

EURO-SCEPTICISM AND EXTREME VOTING PATTERNS IN EUROPE

Social cleavages and socio-political attitudes determining voting for the far left, the far right, and non-voting

Marcel Lubbers and Peer Scheepers

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Abstract

In this contribution, we focus on the role of euro-scepticism in electoral outcomes of national elections. We do so through multilevel multinomial modelling on high-quality cross-national European data to explain voting for different party families. We distinguish voting for far left-wing parties, far right-wing parties, as well as non-voting, versus voting for the other parties. First, we focus on social cleavages related to voting. We test for the effects of traditional cleavages related to educational attainment, social class, income and religiosity on voting preferences. Second, we take diverse socio-political attitudes into account, previously proposed to determine voting preferences. We test whether political euro-scepticism affects voting preferences over and beyond these attitudinal determinants. We find that political euro-scepticism and distrust in the European Parliament contribute to the explanation of extreme political preferences. These effects hold after controlling for a general left-right dimension. Moreover, euro-scepticism explains why lower income categories and lower educated people are more likely to vote for the far right-wing.

INTRODUCTION

‘A sleeping giant’ is how Van der Eijk and Franklin (2004) expect the theme of the ‘European Union’ to be typified in the near future elections of the various European nation states. In the European Elections of 2004, various euro-sceptic or outspokenly anti-EU parties already accomplished electoral successes. The British UK Independence party received wide support (16.8%). In the Netherlands, criticism from van Buitenen on EU bureaucracy was rewarded with 7.3% of the Dutch votes in the European elections. Other specific euro-critical parties were successful in Austria (Liste Martin; 14%), Denmark (JuniBevaegelsen; 9.1%) and Sweden (Junilistan; 14.4%). Once again, these elections were plagued with notoriously high percentages of Europeans that actually abstained from voting. In 2004, on average 45.6% of the Europeans made their way to the voting booths. Low extremes were noted in the new member states; Poland (20.9%), Czech Republic (28.3%) and Slovenia (28.3%).

In national elections it is less clear to what extent mobilization of anti-EU sentiments plays a role. Based on expert survey data on political parties’ programs, Hooghe (2003) and Marks, Hooghe, Nelsen and Edwards (2006) have shown that euro-scepticism is U-shaped related to parties placed on a left-right scale: parties on both extremes of the political spectrum have rather strong anti-EU integration programs, whereas parties in the centre hold rather moderate EU views.

Previous research paid some attention to the importance of resistance to European integration as related to the electoral growth of the far right in Europe, at least in some countries (Taggart 2000). In her case studies of France and Denmark, Ivarsflaten (2005) showed that euro-scepticism is an important determinant for far right political preferences, next to exclusionism and political disillusionment. Van der Burg, Fennema and Tillie (2005) showed that, at least in France, anti-EU attitudes induce voting for the extreme right-wing. As yet, few empirical

studies have studied the relationships between attitudes towards Europe and voting in national elections (Gabel 2000). In this study we question, firstly, to what extent euro-scepticism plays a role in voting for extremist parties, on both the far right and the far left, and in inducing non-voting. Secondly, we aim to study the extent to which euro-scepticism, next to other political attitudes, explains why certain social categories are more likely to perform these types of voting behaviours.

THEORIES

In order to provide theoretically guided hypotheses as preliminary answers to the questions as posed above, we would like to stand on the shoulders of researchers who have previously focused on voting behaviour like Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet (1948), Downs (1957) and Lipset (1960). Whereas Lazarsfeld et al. emphasized the importance of group-related voting behavior, and Lipset emphasized particularly group interests, Downs argued that people evaluate parties by issues on their program and vote the party that corresponds most strongly with the issues they believe to be most important. Considering these approaches to be simultaneously relevant for voting behaviour, we may derive answers on the social cleavages that are still of importance for voting behaviour, as well as on socio-political determinants that may explain different voting preferences between these groups. This theoretical endeavour has been successfully applied in studies on far right-wing voting behaviour (Kitschelt 1995; Lubbers, Gijsberts & Scheepers 2002; Ivarsflaten 2005). Now, we propose to apply this endeavour to explain voting for far left-wing parties, i.e., a classic question that has received far less attention in the recent past than voting for the far right. Few empirical studies exist on voting for the Italian Communists, the popular Danish Enhedslisten, or the French Communists, even though these parties are united in the European 'Left Union'. The question

concerning the extent to which euro-sceptic attitudes affect this voting has not yet been addressed in previous studies.

Moreover, to the extent that euro-scepticism influences extreme (far right- or far left-) voting, we propose that it has an effect over and beyond previously identified determinants of these types of voting. This statement amounts to the simultaneous inclusion of other determinants in order to test rigorously for the non-spurious effect of euro-scepticism on voting, as suggested by Gabel (2000). In a similar vein, Van der Eijk and Franklin (2004) have stressed that euro-scepticism should affect voting behaviour in addition to left-right placement as a separate factor. We expect it to be such a separate determinant, because political parties – and not only those at the extremes – treat the EU as a special topic in their programs, thereby appealing to electoral sentiments, just as the theme of immigration and integration made inroads in political party programs in the 1980s.

Euro-scepticism as an additional explanation for far right-wing voting

Previous research has provided us with overwhelming evidence that underprivileged social categories are more likely to vote for far right-wing parties (Kitschelt 1995; Lubbers, Gijsberts & Scheepers 2002). To explain why these particular social categories, like lowly educated people and people living on low incomes, are more likely to vote for the far right, specific theories have been developed, of which ethnic group conflict theory may be considered rather successful (Gijsberts, Hagendoorn & Scheepers 2004). This theory, building on realistic conflict theories, proposes that particularly underprivileged people are more likely to vote for far right-wing parties, that claim to protect their (economic) interests, because underprivileged people perceive themselves to be threatened by ethnic immigrants with whom they share social conditions (Lubbers et al. 2002; Ivarsflaten 2005). These far right-wing

parties not only claim to protect threatened economic interests, but they might appeal to these underprivileged people by claiming that European integration is another, yet political, threat that eventually may reduce vital national traditions. The Union's creation of European citizenship, captured in various symbolic expressions such as a unified currency, a European passport, a European flag, anthem and even a Europe Day, may increase people's fears over losses of national traditions and the nation's sovereignty. Considering previous research showing that particularly underprivileged people in many countries attach great value to national traditions, chauvinism and patriotism (Coenders, Gijsberts & Scheepers 2004), appealing to euro-scepticism may effectively encourage underprivileged people to vote for these far right-wing parties. Moreover, strong correlations between perceived threat from immigrants and euro-scepticism have been shown in previous research (McLaren 2002; Díez Medrano 2004; De Vreese & Boomgaarden 2005; McLaren 2006).

To ascertain the importance of euro-scepticism for voting for the far right-wing, we propose that it could have an effect, in addition to perceived threat from immigrants, even after controlling for other relevant determinants like authoritarianism, attachment to traditions, and political distrust (Kitschelt 1995; Billiet & De Witte 1995; Jackman & Volpert 1996; Knigge 1996; Mayer 1998; Lubbers, Gijsberts & Scheepers 2002; Golder 2003; Van der Brug, Fennema & Tillie 2005; Veugelers & Magnan 2005). This boils down to the general hypothesis that particularly less privileged people are more likely to be euro-sceptical (Anderson & Reichert 1996; Gabel 1998; De Winter & Swyngedouw 1999; Díez Medrano 2003) – which in turn is expected to explain partially why lower educated people, manual workers and lower income categories are more likely to vote far right-wing parties.

Euro-scepticism as additional explanation for far left-wing voting

Gijsberts and Nieuwbeerta (2000) have focused on the relation between social class and (multinomial) party choice, including the communist parties, separately from the social-democratic parties. Voting for the left is mostly considered in terms of socio-economic cleavages on economic distributions, with communist parties taking the most extreme positions. Gijsberts and Nieuwbeerta (2000) have shown that – particularly for the Western European electorates – manual workers are more likely to vote for parties on the far left of the political spectrum. Moreover, political preferences for egalitarianism go some way to explaining this party preference (Gijsberts & Nieuwbeerta 2000). Voting for the far left-wing is interpreted in terms of class interests as well (Lipset 1960). People in disadvantaged or underprivileged positions prefer more government interference to establish more social equality for their benefit. As many of the far left-wing parties have expressed their concern with the capitalist and non-egalitarian direction of the EU (Hooghe 2003; Beichelt 2004), euro-scepticism could also effectively attract manual workers and hence explain additionally their political preferences for the far left. As it has been shown that particularly less privileged people are more euro-sceptical, we expect that euro-scepticism may additionally explain their likelihood to vote for the far left. We expect, and therefore test, whether the effect holds, in addition to other possible explanations of far left voting, in particular attitudes on egalitarianism (Gijsberts & Nieuwbeerta 2000).

Euro-scepticism as additional explanation for non-voting

The extensive body of research on electoral participation has provided firm evidence that non-voting is explained by theories on cognitive mobilization and social integration (Lane and

Ersson 1990; Smeenk, De Graaf & Ultee 1995; Oppenhuis 1995; Van Egmond, De Graaf & Van der Eijk 1998; Anduiza 2002; Franklin 2002; Rubenson et al. 2004; Martikainen et al. 2005). Politics is a complicated field. Previous research has found that the less people are capable of understanding politics, the more likely they are to abstain from voting.

Empirically, this has been assessed by effects of education and political efficacy (Van Egmond et al. 1998; Martikainen, Martikainen & Wass 2005).

Theories focusing on social integration propose that people who are integrated into intermediary institutions, are more likely to show commitments to society, or at least to promote their institutions' interest in society (Van Egmond et al. 1998). Such commitment increases electoral participation, which has been shown most convincingly for religious versus non-religious people, the latter abstaining much more strongly from voting (Van Egmond 2003). As well as political understanding and incentives from intermediary groups, people need to have trust if they are going to vote. If they distrust the politicians and distrust the political system in general, they will be less likely to vote. Such political cynicism has been found in the past to increase abstention (Rubenson et al. 2004). Dissatisfaction with the government is considered to increase people's likelihood to choose to vote for competing opposition parties. For specific issues, we do not expect much variation between voters and non-voters, as long as there is enough choice between competing parties. Hooghe (2003) has shown that in many European countries, most parties hardly differ in their program with respect to the EU, except for some of the more extreme parties. If euro-scepticism is a motive in voting decisions, but people consider the far left or far right to be too extreme, euro-scepticism may induce people to abstain from voting, also in national elections.

DATA

Data were derived from the European Social Survey (ESS 2004a). The ESS project is funded by the European Commission's Fifth Framework Program, the European Science Foundation and academic funding bodies in participating countries. The ESS team emphasizes the exceptionally high methodological standards of the design and of the operation of the project. A precise data description is available (ESS 2004b; Jowell *et al.*, 2003). Rigorous translation protocols were used, with respondent selection involving a strict random probability sampling. In most countries, face-to-face interviews were conducted and the response target aimed at was very high, i.e., 70%. In quite a few countries, the response rate was indeed higher than in previous data collections. Detailed information on country-specific samples can be found in the country reports as provided by the ESS team in the ESS Documentation Report 2002 / 2003 (<http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org>). We selected people above 18 to represent the actual electorate of European countries.

MEASUREMENTS

The dependent variable *voting behaviour* was constructed on the basis of the question whether people had voted in the last national elections and, if so, for which party they had voted. The answers were recoded into 'did not vote', 'voted for a far left-wing party', 'voted for a far right-wing party' or 'voted for another party'. We used information from the European party families as well as from previous research on right-wing populism and left-wing parties. The European Left Union has been coded as the 'far left'. The respective parties within this group have been attributed the most far left-wing scores in expert surveys (see Appendix 1), below the score of 2.5. There are three exceptions, though; the Finnish Communist Party, the Irish

‘Sinn Féin’ and the Greek Coalition of the Left, that received less extreme evaluations. As the parties are affiliated to the European Left Union, we nevertheless included these parties. The far right-wing parties are not united in the European Parliament. Previous research has discussed extensively the question concerning which parties resemble each other and to what extent the parties differ (Evans 2005). All parties we distinguished to be far right-wing parties scored strongly on anti-immigrant stances. The Italian AN has previously been included by Van der Brug et al. (2005), but some Italian researchers argued that it should be dropped (Ignazi 2003), an argument that has been followed by Lubbers et al. (2002) and was confirmed also with an expert survey. The parties are listed in Appendix 1. Of interest here is that the voters of the far left-wing parties themselves score further to the left-wing side than voters on the right do so on the right-wing side. On average, the far left-wing voters place themselves at 2.6, whereas the far right-wing voters place themselves at 6.4 (on a scale running from 0 to 10). People who did not remember which party they had voted for (4.4%) or did not want to say which party they had voted for (10.8%) were removed from the analyses.¹

To measure *educational attainment* we used information on the highest educational level of the respondent in years. In order to assign a numerical value for the respondents who were still studying at the time of the survey, we took their study duration at the time of the interview. The years of education were categorized into five categories: 8 years of education or less; 9-10 years of education; 11-12 years of education; 13-15 years of education; and 16 or more years of education. The social class measurement follows the EGP classification (Erikson et al. 1983), but we additionally distinguished cultural specialists from technical specialists as proposed by Güveli et al. (2005).²

Monthly net-household income was measured using a standard number of categories with standard ranges. Country-specific coding schemes were used only for Ireland and Hungary.

The ESS documentation provided information on how to make the country-specific coding congruent with the standard coding. To compare incomes between countries, for each country separately, the mean income was set to one. Missing values for household income were – for each country separately – imputed by an estimated value based on other information that was available for the respondents. We estimated missing income values by means of a regression analysis of household income on four variables that are related to household income.

We used information on religious attendance, which we categorized into ‘never’, ‘rarely’, ‘once a month’ and ‘once a month or more’. *Gender* is coded such that women are the reference category with which men are compared. For age, we included a quadratic term to test on differences between elderly, middle-aged and young people.

Measurements of socio-political attitudes

Measurements of euro-scepticism refer to resistance to transferring eventual decisions on policies from the nation state to the EU administration in Brussels, referred to as *political euro-scepticism* (Hooghe, 2003; De Winter & Swyngedouw 1999; Lubbers and Scheepers 2005) and *distrust in the European Parliament*. The former indicates the extent to which people prefer the sovereign nation state to decide on eight varying policies. The latter is measured with a single item, indicating distrust in the EP. There are no measurements available on instrumental euro-scepticism or measurements indicating people’s preference to turn their back on the EU completely. The two constructed measurements correlate only .10, warranting a reference to different aspects of the evaluation of the EU.

To control for other attitudes that have been proven to be relevant determinants of voting behaviour in previous research, we constructed various scales. The *objections towards European immigrants* was measured by two items, asking to what extent people think

immigrants from either poorer or richer European countries should be allowed to enter the country. As the two items correlated .65, we took the items together as one measurement of attitude towards European immigrants. To have a measurement that evaluates immigrants in general, we computed a scale of *perceived ethnic threat*, combining six items on the extent to which people believe immigrants pose a threat to economy and culture ('immigrants take jobs away versus create new jobs', 'immigrants take more services out versus put more services in than they take out', 'immigration is bad versus good for the economy', 'the country's cultural life is undermined versus enriched by immigrants', 'immigrants make the country a worse versus better place to live', 'immigrants make crime problems worse versus better'). These six items turned out to form a reliable scale (Cronbach's alpha = .84). People were also asked to what extent they believe it is important to follow customs and traditions and to what extent it is better for a country that everyone shares customs and traditions. These items were used to measure *attachment to traditions*. The items measuring attitudes towards European immigrants, perceived ethnic threat and attachment to traditions were factor analyzed. These analyses provided evidence that the three scales are empirically distinct. *Political distrust* was measured using four items ('politicians in general care what people like respondent think'; 'politicians are interested in votes rather than in peoples' opinions'; 'trust in country's parliament'; and 'trust in politicians'). The items were transformed into items with similar scale lengths, running from 0 to 10, where 10 means 'no trust'. After factor analyses had shown the uni-dimensionality of the items and reliability analyses had provided satisfactory statistics (Cronbach's alpha = .76), we computed one scale of political distrust, by taking the mean of the scores on the four items. *Dissatisfaction with the government* was measured straightforwardly on a ten-point scale. Similarly, people were asked their *dissatisfaction with the state of the country's economy*. *Political efficacy* was measured by four items ('politics is too complicated to understand', 'could take an active role in a group

involved in political issues', 'hard to make my mind up about political issues' and 'political interest') constituting a reliable scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .70$).

Support for law and order was measured as a proxy for authoritarianism with four items ('the law should always be obeyed', 'important to do what is told and follow rules', 'important that the government is strong and ensures safety', 'important to behave properly'). The items were transformed into similar scale lengths. Reliability analyses showed that the items formed a satisfactory scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .64$). *Support for economic egalitarianism* was measured using two items we took together ('the government should reduce income differentials' and 'employees need strong trade unions to protect work conditions'). *Support for social egalitarianism* was constructed using four items (Cronbach's $\alpha = .67$; importance of 'treating people equally', 'to understand different people', 'to help people and care for others' well-being' and 'to be loyal to friends').³ The two measures on egalitarianism were factorially distinct. The scale of *achievement values* was constructed out of three items (Cronbach's $\alpha = .71$; importance of 'to be rich, have money and expensive things', 'to show abilities and be admired' and 'to be successful and that people recognize achievements').

ANALYSES

To test our hypotheses we used multilevel multinomial logistic modelling (Snijders and Bosker 1999). We included all countries. The analyses provide evidence for variance at the country level. Estimated parameters indicate the likelihood to vote for either the far left, the far right or not to vote *versus* another centre party choice in Europe. All ordinal and interval variables have been transformed into z-scores (e.g. the mean set to zero and standard deviation of one), making comparisons of strength of effects possible. We started with a

model only including background characteristics to find out which social categories are more likely to vote for the far left, the far right or to abstain from voting. In the second model, the results of the inclusion of the socio-political attitudes are presented. Moreover, we present to what extent the effects of socio-political attitudes on voting far left, far right and non-voting are confounded by left-right self-placement. As we are interested in the question concerning to what extent particular socio-political attitudes explain the likelihood that certain social categories vote for each of the distinguished party families or abstain from voting, we present in another table the consequences of dropping the socio-political attitudes one by one for the parameter estimates of some of the background characteristics.

RESULTS

At the bottom of Table 1 in model 1 we present the country variance parameters of the likelihood to vote for the far left, or for the far right and non-voting versus voting for another (centre) party. The three parameters are highly significant, which is not surprising, since the extent of support for far left and far right wing parties varies strongly between countries, as does non-voting. In this research we are, however, primarily interested in the individual level effects and the explanation of these effects.

Education affects all three voting preferences. A higher education increases the likelihood to vote for the far left ($B = .12$), decreases the likelihood to vote for the far right ($B = -.21$) as well as decreasing the likelihood to abstain from voting ($B = -.32$) as compared to voting for another party. Social position contributes strongly to explaining the extreme voting preferences. Socio-cultural professionals (either high or low) differ from the higher technical professionals (i.e., the reference category): They are significantly more likely to prefer a far left-wing party, but significantly less likely to prefer a far right-wing party. Compared to the

technical professionals, we find that lower service and sales workers as well as skilled and unskilled manual workers are more likely to prefer a far left party. Regarding the vote for a far right-wing party, we find that routine non-manual workers, self-employed people (with or without employees), manual workers, their supervisors and farmers are more likely than technical professionals to vote for this party family. Compared to the technical professionals, most occupational categories are more likely to abstain from voting.

Table 1. Multinomial models of the likelihood of voting far left-wing, far right-wing or non-voting versus voting for another party. N = 30,373

	Model 1			Model 2		
	FAR LEFT	FAR RIGHT	NO VOTE	FAR LEFT	FAR RIGHT	NO VOTE
<i>Intercept</i>	-2.45	-3.11	-1.24	-2.93	-3.23	-1.47
Individual characteristics						
<i>Education (z)</i>	.12**	-.21**	-.32**	.05	-.07	-.18**
<i>Social position</i>						
➤ Higher technical professionals (reference)						
➤ Higher social-cultural	.50**	-1.06**	-.19	.26	-.93**	-.09
➤ Lower technical professionals	.20	.25~	.08	.10	.25~	.00
➤ Lower social-cultural professionals	.57**	-.45**	-.10	.27*	-.31	-.09
➤ Routine non-manual workers	.07	.29*	.19**	.01	.24	.06
➤ Lower service workers	.57**	.16	.34**	.39**	.21	.22**
➤ Lower sales workers	.45**	.11	.51**	.37**	.01	.35**
➤ Self employed with employees	-.26	.49**	.22*	-.12	.32	.16
➤ Self employed without employees	.06	.68**	.27**	-.03	.61**	.14
➤ Labor supervisors	.02	.54**	.30**	-.05	.47**	.19~
➤ Skilled manual workers	.50**	.29*	.57**	.36**	.14	.33**
➤ Unskilled manual workers	.54**	.64**	.56**	.41**	.54**	.32**
➤ Farmers/farm laborers	.32~	.52**	.33**	.30	.32~	.12
➤ Other (never had a job)	-.04	.23	.54**	-.07	.12	.40**
<i>Income</i>						
➤ Lowest quartile						
➤ Second lowest quartile	-.01	-.06	-.21**	.07	-.02	-.17**
➤ Second highest quartile	-.10	-.16~	-.33**	-.01	-.09	-.27**
➤ Highest quartile	-.27**	-.19*	-.31**	-.08	-.09	-.20**
<i>Sex (men)</i>	-.12~	.25**	-.19**	-.09	.19**	.03
<i>Age (z)</i>	-.02	-.11**	-.52**	.01	-.16**	-.48**
<i>Age-squared</i>	-.01	.02	.26**	.03	.04	.26**
<i>Church attendance</i>						
➤ Once or more a week	-1.81**	-.70**	-.87**	-1.46**	-.72**	-.73**
➤ Once a month	-1.36**	-.56**	-.76**	-1.08**	-.48**	-.60**
➤ Once or twice a year	-.60**	-.20**	-.44**	-.40**	-.21**	-.35**
➤ Never (reference)						
Intermediate characteristics						
Political euro-scepticism (z)				.06~	.14**	.01
Distrust in EP (z)				.19**	.13**	-.01
Objection to EU immigrants (z)				.02	.14**	.03
Ethnic threat (z)				-.13**	.44**	.04
Attachment to traditions (z)				-.20**	.18**	-.08**
Support for law and order (z)				-.18**	.02	-.07**
Achievement values (z)				-.04	.02	.04**
Economic egalitarianism (z)				.59**	-.13**	-.00
Dissatisfaction with economy (z)				-.05	.04	.02
Dissatisfaction with government (z)				.25**	.02	-.01
Political distrust (z)				-.02	.19**	.33**
Political efficacy (z)				.19**	.12**	-.48**
Social egalitarianism (z)				.14**	-.13**	.00
Variance components						
<i>Level 2: country</i>	.974**	1.886**	.318**	.998**	2.174**	.294**
<i>Level 1: Individual</i>	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000

~ $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

(z) = z-scores

Source: ESS 2002/2003

The parameter estimates for income categories are more or less similar for the three electoral options, although being strongest regarding non-voting. Compared with lower incomes,

higher incomes categories are less likely to prefer a far left-wing party, a far right-wing party, or to abstain from voting as compared to the lowest income category.

Gender and age have no effect on voting for the far left. However, women tend to be somewhat more likely to prefer the far left, which is in contrast with the far right-wing preference that is more likely to be found among men as well as among younger people. Non-voting is more likely among women than among men. Although previous research has shown that older people are less likely abstainers than younger people, the inclusion of the quadratic term of age shows that the likelihood to abstain increases again after a certain age. Finally, we included religiosity, which has a particularly strong effect. Frequent church attendees are less likely to vote for the far left ($B = -1.81$), are less likely to vote for the far right ($B = -.70$) and are less likely to abstain from voting ($B = -.87$) as compared to voting for the centre parties.

In the second model of Table 1, we included relevant socio-political attitudes simultaneously. Of particular interest are the effects from political euro-scepticism and distrust in the European Parliament. We actually find that political euro-scepticism increases the likelihood to vote for the far right only ($B = .14$), whereas distrust in the EP increases both the likelihood to vote for the far left ($B = .19$) and for the far right ($B = .13$). There is no effect from either euro-scepticism or distrust in the EP on non-voting, thus refuting our expectations.

Many other socio-political attitudes are significant and hence relevant, in line with previous research. Voting for the far left is strongly determined by economic egalitarianism ($B = .59$) and dissatisfaction with the government ($B = .25$). Moreover, the likelihood to vote for the far left increases the less people are attached to traditions ($B = -.20$), the higher their political efficacy ($B = .19$), the less they support law and order ($B = -.18$), the more they support social egalitarianism ($B = .14$) and the less they perceive ethnic threat ($B = -.13$).

Far right-wing voting is most strongly determined by perceived ethnic threat ($B = .44$). In addition to political euro-scepticism and distrust in the EP, the likelihood to vote for the far

right increases when people feel attached to traditions ($B = .18$), have more political distrust ($B = .19$), object to immigrants from the EU ($B = .14$), oppose economic and social egalitarianism (both $B = -.13$) and score higher on political efficacy ($B = .12$).

The likelihood to abstain from voting increases when people feel less political efficacy ($B = -.48$) and are more distrustful politically ($B = .33$). Moreover, attachment to traditions, support for law and order ($B = -.08$ respectively $-.07$) decrease the likelihood to abstain from voting.

A general ideological left-right placement could confound the effects of euro-scepticism (e.g., Van der Eijk & Franklin 2004). Therefore, we additionally estimated a model including left-right self placement. Only the new parameters of the socio-political attitudes are presented in Table 2. Comparing these effects with model 2 from Table 1 provides us the possibility to evaluate the consequences of including left-right placement. Regarding voting for the far left, distrust in EP turns out to have a smaller effect when we include left-right placement. For the far right however, the parameters of political euro-scepticism and distrust in the EP are hardly altered in the model where left-right placement has been included. This leads us to conclude that far right-wing voting in national elections is determined by euro-scepticism, in addition to various theoretically important explanations and left-right wing placement. Including left-right placement reduces most strongly some effects on voting for the far left, in particular from economic egalitarianism, and to a smaller extent the effects from political efficacy, attachment to traditions and ethnic threat.

Table 2. Parameter estimates and change of intermediate characteristics *after inclusion of left-right placement*. N = 30,373

Intermediate characteristics	FAR LEFT		FAR RIGHT		NO VOTE	
		Parameter change		Parameter change		Parameter change
Political euro-scepticism (z)	.04	-.02	.13**	-.01	.01	.00
Distrust in EP (z)	.10**	-.09	.14**	+.01	-.01	.00
Objection to EU immigrants (z)	.06~	+.04	.14**	-.01	.03	.00
Ethnic threat (z)	-.04	+.09	.38**	-.06	.04	.00
Attachment to traditions (z)	-.12**	+.08	.14**	-.04	-.08**	.00
Support for law and order (z)	-.15**	+.03	-.01	-.03	-.07**	.00
Achievement values (z)	-.02	+.02	.01	-.01	.05**	.01
Economic egalitarianism (z)	.26**	-.33	-.05	+.08	-.01	-.01
Diss. with economy of country (z)	-.06	-.01	.07	+.03	.02	.00
Dissatisfaction with government (z)	.15**	-.10	.05	+.03	-.01	.00
Political distrust (z)	.01	+.03	.17**	-.02	.33**	.00
Political efficacy (z)	.06	-.13	.07*	-.05	-.48**	.00
Social egalitarianism (z)	.10**	-.04	-.10*	+.03	.00	.00
Left-right placement (z)	-1.04**		.46**		-.04**	

~ $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Source: ESS 2002/2003

To test the hypotheses that differences between privileged and less privileged social categories in the likelihood to vote for the far right-wing family parties are explained by euro-scepticism, we refer to the parameter estimates in Table 3. This table presents the initial effect parameter in the likelihood to vote for the far right, not yet controlled for confounding attitudinal determinants. Next, a column of final parameters is presented, which represent the likelihood to vote for the far right, after controlling for all relevant socio-political attitudes. The six successive columns show what the parameter would have been, if we had included all socio-political attitudes except for the one mentioned in the column. This provides insights into the importance of this specific attitude to explain the likelihood of the listed social category to vote for the far right-wing. To facilitate the readers' comprehension, we highlighted the cells which show a relevant parameter change.

Our hypotheses read that particularly less privileged people would be more likely to vote for a far right party because of their euro-sceptic attitude. Regarding education, we found a negative effect on voting for the far right; the higher the people's education, the less likely they vote for the far right. Exclusion of the euro-sceptic attitudes indeed increases the final parameter in strength; from -0.070 to -0.080. This implies that euro-scepticism explains partly

why education affects voting for the far right. However, its relevance is limited. The importance of ethnic threat and objections to immigrants from within the EU explains more strongly why lower educated people are more likely to vote for the far right. Next, we focus on manual workers who were found to be more likely to vote for the far right. The difference is, however, not explained by euro-scepticism, but rather by perceived ethnic threat and objections to immigrants that explain the likelihood more strongly. A limited interpretation is provided by the importance of tradition and law and order, and political distrust, which prevail somewhat more strongly among manual workers than among technical specialists. Why higher income categories are less likely to vote for the far right compared to the lowest income categories is relatively well explained by euro-scepticism. Higher income categories are less euro-sceptic and hence less likely to vote for the far right in national elections. Higher income categories perceive less ethnic threat and have fewer objections to immigrants from the EU, thereby explaining their lower likelihood to vote for the far right.

Table 3. Parameters explaining voting for the far right-wing, excluding one attitude or set of attitudes; N = 30,373

	Initial model	Final model	Political euro-scepticism and distrust in EP	Ethnic threat and objection EU immigrants	Attachment to tradition and support for law and order	Political distrust and dissatisfaction with government	Political efficacy	Dissatisfaction with economy and economic egalitarianism
Education	-.214	-.070	-.080	-.128	-.075	-.076	-.054	-.057
Manual workers	.643	.543	.539	.616	.551	.557	.505	.484
Highest income	-.191	-.095	-.117	-.127	-.100	-.097	-.078	-.057

Source: ESS 2002/2003

CONCLUSIONS

In this contribution, we have focused on the crucial question concerning to what extent euro-scepticism affects the electorate's preferences to vote for parties at the far ends of the political spectrum. Having the huge advantage of high-quality, cross-national data for many European countries, analyzed using advanced methodological tools, we now may provide a rather firm answer to this question. We have found that voting for the far right and for the far left at national elections are to some extent explained by euro-scepticism, over and beyond other relevant socio-political attitudes. These findings show that the sleeping giant of 'European Integration' has awakened to become a relevant electoral force. Moreover, we have found evidence for the hypotheses that euro-scepticism explains why low educated people and people with lower incomes are more likely to vote for the far right in Western Europe as an answer to our second question. Euro-scepticism does not, however, play a role with regard to non-voting in national elections.

We also have to conclude, however, that euro-scepticism continues to be a dwarf as compared to other socio-political stances that determine voting preferences. It turns out that the previously proposed explanations for far left-wing voting and far right-wing voting are more important than euro-scepticism. Far left-wing voting is determined most strongly by attitudes on economic egalitarianism and dissatisfaction with the government. Far right-wing voting is determined most strongly by perceptions of ethnic threat and attachment to traditions. The main determinants of non-voting are political efficacy and political distrust.

In terms of background characteristics, considered to be important indicators of social cleavages, education turns out to be very important for the voting outcomes. Having attained a high educational level increases the likelihood of voting for the far left and decreases the likelihood of voting for the far right or staying home at the elections. Having a higher income

decreases the likelihood of voting for either of the extremist options. We found that manual workers, as compared to higher professionals, are more likely to vote for either the far left or for the far right, and are more likely to abstain from voting. The political party family that these manual workers prefer is strongly dependent on their stances on economic and political issues. Those who perceive ethnic minorities to be a threat and object to immigrants are more likely to vote for the far right parties rather than the far left parties. Those who support egalitarianism instead are more likely to vote for the far left parties rather than the far right parties. Within the higher professional groups we found differences between cultural and technical specialists. The cultural specialists (both higher and lower) are more inclined to vote for the far left and least likely to vote for the far right. Religion as an intermediate social power restrains people in voting for either of the extremes as compared to voting for the centre parties.

The scientific discussion regarding whether euro-scepticism contributes to explain extreme voting behaviour next to the left-right dimension can be answered positively. We tested the importance of euro-scepticism, not only controlled for the left-right-wing dimension, but for other relevant socio-political attitudes taken into account in previous research to explain far right-wing voting, far left-wing voting and non-voting. Testing these full, and hence complex, models revealed that political euro-scepticism and dissatisfaction with the European Parliament affect far right-wing and far left-wing voting, additionally to other characteristics.

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Appendix 1. Parties by country categorized into the far left and the far right, percentage of votes for respective parties and average left-right placement of voters for the parties in the ESS data. Percentage of non-voters. Within parentheses: the left- and right-wing scores based on an expert judgment survey, if available (Lubbers 2001)

	<i>Far left parties</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>LR</i>	<i>Far right parties</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>LR</i>	<i>Not voted</i>
FI <i>Finland</i>	Vasemmistoliitto (Left Alliance) (1.9) Suomen Kommunistinen Puolue (Communist Party of Finland) (3.2)	7.0	2.7				17.8
SE <i>Sweden</i>	Vänsterpartiet (Left Party) (2.2)	9.5	2.2				12.1
NO <i>Norway</i>	Rød Valgallianse (Red Electoral Alliance) (2.0) Sosialistisk Venstreparti (Socialist Left Party) (2.2)	13.8	3.5	Fremskrittspartiet (Progress Party) (8.1)	15.9	6.7	14.6
DK <i>Denmark</i>	Enhedslisten (Unity List) (1.0)	1.6	1.6	Dansk Folkeparti (Danish People's Party) (8.7) Fremskridtpartiet (Progress Party) (8.7)	8.2	6.5	5.5
GB <i>Great Britain</i>							26.9
IE <i>Ireland</i>	Sinn Féin/'We Ourselves' (3.2)	4.0	4.0				19.4
NL <i>The Netherlands</i>	Socialistische Partij (Socialist Party) (1.4)	6.7	3.4	Lijst Pim Fortuyn (List Pim Fortuyn)	13.6	6.3	12.7
BE <i>Belgium</i>	Partij van de Arbeid (Labour Party) Parti des Travailleurs de Belgique (Belgian Labour Party)	0.4	0.7	Vlaams Blok (Flemish Bloc) (9.3) Front National (9.5)	7.0	6.2	10.7
LU <i>Luxemburg</i>	Déi Lénk (The Left) (1.3)	1.7	2.0				14.2
DE <i>Germany</i>	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (Party of Democratic Socialism) (1.6)	7.1	2.7	Die Republikaner (Republicans) (8.7)	0.5	6.8	12.5
AT <i>Austria</i>				Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (Freedom party of Austria) (8.5)	5.5	6.2	11.8
CH <i>Switzerland</i>				Schweizerische Volkspartei (Swiss People's Party) (8.4) Lega dei Ticinesi (League of Ticinians) (9.0) SchweizerDemokraten (Swiss Democrats) (9.1) Freiheitspartei (Freedom Party) (8.9)	19.2	6.1	29.5
FR <i>France</i>	Communiste Revolutionnaire (Revolutionary Communists) Parti Communiste (1.5) (Communist Party) Lutte ouvrière (Workers' Struggle) Mouvement des citoyens (Citizens' movement)	8.2	2.5	Front National (9.5) Mouvement National Republicain (National Republican Movement)	7.2	5.8	24.4

ES <i>Spain</i>	Izquierda Unida (United Left) (2.5)	5.3	2.7				19.2
PT <i>Portugal</i>	Bloco de Esquerda (Left Bloc)	11.5	2.3				24.7
	Partido Comunista Portugues (Portuguese Communists) (2.2)						
	Partido Comunista dos Trabalhadores (Communist Party of workers)						
IT <i>Italy</i>	Comunisti Italiani (Italian Communists)	7.2	2.3	Lega Nord (Northern League) (7.6)	2.2	6.0	10.1
	Rifondazione Comunista (Communist Refoundation) (0.7)			Fiamma tricolore (Three Colored Flame) (9.7)			
GR <i>Greece</i>	Kommounistiko Komma Ellado (Communist party of Greece) (1.6)	7.8	2.0				7.3
	Sinaspismos tis Aristeras ke ti Proodu (Coalition of the Left) (3.7)						
PO <i>Poland</i>				Liga Polskich Rodzin (League of Polish Families)	5.0	7.4	32.3
CZ <i>Czech Republic</i>	Komunistická Strana Čech a Morava (Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia)	9.8	2.4	Republikanská Morislav Sladek (Republicans of Miroslav Sladek)	0.2	9.3	35.5
HU <i>Hungary</i>	Munkáspárt (Workers' Party)	0.9	2.3	Pravý blok (Right Bloc)			
				Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja (Hungarian Justice and Life Party)	1.4	6.0	17.3
SI <i>Slovenia</i>				Slovenska Nacionalna Stranka (Slovenian National Party)	2.8	5.0	19.0

% = Percentage (in data) voted for the respective parties

LR = Left-right placement (ranging from 0 to 10) of the voters for the respective parties

NOTES

¹ Variation between countries is large concerning the extent to which people refused an answer or did not remember the party they voted for. The sum of refusing and the don't know category is smallest in the Netherlands, and largest in Italy. Refusing an answer is more likely among lower educated people, the highest income group and religious people. Moreover, socio-cultural specialists, self-employed people and people who never had a job also more often refuse an answer. Women, lower educated people and religious people do not remember what party they voted for, more often than others.

² For Norway, no information was collected among the self-employed about their supervision. So, for Norway, we could not distinguish between self-employed with or without employees. The French data provided ISCO codes in two-digits only. Consequently, this produces a somewhat different coding than for the other countries. In particular, the category of routine non-manuals is larger. The category of lower sales persons is lacking for France.

³ The pro-social attitude scale is an average constant in Luxemburg and Italy, as the items were not included in the surveys in these two countries.