2007. It aims to 'reduce poverty and create an area of shared prosperity and values based on deeper economic integration, intensified political and cultural relations, enhanced cross-border co-operation and shared responsibility for conflict prevention between the EU and its neighbours … [and to] anchor the EU's offer of concrete benefits and preferential relations within a differentiated framework which responds to progress made by the partner countries in political and economic reform'. To this end, **ENP Action Plans** have been drawn up. These contain an agenda of political and economic reforms with short- and medium-term priorities. Plans have so far been agreed with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia and Ukraine. The ENP is designed to cover increased trade relations, involvement in the EU's internal market, and co-operation on justice and home affairs, energy, transport, information society, environment and research and innovation, and social policy (McGowan et al. 2013: 96).

Europe Agreements are types of association agreement and were concluded by the European Communities with countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) subsequent to the latter's democratisation after 1989. The first such agreements were signed in December 1991, and by mid-1995 agreements existed with nine countries (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia). A further agreement was signed with Slovenia in June 1996, which came into effect in early 1999. Each agreement provided for free trade in industrial goods, political dialogue, wide-ranging co-operation and legislative harmonisation. Bilateral institutions were also established to manage the association created. After concluding Europe agreements, each of the CEE countries went on to apply for membership of the European Union. All except Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU on 1 May 2004; those two countries joined on 1 January 2007. When devising stabilisation and association agreements for the countries of the

Western Balkans, the European Commission drew heavily on the structure and content of the Europe agreements (McGowan et al. 2013: 80).

Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAAs) are the association agreements that the European Union (EU) has devised for countries in the Western Balkans as part of the stabilisation and association process. The first was concluded with the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia (FYRM) in 2001 and was soon followed by an agreement with Croatia and, later, one with Albania (2006). In March 2007 Montenegro concluded negotiations on an SAA. Agreements with Bosnia and Herzegovina and with Serbia followed in 2008. These, like the agreements with FYRM and Croatia, are modelled very much on Europe agreements, but place a much greater emphasis on the pursuit of regional co-operation as a prerequisite for closer collaboration with the EU. They also confirm the associate country's status as potential candidate for EU membership […] (McGowan et al. 2013: 182).

Accession Partnerships were first adopted by the European Union (EU) for applicant countries from Central and Eastern Europe in 1998 and were designed to assist them in meeting the accession criteria and preparing themselves for membership of the EU. They list priority areas for legal adaptation and administrative reform in the countries concerned and for EU financial assistance through the former instrument for structural policies for pre-accession (ISPA), PHARE and Sapard programmes (which were replaced in January 2007 by the instrument for pre-accession assistance). Accession partnerships have since been adopted for Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Similar in purpose and content, although precursors to accession partnerships, European partnerships have been developed for other countries of the Western Balkans seeking membership of the EU (McGowan et al. 2013: 3).

European Partnerships were launched in 2003 and first adopted in 2004 by the European Union (EU) for the countries of the Western Balkans. They are similar to accession partnerships in that they identify short- and medium-term priorities that the countries need to address in order to integrate with the EU. It is envisaged that the successful fulfilment of the priorities will equip the countries with the institutional and legislative framework and administrative capacity required for a functioning democracy and market economy. It should also assist their prospects towards EU membership (McGowan et al. 2013: 99).

[Formal] Accession Negotiations need to be completed before applicant countries can join the European Union (EU). They are conducted on a bilateral basis, with the European Commission co-ordinating the position of the EU's member states. The last 14 years or so have seen the EU engaged in an unprecedented number of accession negotiations, beginning with Cyprus and five Central and Eastern European countries (the Czech Republic, Estonia,

Hungary, Poland and Slovenia), often referred to as the 'Luxembourg group', in 1998. Two years later, in 2000, the EU opened accession negotiations with the so-called 'Helsinki group' (Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Romania and Slovakia). Negotiations with those applicant countries meeting the accession criteria – the Luxembourg group plus Latvia, Lithuania, Malta and Slovakia – were concluded at the Copenhagen summit of the European Council held on 12-13 December 2002. The Accession Treaty was then signed on 16 April 2003. Following ratification of the Accession Treaty, the 10 countries joined the EU on 1 May 2004. The following month, Bulgaria concluded its accession negotiations with the EU. Romania followed suit in December 2004, and an Accession Treaty was signed on 25 April 2005. Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU on 1 January 2007. Accession negotiations with Croatia and Turkey were open on 4 October 2005. […] Negotiations with Croatia were completed in 2011. Of the current applicants, the EU opened accession negotiations with Iceland and 27 on 2010 and with Montenegro on 29 June 2012 (McGowan et al. 2013: 3).

Acceding Country: Once the [Accession] treaty is signed, […] the candidate becomes an acceding country. This means it is expected to become a full EU member on the date laid down in the treaty, providing the treaty has been ratified (European Commission 2013).

Member States is a term that is used to refer to the [28] countries that currently comprise the European Union. These are Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, [Croatia], Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom (McGowan et al. 2013: 144-5).

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McGowan, Lee and David Phinnemore (2012) 'A-Z of the European Union' in *The European Union Encyclopedia and Directory 2013*, London: Routledge.

Appendix B: Formal association agreements between the European Union and 23 former states of the Communist Bloc, 1989-2014

Albania

Trade and Cooperation Agreement 1992

European Partnership 2004

Armenia

Partnership and Cooperation Agreement 1999

European Neighbourhood Policy with Action Plan 2006

Azerbaijan

Partnership and Cooperation Agreement 1999

European Neighbourhood Policy with Action Plan 2006

Belarus

No formal association agreement (Partnership and Cooperation Agreement negotiations suspended in 1997, officially part of the European Neighbourhood Policy but no Action Plan in place)

Bosnia and Herzegovina

European Partnership 2008

Bulgaria

Trade and Cooperation Agreement 1990

Europe Agreement 1995

Accession Partnership 1998

Formal Accession Negotiations open 2000

Signs Treaty of Accession 2005 – becomes Acceding Country

Joins EU 2007

Croatia

Stabilisation and Association Agreement 2005

Formal Accession Negotiations open 2006

Accession Partnership 2008

Joins EU 2013

Czech Republic

Trade and Cooperation Agreement 1990

Europe Agreement 1995

Accession Partnership 1998

Formal Accession Negotiations open 1998

Joins EU 2004

Estonia

Trade and Cooperation Agreement 1993

Europe Agreement 1998

Accession Partnership 1998

Formal Accession Negotiations open 1998

Joins EU 2004

Georgia

Partnership and Cooperation Agreement 1999

European Neighbourhood Policy with Action Plan 2006

Hungary

Trade and Cooperation Agreement 1988

Europe Agreement 1994

Accession Partnership 1998

Formal Accession Negotiations open 1998

Joins EU 2004

Latvia

Trade and Cooperation Agreement 1993

Europe Agreement 1998

Accession Partnership 1998

Formal Accession Negotiations open 2000

Joins EU 2004

Lithuania

Trade and Cooperation Agreement 1993

Europe Agreement 1998

Accession Partnership 1998

Formal Accession Negotiations open 2000

Joins EU 2004

Macedonia

Stabilisation and Association Agreement 2004

European Partnership 2006

Accession Partnership 2008

Moldova

Partnership and Cooperation Agreement 1998

European Neighbourhood Policy with Action Plan 2005

Montenegro

European Partnership 2007

Poland

Trade and Cooperation Agreement 1989

Europe Agreement 1994

Accession Partnership 1998

Formal Accession Negotiations open 1998

Joins EU 2004

Romania

Trade and Cooperation Agreement 1991

Europe Agreement 1995

Accession Partnership 1998

Formal Accession Negotiations open 2000

Acceding country 2005

Joins EU 2007

Russian Federation

Trade and Cooperation Agreement 1990

Partnership and Cooperation Agreement 1997

Serbia

European Partnership 2006

Slovakia

Trade and Cooperation Agreement 1990

Europe Agreement 1995

Accession Partnership 1998

Formal Accession Negotiations open 2000

Joins EU 2004

Slovenia

Trade and Cooperation Agreement 1993

Europe Agreement 1999

Accession Partnership 1998

Formal Accession Negotiations open 1998

Joins EU 2004

Ukraine

Partnership and Cooperation Agreement 1998

European Neighbourhood Policy with Action Plan 2005

Appendix C: Summary statistics for all variables used in the analysis

VARIABLES	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Dependent variable					
Support for a Democratic System	101,685	3.181	0.756	1	4
Independent variables					
EU Association	133,722	1.812	1.375	0	4
Distrust in EU	97,115	2.464	0.895	1	4
Individual-level controls					
Education	115,153	5.074	1.995	1	8
Age	133,521	44.428	16.937	15	103
Female	133,680	0.55	0.497	0	1
Unemployment	129,792	0.098	0.297	0	1
Cohort					
Pre-Cold War	133,521	0.079	0.269	0	1
Cold War	133,521	0.718	0.45	0	1
Post-Cold War	133,521	0.203	0.403	0	1
Macro-level controls					
Polity4	133,722	5.275	5.461	-9	10
GDP	133,722	5,950.65	5,881.07	380.436	27,377.10
GDP Growth	122,993	2.754	5.023	-11.615	11.2
Misery Index	121,032	44.242	96.501	6.424	972.346
Time	133,722	12.172	6.84	-1	24

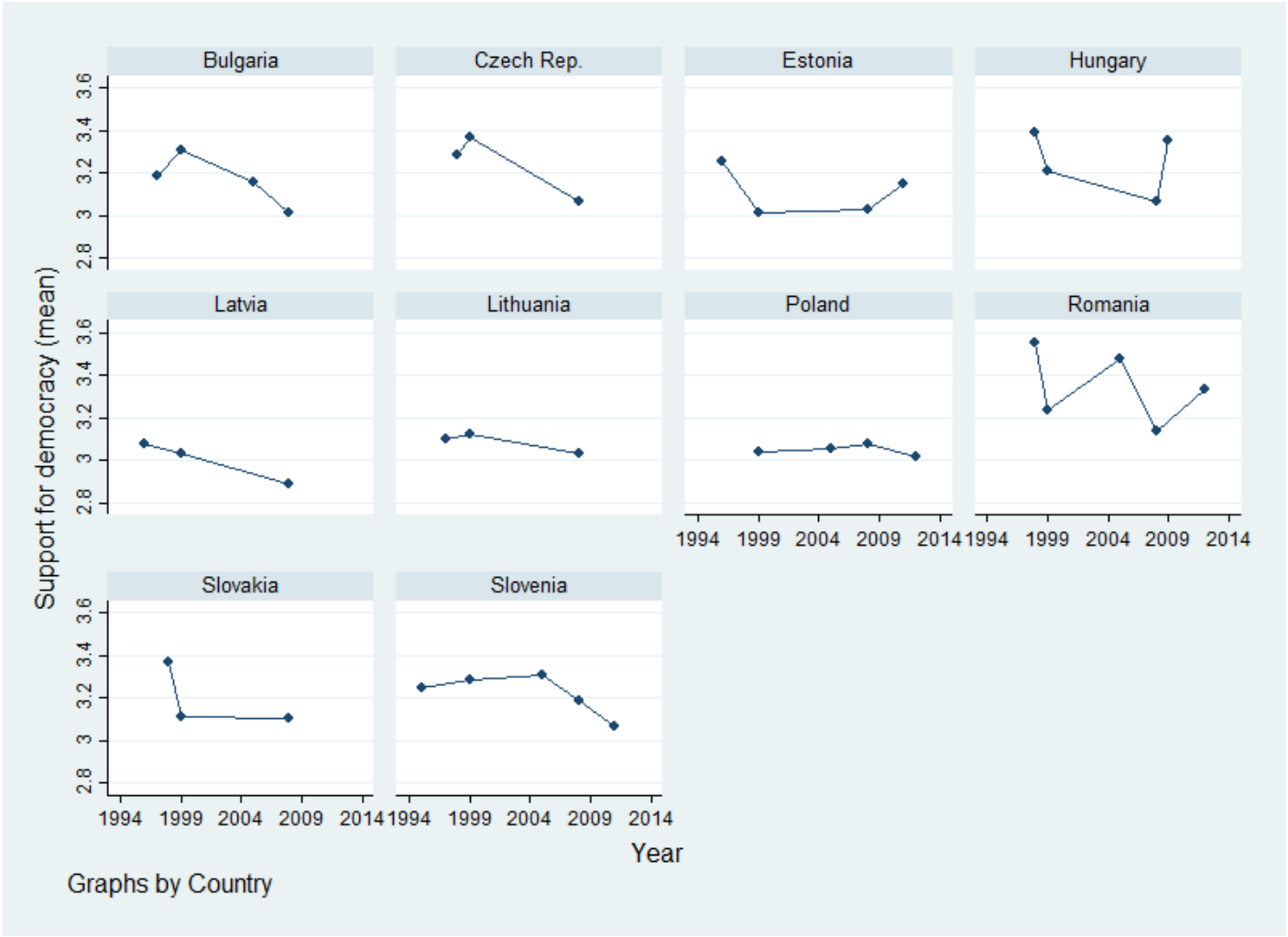
Appendix D: Responses by country and year to survey question on support for democratic system (main dependent variable).

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2005	2006	2008	2009	2011	2012	2014	*Total*
Albania	0	0	0	951	0	0	0	940	0	0	0	1,407	0	0	0	0	*3,298*
Azerbaijan	0	0	1,693	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,428	0	960	0	0	*4,081*
Armenia	0	0	1,790	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,378	0	984	0	0	*4,152*
Bulgaria	0	0	863	0	815	0	0	0	0	835	0	1,213	0	0	0	0	*3,726*
Belarus	0	1,726	0	0	0	761	0	0	0	0	0	1,236	0	1,527	0	0	*5,250*
Croatia	0	1,159	0	0	962	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,390	0	0	0	0	*3,511*
Czech Rep.	0	0	0	1,092	1,826	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,612	0	0	0	0	*4,530*
Estonia	0	933	0	0	818	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,342	0	1,400	0	0	*4,493*
Georgia	0	1,877	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,273	1,408	0	0	1,070	*5,628*
Hungary	0	0	0	596	906	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,438	954	0	0	0	*3,894*
Kazakhstan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,500	0	0	*1,500*
Kyrgyzstan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	1,497	0	0	*2,497*
Latvia	0	1,099	0	0	868	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,320	0	0	0	0	*3,287*
Lithuania	0	0	847	0	795	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,164	0	0	0	0	*2,806*
Moldova	0	898	0	0	0	0	0	798	0	0	979	1,318	0	0	0	0	*3,993*
Montenegro	0	220	0	0	0	0	956	0	0	0	0	1,315	0	0	0	0	*2,491*
Poland	0	0	0	0	941	0	0	0	0	872	0	1,328	0	0	865	0	*4,006*
Romania	0	0	0	1,090	965	0	0	0	0	1,556	0	1,292	0	0	1,378	0	*6,281*
Russia	1,591	0	0	0	1,866	0	0	0	0	0	1,703	1,207	0	2,105	0	0	*8,472*
Serbia	0	1,092	0	0	0	0	1,058	0	0	941	0	1,313	0	0	0	0	*4,404*
Slovakia	0	0	0	1,041	1,190	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,285	0	0	0	0	*3,516*
Slovenia	938	0	0	0	931	0	0	0	0	924	0	1,288	0	965	0	0	*5,046*
Ukraine	0	1,935	0	0	897	0	0	0	0	0	822	1,176	0	1,500	0	0	*6,330*
Macedonia	0	0	0	852	0	0	951	0	0	0	0	1,365	0	0	0	0	*3,168*
Uzbekistan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,325	0	0	*1,325*
Total	*2,529*	*10,939*	*5,193*	*5,622*	*13,780*	*761*	*2,965*	*1,738*	*1,000*	*5,128*	*3,504*	*29,088*	*2,362*	*13,763*	*2,243*	*1,070*	*101,685*

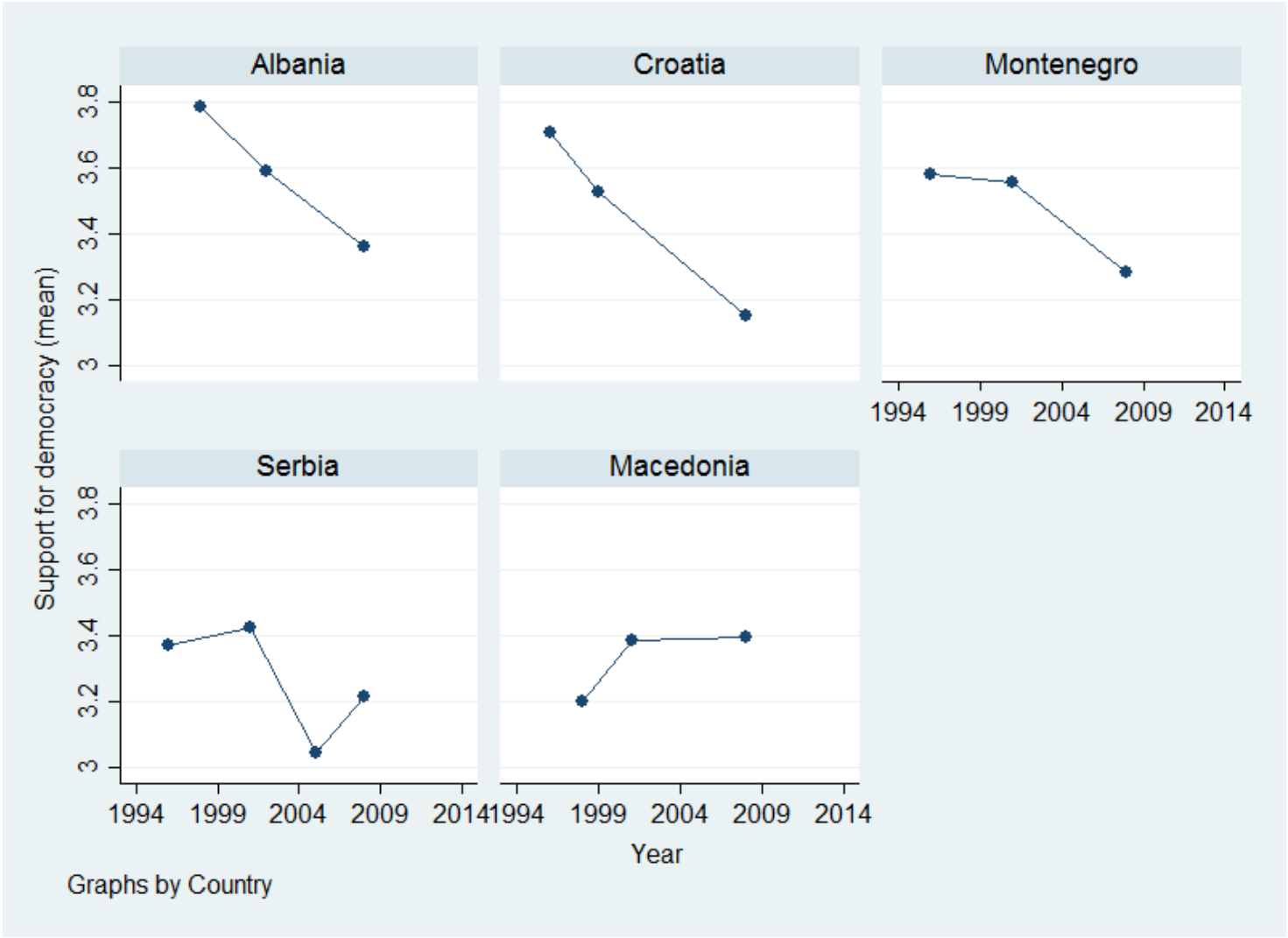
Note: Missing data listwise deleted. Survey question: *"I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country? Having a democratic political system"*.

Appendix E: Average support for democracy figures by regions

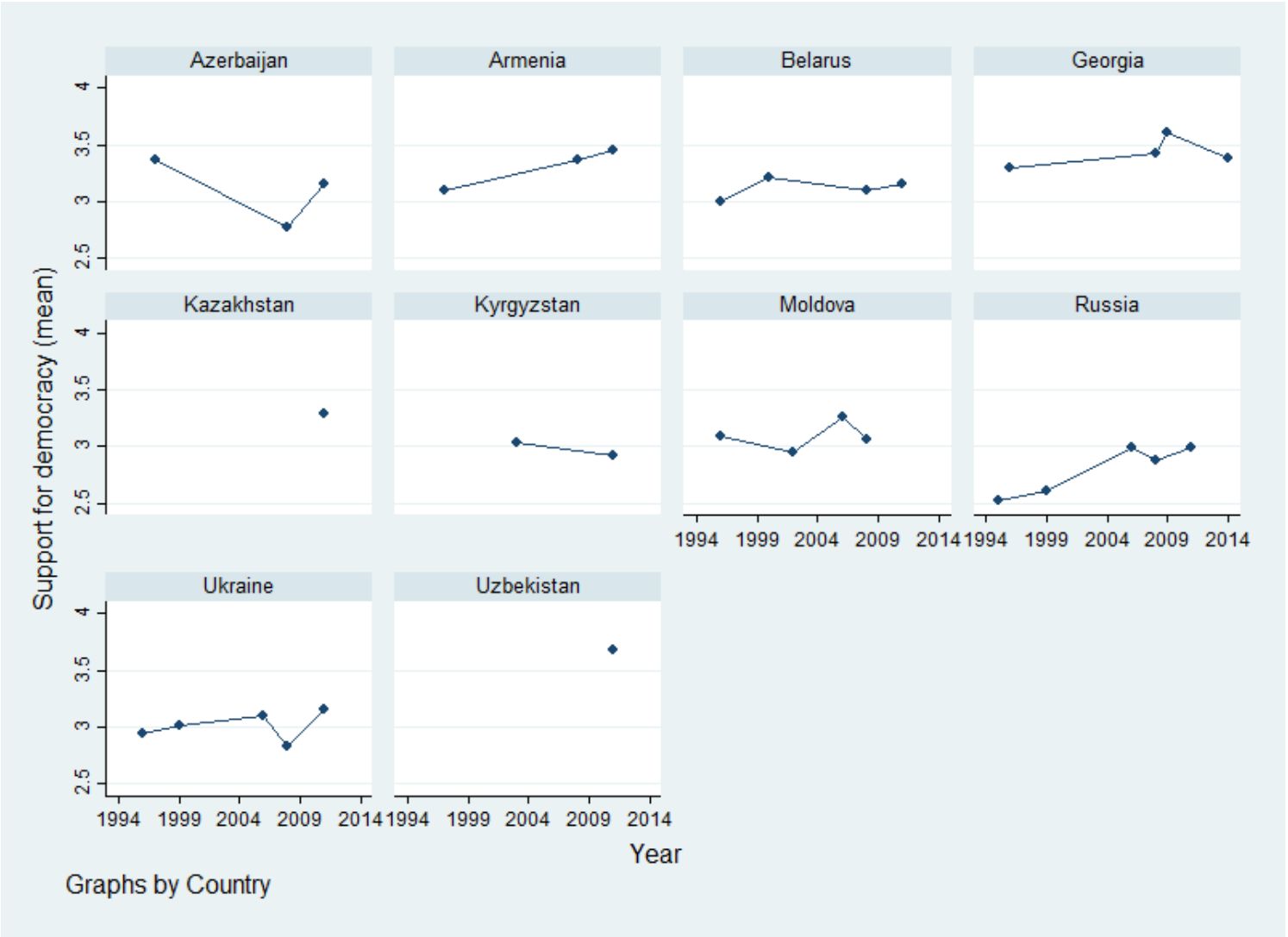
Appendix E.1: Average support for democracy in Central and Eastern European states



Appendix E.2: Average support for democracy in Western Balkans states



Appendix E.3: Average support for democracy in former USSR states



Appendix F: Average marginal effects on support for democracy (Model 4)

	Support for democracy	AME	Std. Error	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf. Interval]	
EU Association							
Economic association	***Very bad***	-0.012	0.003	-4.210	0.000	-0.018	-0.007
	Fairly bad	-0.025	0.005	-5.530	0.000	-0.034	-0.016
	Fairly good	-0.041	0.008	-4.860	0.000	-0.058	-0.025
	Very good	0.079	0.013	5.970	0.000	0.053	0.104
Political association	***Very bad***	-0.004	0.002	-2.150	0.032	-0.008	0.000
	Fairly bad	-0.008	0.003	-2.320	0.020	-0.015	-0.001
	Fairly good	-0.011	0.005	-2.330	0.020	-0.020	-0.002
	Very good	0.023	0.010	2.390	0.017	0.004	0.042
Candidate state	***Very bad***	0.002	0.002	1.000	0.315	-0.002	0.007
	Fairly bad	0.004	0.004	1.010	0.313	-0.004	0.013
	Fairly good	0.005	0.005	0.990	0.324	-0.005	0.016
	Very good	-0.012	0.012	-1.010	0.314	-0.036	0.011
Member state	***Very bad***	0.010	0.003	2.840	0.005	0.003	0.017
	Fairly bad	0.017	0.006	3.010	0.003	0.006	0.029
	Fairly good	0.019	0.007	2.610	0.009	0.005	0.033
	Very good	-0.046	0.015	-3.050	0.002	-0.075	-0.016
Demographic Controls							
Age	***Very bad***	0.000	0.000	0.690	0.490	0.000	0.000
	Fairly bad	0.000	0.000	0.690	0.488	0.000	0.000
	Fairly good	0.000	0.000	0.690	0.490	0.000	0.000
	Very good	0.000	0.000	-0.690	0.487	0.000	0.000
Cohort							
Pre-Cold War	***Very bad***	-0.001	0.001	-0.400	0.687	-0.003	0.002
	Fairly bad	-0.001	0.002	-0.400	0.686	-0.006	0.004
	Fairly good	-0.001	0.003	-0.400	0.687	-0.007	0.005
	Very good	0.003	0.007	0.400	0.686	-0.011	0.016
Post-Cold War	***Very bad***	0.002	0.001	1.850	0.064	0.000	0.003
	Fairly bad	0.003	0.002	1.920	0.055	0.000	0.006
	Fairly good	0.004	0.002	1.850	0.064	0.000	0.008
	Very good	-0.009	0.005	-1.930	0.053	-0.018	0.000
Female	***Very bad***	0.003	0.001	4.410	0.000	0.002	0.004
	Fairly bad	0.006	0.001	5.670	0.000	0.004	0.007
	Fairly good	0.007	0.002	4.400	0.000	0.004	0.010
	Very good	-0.016	0.003	-6.010	0.000	-0.021	-0.011
Education	***Very bad***	-0.004	0.001	-6.300	0.000	-0.005	-0.003
	Fairly bad	-0.008	0.001	-14.010	0.000	-0.009	-0.007
	Fairly good	-0.010	0.002	-6.230	0.000	-0.014	-0.007

	Very good	0.022	0.001	24.540	0.000	0.021	0.024
Unemployment	***Very bad***	0.003	0.001	3.160	0.002	0.001	0.005
	Fairly bad	0.006	0.002	3.540	0.000	0.002	0.009
	Fairly good	0.007	0.002	3.150	0.002	0.003	0.012
	Very good	-0.016	0.004	-3.620	0.000	-0.024	-0.007
<u>Country-level Controls</u>							
Polity 4	***Very bad***	0.000	0.000	-2.500	0.012	-0.001	0.000
	Fairly bad	-0.001	0.000	-2.760	0.006	-0.001	0.000
	Fairly good	-0.001	0.000	-2.560	0.011	-0.002	0.000
	Very good	0.002	0.001	2.780	0.006	0.001	0.004
Log GDP	***Very bad***	-0.009	0.002	-4.030	0.000	-0.013	-0.005
	Fairly bad	-0.017	0.003	-5.360	0.000	-0.024	-0.011
	Fairly good	-0.022	0.005	-4.220	0.000	-0.033	-0.012
	Very good	0.049	0.009	5.510	0.000	0.031	0.066
GDP growth	***Very bad***	0.000	0.000	3.230	0.001	0.000	0.001
	Fairly bad	0.001	0.000	3.650	0.000	0.000	0.001
	Fairly good	0.001	0.000	3.260	0.001	0.000	0.001
	Very good	-0.002	0.001	-3.760	0.000	-0.003	-0.001
Log Misery Index	***Very bad***	0.007	0.001	5.490	0.000	0.005	0.010
	Fairly bad	0.013	0.001	8.970	0.000	0.011	0.016
	Fairly good	0.017	0.003	5.520	0.000	0.011	0.024
	Very good	-0.038	0.004	-10.570	0.000	-0.045	-0.031
Time since 1990	***Very bad***	0.001	0.001	2.000	0.046	0.000	0.003
	Fairly bad	0.003	0.001	2.150	0.032	0.000	0.005
	Fairly good	0.003	0.002	2.130	0.033	0.000	0.007
	Very good	-0.007	0.003	-2.200	0.028	-0.014	-0.001

Appendix G: Multilevel mixed-effects ordered probit regression of EU association on trust in the EU, and EU association and trust in EU on support for democracy: cross-classified random effects

	Model 5: Trust in the EU	**Model 6: Association with EU and trust in EU**	**Model 7: Interactions**
EU Association Fixed Effects (Reference: No Association)			
Economic Association	-0.019	0.260***	-0.135
	(0.037)	(0.040)	(0.082)
Political Association	-0.193***	0.108***	-0.045
	(0.029)	(0.032)	(0.044)
Candidate State	-0.168***	0.003	-0.232***
	(0.035)	(0.038)	(0.055)
Member State	-0.099*	-0.078	-0.283***
	(0.045)	(0.049)	(0.060)
Euroscepticism Fixed Effect			
Trust in EU		0.188***	0.123***
		(0.005)	(0.010)
Interaction Fixed Effects			
Economic Association x EU Trust			0.153***
			(0.026)
Political Association x EU Trust			0.068***
			(0.013)
Candidate State x EU Trust			0.101***
			(0.017)
Member State x EU Trust			0.087***
			(0.015)
Individual Fixed Effects			
Age	-0.002***	0.001	0.001
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Cohort			
Pre-Cold War	0.028	-0.001	-0.001
	(0.020)	(0.022)	(0.022)
Post-Cold War	0.062***	-0.025	-0.025
	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.014)
Female	-0.019*	-0.046***	-0.046***
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Education	0.023***	0.067***	0.067***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Unemployment	-0.072***	-0.028*	-0.027*
	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Country-level Fixed Effects			
Polity 4 score	0.013***	0.008**	0.009**
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Log GDP	0.120***	0.142***	0.145***
	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.030)

GDP growth	0.014***	-0.009***	-0.010***
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Log Misery Index	0.202***	-0.118***	-0.119***
	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Time since 1990	-0.027**	-0.023*	-0.024*
	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Cut point 1	0.291	-0.686**	-0.815**
	(0.241)	(0.249)	(0.253)
Cut point 2	1.287***	0.118	-0.011
	(0.241)	(0.249)	(0.252)
Cut point 3	2.616***	1.658***	1.529***
	(0.242)	(0.249)	(0.253)
Variance components			
Country [N = 25]	0.157	0.086	0.085
	(0.048)	(0.027)	(0.027)
Year [N = 16]	0.040	0.048	0.048
	(0.016)	(0.018)	(0.018)

Dependent variables: Model 5 *trust in the EU* [1 “none” – 4 “a great deal”]; Models 6/7 *support for democracy* [1 “very bad” – 4 “very good”].
Data: European Values Study and World Values Survey (1995-2014).
Significance levels: * p<.05, ** p<.01 *** p<.001. Standard errors in parentheses.
N obs.: 83,302 (Model 5) 75,527 (Models 6/7).

Appendix H: Multilevel mixed-effects ordered probit regression of EU association on trust in the EU, and EU association and trust in EU on support for democracy: cross-classified random effects (N.B: Trust in EU variable treated as categorical)

	Model 7: Interactions
EU Association Fixed Effects (Reference: No Association)	
Economic Association	0.109
	(0.082)
Political Association	0.019
	(0.040)
Candidate State	-0.154**
	(0.049)
Member State	-0.207***
	(0.058)
Trust in EU Fixed Effect (Reference: confidence "None")	
Not very much	0.079**
	(0.026)
Quite a lot	0.207***
	(0.026)
A great deal	0.391***
	(0.036)
Interaction Fixed Effects (Reference: No Association and confidence "None")	
Economic Assoc x Not very much	0.066
	(0.083)
Economic Assoc x Quite a lot	0.176*
	(0.079)
Economic Assoc x A great deal	0.406***
	(0.092)
Political Assoc x Not very much	0.068*
	(0.033)
Political Assoc x Quite a lot	0.146***
	(0.033)
Political Assoc x A great deal	0.185***
	(0.044)
Candidate state x Not very much	0.121**
	(0.042)
Candidate state x Quite a lot	0.231***
	(0.043)
Candidate state x A great deal	0.278***
	(0.062)
Member state x Not very much	0.086*
	(0.038)
Member state x Quite a lot	0.192***
	(0.037)

Member state x A great deal	0.210***
	(0.053)
Individual Fixed Effects	
Age	0.001
	(0.000)
Cohort	
Pre-Cold War	-0.001
	(0.022)
Post-Cold War	-0.026
	(0.014)
Female	-0.045***
	(0.008)
Education	0.067***
	(0.002)
Unemployment	-0.028*
	(0.013)
Country-level Fixed Effects	
Polity 4 score	0.010***
	(0.003)
Log GDP	0.149***
	(0.030)
GDP growth	-0.009***
	(0.002)
Log Misery Index	-0.120***
	(0.012)
Time since 1990	-0.024*
	(0.011)
Cut point 1	-0.949***
	(0.249)
Cut point 2	-0.146
	(0.249)
Cut point 3	1.395***
	(0.249)
Variance components	
Country [N = 25]	0.084
	(0.026)
Year [N = 16]	0.048
	(0.018)

Dependent variable: *support for democracy* [1 "very bad" – 4 "very good"].
Data: European Values Study and World Values Survey (1995-2014).
Significance levels: * p<0.05, ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001. Standard errors in parentheses. N obs.: 75,527.

Appendix I: Average marginal effects table for interaction effects of EU association and confidence in the EU on support for democracy

Linear regression

Interaction between:		**Delta-method**					
EU Association Type	**Confidence in the EU**	**AME**	**Std. Error**	**z**	**P>|z|**	**[95% Conf. Interval]**	
Economic association	***None at all***	0.045	0.052	0.860	0.389	-0.057	0.147
	Not very much	0.098	0.034	2.920	0.003	0.032	0.164
	Quite a lot	0.162	0.029	5.570	0.000	0.105	0.218
	A great deal	0.250	0.037	6.710	0.000	0.177	0.323
Political association	***None at all***	0.012	0.025	0.460	0.642	-0.038	0.061
	Not very much	0.055	0.022	2.470	0.014	0.011	0.100
	Quite a lot	0.100	0.022	4.490	0.000	0.057	0.144
	A great deal	0.119	0.030	4.040	0.000	0.061	0.177
Candidate state	***None at all***	-0.085	0.031	-2.710	0.007	-0.146	-0.023
	Not very much	-0.016	0.027	-0.610	0.542	-0.069	0.036
	Quite a lot	0.043	0.027	1.590	0.112	-0.010	0.097
	A great deal	0.062	0.039	1.610	0.107	-0.013	0.138
Member state	***None at all***	-0.161	0.036	-4.440	0.000	-0.232	-0.090
	Not very much	-0.091	0.033	-2.790	0.005	-0.154	-0.027
	Quite a lot	-0.018	0.033	-0.540	0.587	-0.081	0.046
	A great deal						

Appendix J: Robustness tests

Appendix J.1: Models 4 and 7 using multilevel mixed effects linear regression

	Model 4: Full model	**Model 7: Interactions**
EU Association Fixed Effects (Reference: No Association)		
Economic Association	0.119***	-0.052
	(0.023)	(0.051)
Political Association	0.040*	-0.023
	(0.018)	(0.028)
Candidate State	-0.022	-0.128***
	(0.022)	(0.034)
Member State	-0.099***	-0.212***
	(0.028)	(0.038)
Euroscepticism Fixed Effect		
Trust in EU		0.081***
		(0.007)
Interaction Fixed Effects		
Economic Association x EU Trust		0.074***
		(0.016)
Political Association x EU Trust		0.039***
		(0.008)
Candidate State x EU Trust		0.055***
		(0.011)
Member State x EU Trust		0.062***
		(0.009)
Individual Fixed Effects		
Age	-0.000	0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Cohort		
Pre-Cold War	0.006	-0.000
	(0.013)	(0.014)
Post-Cold War	-0.019*	-0.019*
	(0.008)	(0.009)
Female	-0.025***	-0.025***
	(0.005)	(0.005)
Education	0.040***	0.042***
	(0.001)	(0.001)
Unemployment	-0.032***	-0.020*
	(0.008)	(0.008)
Country-level Fixed Effects		
Polity 4 score	0.006***	0.007***
	(0.002)	(0.002)
Log GDP	0.092***	0.093***
	(0.016)	(0.018)
GDP growth	-0.004***	-0.006***
	(0.001)	(0.001)

Log Misery Index	-0.080***	-0.084***
	(0.006)	(0.008)
Time since 1990	-0.014*	-0.015*
	(0.006)	(0.007)
Constant	2.745***	2.483***
	(0.146)	(0.156)
Variance components		
Country [N = 25]	0.047	0.032
	(0.014)	(0.010)
Year [N = 16]	0.019	0.020
	(0.007)	(0.008)

Dependent variable: *support for democracy* [1 “very bad” – 4 “very good”].
Data: European Values Study and World Values Survey (1995-2014).
Significance levels: * p<.05, ** p<.01 *** p<.001. Standard errors in parentheses.
N obs.: 96,288 (Model 4) 75,527 (Model 7).

Appendix J.2: Models 4 and 7 with added country control for globalisation (KOF index of globalisation)

	Model 4: Full model	**Model 7: Interactions**
EU Association Fixed Effects (Reference: No Association)		
Economic Association	0.242***	-0.103
	(0.041)	(0.085)
Political Association	0.082**	-0.019
	(0.030)	(0.048)
Candidate State	-0.009	-0.206***
	(0.038)	(0.058)
Member State	-0.131**	-0.257***
	(0.044)	(0.063)
Euroscepticism Fixed Effect		
Trust in EU		0.123***
		(0.010)
Interaction Fixed Effects		
Economic Association x EU Trust		0.151***
		(0.026)
Political Association x EU Trust		0.068***
		(0.013)
Candidate State x EU Trust		0.102***
		(0.017)
Member State x EU Trust		0.087***
		(0.015)
Individual Fixed Effects		
Age	-0.000	0.001
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Cohort		
Pre-Cold War	0.009	-0.002
	(0.019)	(0.022)
Post-Cold War	-0.022	-0.021
	(0.013)	(0.015)
Female	-0.045***	-0.045***
	(0.007)	(0.008)
Education	0.064***	0.068***
	(0.002)	(0.002)
Unemployment	-0.046***	-0.028*
	(0.012)	(0.014)
Country-level Fixed Effects		
Log KOF	-0.269	-0.196
	(0.146)	(0.141)
Polity 4 score	0.005*	0.009**
	(0.003)	(0.003)
Log GDP	0.112***	0.157***
	(0.025)	(0.031)

GDP growth	-0.006***	-0.009***
	(0.002)	(0.002)
Log Misery Index	-0.105***	-0.119***
	(0.010)	(0.012)
Time since 1990	-0.017	-0.020
	(0.011)	(0.012)
Cut point 1	-2.534***	-1.448**
	(0.578)	(0.546)
Cut point 2	-1.749**	-0.643
	(0.578)	(0.546)
Cut point 3	-0.214	0.901
	(0.578)	(0.546)
Variance components		
Country [N = 25]	0.107**	0.080**
	(0.032)	(0.025)
Year [N = 16]	0.036**	0.050**
	(0.013)	(0.019)

Dependent variable: *support for democracy* [1 "very bad" – 4 "very good"].
Data: European Values Study and World Values Survey (1995-2014).
Significance levels: * p<.05, ** p<.01 *** p<.001. Standard errors in parentheses.
N obs.: 95,218 (Model 4) 74,533 (Model 7).

Appendix J.3: Models 4 and 7 with added demographic controls for religiosity (binary variable for religious or not), town size (ordinal variable) and relationship status (binary variable for married or not).

	Model 4: Full model	Model 7: Interactions
EU Association Fixed Effects (Reference: No Association)		
Economic Association	0.228***	-0.173*
	(0.038)	(0.084)
Political Association	0.082**	-0.021
	(0.029)	(0.045)
Candidate State	-0.018	-0.223***
	(0.036)	(0.057)
Member State	-0.108*	-0.265***
	(0.045)	(0.063)
Euroscepticism Fixed Effect		
Trust in EU		0.118***
		(0.011)
Interaction Fixed Effects		
Economic Association x EU Trust		0.167***
		(0.026)
Political Association x EU Trust		0.068***
		(0.013)
Candidate State x EU Trust		0.106***
		(0.018)
Member State x EU Trust		0.093***
		(0.015)
Individual Fixed Effects		
Religious	0.030***	0.015
	(0.009)	(0.010)
Married	0.009	0.011
	(0.008)	(0.009)
Age	-0.000	0.001
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Cohort		
Pre-Cold War	0.007	0.001
	(0.020)	(0.023)
Post-Cold War	-0.022	-0.022
	(0.014)	(0.015)
Female	-0.048***	-0.046***
	(0.008)	(0.009)
Education	0.065***	0.068***
	(0.002)	(0.002)
Unemployment	-0.043***	-0.025
	(0.013)	(0.014)

Country-level Fixed Effects		
Polity 4 score	0.006*	0.008**
	(0.003)	(0.003)
Log GDP	0.146***	0.160***
	(0.027)	(0.030)
GDP growth	-0.006***	-0.009***
	(0.002)	(0.002)
Log Misery Index	-0.116***	-0.128***
	(0.010)	(0.013)
Time since 1990	-0.024*	-0.028*
	(0.010)	(0.011)
Cut point 1	-1.191***	-0.773**
	(0.236)	(0.258)
Cut point 2	-0.403	0.034
	(0.236)	(0.258)
Cut point 3	1.127***	1.576***
	(0.236)	(0.258)
Variance components		
Country [N = 25]	0.130***	0.091**
	(0.039)	(0.028)
Year [N = 16]	0.044**	0.052**
	(0.016)	(0.020)

Dependent variable: support for democracy [1 “very bad” – 4 “very good”].
Data: European Values Study and World Values Survey (1995-2014).
Significance levels: * p<.05, ** p<.01 *** p<.001. Standard errors in parentheses.
N obs.: 82,888 (Model 4) 66,046 (Model 7).

Appendix J.4: Model 7 with added trust in domestic institutions indicator (trust in Parliament – ordinal variable)

	Model 7: Interactions
EU Association Fixed Effects (Reference: No Association)	
Economic Association	-0.101
	(0.083)
Political Association	0.000
	(0.044)
Candidate State	-0.194***
	(0.055)
Member State	-0.233***
	(0.061)
Euroscepticism Fixed Effect	
Trust in EU	0.112***
	(0.011)
Interaction Fixed Effects	
Economic Association x EU Trust	0.142***
	(0.026)
Political Association x EU Trust	0.057***
	(0.013)
Candidate State x EU Trust	0.091***
	(0.017)
Member State x EU Trust	0.076***
	(0.015)
Trust in national Parliament	0.065***
	(0.005)
Individual Fixed Effects	
Age	0.000
	(0.000)
Cohort	-0.002
Pre-Cold War	(0.023)
	-0.030*
Post-Cold War	(0.015)
	-0.046***
Female	(0.008)
	0.068***
Education	(0.002)
	-0.024
Unemployment	(0.014)
	0.000
Country-level Fixed Effects	
Polity 4 score	0.009**
	(0.003)

Log GDP	0.146***
	(0.030)
GDP growth	-0.010***
	(0.002)
Log Misery Index	-0.125***
	(0.012)
Time since 1990	-0.025*
	(0.011)
Cut point 1	-0.738**
	(0.253)
Cut point 2	0.068
	(0.253)
Cut point 3	1.607***
	(0.253)
Variance components	
Country [N = 25]	0.087*
	(0.027)
Year [N = 16]	0.050**
	(0.019)

Dependent variable: support for democracy [1 “very bad” – 4 “very good”].
Data: European Values Study and World Values Survey (1995-2014).
Significance levels: * p<.05, ** p<.01 *** p<.001. Standard errors in parentheses.
N obs.: 74,060.

Appendix K: Frequency of responses by countries and ministries (observations)

	Country							
Ministry	Estonia	Hungary	Latvia	Lithuania	Poland	Slovakia	Slovenia	*Total*
Agriculture	72	0	31	4	33	56	22	*218*
Economic, Regional, Transport and Labour	70	24	57	92	144	239	2	*628*
Education and Culture	0	0	7	15	10	37	21	*90*
Environment	90	0	14	1	27	42	12	*186*
Finance	43	43	1	9	127	115	81	*419*
Foreign Affairs	0	0	7	3	0	109	1	*120*
Health	5	16	49	13	15	30	41	*169*
Interior and Justice	30	38	35	28	22	4	116	*273*
Other	3	5	19	3	4	0	22	*56*
Prime Minister's Office	22	38	22	15	20	59	0	*176*
Total	*335*	*164*	*242*	*183*	*402*	*691*	*318*	*2,335*

Appendix L: Mokken scale analysis of items for dependent variable index: "EU membership is good" and "EU integration is good"

Item	**Mean**	**Loevinger H**	**H0: Hj<=0 p-value**
EU membership is good	4.209	0.817	0.000
EU integration is good	3.960	0.817	0.000
Scale		0.817	0.000

Appendix M: Mokken scale analysis of items for EU projection index

EU projection index **Item**	**Mean**	**Loevinger H**	**H0: Hj<=0 p-value**
Exchange of experts, bilateral or multinational cooperation programs.	3.242	0.505	0.000
Consultation with colleagues from one or more other member states outside the formal EU framework	3.245	0.628	0.000
Preparation of national input into EU-level meetings	3.352	0.579	0.000
Participation in meetings organised by the European Commission or working groups gathered by the Council of Ministers	3.224	0.624	0.000
Scale		*0.584*	*0.000*

Appendix N: Mokken scale analysis of items for EU reception index

EU reception index **Item**	**Mean**	**Loevinger H**	**H0: Hj<=0 p-value**
Practical application or enforcement of rules and policies that originated in the EU	3.949	0.594	0.000
Transposition of European policies into national legal measures	3.693	0.618	0.000
Having to take into account EU policies during national policy making	3.886	0.595	0.000
Scale		*0.603*	*0.000*

Appendix O: Simple regression analyses of civil service EU support (sub-sample: civil servants whose daily work is affected by the EU) – full table

	Model 1: Length of contact	Model 2: Projection-type contact	Model 3: Reception-type contact	Model 4: All effects	
				β	B
Hours/week working on EU related matters (percent)	0.002**			0.002*	0.077*
	(0.001)			(0.001)	
EU projection index (mean)		0.076**		0.071**	0.093**
		(0.021)		(0.026)	
EU reception index (mean)			0.046	0.004	0.004
			(0.025)	(0.030)	
Individual-level controls					
Female	-0.127**	-0.103*	-0.105*	-0.130**	-0.080**
	(0.049)	(0.045)	(0.045)	(0.049)	
Age	0.060*	0.036	0.033	0.049	0.067
	(0.029)	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.030)	
Education	0.089**	0.102**	0.097**	0.085*	0.080*
	(0.033)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.034)	
Years worked in public administration	0.020	0.013	0.013	0.021	0.040
	(0.022)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.022)	
Managerial responsibilities	0.081	0.077	0.094	0.060	0.036
	(0.056)	(0.051)	(0.051)	(0.057)	
Ministry controls (Reference category: Foreign Affairs)					
Agriculture	-0.325*	-0.196	-0.258*	-0.304*	-0.120*
	(0.137)	(0.124)	(0.126)	(0.139)	
Economic, Regional, Transport and Labour	-0.253*	-0.110	-0.190	-0.203	-0.117
	(0.121)	(0.110)	(0.111)	(0.124)	
Education and Culture	0.083	0.191	0.141	0.096	0.018
	(0.192)	(0.181)	(0.179)	(0.196)	
Environment	-0.456**	-0.371**	-0.447**	-0.412**	-0.135**
	(0.145)	(0.129)	(0.129)	(0.147)	
Finance	-0.131	-0.055	-0.121	-0.099	-0.048
	(0.127)	(0.116)	(0.116)	(0.129)	
Health	-0.256	-0.225	-0.291*	-0.225	-0.068
	(0.152)	(0.139)	(0.140)	(0.154)	
Interior and Justice	-0.433**	-0.335*	-0.405**	-0.392**	-0.151**
	(0.142)	(0.131)	(0.131)	(0.144)	
Other	-0.129	-0.039	-0.091	-0.110	-0.018
	(0.224)	(0.217)	(0.218)	(0.225)	
Prime Minister's Office	-0.155	-0.059	-0.148	-0.098	-0.030
	(0.143)	(0.132)	(0.131)	(0.146)	
Constant	3.902**	3.675**	3.835**	3.685**	
	(0.181)	(0.176)	(0.177)	(0.203)	
Observations	996	1,160	1,172	979	
R-squared (overall)	0.070	0.080	0.066	0.081	

Dependent variable: Support for EU index (1 [low support] – 5 [high support]). OLS regression with country fixed effects. Significance levels: ** p<0.01, * p<0.05. Standard errors in parentheses.

Appendix P: List of interviewees by relationship with EU groups

Member states

BGR1, Diplomat, Permanent Representation of Hungary to the European Union, Brussels, April 2015.

HU1, Diplomat, Permanent Representation of Hungary to the European Union, Brussels, April 2015.

HU2, Diplomat, Permanent Representation of Hungary to the European Union, Brussels, April 2015.

HU3, Diplomat, Permanent Representation of Hungary to the European Union, Brussels, April 2015.

HU4, Diplomat, Permanent Representation of Hungary to the European Union, Brussels, June 2015.

HU5, Diplomat, Permanent Representation of Hungary to the European Union, Brussels, June 2015.

European Commission

COM1, Hungarian Commission officer, DG JUST, Brussels, June 2015.

COM2, Hungarian Commission officer, DG EMPL, Brussels, June 2015.

COM3, Slovak Commission officer, DG EMPL, Brussels, June 2015.

COM4, Hungarian Commission officer, DG REGIO, Brussels, June 2015.

COM5, Hungarian Commission officer, DG COMP, Brussels, June 2015.

COM6, Czech Commission officer, DG EMPL, Brussels, June 2015.

COM7, Hungarian Commission officer, DG EMPL, Brussels, June 2015.

Candidate states

ALB1, Mission of Albania to the European Union, Brussels, June 2015.

ALB2, Mission of Albania to the European Union, Brussels, June 2015.

BiH1, Diplomat, Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the European Union, Brussels, April 2015.

BiH2, Diplomat, Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the European Union, Brussels, April 2015.

MKD1, Diplomat, Mission of the Republic of Macedonia to the European Union, Brussels, April 2015

MNE1, Diplomat, Mission of Montenegro to the European Union, Brussels, April 2015.

MNE2, Diplomat, Mission of Montenegro to the European Union, Brussels, April 2015.

SRB1, Diplomat, Mission of The Republic of Serbia to the European Union, Brussels, April 2015.

SRB2, Diplomat, Mission of The Republic of Serbia to the European Union, Brussels, April 2015.

SRB3, Diplomat, Mission of The Republic of Serbia to the European Union, Brussels, April and June 2015.

SRB4, Diplomat, Mission of The Republic of Serbia to the European Union, Brussels, June 2015.

European Partnership States

GEO1, Diplomat, Mission of Georgia to the European Union, Brussels, April 2015.

MDA1, Diplomat, Mission of the Republic of Moldova to the European Union

UKR1, Mission of Ukraine to the European Union, Brussels, June 2015.

Other bilateral relations

RUS1, Diplomat, Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, Brussels, June 2015.

Appendix Q: Interview script

A. Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to do an interview with me. As mentioned in previous communications, the purpose of my research is to study the relationship between diplomatic missions in Brussels and the European Union. I would like to understand your professional role in terms of your daily work with the EU, as well as your personal experience with political life in Europe, including your personal views on the EU and democracy.
The findings of this study will make an important contribution towards the academic and practical understanding of diplomacy in contemporary international relations, where diplomacy does not only happen between countries but also with regional organisations such as the EU. In addition, the project will help diplomats and governments understand better the nature of the interaction between the diplomats and international organisations, and the effects and consequences of this relationship. Your participation today is therefore a crucial piece of the puzzle, and one for which I am very grateful.
Your answers and your participation will be completely anonymous and confidential. I will be audio recording the interview, but this is for my benefit so that I can listen to you more easily and concentrate on what you are saying, instead of having to take notes. The content of the recording will remain anonymous and confidential. It will be stored securely with password-protection, and will not be shared with any third parties. However, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time during or after the interview.

Do you have any questions for me?

1. Before we begin, could you tell me a bit about yourself and your background?
    a. Study – where, when, what? Institution?
        i. Ever study abroad?
    b. Before coming to Brussels, did you follow and foreign media, specifically those from the EU?
    c. When did you enter the Foreign Service?
    d. Previous postings abroad
        i. Ever in EU?
    e. How long in Brussels?

B. *Professional work with the EU*

1. What are your professional responsibilities in the Embassy?
    a. Day-to-day work: documents, legislation, meetings, etc.
    b. (Generic roles e.g. Ambassador, First secretary, Attaché, etc.)

2. Can you tell me about the day-to-day contact that you have with the EU as part of your job?
    a. Issues
        i. Policies
            1. Prompt: rules and regulations, negotiations, lobby work
        ii. Home country
            1. Prompt: Integration/accession, cooperation, trade/business, defending home country's position
    b. Meetings [if not meetings, contacts (phone, email, etc.)]:
        i. Who are the people?
            1. Which EU institutions?
                a. Prompt: contact with Council, Commission, EP
            2. Their main responsibilities
                a. At what level they work
        ii. What is the nature of these discussions?
            1. Cooperative/conflictual

C. *Perceptions of the EU*

1. In your home country, how does the <u>government</u> perceive the EU? Why?
    a. How are EU institutions perceived? Why?

b. How are EU actions perceived? Why?

c. How are EU policies perceived? Why?

    i. Internal/External

        1. Specifically, how is democracy (policy) in the EU perceived by your home government?

    ii. What about the external policies of the EU regarding democracy?

        1. Prompt: Democracy promotion

        2. Prompt: Soft power/normative power

d. Does public opinion in your home country correspond to your government's views on the EU?

    i. In what ways is it the same/different?

2. What is your personal view of the EU? Why?

    a. Prompt: Institutions, actions, policies

D. Views on Democracy

1. What are your personal views about democracy inside the EU?

2. What do you think about how the EU projects democracy to the rest of the world?

    a. External policies

    b. Prompt: democracy promotion

    c. Prompt: soft power, normative power

3. What your views about democracy as a political system in general?

    a. Prompt for 4 dimensions of democracy

        i. free and fair elections

        ii. freedom of association

        iii. freedom of expression

iv. freedom of the media

b. Prompts for EU goals/tools:

i. Observing elections

ii. Dialogue

iii. Human rights

iv. Legislative changes

v. Incentives: economic integration, access to EU market, mobility, financial assistance

vi. Enhancing civil societies

vii. Conditionality

4. Are your views of the EU now different from before you came to work to Brussels?

i. If yes: How are they different?

ii. If no: Working with the EU has had no effect?

b. What do you think you changed/did not change your views?

5. Are your views on democracy different from before you came to work to Brussels?

i. If yes: How are they different?

ii. If no: Working with the EU has had no effect?

b. What do you think you changed/did not change your views?

E. Democratic socialisation

1. There is a theory in political science called "international socialisation theory", which basically proposes that when actors join an organisation or community, they will be inducted into the norms and values of that community. These actors will comply with the norms of this community and behave appropriately, and in this process some actors will even go as far as to adopt or internalise those norms as their own.
Some political scientists think that it could be said that the EU as a community could potentially socialise people who work with it or within

it, into following values that the EU upholds. Since one of the more important of these is the principle of democracy, in my PhD I want to examine whether the EU has the potential to democratically socialise people coming from other countries, such as yourself. In other words, I am interested to see whether working with the EU community has had an effect on the way you think about democracy. Based on your personal experience, do you think there may be any truth to this theory?

   a. Have you noticed any change in your views about democracy since you started working with the EU?

   b. Have you noticed any change in any of your colleagues in terms of their views about democracy since they started working with the EU?

2. Mechanisms:

   a. Material incentives

   b. social Incentives

   c. Argumentation/learning

   d. Role playing

3. Conditions:

   a. Do you think the extent to which a person may be open to socialisation will depend on their personality? [Identity]

      i. Age, gender, education, rank

      ii. prior experience abroad

      iii. political affiliation

   b. Frequency and quality of interaction with EU

      i. length of time spent working with EU

6. Ending

1. From your own personal point of view, what do you think of the future of democracy in:

   a. Your own country?

b. The EU?

2. Thank respondent for participation.
    a. Ask for contacts within Embassy and in other Embassies.
    b. Availability for completing a short survey online, sometime in the future
    c. Disseminate survey among colleagues within Embassy and in other embassies