

Aiming at Compromise or Compromising the Aims: Do Voters Reward Eurosceptic Governments?

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ABSTRACT

Ample literature studies bargaining in the Council of the European Union (EU), and how it is driven by electoral politics and responsiveness to voters' preferences. Much less attention was given to studying the reverse causal link, i.e. whether voters respond to their country's share in the benefits of European integration. The lack of theory about how voters respond to the record of Eurosceptic governments in office is an important gap in our understanding of the dynamics of Eurosceptic politics. If Eurosceptic parties cannot systematically use government positions to increase their power, they will struggle to succeed in institutionalizing European integration as the dominant domestic issue-alignment, and the Eurosceptic movement would remain marginal to the process of European integration. We argue that progress in European integration and aggregate-national benefits from it increase voters' support for mainstream government parties, but decrease voters' support for Eurosceptic government parties, especially voters with Eurosceptic views. Voters with pro-EU attitudes appreciate both greater European integration and the gains from it, while for voters with Eurosceptic attitudes such gains conflict with their desire to frustrate European integration. Voters will not reward Eurosceptic government parties for the benefits of integration if they are deemed as a signal that the government has compromised over its Eurosceptic agenda. We test our arguments using linear regression analysis, multiple imputations, and conjoint survey experimental design (the latter has received permission from our institution's ethics committee and we report on the encouraging results of a pre-test pilot experiment). Based on data on all parties and national elections in all of the EU member states from 1979 to 2018, we find that voters reward mainstream government parties that increase net fiscal funding from the EU (their votes increase by 11 percent for an increase in net transfers worth one percent of GDP) but punish Eurosceptic incumbent parties (votes falls by 29 percent). High-profile EU-events hurt mainstream government parties (losing 18 percent of the votes for a rise of one percent in the events index), but especially Eurosceptic incumbent parties (perhaps losing twice as much). Large Eurosceptic incumbent parties in particular lose 24 percent of their votes when the *de jure* integration index (EU treaties and legislation) rises by one percent. Though further studies are warranted to cement stronger assertions, these initial results document how difficult it is for Eurosceptic parties to sustain power.

Keywords: Euroscepticism; Democratic Responsiveness; EU Integration; Political Cleavages.

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Introduction

Since the 1950s, European integration has intensified the pooling of authority and sovereignty among member states of the European Union (EU) and its precursors. Focusing in its early years mostly on trade liberalization and common regulation of production and trade, since the 1990s European integration began intruding on core state powers such as border-control and macro-economic policy (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2016). However, this process has been accompanied by an increase in the vote for Polity-Eurosceptic parties – those that resist a supranational European polity. The pace of institutional integration has slowed and the fundamental values of the EU have been called into question (Raskin and Sadeh 2022; Csehi 2023).

The two main traditional schools in the study of European integration, the Liberal-Intergovernmentalist (Moravcsik, 1998; Moravcsik and Schimmelfennig 2009) and the Neofunctionalist (Haas 1958; Schmitter 1969; Niemann and Schmitter 2009), downplayed the importance of domestic politics (Kuhn 2019). In contrast, the Post-functionalist literature that emerged in response to these developments, argues that European integration, which until the 1990s was a technical issue-area, has been politicized; it has acquired saliency in political parties' platforms, engages the wider public, and is debated in legislatures (Kuhn 2019).

Much of the Post-functionalist literature studies the relationship between European integration and the rise of Eurosceptic parties or Eurosceptic popular attitudes. Post-functionalists have highlighted the popular pressures and electoral incentives of governments to pursue (dis)integration (Ford and Jennings 2020) and how increasing European integration comes back to affect popular support for the EU or Eurosceptic parties (Schmidt 2019). Citizens may support moderate transfer of authority from national to EU institutions to improve policy efficiency (Shorrocks and de Geus 2019), but object to integration of core state powers (Kuhn and Nicoli 2020; Nicoli 2020). Since the Maastricht Treaty, a “Constraining Dissensus” prevails (Hooghe and Marks 2009). The traditional class and religious cleavage among mainstream political parties in Europe is

declining, and a new transnational cleavage emerges between Green, Alternative, Libertarian (GAL) parties, and Traditional, Authoritarian, Nationalist (TAN) parties.

As we review in the next section, ample literature has explained the mechanism of this transformation, such as the Thermostatic Responsiveness Model (Soroka and Wlezien 2010), and political entrepreneurship by challenger parties (Hobolt and De Vries 2016; Hooghe and Marks 2018). There is extensive literature on the electoral success of populist parties in general (Margalit 2019a; 2019b). There are also studies on how Eurosceptic parties can frustrate or differentiate European integration (De Vries *et al.* 2021; Winzen 2020), taking advantage of various responsiveness mechanisms (Hobolt and Wratil 2020; Schneider 2020). However, few studies focus on electoral rewards to such government responsiveness (Schneider 2018) and hardly any focus on the electoral performance of Eurosceptic parties in national governments. Furthermore, there seems to be a general presumption that voters with Eurosceptic attitudes vote for parties with a Eurosceptic agenda, but this has never been tested and may not be so obvious, as we demonstrate in the next section. This is an important gap in our understanding of the dynamics of Eurosceptic politics. If Eurosceptic parties cannot systematically use government positions to increase their power, they will struggle to succeed in institutionalizing European integration as the dominant domestic issue-alignment, and the Eurosceptic movement will ultimately be marginal to the process of European integration. We need to explain how different types of voters, reward or punish different types of parties for their record over European integration when they are in government.

We argue that progress in European integration and aggregate-national benefits from it increase voters' support for mainstream government parties, but decrease voters' support for Eurosceptic government parties, especially voters with Eurosceptic views. Voters with pro-EU attitudes appreciate both greater European integration and the gains from it, while for voters with Eurosceptic attitudes such gains conflict with their desire to frustrate European integration. Voters will not reward Eurosceptic government parties

for the benefits of integration if they are deemed as a signal that the government has compromised over its Eurosceptic agenda. We thus distinguish between voters' preferences on European integration, parties' positions on the European integration divide, and their record when in government.

In the empirical sections we use a mixed method, combining model-based and experimental approaches. The third section employs a model-based method, using data on all parties and national elections in all of the EU member states from 1979 to 2018. We use linear regression, but also resort to Multiple Imputations (MI) method, given missing observations for our operationalization of voters' attitudes. We find that voters reward mainstream government parties that increase net fiscal funding from the EU (their votes increase by 11 percent for an increase in net transfers worth one percent of GDP) but punish Eurosceptic incumbent parties (votes falls by 29 percent). High-profile EU-events hurt mainstream government parties (losing 18 percent of the votes for a rise of one percent in the events index), but especially Eurosceptic incumbent parties (perhaps losing twice as much). Large Eurosceptic incumbent parties in particular lose 24 percent of their votes when the *de jure* integration index (EU treaties and legislation) rises by one percent. Though further studies are warranted to cement stronger assertions, these initial results document how difficult it is for Eurosceptic parties to sustain power.

The fourth section details a conjoint survey experiment design. We plan to recruit participants from among citizen-residents of Italy, which is a large EU member state that in recent years had real-life experience with both Eurosceptic and mainstream incumbent parties contesting elections. We plan to ask participants to vote for one of two parties, randomly assigned as incumbent or opposition parties, and with randomly assigned policy dimensions. We will expose participants to a series of randomly assigned treatments, vignettes related to the progress and gains of European integration. This experiment has received permission from our institution's ethics committee and we report on the encouraging results of a pre-test pilot experiment. The fifth section provides conclusions.

Electoral rewards for Eurosceptic parties in government

The Post-functionalist literature that emerged in response to these developments, argues that European integration, which until the 1990s was a technical issue-area, has been politicized; it has acquired saliency in political parties' platforms, engages the wider public, and is debated in the EP and in national legislatures (Kuhn 2019). Much of this literature studies the relationship between European integration and policy-making at the EU level on the one hand, and the rise of Eurosceptic parties or Eurosceptic popular attitudes on the other hand.

From a bottom-up perspective, namely, how the rise of Eurosceptic parties or attitudes frustrates European integration and the work of EU institutions, Post-functionalists have highlighted the popular pressures and electoral incentives of governments to pursue (dis)integration. Personal, regional, social and political attributes may bias individuals in favor or against European integration. Scholars attributed popular support for integration to egocentric and sociotropic utility calculus, sociotropic identity concerns, and general trust in institutions. Individuals who are in the position to gain from integration (economic liberalization), tend to support it for their personal or national benefit. Popular support for the EU is more typical of Europe's wealthy and catch-up regions, while popular Euroscepticism is more common in its declining regions (Mayne and Katsanidou 2022) and in member states with high unemployment (Toshkov 2011). Political sophistication and openness to information enable people's comprehension of the EU project and thus may increase support for it. In contrast, individuals with stronger national affiliations or perception of inter-cultural threat, oppose integration and see it as detrimental to the nation's sovereignty and traditional identity. Citizens who distrust national institutions may support the EU if they trust its institutions more, or otherwise turn against it. Borders protect the less mobile and educated, as well as their national identity, culture, community and sovereignty (Hooghe and Marks 2018). Concerned voters increasingly look for parties that oppose the European supranational polity.

Indeed, from the bottom-up perspective it is shifts in the above factors that have given rise to assertive anti-EU political parties in Western Europe: the expansion of higher education and rise of a mass graduate class; the corresponding decline of school leavers with few or no educational qualifications; mass migration and the growing ethnic diversity of electorates; the aging of societies and sharpening of generational divides; and increased geographical segregation of populations between prospering, globalized major cities and declining hinterland (Ford and Jennings 2020). And how does all this relate to EU policy? Some studies find evidence that European public opinion significantly influences or constrains European integration policy (Blauberger *et al.* 2018; Bølstad 2015; Toshkov 2011), or at least is being considered by EU institutions (Buena, 2017; De Bruycker 2017). However, evidence in other studies is qualified, or finds that integration law adoption actually increases when public attitudes are more negative toward the EU (Williams and Bevan 2019).

In contrast, the top-down perspective studies how increasing European integration affects popular support for the EU or Eurosceptic parties (Schmidt 2019). Moderate transfer of authority from national to EU institutions may increase policy efficiency (making the EU more output-legitimate in the eyes of the public) more than decrease policy responsiveness (making the EU less input-legitimate), so not much anti-EU sentiments fostered on balance (Konstantinidis *et al.* 2019). Some integration of core state powers may meet greater support than regulatory integration, especially if it is externally, rather than internally, oriented (Moland 2022). Evidence suggests some socialization effect: citizens' support for their country's membership of the EU increases over time, especially those who spent their formative years in a non-democracy (Shorrocks and de Geus 2019).

However, Post-functionalist scholarship generally expects crisis-led spill-over to core state powers to ultimately politicize integration and stimulate objection to it (Kuhn and Nicoli 2020; Polyakova and Fligstein 2016). It is commonly argued that since the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, a "Constraining Dissensus" prevails (Hooghe and Marks 2009). As European integration moved from politically-isolated, low-politics,

regulatory cooperation, to redistributive, high-politics, core-state-powers projects, the lack of appropriate supranational venues for contestation gave rise to a democratic deficit (de Wilde and Lord 2016; Nicoli 2020). Good government performance and output legitimacy could no longer compensate for the exclusion of the public from policymaking and the erosion of input legitimacy (Schmidt 2013). Following the logic of Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model, the ensuing democratic deficit could be resolved by accelerating the development of supranational democratic decision-making bodies. This would introduce electoral competition among EU executives, and prevent opposition to integration policies from turning into opposition to a supranational European polity. Alternatively, integration could be scaled back, leaving decisions on redistributive policies at the national level. For as long as the democratic deficit is left unresolved, the dominant domestic issue-alignment (typically right-left) is transformed into a constitutional core-periphery divide, pitting opponents of a supranational European polity, labeled Eurosceptics in this study, against supporters (Nicoli 2020). In this sense the rise of Eurosceptic parties is part of the general decline of the class and religious cleavage among mainstream political parties in Europe since the 1990s, and the emergence of a transnational cleavage between Green, Alternative, Libertarian (GAL) parties, and Traditional, Authoritarian, Nationalist (TAN) parties.

But how specifically does such a transformation come about? According to the Thermostatic Responsiveness Model, whenever supply of a policy rises to satisfy voters, their demand for further policy measures falls. This suggests rejection of further EU treaties and legislation (Soroka and Wlezién 2010). However, such response by voters is unlikely to be automatic, given the non-uniform effect of different acts of legislation on integration. Qualified applications of the model focused on specific politically-salient issues (De Bruycker 2020), such as internal migration (Toshkov and Kortenska 2015; Jeannot 2020) and austerity policies imposed by EU institutions (Armingeon and Ceka 2014; Biten *et al.* 2022). However, identifying a causal mechanism

is important in order to rule out a spurious relationship in which elites are driving both public opinion and EU policy (Bølstad 2015).

A more comprehensive top-down causal mechanism linking European integration to the fortunes of Eurosceptic parties is offered by studies emphasizing the role of political entrepreneurship by extreme-right or extreme-left parties. Such parties are disadvantaged by the salience of the right-left issue-cleavage, and attempt to communicate EU events to voters in order to mobilize them away from the dominant mainstream parties. Uninformed and uninterested voters rely on media coverage, or cues from political parties to shape their attitudes on European integration (Hobolt and De Vries 2016; Pannico 2020; van Kessel *et al.* 2021). Representational gaps between mainstream parties and their disaffected voters push the latter to vote for anti-establishment challenger parties (Bakker *et al.* 2020). Some studies find that EU issues polarize the vote and drive support for Eurosceptic and politically extreme attitudes, but the evidence is mixed. The twin shocks of the Euro crisis in 2011-12 and the refugee crisis in 2015 were a catalyst in this process, demonstrating to voters the failures of political elites and EU institutions (Hooghe and Marks 2018; Noury and Roland 2020). Radical parties on the left appeal to voters' economic concerns, while parties on the right benefit from voters' concern for national sovereignty and identity (De Vries and Edwards 2009; De Vries *et al.* 2021; Kirkizh *et al.* 2022). Such communication is especially beneficial to the Eurosceptic radical parties if major EU events occur close to national elections (Raskin and Sadeh 2022) and if EP and national elections roughly coincide (Beaudoonnet and Franklin 2016), especially for radical right parties (Schulte-Cloos 2018).

The message of Eurosceptic parties seems to resonate more than the mainstream one because mainstream parties are mostly pro-EU and prefer minimal public attention to European integration (Braun and Grande 2021; Carmines 1991; De Vries and Hobolt 2012). EU issues are not very congruent with established domestic issue-alignments in most member states, such as (but not limited to) the right-left class divide, which define mainstream party contestation, underpin their political support base and keep them alternating

in power (Hooghe and Marks 2018). Rather, change in the existing issue-alignment is in the interest of extreme parties – those with positions aligned at the tails of the domestic distribution of votes according to the established issue-alignment, and thus systematically excluded from government (Krause 2020; Meguid 2005). Extreme parties are also in a better position to pursue such issue-entrepreneurship than mainstream parties because they are not accountable for government policies and need not weigh policy consequences. They are not responsible for the introduction of new EU institutions and policies and rarely enjoy their perks. Evidence provided by the new cleavage literature suggests that disadvantaged parties in European countries are indeed significantly likelier to adopt a Eurosceptic position and enhance its saliency (Adams *et al.* 2021; Carmines 1991; Hobolt and De Vries 2015).

From a bottom-up perspective, existing literature has studied how Eurosceptic parties can frustrate further European integration, push for differentiated integration, or attempt to sabotage the routine work of EU institutions (Telle *et al.* 2022; Winzen 2020). They are more successful when integration is subject to national vetoes (deciding by unanimity), and the Eurosceptic parties either control at least one national government or can veto its decisions, such as through national referendums (De Vries *et al.* 2021). On immigration in particular, Eurosceptic radical right parties bargain harder because their voters are willing to compromise over most other issues in order to restrict immigration (Rovny and Polk 2020), while voters for other parties are not as single-minded (Kirkizh *et al.* 2022). However, the government responsiveness literature (Schneider 2013; 2018; 2020) shows that Eurosceptic parties also affect European integration by influencing even mainstream legislators' and governments' utility calculus. Mainstream pro-EU parties compete with Eurosceptic parties, and occasionally have to compromise with them as coalition partners. This has forced them to signal to voters that they are responsive to at least some Eurosceptic concerns when they bargain with other member states' governments over EU policy, especially in the Council of the EU. Such turnover responsiveness (Zhelyazkova *et al.* 2019) has led member states' governments to object to EU legislation that

involves greater pooling of authority when the public is more Eurosceptic (Sadeh *et al.* 2022), when EU issues are more politicized (Hagemann *et al.* 2017; Hobolt and Wratil 2020; Wratil 2018; 2019), pending national elections (Kleine and Minaudier 2017), when ideological extremism is rising (Schneider 2014) and when referendums are constitutionally mandated (Cheneval and Ferrín 2018).

From a top-down perspective, a few studies suggest that popular support for the EU in general responds to such government actions. Popular support for integration is higher among member states that are net recipients of EU funds (Guerra and McLaren 2016), and use them efficiently (López-Bazo 2022), but it is not clear whether pro-EU public preferences drive, or rather result from such funding. Fewer studies focused on electoral rewards to government responsiveness. Schneider (2018) shows that uncompromising and responsive negotiation stances (input responsiveness), as well as receiving a greater share of the EU budget (output responsiveness), on average increase public support for the government in surveys (until 2002 when her data ends). However, it is likely that part of this support comes from pro-EU voters who simply want their government to bargain harder for the national slice of the EU cake. It is also unclear if these results are driven mostly by rewards for Eurosceptic parties in government, or for the mainstream pro-EU parties in government.

It thus seems that hardly any studies have explained whether Eurosceptic parties in national governments that use this position to act against European integration increase support for them in national elections. There is of course ample literature on the sources of electoral success of populist, mostly radical right parties (Margalit 2019a; 2019b; Noury and Roland 2020; Vachudova 2021), but not all radical right parties are Eurosceptic and not all Eurosceptic parties are radical right (Raskin and Sadeh 2022), and more importantly, existing studies do not connect Eurosceptic parties' record when in government to their electoral performance. The figures below demonstrate an empirical tendency for Eurosceptic incumbent parties to be held by voters to different standards than mainstream incumbent parties (see next section for data sources and operational

definitions of variables). The figures suggest that voters punish Eurosceptic incumbent parties for obtaining greater fiscal benefits from the EU (Figure 1), but reward them when trade with other EU member states expands (Figure 2). Figure 3 seems to suggest that voters with Eurosceptic attitudes punish Eurosceptic governments for merely being in government, perhaps because they resent the compromises that come with government office. There is a relatively small number of observations of Eurosceptic incumbent parties contesting elections, so these simple illustrations do not represent solid evidence, but they do point at a potentially interesting phenomenon.

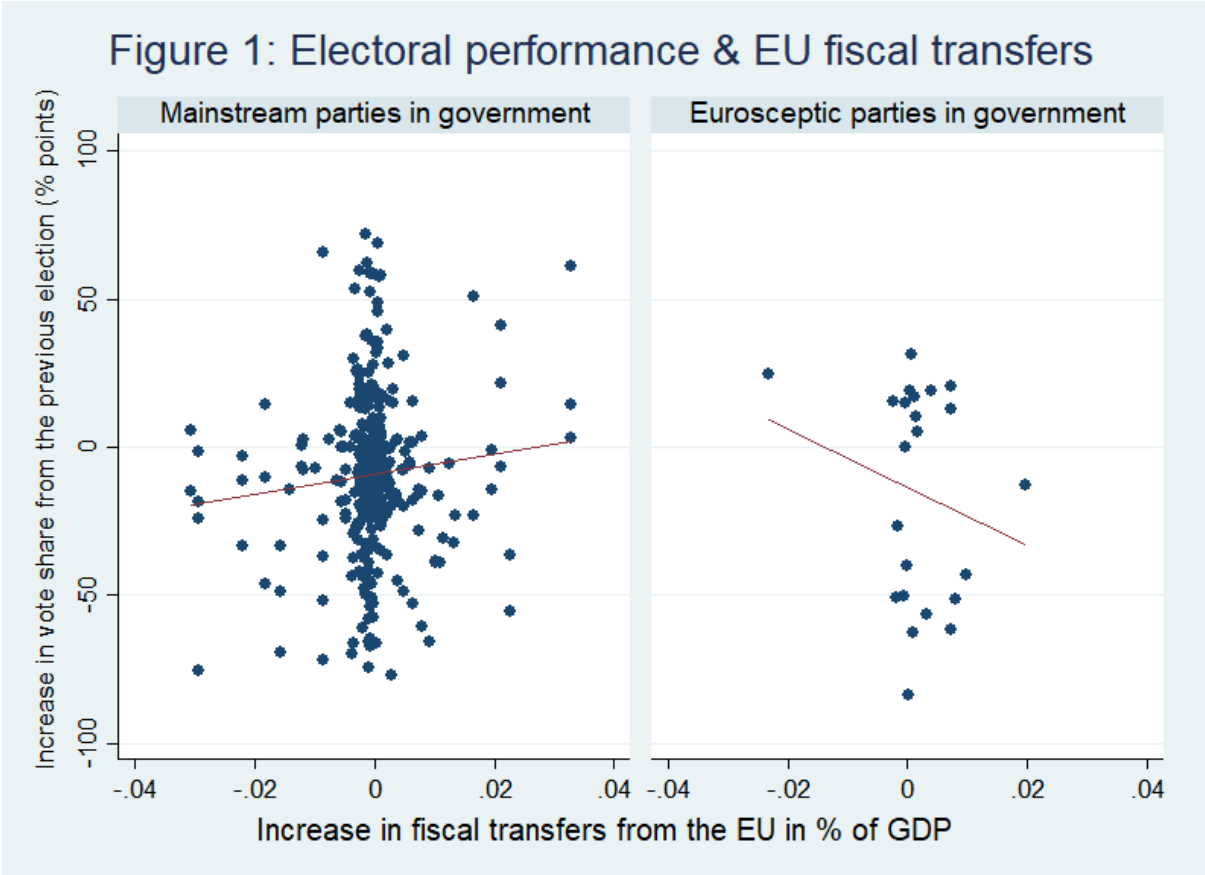
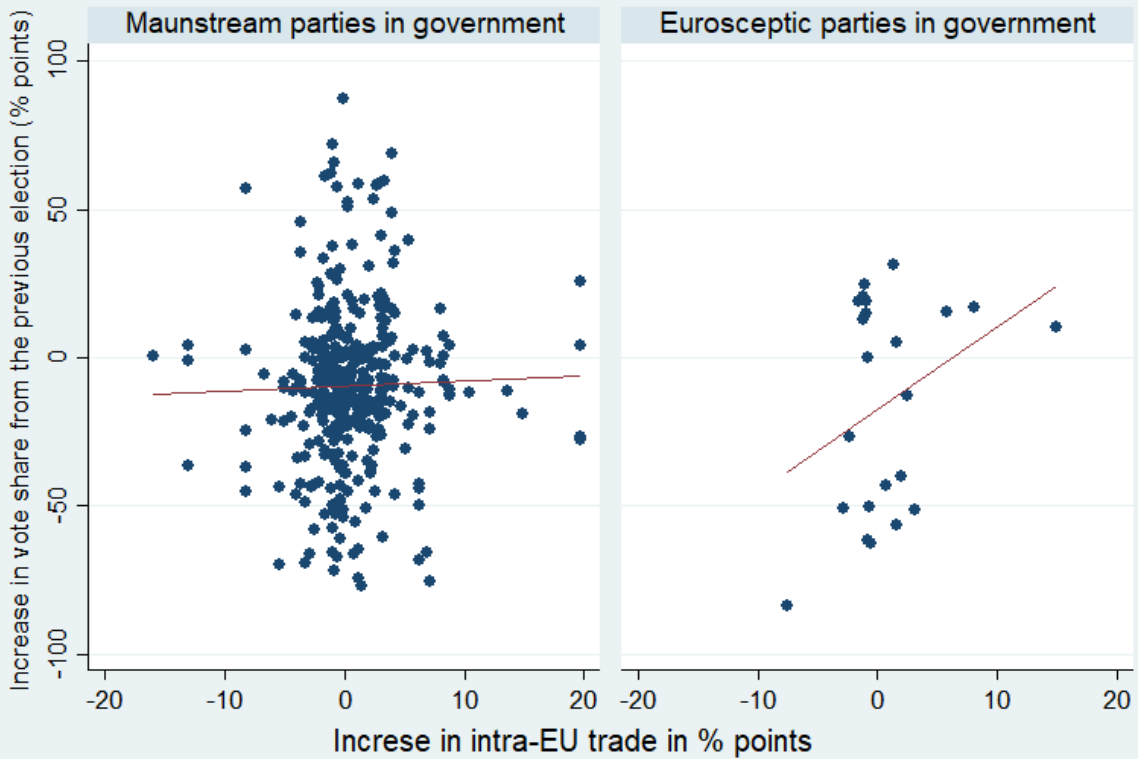
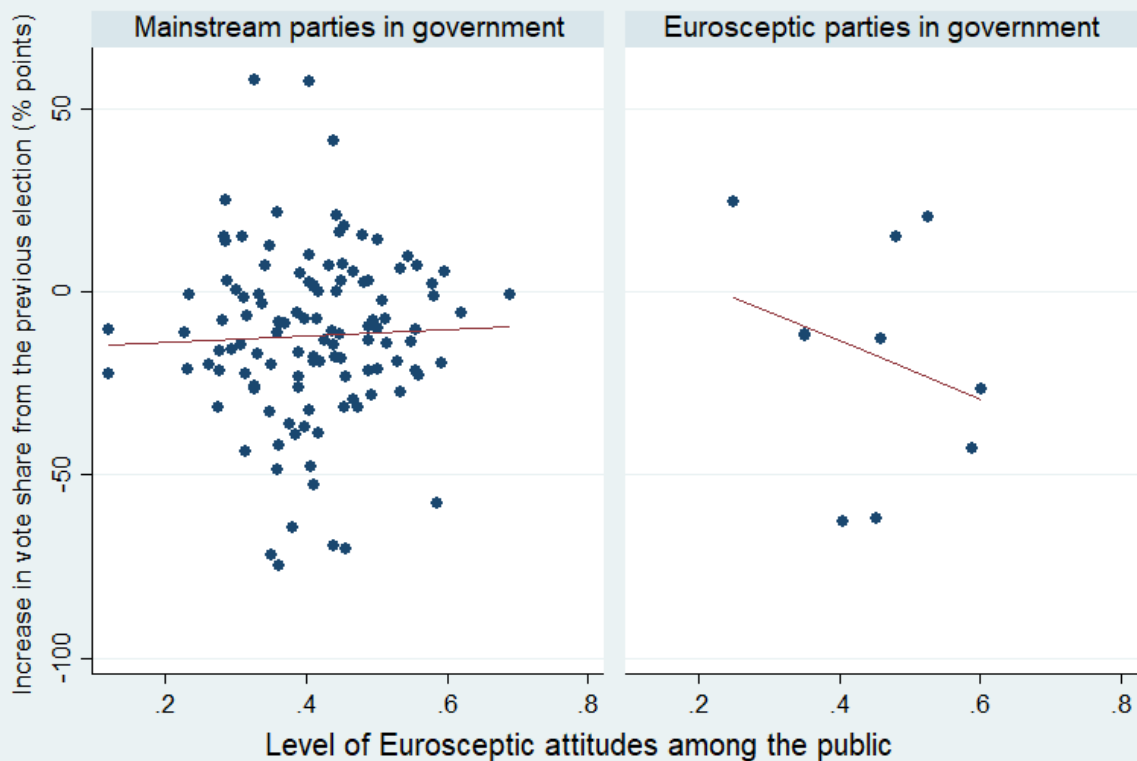


Figure 2: Electoral performance & intra-EU trade



The lack of theory about how voters respond to the record of Eurosceptic governments in office is an important gap in our understanding of the dynamics of Eurosceptic politics. If Eurosceptic parties cannot systematically use government positions to increase their power, they will struggle to succeed in institutionalizing European integration as the dominant domestic issue-alignment, and the Eurosceptic movement would remain marginal to the process of European integration. We need to explain how different types of voters, reward or punish different types of parties in national governments, in response to their Eurosceptic actions at the EU level.

Figure 3: Electoral performance & popular Euroscepticism



The main argument in this paper is that voters support (desert) pro-EU parties in government if their record suggest that they promote (frustrate) European integration, and voters support (desert) Eurosceptic parties in government if their record suggest that they frustrate (promote) European integration. However, anti-EU voters do not support pro-EU parties in government even if they act to frustrate European integration. Pro-EU parties may do this because of electoral competition from Eurosceptic parties (anticipatory representation),¹ who try to attract some traditional voters of mainstream parties (Mariano and Schneider 2022). Conversely, pro-EU voters do not support Eurosceptic parties in government even if they act to promote European integration, perhaps because such parties are tempted by office perks (König and Luig 2017), or perhaps because of financial or other constraints. Voters do not support parties from the other side

¹ Franchino *et al.* 2022; Hagemann *et al.* 2017; Rauh *et al.* 2020; Sadeh *et al.* 2022; Zhelyazkova *et al.* 2019.

of the EU divide even when in government they promote policies they like, because such ‘changes of skin’ serve to legitimize the message of the parties on the ‘correct’ side of the divide. For example, Down and Han (2020) find that the vote for radical right parties rises if mainstream parties adopt their policies, thus legitimizing their agenda (See also Raskin and Sadeh 2022). The aggregate net effect is that voters’ support for pro-EU (Eurosceptic) parties increases if they act to promote (frustrate) integration, but falls otherwise. This project thus distinguishes between voters’ preferences on European integration, parties’ positions on the European integration divide, and their actions when in government.

We argue that progress in European integration and aggregate-national benefits from it increase voters’ support for mainstream government parties, but decrease voters’ support for Eurosceptic government parties, especially voters with Eurosceptic views. Voters with pro-EU attitudes appreciate both greater European integration and the gains from it, while for voters with Eurosceptic attitudes such gains conflict with their desire to frustrate European integration. Voters will not reward Eurosceptic government parties for the benefits of integration if they are deemed as a signal that the government has compromised over its Eurosceptic agenda. We thus distinguish between voters’ preferences on European integration, parties’ positions on the European integration divide, and their record when in government.

H1: Progress in European integration and aggregate-national benefits from it increase voters’ support for mainstream government parties.

H2: Progress in European integration and aggregate-national benefits from it decrease voters’ support for Eurosceptic government parties.

H3: Progress in European integration and aggregate-national benefits from it decrease support of voters with Eurosceptic views for Eurosceptic government parties.

A model-based analysis of Eurosceptic electoral success

Our panel data of 1,283 election-party observations is clustered by states, covering 1979-2018 and all EU member states. The dependent variable – *Gains* – is the electoral success of parties, the percent change in the party’s share of the vote to (the lower house of) the legislature from the previous election, based on CHES data (Bakker *et al.*, 2015; Polk *et al.*, 2017).² Only parties that contested at least two consecutive elections are included. A total of 306 parties contesting 213 national elections are included in our data (see descriptive statistics and tabulation in Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix A). We run cross-section OLS regression, standard errors clustered on the election cycle, with country fixed effects, to control for the electoral system and other structural characteristics affecting outcomes.

We code three dummies for government parties contesting elections. *Cabinet* is a dummy for a party that has participated in government anytime since the previous election. *Cabinet1Y* is a dummy for a party that has participated in government anytime during the last 365 days prior to the contested election. *CabinetLargest* is a dummy for a party that was the largest (or only) party in government as of the contested election day, or the day its participation in government terminated before the contested election. Data for this coding is based on *ParlGov* election database (Döring and Manow, 2022).³ *EuroSceptic* is a dummy for Polity-Eurosceptic parties, based on Raskin and Sadeh’s (2022) classification of parties. We then interact *EuroSceptic* with each of the cabinet dummies to generate the respective dummies *ScCabinet* *ScCabinet1Y* *ScCabinetLargest*, which

² Thus, a rise in the party’s share of the vote from 20 to 30 percent is a 50 percent increase. Measuring the simple change in the vote share (30-20=10) would make party observations within a single election co-dependent (all sum up to zero).

³ *ParlGov* does not code transitional government that did not last more than three months. Parties that may have participated in such cabinets are coded zero in our dummies.

therefore nest in the general cabinet dummies. We also specify *EuroSceptic* separately as a control on these interactions.

We next proxy for progress in European integration and aggregate-national benefits from it with four variables. *Event-Myopia* is Raskin and Sadeh's (2022) least myopic country-election Major Integration Events index. These are high-profile events in European integration, such as new treaties, accession of new member states and related national referendums, that occur ahead of the contested election. This measure is log-transformed, such that divided by 100, the estimated coefficient is the percent change in the share of the vote in response to a one percent increase in (a rise of 0.01 in the log-transformed value of) the number of major integration events and/or their proximity to national elections. *FiscalBenefit* is the change in the ratio of Operating Budgetary Balance (OBB) to GDP (Schneider, 2013; 2018) since the previous election, using the Commission's guidelines and data in the EU's official 2008 financial report (1979-1999) and the Commission's calculations (2000-2019). Divided by 100, the estimated coefficient is the percent change in the share of the vote in response to an increase in the net fiscal gain from the EU budget equivalent to one percent of GDP. *Integration* is the percent change in Leuffen *et al.* (2013) aggregate index of *de jure* European integration, and *EUTrade* is the percent change in the share of trade turnover with other member states relative to the country's overall foreign trade (IMF DOTS database). Percent point change in both variables is calculated during the pre-election calendar year, such that the estimated coefficient is the percent change in the share of the vote in response to an increase of one percent in *de jure* integration or trade. A positive coefficient for the interaction of either *Cabinet*, *Cabinet1Y* or *CabinetLargest* with either *Event-Myopia*, *FiscalBenefit*, *Integration* or *EUTrade* would support H1. A negative coefficient for the interaction of either *ScCabinet*, *ScCabinet1Y* or *ScCabinetLargest* with either *Event-Myopia*, *FiscalBenefit*, *Integration* or *EUTrade* would support H2.

To test H3 we use two alternative measures of popular Euroscepticism based on responses to two particular questions in Eurobarometer surveys. *European* is the share of respondents that see themselves, currently or in the near future, only as national and not European. *Membership* is the share of respondents that think their countries membership in the EU is a bad thing. We record responses to surveys fielded closest to but before the contested election (the end of the survey period falling before the election day), and no longer than a year before the election. Triple interactions (indeed quadruple interactions, considering that *ScCabinet*, *ScCabinetLY* and *ScCabinetLargest* are themselves interactions) as a test for H3 would be problematic given their complexity. The paucity of observations with Eurosceptic parties in government also does not allow slicing the data so thinly. Thus, we simply interact *European* or *Membership* with the above cabinet dummies. If the coefficients of the other integration-related interactions weaken as a result, we interpret this as support for H3.

The above question on feeling national or European, commonly used by scholars of Euroscepticism, was inconsistently included in Eurobarometer surveys, and only since 1990 (with slight occasional formulation changes). This leaves only 826 observations in our dataset. The question on membership in the EU was included in Eurobarometer surveys since the early 1970, and somewhat more consistently, but has not been included since 2011. Thus, our dataset includes only 924 *Membership* observations. The resulting absence of values on the other variables in many other observations might bias estimates or weaken their precision. This is again especially problematic given the paucity of observations with Eurosceptic parties in government. We regard the missing observations as missing at random (not due to their values), but not completely at random (Eurostat must have had reasons for including or excluding questions from its surveys).

Thus, as a robustness check, we resort to the Multiple Imputations method (Rubin, 1987). MI imputes missing values by simulation from their posterior predictive distribution (the distribution of possible unobserved values conditional on the observed values) under an imputation model (which users specify) fitted to the observed data. Such imputations can be repeated several times over, providing several different

complete datasets. The analysis model (OLS regression in our case) is then estimated for each of these, and then combines the results to produce overall estimates. In this way, the uncertainty involved in imputing the missing values can be accounted for by examining the variation between inferences obtained in each of the completed datasets. The overall estimates incorporate the missing data uncertainty as well as sampling variation - range of values that the true values could have taken (Carlin *et al.* 2003). We use the same model for both imputation and analysis, opt for 100 imputations per regression, and set the seed number for the random draws.⁴

We use Raskin and Sadeh's (2022) data to control for the percent point change in the pre-election calendar year in GDP per capita (*GDPPC*), *Unemployment* and number of asylum applications per country population (*Asylum*). We interact these three variables with the cabinet dummies because we expect that government policies affect them too, though they are less directly related to European integration. The coefficients of all of the interactions' constitutive terms other than cabinet dummies indicate these variables effects on non-government parties (in which case the cabinet dummies are set to zero). Finally, some technical controls. *PartySize* is each party's vote share in the previous election cycle. *Disproportionality* is the Gallagher Index of proportional-representation. *2LargeMainSc* is the weighted mean of the Euroscepticism score of the two largest non-extreme parties, to control for their ability to adopt parts of the extreme parties' agendas.

⁴ To ensure replicability of the estimates, Stata statistical package offers seed numbers, ranging between 0 and 2^{31} , each of which is essentially a label for a sequence of uniformly distributed pre-determined values between 0 and 1. Once a seed is specified, each imputation draws a number from the sequence. To ensure randomness, we take the winning number (921547) for the first prize in Israel's national lottery draw of January 5th 2023 as our seed number. This is the most recent draw before the running of this procedure (see <https://www.pais.co.il/subscriber/archive.aspx>).

Table 3 in Appendix A reports estimates of regressions that do not distinguish between Eurosceptic and other parties. On average, the share of the votes for incumbent parties falls by between 17 and 23 percent for every one percent increase in the number of EU-related high-profile events and their proximity to election day; the share of the votes for non-government parties rise by between 19 and 22 percent. The share of the vote for non-government parties also rises by 0.23 percent for every one percent increase in *de jure* European integration. An increase in OBB of one percent of GDP is associated with a rise of 10 percent in the share of the vote for incumbent parties, but this effect is weaker if they had left the government within its last year. Oddly, voters seem not give credit to the largest party in government, which can be explained by different and conflicting responses depending on the type of party. We address this in the next table, where we introduce the Eurosceptic cabinet dummies.

Starting with H1, results reported in Table 4 suggest that voters reward mainstream government parties that increase the OBB, regardless their relative size in cabinet. However, EU-events hurt their electoral performance, while *Integration* and *EUTrade* do not have strong effects. As for H2, recall that the Eurosceptic cabinet dummies nest in the general cabinet dummies, so the coefficients of the former reflect the difference in each effect of Eurosceptic incumbent parties over non-Eurosceptic incumbent parties. Thus, the table also reports tests for sums of the coefficients of the two relevant interactions, to show the full effect for Eurosceptic government parties. Relative to mainstream parties, voters do punish Eurosceptic incumbent parties for EU events, OBB gains and progress in *de jure* integration, but for the former two the net effect is not always strong. Large Eurosceptic incumbent parties unexpectedly benefit from greater intra-EU trade, perhaps by voters who feel left behind. While not fully benefiting from greater unemployment under their watch, Eurosceptic incumbent parties do better than their mainstream peers. Another interesting finding is the Eurosceptic parties that have participated in the government within its last 365 days escape punishment by voters.

In Table 5 we specify *European* to test H3. Regression 9 drops *Asylum*'s interaction with *ScCabinetLargest*, because the missing observations in *European* leave too few cases of Eurosceptic large incumbent governments. As this may bias the estimates, we cannot infer much from Regression 9. However, estimates for Regression 7 support H3 – the effects estimated in Regression 4 have weakened. Alternatively, in Table 6 we specify *Membership*. Regression 12 again drops some interactions and is disregarded. Estimates for Regression 10 partly support H3 – the effects estimated in Regression 4 for *FiscalBenefit* have disappeared, but Estimates for Regression 11 do not support H3 – the effects estimated in Regression 5 for *Event-Myopia* and *Integration* were insignificant, but now strengthened. Unexpectedly, the specification of this measure of Popular Euroscepticism affected mainstream incumbent parties, which are no longer affected by *Event-Myopia* and *FiscalBenefit*. In addition, *Asylum* becomes a significant (though small) driver of votes for the non-government parties.

Finally, as a robustness check, we turn to MI. Unfortunately, MI does not allow testing for combinations of coefficients of interactions. However, comparing Regressions 13-15 in Table 7 with Regressions 4-6 in Table 4, it seems that the specification of *European* made little meaningful, although it did weaken the effect of *Integration* on Eurosceptic incumbent parties, providing weak support for H3. This does not apply to large Eurosceptic parties in government, perhaps because they draw on the support of voters with non-Eurosceptic attitudes. Note that Relative Variable Increase (RVI) is the increase in the variance of each variable's coefficient estimates due to the missing values in *European*. An average RVI (averaged over all coefficients) close to zero indicates that the missing data have little effect on the variance of the coefficients' estimates. In Regressions 13-15, average RVI is indeed small, ranging between 0.0269 and 0.0691. We interpret this to suggest that the estimates can be trusted. The largest Fraction of Missing Information (FMI) among the coefficient estimates due to the missing values indicates whether the number of imputations is sufficient. A rule of thumb is that the number of imputations should exceed $100 \times \text{FMI}$ for the level of reproducibility to be

adequate. Thus, in our case 40 imputations would have sufficed. We repeat the MI procedure in Table 8, this time with *Membership*. Now the effects of integration on large incumbent Eurosceptic parties indeed disappear, but the RVI is higher in Regression 18 than in Regression 15.

The conjoint survey experimental design

To test the causal effects of the gains and progress of European integration during a Eurosceptic government's term of office, across the varying presence of other information signals, subjects will participate in a conjoint survey experiment. Conjoint survey experiments allow testing and controlling for the extent to which multiple randomly varied attributes affect subjects' choices through a set of alternatives (Hainmueller *et al.*, 2014). For our purposes, conjoint surveys also allow to conceal the purpose of the experiment and make the setting more realistic (in this case, several political divides on which political parties are commonly positioned in Europe).

Recruitment: We aim to conduct the experiment among adult citizen-residents of Italy. We select this country because in recent years it had real-life experience with both Eurosceptic incumbent parties contesting elections (for example in 2013)⁵ and non-Eurosceptic incumbent parties. To ensure sufficient statistical power, up to 1,000 participants will be non-probabilistically sampled to resemble their country's population

⁵ Austria and Czechia had such experience too (in 2017 and 2013 respectively), but a good sample may be harder to obtain there due to the relatively small size of their population. The incumbent Eurosceptic parties were the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) in Czechia and the Northern League (LN) in Italy. See the section on the regressions analysis for the parties' classification method.

across age, gender, race or ethnicity, and geography.⁶ We aim for a Minimum Detectable Effect lower than five percent (see Appendix B for power calculations). All of the participants will take part in the experiment on the same week, which will be chosen away from major EU events and national elections as much as possible. Participants must answer all of the questions (except in the pre-experiment survey – see below) and will have no option to go back and revise previously answered questions, to reduce conditioning effects among questions.

A pre-test pilot experiment with 120 subjects was administered, in order to check for unforeseen problems in the setup. The results suggest that the survey did not pose a particular challenge to participants in terms of complexity and length (see report in Appendix B). Only six participants were eliminated for failing to pay sufficient attention during the survey, and response times per survey question suggest that participants dedicated sufficient time to understand the experiment early on, followed by a reasonable learning curve. The results of the pre-test pilot experiment also suggest that participants' responses were unlikely to have been conditioned by their perceptions of the purpose of the study or their values and political preferences.

Pre-experiment survey: Before the experiment begins, participants will sign a consent form, and then answer a series of questions that will record their socio-demographic characteristics, general political orientation and trust in political institutions, and (importantly for testing our hypotheses) their attitudes towards European integration (See Appendix B). For the latter, two typical questions that appear in Eurobarometer surveys will be used, namely whether the respondent feels mostly national or mostly European, and whether he/she thinks his/her country's membership of the EU is a good/bad thing. Attention and manipulation checks will be included in the pre-experiment survey and at the end of the experiment. Results will be analyzed with and

⁶ Participants will be recruited to the experiment via *Prolific*, which is a commercial survey company that recruits subjects to participate via its online survey platform.

without those who fail these checks, and with or without the 10 percent of fastest participants to complete the survey (in case this indicates lack of attention).

General experiment setup: Following this, each participant will be presented with different fictional profiles of two parties who are running for an upcoming fictional election to the national legislature (See Appendix B), and will be asked to decide which of them he/she supports more. The parties are not competing against each other in a single election. Rather, each is fighting in a different hypothetical election. Expressing support for each party will take place in two rounds, first with a direct binary choice between them and then with an ordinal scale of likelihood of supporting each party. During the experiment participants will be presented with a total of 8 different pairs of profiles. Each party profile will contain eleven attributes.⁷ The first attribute will be the party's place in parliament (large party in opposition, small party in opposition, small party in government, large party in government). The second attribute will be a position on the Economic left-right divide, and each party will be randomly assigned a position along a 5-point scale (center position, and moderate and extreme positions in either direction). Randomly assigned positions along a 5-point scale for each party will follow over Social values (Liberal-Conservative), Religion (religious-secular), European integration (pro-anti), Environmental policy and the urban-periphery divide.

Four additional attributes will represent hypothetical developments occurring before the particular election that each party is contesting, simulating the four effects of EU integration on the record of the government (again randomly assigned along a 5-point scale), as operationalized in the model-based regression: EU-related events, fiscal benefits, *de jure* integration, and EU trade.

⁷ Bansak *et al.* (2018) and Jenke *et al.* (2021) suggest that this is not an excessive number of attributes in conjoint analysis.

Hence, in each decision participants will be exposed to one of $4 \cdot 5^{10} = 39,062,500$ combinations of attributes per party, so more 1,526 trillion different possible combinations of attributes for the two parties in each task, with equal probability. The order of presentation of attributes will be fixed, as described above, which should make it easier for participants to choose between the parties.

Testing hypotheses: As explained above, voting will take place in two rounds. Round 1 vote will have three options: 1=Support Party A; 2=Support Party B; 3=Support none of these parties, or don't know. Answer 3 is meant to help simulating voter turnout and making support for each party more independent; Following this, in the same screen, participants will be asked to decide again without Answer 3, before moving to Round 2. In Round 2, support for each party will be expressed separately on a 5-point scale between 1 (very much unlikely to support the party) through 5 (very much likely to support the party). Following this, each participant will be presented with a new pair of parties and again asked to choose one of them. This process will be repeated eight times (participants will be presented with a total of eight pairs of parties, or eight waves of choice).

The effect of each attribute on the support for the incumbent pro/anti-EU party will be estimated in regression analysis, in which each party in each pair is a separate observation, each of the three support variables is alternatively the dependent variable, and the independent variables include all attributes, a wave count, and personal traits based on the pre-experiment survey.⁸ The observations will be clustered on participant IDs, since support for one party in a pair is a choice against the other, and to account for unobserved participant traits that affect their choice (Hainmueller *et al.*, 2014, 16-17). Alternatively, each pair of parties in a single choice forms a single observation, support for the pro- or anti-EU incumbent party

⁸ Logit or probit regression analysis for the binary Round 1 choice, ordered logit, ordered probit or linear regression analysis for the ordinal Round 2 choice.

in the pair is the dependent variable (higher values indicating greater support for it, as indicted above), and all of the variables are calculated as differences between the two parties (the value for the pro- or anti-EU incumbent party minus the value for the opposition party).⁹ To test whether participants' responses are sensitive to the sequence of the experiment, the wave count variable will be interacted with each of the attributes. Statistically significant coefficients for these interactions would signal such sequence effect, in which case the later waves may be stepwise dropped from the data until such coefficients turn insignificant.

The attributes on the position of the party in parliament, and on its position on European integration will be represented by a set of three dummies: one for pro-EU parties in government (large or small incumbent parties that are either moderately or extremely pro-EU), another for anti-EU parties in government (large or small incumbent parties that are either moderately or extremely anti-EU), and a dummy for a party in government that is centrist on European integration. Thus, the default case will be of a party not in government (whatever its position on European integration), and the coefficients of these dummies will estimate the potential electoral effects relative to non-government parties.¹⁰ All of the other nine attributes will be represented by their ordinal scales. A positive and statistically significant coefficient for each of the four attributes simulating effects of EU integration on the record of the government, when interacted with the pro-EU incumbent party dummy, would support H1. Conversely, a negative and statistically significant

⁹ This approach has the advantage of avoiding an econometric problem rather than correcting for it, at a cost of raising the MDE (from 4.44% to 6.28%).

¹⁰ Since probabilistically 50 percent of observations will include a party in government, and 40 percent of parties will be Pro-EU, 20 percent of observations will be of an incumbent pro-EU party. Similarly, 20 percent of observations will be of an incumbent anti-EU party, and 10 percent of observations will be of an incumbent party that is centrist on European integration.

coefficient for each of these four attributes, when interacted with the anti-EU incumbent party dummy, would support H2. H3 would be supported if these estimated effects on support for the incumbent anti-EU party were stronger (weaker) among participants who self-identified as having anti-EU (pro-EU) attitudes in the pre-experiment survey. For this purpose, participants will be classified as having anti- or pro-EU attitudes according to their place below or above the median of the scale of answers to the relevant questions, or to their place in the extreme quartiles. Alternatively, the scales for pro- or anti-EU incumbent parties will be interacted with a dummy for being the largest party in government, as well as the four EU-policy attribute variables, to test these hypotheses for the largest government parties.

Conclusions

Opposition to the process of authority transfer from national to EU institutions has resulted in the rise of Eurosceptic parties that wish to pursue disintegration within the EU. Earlier studies investigating this phenomenon have mainly focused on why Eurosceptic parties gained power. However, there is remarkably little research evidence on electoral rewards to government responsiveness in general and Eurosceptic parties in national governments in particular. Are Eurosceptic parties punished by their voters if promoting European integration? Do mainstream parties gain less support if promoting disintegration? In this study, we have tried to answer these critical questions and add another level to the study of European integration by explaining why and how domestic political support is shaped by government responsiveness.

Using a mixed method, model-based approach and experimental design, we explore voters' support for mainstream and Eurosceptic government parties that pursue more or less integration. The model-based approach highlights the importance of government responsiveness. Specifically, we find that (1) voters increase (decrease) their support to mainstream (Eurosceptic) parties that increase net fiscal funding from the

EU, (2) High-profile EU events hurt mainstream government parties and especially Eurosceptic ones, and (3) voters' support decrease for large Eurosceptic parties when more EU treaties and legislation are signed during their incumbency. The aim of the conjoint experiment is to explain the causal mechanism that makes EU voters responsive to European integration, as mediated by parties.

The main goal of our study is to describe and explain the electoral rewards to incumbents' policy responsiveness with the premise that they were elected to office in order to pursue their voters' preferences. Although our research strategy allows us to generalize our conclusions, we encourage scholars to examine the extent to which that is the case. Italy might be ideal for testing our theoretical claims. However, the political landscape in other EU countries is very much different and may affect how voters evaluate policy responses. It might be, for instance, that voters in specific EU countries did not have real-life experience with both non-Eurosceptic and Eurosceptic incumbent parties contesting elections.

Furthermore, our study offers a methodological advance to the literature on Eurosceptic politics by combining observational aggregate data that increase external validity with an experimental design at the individual level for increasing internal validity. By that, we provide a more complete story of the relationship between incumbents' EU (dis)integration policies and voters' support. We hope future work will adopt this approach to examine voters' support for parties, candidates, and policies.

Since European integration has been progressing ever since the mid-1950s without necessarily being accompanied by stable domestic political support, understating electoral rewards to government responsiveness is crucial not only for the EU to function as a democratic organization but also for each member state. Besides democratic backsliding, by pursuing policies that do not respond to voters' preferences, the government might open the door for more extreme parties to take control and put the stability of the European union in greater danger.

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Appendix A – Tables for the model based section

Table A1: Descriptive statistics

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Unit and potential range
<i><u>Dependent variable:</u></i>						
<i>Gains</i>	1,283	10.06	104.70	-100	2,542.9	Percent points (-100→∞)
<i><u>Independent variable:</u></i>						
<i>Cabinet</i>	1,283	0.32	0.47	0	1	Dummy
<i>Cabinet1Y</i>	1,283	0.29	0.45	0	1	Dummy
<i>CabinetLargest</i>	1,283	0.15	0.36	0	1	Dummy
<i>Euroceptic</i>	1,239	0.21	0.41	0	1	Dummy
<i>ScCabinet</i>	1,239	0.023	0.149	0	1	Dummy
<i>ScCabinet1Y</i>	1,239	0.017	0.129	0	1	Dummy
<i>ScCabinetLargest</i>	1,239	0.010	0.102	0	1	Dummy
<i><u>Proxies for progress in European integration and benefits from it:</u></i>						
<i>Event-Myopia</i>	1,283	5.015	0.717	0.930	5.931	Log-transformed index
<i>FiscalBenefit</i>	1,129	0.0003	0.0072	-0.0307	0.0327	Ratio (unbounded)
<i>Integration</i>	1,283	12.52	40.80	-15.15	219.89	Percent points (-100→∞)
<i>EUTrade</i>	1,196	0.62	4.02	-15.98	19.66	Percent points (-100→∞)
<i><u>Control variables:</u></i>						
<i>European</i>	826	0.41	0.10	0.12	0.69	Proportion (0→1)
<i>Membership</i>	924	0.13	0.08	0.02	0.38	Proportion (0→1)
<i>GDPPC</i>	1,283	1.98	3.43	-12.98	23.94	Percent points (-100→∞)
<i>Unemployment</i>	1,264	0.82	15.18	-26.76	126.91	Percent points (-100→∞)
<i>Asylum</i>	1,186	19.68	93.35	-88.44	778.84	Percent points (-100→∞)
<i>PartySize</i>	1,283	13.21	12.31	0.10	54.80	Percent points (0→100)
<i>Disproportionality</i>	1,283	5.89	4.69	0.42	25.25	Index (positive values)
<i>2LargeMainSc</i>	1,275	0.219	0.144	0.000	0.679	Index (0→1)

Table A2: Tabulation of cabinet dummies

		<i>Cabinet</i>		<i>CabinetLY</i>		<i>CabinetLargest</i>		Total
		0	1	0	1	0	1	
<i>EuroSceptic</i>	0	589	385	625	349	793	181	974
	1	237	28	244	21	252	13	265
	Total	826	413	869	370	1,045	194	1,239

Table A3: Regressions with cabinet dummies

	(1) Cabinet	(2) Cabinet 1Y	(3) Cabinet Largest
Cabinet dummy (<i>Cabinet / Cabinet 1Y / Cabinet Largest</i>)	87.66 ** (35.78)	78.03 ** (35.16)	123.64 *** (30.01)
Interaction with <i>Event-Myopia</i>	-19.98 *** (7.33)	-17.66 ** (7.29)	-22.94 *** (5.53)
Interaction with <i>FiscalBenefit</i>	1,003.70 ** (482.62)	885.50 * (455.94)	211.38 (472.60)
Interaction with <i>Integration</i>	-0.15 (0.13)	-0.16 (0.12)	-0.19 * (0.10)
Interaction with <i>EUTrade</i>	1.89 * (1.04)	1.68 (1.03)	1.16 * (0.69)
Interaction with <i>GDPPC</i>	-1.71 (1.80)	-2.20 (1.72)	-0.69 (1.36)
Interaction with <i>Unemployment</i>	-0.21 (0.39)	-0.25 (0.38)	0.00 (0.26)
Interaction with <i>Asylum</i>	0.01 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)	0.00 (0.03)
<i>Event-Myopia</i>	22.09 *** (6.85)	20.69 *** (6.72)	18.67 *** (5.48)
<i>FiscalBenefit</i>	-250.47 (355.00)	-210.34 (336.93)	76.59 (291.72)
<i>Integration</i>	0.23 ** (0.11)	0.23 ** (0.10)	0.21 ** (0.09)
<i>EUTrade</i>	-1.02 (0.85)	-0.92 (0.81)	-0.65 (0.64)
<i>GDPPC</i>	1.43 (1.32)	1.73 (1.30)	1.38 (1.05)
<i>Unemployment</i>	-0.03 (0.32)	-0.00 (0.31)	-0.05 (0.25)
<i>Asylum</i>	0.03 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)	0.02 (0.02)
<i>PartySize</i>	-1.08 *** (0.25)	-1.13 *** (0.25)	-1.47 *** (0.34)
<i>Disproportionality</i>	1.51 (1.50)	1.33 (1.53)	1.50 (1.51)
<i>2LargeMainSc</i>	6.31 (27.51)	6.98 (27.45)	9.72 (27.44)
Constant	-72.84 ** (28.77)	-65.72 ** (28.24)	-59.15 ** (24.17)
R-squared	0.06	0.06	0.05
N	1,047	1,047	1,047

Note: Results from cross-section OLS regression, standard errors clustered on the election cycle in parentheses, with country fixed effects. Dependent variable is the percent change in the party's share of the vote from the previous election. * .05 < p ≤ .10. ** .01 < p ≤ .05. *** p ≤ .01. Blue, green and yellow shades highlight significant and theoretically meaningful effects for respectively Eurosceptic and mainstream government parties, and non-government parties.

Table A4: Regressions with Eurosceptic cabinet dummies

	(4) Cabinet	(5) Cabinet 1Y	(6) Cabinet Largest
Eurosceptic Cabinet dummy (<i>ScCabinet/ ScCabinet1Y/ ScCabinetLargest</i>)	99.97 (213.69)	50.46 (358.62)	-51.04 (263.82)
Interaction with <i>Event-Myopia</i>	-19.02 (38.74)	-9.27 (67.40)	11.36 (48.48)
Interaction with <i>FiscalBenefit</i>	-3,940.00 ** (1,618.32)	-4,082.91 * (2,400.89)	-3,260.51 ** (1,492.48)
Interaction with <i>Integration</i>	-0.56 ** (0.27)	-0.46 (0.29)	-11.32 *** (3.28)
Interaction with <i>EUTrade</i>	0.65 (1.60)	1.95 (5.86)	23.79 *** (8.54)
Interaction with <i>GDPPC</i>	4.85 (9.02)	6.49 (8.76)	15.89 (10.82)
Interaction with <i>Unemployment</i>	1.12 (0.93)	1.30 (0.93)	2.17 ** (1.10)
Interaction with <i>Asylum</i>	0.10 (0.07)	0.09 (0.10)	0.01 (0.09)
Cabinet dummy (<i>Cabinet/ Cabinet1Y/ CabinetLargest</i>)	75.49 ** (34.07)	66.83 ** (33.66)	116.36 *** (29.24)
Interaction with <i>Event-Myopia</i>	-17.57 ** (7.10)	-15.47 ** (7.08)	-21.33 *** (5.39)
Interaction with <i>FiscalBenefit</i>	1,065.78 ** (472.08)	950.96 ** (439.01)	350.99 (439.85)
Interaction with <i>Integration</i>	-0.14 (0.12)	-0.15 (0.12)	-0.19 * (0.11)
Interaction with <i>EUTrade</i>	1.68 (1.02)	1.52 (1.00)	1.22 * (0.73)
Interaction with <i>GDPPC</i>	-2.08 (1.74)	-2.51 (1.67)	-0.91 (1.31)
Interaction with <i>Unemployment</i>	-0.36 (0.45)	-0.42 (0.45)	-0.06 (0.33)
Interaction with <i>Asylum</i>	-0.01 (0.05)	-0.00 (0.05)	0.00 (0.04)
<i>Event-Myopia</i>	19.37 *** (6.65)	18.04 *** (6.51)	16.61 *** (5.32)
<i>FiscalBenefit</i>	-62.45 (344.28)	-6.43 (324.39)	295.87 (265.78)
<i>Integration</i>	0.24 ** (0.11)	0.23 ** (0.11)	0.21 ** (0.09)
<i>EUTrade</i>	-1.08 (0.85)	-0.98 (0.82)	-0.71 (0.64)
<i>GDPPC</i>	1.15 (1.29)	1.44 (1.27)	1.11 (1.04)
<i>Unemployment</i>	-0.10 (0.30)	-0.06 (0.30)	-0.10 (0.24)
<i>Asylum</i>	0.04	0.04	0.03

	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)
<i>EuroSceptic</i>	1.41 (12.41)	1.68 (12.04)	4.39 (11.19)
<i>PartySize</i>	-1.15 *** (0.26)	-1.21 *** (0.26)	-1.56 *** (0.36)
<i>Disproportionality</i>	1.19 (1.54)	1.05 (1.56)	1.23 (1.53)
<i>2LargeMainSc</i>	2.19 (28.02)	2.81 (28.26)	3.13 (28.21)
Constant	-55.85 ** (26.86)	-49.19 * (26.51)	-45.96 ** (22.79)
R-squared	0.06	0.06	0.05
N	1,023	1,023	1,023
<u>Tests for sums of coefficients:</u>			
Interactions of <i>Event-Myopia</i>	-36.59 (39.10)	-24.74 (67.95)	-9.97 (47.90)
Interactions of <i>FiscalBenefit</i>	-2,874.22 * (1,611.44)	-3,131.95 (2,406.94)	-2,909.52 ** (1,450.20)
Interaction of <i>Integration</i>	-0.70 *** (0.27)	-0.61 ** (0.29)	-11.51 *** (3.30)
Interaction of <i>EUTrade</i>	2.34 (1.62)	3.48 (5.70)	25.01 *** (8.52)
Interaction of <i>GDPPC</i>	2.76 (9.00)	3.98 (8.74)	14.98 (10.83)
Interaction with <i>Unemployment</i>	0.77 (0.98)	0.88 (0.98)	2.11 * (1.12)
Interaction with <i>Asylum</i>	0.09 (0.08)	0.09 (0.10)	0.02 (0.09)

See note to Table 3.

Table A5: Regressions with Eurosceptic cabinet dummies and control for popular Euroscepticism (European)

	(7) Cabinet	(8) Cabinet 1Y	(9) Cabinet Largest
Eurosceptic Cabinet dummy (<i>ScCabinet / ScCabinet1Y / ScCabinetLargest</i>)	-452.74 * (266.76)	-379.05 (286.38)	76.33 (214.63)
Interaction with European	253.08 (208.38)	178.55 (201.78)	6.78 (74.08)
Interaction with <i>Event-Myopia</i>	60.24 (48.15)	52.01 (56.94)	-12.73 (39.15)
Interaction with <i>FiscalBenefit</i>	-6,204.92 * (3,460.17)	-5,907.65 * (3,390.98)	-13,246.24 *** (3,026.45)
Interaction with <i>Integration</i>	0.26 (0.33)	0.35 (0.44)	90.17 ** (36.65)
Interaction with <i>EUTrade</i>	1.32 (2.55)	5.85 (9.96)	18.10 *** (5.60)
Interaction with <i>GDPPC</i>	15.22 (21.30)	19.47 (29.36)	-75.33 ** (29.26)
Interaction with <i>Unemployment</i>	2.13 (2.13)	2.72 (3.30)	-7.35 ** (3.10)
Interaction with <i>Asylum</i>	0.13 (0.11)	0.10 (0.11)	
Cabinet dummy (<i>Cabinet / Cabinet1Y / CabinetLargest</i>)	94.84 * (49.16)	85.88 * (50.86)	125.62 *** (36.05)
Interaction with European	32.47 (84.62)	27.10 (85.01)	64.75 (63.06)
Interaction with <i>Event-Myopia</i>	-22.93 ** (9.83)	-20.33 ** (10.23)	-26.04 *** (6.48)
Interaction with <i>FiscalBenefit</i>	1,350.42 *** (507.17)	1,252.17 ** (480.03)	590.18 (503.74)
Interaction with <i>Integration</i>	-0.23 (0.20)	-0.26 (0.19)	-0.26 (0.18)
Interaction with <i>EUTrade</i>	1.59 (2.28)	1.51 (2.29)	1.10 (1.22)
Interaction with <i>GDPPC</i>	-1.64 (2.06)	-2.17 (1.90)	-0.75 (1.49)
Interaction with <i>Unemployment</i>	-0.48 (0.83)	-0.55 (0.85)	-0.25 (0.58)
Interaction with <i>Asylum</i>	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.00 (0.06)	0.01 (0.05)
European	-58.54 (81.35)	-59.45 (80.20)	-49.02 (66.17)
<i>Event-Myopia</i>	23.72 *** (8.64)	22.06 ** (8.50)	19.80 *** (6.47)
<i>FiscalBenefit</i>	-126.70 (393.12)	-44.55 (357.63)	328.23 (298.42)
<i>Integration</i>	0.35 ** (0.14)	0.34 *** (0.13)	0.30 ** (0.12)
<i>EUTrade</i>	-0.48	-0.40	-0.14

	(1.42)	(1.31)	(1.11)
<i>GDPPC</i>	0.51 (1.36)	0.89 (1.30)	0.65 (0.98)
<i>Unemployment</i>	0.08 (0.42)	0.11 (0.41)	0.05 (0.30)
<i>Asylum</i>	0.06 (0.04)	0.06 (0.04)	0.05 (0.03)
<i>EuroSceptic</i>	8.59 (17.31)	8.85 (16.70)	12.04 (15.48)
<i>PartySize</i>	-1.55 *** (0.35)	-1.61 *** (0.36)	-2.08 *** (0.50)
<i>Disproportionality</i>	1.96 (1.46)	1.82 (1.53)	1.87 (1.49)
<i>2LargeMainSc</i>	-28.15 (23.95)	-28.01 (23.97)	-26.82 (24.77)
Constant	-50.38 (41.28)	-41.57 (41.79)	-37.20 (36.80)
R-squared	0.07	0.07	0.07
N	744	744	744

See note to Table 3. Brown shades highlight omitted variables.

Table A6: Regressions with Eurosceptic cabinet dummies and control for popular Euroscepticism (*Membership*)

	(10) Cabinet	(11) Cabinet 1Y	(12) Cabinet Largest
Eurosceptic Cabinet dummy (<i>ScCabinet / ScCabinet1Y / ScCabinetLargest</i>)	345.06 (311.88)	956.80 ** (412.14)	37,509.21 *** (5,296.85)
Interaction with <i>Membership</i>	-87.10 (171.16)	95.41 (208.84)	50,103.31 *** (7,125.72)
Interaction with <i>Event-Myopia</i>	-62.61 (59.59)	-183.43 ** (78.00)	-8,700.42 *** (1,229.56)
Interaction with <i>FiscalBenefit</i>	177.46 (3125.60)	-5712.22 (4516.03)	48,820.38 *** (6,482.25)
Interaction with <i>Integration</i>	-0.97 *** (0.36)	-1.12 *** (0.37)	-754.05 *** (105.87)
Interaction with <i>EUTrade</i>	1.09 (1.29)	12.37 *** (4.66)	1,972.83 *** (277.52)
Interaction with <i>GDPPC</i>	-12.38 (15.03)	-22.77 (14.28)	-280.96 *** (39.75)
Interaction with <i>Unemployment</i>	-1.05 (1.61)	-1.55 (1.47)	
Interaction with <i>Asylum</i>	-0.96 *** (0.29)	-1.07 *** (0.32)	
Cabinet dummy (<i>Cabinet / Cabinet1Y / CabinetLargest</i>)	19.19 (58.22)	26.75 (57.32)	62.34 (42.06)
Interaction with <i>Membership</i>	47.57 (76.32)	39.37 (75.67)	45.93 (72.98)
Interaction with <i>Event-Myopia</i>	-8.32 (11.60)	-9.82 (11.48)	-13.90 * (8.08)
Interaction with <i>FiscalBenefit</i>	329.11 (791.32)	56.35 (678.73)	-341.83 (599.31)
Interaction with <i>Integration</i>	-0.20 (0.15)	-0.21 (0.15)	-0.26 * (0.13)
Interaction with <i>EUTrade</i>	2.00 * (1.16)	1.89 (1.14)	1.52 ** (0.64)
Interaction with <i>GDPPC</i>	1.73 (3.17)	1.29 (3.15)	1.73 (2.75)
Interaction with <i>Unemployment</i>	0.02 (0.54)	0.02 (0.53)	0.28 (0.34)
Interaction with <i>Asylum</i>	-0.10 *** (0.04)	-0.08 ** (0.03)	-0.03 (0.03)
<i>Membership</i>	-124.09 * (64.92)	-130.43 ** (64.60)	-123.53 ** (62.21)
<i>Event-Myopia</i>	18.88 ** (7.95)	19.21 ** (7.76)	18.80 *** (5.88)
<i>FiscalBenefit</i>	725.69 (628.00)	783.68 (616.79)	810.19 (525.37)
<i>Integration</i>	0.30 ** (0.13)	0.29 ** (0.13)	0.27 ** (0.10)
<i>EUTrade</i>	-0.88	-0.74	-0.49

	(0.74)	(0.72)	(0.54)
<i>GDPPC</i>	0.20 (2.06)	0.40 (2.05)	1.24 (1.72)
<i>Unemployment</i>	-0.02 (0.32)	0.00 (0.32)	0.03 (0.27)
<i>Asylum</i>	0.14 *** (0.03)	0.12 *** (0.03)	0.09 *** (0.02)
<i>EuroSceptic</i>	-9.32 (11.08)	-8.88 (10.78)	-6.83 (9.93)
<i>PartySize</i>	-1.07 *** (0.33)	-1.05 *** (0.33)	-1.33 *** (0.39)
<i>Disproportionality</i>	0.52 (2.66)	0.66 (2.62)	0.41 (2.70)
<i>2LargeMainSc</i>	63.02 (41.07)	68.84 * (41.09)	67.04 (41.06)
Constant	-75.47 * (41.14)	-77.82 * (40.19)	-80.09 *** (28.49)
R-squared	0.12	0.12	0.11
N	688	688	688

See note to Table 5.

Table A7: MI regressions with Eurosceptic cabinet dummies and control for popular Euroscepticism (*European*)

	(13) Cabinet	(14) Cabinet 1Y	(15) Cabinet Largest
Eurosceptic Cabinet dummy (<i>ScCabinet / ScCabinet1Y / ScCabinetLargest</i>)	57.38 (238.48)	23.06 (360.80)	-72.31 (267.98)
Interaction with <i>European</i>	45.75 (155.52)	-23.29 (197.64)	83.48 (162.30)
Interaction with <i>Event-Myopia</i>	-14.65 (39.69)	-2.62 (70.06)	8.07 (46.61)
Interaction with <i>FiscalBenefit</i>	-4,298.53 ** (2,034.77)	-3,883.45 (3,190.95)	-4,455.16 ** (2,064.07)
Interaction with <i>Integration</i>	-0.48 (0.33)	0.44 (0.41)	-12.79 *** (3.63)
Interaction with <i>EUTrade</i>	0.80 (1.72)	1.73 (7.78)	27.18 *** (9.04)
Interaction with <i>GDPPC</i>	4.99 (9.28)	7.50 (9.27)	16.04 (10.59)
Interaction with <i>Unemployment</i>	1.10 (0.97)	1.40 (0.98)	2.25 ** (1.07)
Interaction with <i>Asylum</i>	0.10 (0.07)	0.08 (0.10)	0.04 (0.09)
Cabinet dummy (<i>Cabinet / Cabinet1Y / CabinetLargest</i>)	66.37 (41.10)	58.94 (41.23)	99.62 *** (33.41)
Interaction with <i>European</i>	20.48 (62.79)	17.69 (63.21)	35.26 (49.56)
Interaction with <i>Event-Myopia</i>	-17.34 ** (9.83)	-15.27 ** (6.89)	-20.74 *** (5.27)
Interaction with <i>FiscalBenefit</i>	1,062.94 ** (469.61)	947.16 ** (438.34)	356.88 (443.78)
Interaction with <i>Integration</i>	-0.14 (0.12)	-0.15 (0.12)	-0.19 * (0.11)
Interaction with <i>EUTrade</i>	1.58 (1.04)	1.43 (1.02)	1.07 (0.74)
Interaction with <i>GDPPC</i>	-2.26 (1.79)	-2.67 (1.73)	-1.28 (1.32)
Interaction with <i>Unemployment</i>	-0.40 (0.52)	-0.46 (0.53)	-0.15 (0.38)
Interaction with <i>Asylum</i>	-0.01 (0.05)	-0.00 (0.05)	0.00 (0.04)
<i>European</i>	-25.60 (51.06)	-59.45 (80.20)	-23.47 (42.61)
<i>Event-Myopia</i>	19.09 *** (6.48)	17.76 *** (6.34)	16.33 *** (5.21)
<i>FiscalBenefit</i>	-33.88 (350.22)	26.25 (330.59)	325.78 (275.42)
<i>Integration</i>	0.23 ** (0.11)	0.23 ** (0.11)	0.21 ** (0.09)
<i>EUTrade</i>	-0.93	-0.83	-0.57

	(0.88)	(0.85)	(0.67)
<i>GDPPC</i>	1.30 (1.29)	1.59 (1.27)	1.24 (1.06)
<i>Unemployment</i>	-0.05 (0.34)	-0.01 (0.33)	-0.06 (0.26)
<i>Asylum</i>	0.04 (0.04)	0.04 (0.04)	0.04 (0.03)
<i>EuroSceptic</i>	1.55 (12.37)	1.85 (12.01)	4.43 (11.19)
<i>PartySize</i>	-1.15 *** (0.26)	-1.20 *** (0.26)	-1.56 *** (0.36)
<i>Disproportionality</i>	1.19 (1.54)	1.03 (1.58)	1.22 (1.54)
<i>2LargeMainSc</i>	0.80 (27.46)	1.19 (27.65)	1.55 (27.67)
Constant	-44.70 (38.64)	-37.95 (38.44)	-35.67 (32.97)
F-test	554.96 ***	792.18 ***	1,394.40 ***
Average RVI	0.0269	0.0435	0.0691
Largest FMI	0.2659	0.3822	0.2762
N	1,023	1,023	1,023

Note: Results for multiple imputations of cross-section linear regression, standard errors clustered on the election cycle in parentheses, with country fixed effects, based on 100 imputations (seed number 921547). Dependent variable is the percent change in the party's share of the vote from the previous election. * .05 < p ≤ .10. ** .01 < p ≤ .05. *** p ≤ .01.

Table A8: MI regressions with Eurosceptic cabinet dummies and control for popular Euroscepticism
(Membership)

	(16) Cabinet	(17) Cabinet 1Y	(18) Cabinet Largest
Eurosceptic Cabinet dummy (ScCabinet/ScCabinet1Y/ScCabinetLargest)	39.76 (221.30)	40.39 (356.64)	- 131.60 (344.52)
Interaction with Membership	-185.89 (161.67)	-196.21 (196.82)	-89.69 (748.65)
Interaction with <i>Event-Myopia</i>	-3.26 (41.58)	-2.98 (67.94)	28.57 (77.90)
Interaction with <i>FiscalBenefit</i>	-3,460.78 ** (1,689.10)	-3,785.52 (2,521.44)	-2,483.99 (3,827.99)
Interaction with <i>Integration</i>	-0.53 ** (0.26)	-0.48 * (0.29)	-10.58 (16.26)
Interaction with <i>EUTrade</i>	0.96 (1.62)	2.03 (6.23)	22.18 (42.14)
Interaction with <i>GDPPC</i>	6.60 (9.57)	7.63 (9.68)	17.59 (20.45)
Interaction with <i>Unemployment</i>	1.32 (1.00)	1.47 (1.03)	2.27 (2.54)
Interaction with <i>Asylum</i>	0.05 (0.09)	0.04 (0.11)	-0.04 (0.19)
Cabinet dummy (Cabinet/Cabinet1Y/CabinetLargest)	69.15 (34.41)	60.00 (33.83)	111.18 *** (29.50)
Interaction with Membership	98.41 (150.78)	104.14 (145.62)	74.11 (125.73)
Interaction with <i>Event-Myopia</i>	-19.23 ** (7.98)	-17.19 ** (7.94)	-22.46 *** (6.18)
Interaction with <i>FiscalBenefit</i>	949.84 * (516.54)	835.89 * (471.75)	283.40 (461.80)
Interaction with <i>Integration</i>	-0.16 (0.12)	-0.17 (0.12)	-0.20 * (0.11)
Interaction with <i>EUTrade</i>	1.57 (1.04)	1.39 (1.02)	1.15 (0.77)
Interaction with <i>GDPPC</i>	-0.92 (2.55)	-1.27 (2.48)	-0.04 (2.04)
Interaction with <i>Unemployment</i>	-0.24 (0.46)	-0.30 (0.46)	0.02 (0.35)
Interaction with <i>Asylum</i>	0.01 (0.06)	0.02 (0.06)	0.02 (0.05)
Membership	-111.99 (199.27)	-120.19 (193.30)	-92.73 (172.31)
<i>Event-Myopia</i>	20.99 *** (7.71)	19.87 *** (7.65)	17.90 *** (6.24)
<i>FiscalBenefit</i>	71.91 (423.32)	127.40 (393.38)	391.64 (326.88)
<i>Integration</i>	0.25 ** (0.11)	0.25 ** (0.11)	0.22 ** (0.09)

<i>EUTrade</i>	-0.95 (0.88)	-0.84 (0.85)	-0.63 (0.66)
<i>GDPPC</i>	-0.01 (2.44)	0.17 (2.43)	0.13 (2.09)
<i>Unemployment</i>	-0.20 (0.35)	-0.17 (0.34)	-0.19 (0.29)
<i>Asylum</i>	0.02 (0.06)	0.02 (0.05)	0.02 (0.04)
<i>EuroSceptic</i>	0.98 (12.49)	1.13 (12.16)	3.78 (11.30)
<i>PartySize</i>	-1.16 *** (0.27)	-1.22 *** (0.27)	-1.58 *** (0.37)
<i>Disproportionality</i>	1.45 (1.62)	1.31 (1.65)	1.46 (1.63)
<i>2LargeMainSc</i>	8.64 (31.64)	9.82 (31.86)	9.72 (31.81)
Constant	-52.96 * (27.85)	-46.53 (27.38)	-44.38 (23.49)
F-test	12.55 ***	47.23 ***	3.95 ***
Average RVI	0.2016	0.2005	0.2342
Largest FMI	0.5647	0.5595	0.7078
N	1,023	1,023	1,023

See note to Table 7.

Appendix B – Conjoint survey experiment

Consent form

“Welcome and thank you very much for considering your participation in this survey-based research!

We are going to ask you questions about your political opinions and beliefs. Some of the questions may be difficult to answer, but we trust you will do your best. Answering all of the questions is supposed to take up to **15 minutes**.

Be sure to spend enough time reading and understanding each question. To ensure the quality of survey data, your responses will be subject to sophisticated statistical control methods, which can detect incoherent or rushed answers. Responding without adequate effort or skipping many questions may result in your responses not being included in the survey and you may not receive your payment.

Before we start, it is important that you understand what rights you have as a participant in this study.

Participation in this research is voluntary and you can quit at any time. Any information you give us will only be used for scientific purposes and will be treated confidentially. The answers that you provide can be reused for other research purposes, without identifying you. The results of this research will only be reported in an anonymized and aggregated manner. You agree to the collection, processing, transfer and use of the data as described here, including for replication purposes.

For any questions regarding your participation in this study, you may contact socialscienceandconomics@gmail.com.

Please note that email communication is neither private nor secure. Though we are taking precautions to protect your privacy, you should be aware that information sent through e-mail could be read by a third party. However, participating in this study represents no greater risk than usual internet use.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to screen width, it may be easier to participate in this survey using a computer rather than a smartphone.

Please indicate below whether you agree and then proceed by clicking the next arrow.”

Pre-experiment survey (Socio-demographics)

[First screen]

1. What is your gender? (0=Male; 1=Female; 2=Non-binary/third gender; 99=Prefer not to answer).
2. What is your age (18-99)?
3. What type of community do you live in? (1=Rural area; 2=Small city or town; 3=Suburb near a large city; 4=Large city; 9=Other; 99=Prefer not to answer).
4. In which region do you currently live (drop-down menu of the 20 official regions of Italy; 99=Prefer not to answer)?
5. Where were you born (drop-down menu of the 20 official regions of Italy, and an option for people born out of Italy; 99=Prefer not to answer)?
6. What is the highest educational level that have you have attained? (0=No education; 1=Primary education; 2=Secondary education; 3=Bachelor or equivalent; 4=Master or equivalent; 5=Doctoral or equivalent; 6=Other professional qualification; 9=Other; 99=Prefer not to answer).

[Second screen]

7. People sometimes describe themselves as belonging to the lower class, the middle class, or the upper class. In your opinion, which class do you belong to? (0=Lower class; 1=Lower middle class; 2=Middle class; 3=Upper middle class; 4=Upper class; 9=Don't know; 99=Prefer not to answer).
8. On economic policy matters, do you consider yourself as: (1=Very Capitalist; 2=Capitalist; 3=Centrist; 4=Socialist; 5=Very Socialist; 9=Don't know; 99=Prefer not to answer)
9. On social values, do you consider yourself: (1=Very liberal; 2=Liberal; 3=Moderate; 4=Conservative; 5=Very Conservative; 9=Don't know; 99= Prefer not to answer).
10. On religion, do you consider yourself to be: (1=Very religious; 2=Moderately religious; 3=Centrist; 4=Moderately secular; 5=Very secular; 9=Don't know; 99=Prefer not to answer).

[Third screen]

11. In politics, do you see yourself as: (1=Very Right-wing; 2=Right-wing; 3=Center; 4=Left-wing; 5=Very Left-wing, 9=Don't know, 99=Prefer not to answer)
12. Generally speaking, do you think that Italy's membership of the EU is a good thing or a bad thing? (0=A bad thing; 1=A good thing; 9=Don't know; 99=Prefer not to answer).

13. In the near future do you see yourself as: (1=Italian only; 2= Italian and European; 3=European and Italian; 4=European only; 9=Don't know; 99=Prefer not to answer).
14. Regarding climate policy, do you see yourself as: (1=Very anti climate policy; 2=Anti climate policy; 3=Centrist; 4=Supportive of climate policy; 5=Very supportive of climate policy; 9=Don't know; 99=Prefer not to answer).

[Fourth screen]

15. Did you vote in the most recent election to the national legislature? (1=Yes; 2=No, I didn't want to vote; 3=No, I wasn't able to vote; 9=Don't remember; 99=Prefer not to answer).
16. [ATTENTION CHECK] People often use different social media platforms during an election campaign to receive information about each candidate party. We want to know which platform people trust to get this information. We also want to know if people are paying attention to the question. To show that you've read this much, please ignore the following question and select three random social media platforms.
- When you need to find such information, which social media platform you use the most? **Please choose one.** (1=Facebook; 2=Instagram; 3=LinkedIn; 4=Twitter; 5=TikTok; 9=Don't know; 99=Prefer not to answer).

[Fifth screen]

17. To what extent do you trust each of the following institutions [The media; The political parties; The national legal system; The police; This is an attention check; please chose "Trust"; The public administration; The Italian government; The Italian parliament; The European Union]? (1=Do not trust at all; 2=Do not Trust; 3=Do not trust and trust at the same time; 4=Trust; 5=Trust a lot; 9=Don't know; 99=Prefer not to answer).
18. We want to make sure you are not a robot. Can you please answer the following question:
How much is 1 + 1? [open field]

Experiment questions

[Sixth screen]

[preamble] “You will next be presented with two hypothetical political parties.

Imagine that each of them is contesting a different election to Italy’s national legislature.

Note: The parties are not competing against each other in a single election; Rather, each is fighting other parties in a different hypothetical election.

For each party, you will be provided with:

- Its policy positions.
- Its place in government or opposition before the election.
- Hypothetical information on different developments that occurred before the particular election that each party is contesting.

Please study this information carefully and choose which of these parties you support more, given also the developments that occurred before each election.

Following this, you will be presented with a new pair of parties and again asked to choose one of them.

This process will be repeated eight times (you will be presented with a total of eight pairs of parties).

Pair #1 of a total of 8 pairs of parties:”

[Wave A1 – two randomized party profiles presented – See Tables B1 and B2 below]

19. Which party do you support more? 1=Party A; 2=Party B; 9= None of the parties, or don’t know.

20. And now if you must decide between the two, which party do you support more? 1=Party A; 2= Party B.

[Next screen]

21. And now, how likely are you to support Party A, on a 5-point scale, where 1 indicates that you are extremely unlikely to support it and 5 indicates that you are extremely likely to support it?

22. And now, how likely are you to support Party B, on a 5-point scale, where 1 indicates that you are extremely unlikely to support it and 5 indicates that you are extremely likely to support it?

[Wave A2 – The preamble is presented again, two newly randomized party profiles presented and participants vote again]

...

[Wave A8 – The preamble is presented again, two newly randomized party profiles presented and participants vote again]

[Next screen]

23. [ATTENTION CHECK] Which of the following appeared as a policy position of the parties for which you were asked to vote (select any)?
- a. Foreign relations with the US.
 - b. Religion
 - c. Urban–Periphery divide
 - d. Immigration

[Next screen]

24. [Feedback] In your opinion, what is this study about?
- a. Economic policy
 - b. Social values
 - c. European Union
 - d. Environment policy
 - e. Religion and politics
 - f. Urban-Periphery divide
 - g. Other (please specify)

25. [Feedback] Do you feel that the survey was biased?
- a. Yes, against my own values and political preferences
 - b. Yes, towards my own values and political preferences
 - c. No, it did not feel biased

[Next screen]

“Thank you for participating in this survey.”

Table B1: Conjoint attributes and levels

Attribute	Level
Position of the party in parliament	1=Large party in opposition; 2=Small party in opposition; 4=Small party in government; 5=Large party in government.
Party position on Economic ideology	1=Very Capitalist; 2=Moderately Capitalist; 3=Centrist; 4=Moderately Socialist; 5=Very Socialist.
Party position on Social values	1=Very Liberal; 2= Moderately Liberal; 3=Centrist; 4=Moderately Conservative; 5=Very Conservative.
Party position on religion	1=Very religious; 2=Moderately religious; 3=Centrist; 4=Moderately secular; 5=Very secular.
Party position on European integration	1= Very anti-EU; 2=Moderately anti-EU; 3=Centrist; 4=Moderately pro-EU; 5=Very pro-EU.

Party position on climate policy	1=Very anti climate policy; 2=Anti climate policy; 3=Centrist; 4=Supports climate policy; 5=Very supportive of climate policy.
Party position on Urban–Periphery divide	1=Very supportive of small towns and villages; 2=Moderately supportive of small towns and villages; 3=Centrist; 4=Moderately supportive of large cities; 5=Very supportive of large cities.
The European Council discussed new treaties. This happened:	1=2 years before the election; 2=1 year before the election; 3=6 months before the election; 4=1 month before the election; 5=1 week before the election.
Before the election, Italy received from the European Union:	1=Much less money; 2=Less money; 3=The same amount of money as always; 4=More money; 5=Much more money.
Before the election, unification of Europe:	1=Has been seriously set back; 2=Was rolled back a little; 3=Has not made any progress; 4=Somewhat increased; 5=Very much accelerated.
Before the election, Italy traded with other European countries:	1=Much less; 2=Less; 3=As it always has; 4=More; 5=Much more.

Table B2: Example of party profiles

	Party A	Party B
Position of the party in parliament	Large party in government	Small party in opposition
Economic Ideology	Moderately Socialist	Moderately Capitalist
Social Values	Centrist	Very Conservative
Religion	Very religious	Centrist
European Union	Very pro-EU	Centrist
Climate policy	Anti-climate policy	Supports climate policy
Urban–Periphery divide	Very supportive of large cities	Very supportive of large cities
The European Council convened to discuss new treaties. This happened:	6 months before the election	1 month before the election
Before the election, Italy received from the European Union:	More money	Less money
Before the election, the unification of Europe:	Has not made any progress	Very much accelerated
Before the election, Italy traded with other European countries:	As it always has	Much less

Test power and Sample size calculation

The Minimum Detectable Effect (MDE) is:

$$MDE = (t_{\frac{\alpha}{2}} + t_{1-k}) * \sqrt{\frac{1}{P(1-P)}} * \sqrt{\frac{\sigma^2}{N}}$$

Where t is a t-distribution statistic, α is the probability of Type 1 error (false negative, conventionally set to 0.05), $1-k$ is the probability of a Type 2 error (false positive), k is the power of the test (conventionally set to 0.8, to achieve $(1-k)/\alpha=4$), P is the probability of being randomly assigned to a group (conventionally set to 0.5 assuming equal probability of assignment across groups), σ is the standard error in the data (conventionally set to 1 assuming a normal distribution).

The sample size if there are two comparison groups in the experiment (one treatment group and one control group) is thus:

$$N = \frac{(t_{\frac{\alpha}{2}} + t_{1-k})^2}{MDE^2} * \frac{\sigma^2}{P(1-P)}$$

We aim for $MDE = 0.05$, so the required number of effective observations is:

$$N = \frac{(1.97 + 0.84)^2}{0.0025} * \frac{1}{0.25} = 12,634$$

Since each participant will in effect vote for two parties, the required number of participants is half of this calculated number. The required number of participants will be further reduced by having participants vote eight times on newly randomized party profiles. With 1,000 participants the MDE is 4.44 percent; for an MDE of 5 percent a total of 790 participants will suffice.

Report on the pre-test pilot experiment

In order to check for unforeseen problems in the Conjoint survey experiments setup, a pre-test pilot experiment took place on Saturday, 29 April 2023. 120 adult citizen-residents of Italy were recruited to the survey experiment via *Prolific*. Participants were not pre-screened and the sample was not modeled to be representative, so any socio-demographic bias among participants is random. The survey was published at 5:27 PM CET, and immediately started receiving responses. The 120th response ended at 6:47 PM, only 1:20 hours after the survey was published. The median response time (the time it took participants to complete the entire survey experiment) was 12:41 minutes, compared with the 15 minutes that participants were informed to expect in the consent form.¹¹ The rapid completion of the recruitment and the reasonable response times suggest that the survey did not pose a particular challenge to participants in terms of complexity and length. One participant declined the consent form, so effectively there were 119 participants. The following socio-demographic data are based on participant responses to the pre-experiment survey:

Gender: 71 males; 43 females; 5 “Non-binary/third gender”.

Age: ranged from 20 to 66; averaging 30; median 27.

Community type: Small city or town 58; Big city 41; Suburb near a big city 13; Rural area 7.

Region: Almost all of Italy’s 20 regions are represented in the study in terms of both participants’ place of residence and their place of birth (only its smallest – Aosta Valley – is not). Campania, Emilia

¹¹ Median values are less affected by outlier values than average values. This is important because some participants may be distracted during the survey by events outside their control, artificially lengthening their response times.

Romagna, Lazio and Lombardy are the most represented regions by residence, each with 10-20 participants. 90 participants reside in the same region in which they were born.

Education: Secondary 57; Bachelor 36; Master 21; Doctorate 2; other options 3.

Class: Lower class 3; Lower middle class 26; Middle class 62; Upper middle class 24; Upper middle class 2; Don't know 2.

Economic Policy: Very Capitalist 1; Capitalist 12; Centrist 37; Socialist 42; Very Socialist 13; Don't know 10; Prefer not to answer 4.

Social values: Very liberal 41; Liberal 45; Moderate 22; Conservative 4; Very Conservative 2; Don't know 5.

Religion: Very religious 2; Moderately religious 8; Centrist 10; Moderately secular 25; Very secular 71; Don't know 2; Prefer not to answer 1.

Political leaning: Very Right-wing 0; Right-wing 8; Center 22; Left-wing 57; Very Left-wing 19, Don't know 10, Prefer not to answer 3.

EU membership: A bad thing 8; A good thing 99; Don't know 11; Prefer not to answer 1.

European identity: Italian only 8; Italian and European 72; European and Italian 25; European only 6; Don't know 8.

Climate policy: Very anti climate policy 0; Anti climate policy 0; Centrist 7; Supportive of climate policy 33; Very supportive of climate policy 73; Don't know 5; Prefer not to answer 1.

Voting record in the most recent election to the national legislature: Voted 92; Didn't want to vote 11; Wasn't able to vote 14; Don't remember 2.

Trust in the Media: Do not trust at all 6; Do not Trust 48; Do not trust and trust at the same time 47; Trust 17; Trust a lot 1; Don't know 0; Prefer not to answer 0.

Trust in the Political parties: Do not trust at all 17; Do not Trust 64; Do not trust and trust at the same time 33; Trust 3; Trust a lot 1; Don't know 1; Prefer not to answer 0.

Trust in the Legal system: Do not trust at all 1; Do not Trust 30; Do not trust and trust at the same time 28; Trust 51; Trust a lot 6; Don't know 3; Prefer not to answer 0.

Trust in the Police: Do not trust at all 7; Do not Trust 20; Do not trust and trust at the same time 42; Trust 44; Trust a lot 6; Don't know 0; Prefer not to answer 0.

Trust in the Public Administration: Do not trust at all 7; Do not Trust 36; Do not trust and trust at the same time 58; Trust 12; Trust a lot 4; Don't know 2; Prefer not to answer 0.

Trust in the Government: Do not trust at all 21; Do not Trust 44; Do not trust and trust at the same time 40; Trust 10; Trust a lot 3; Don't know 1; Prefer not to answer 0.

Trust in the Parliament: Do not trust at all 13; Do not Trust 48; Do not trust and trust at the same time 39; Trust 15; Trust a lot 3; Don't know 1; Prefer not to answer 0.

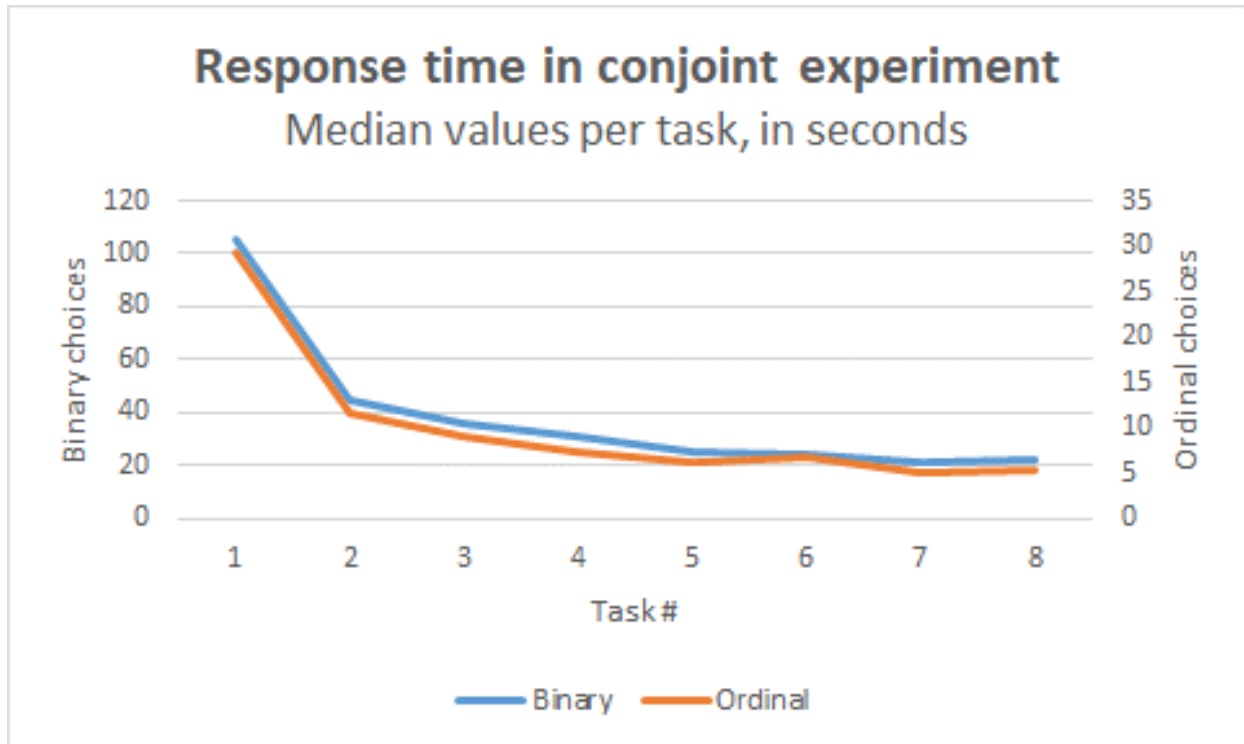
Trust in the EU: Do not trust at all 5; Do not Trust 8; Do not trust and trust at the same time 35; Trust 45; Trust a lot 24; Don't know 2; Prefer not to answer 0. Thus, there appears to be is no clear bias among participants in trust in the EU. Trust in the EU is positively and significantly ($p>0.01$) associated with trust in the legal system ($r=0.54$), parliament ($r=0.43$), government ($r=0.41$), public administration ($r=0.35$), the media ($r=0.30$), political parties ($r=0.26$), and the police ($r=0.18$, $p=0.046$).

Attention checks: As *Prolific* recommends, we decided to eliminate participants that failed two or more of the four attention checks embedded in the survey, especially if their response times were relatively short. Such participants' answers may not be reliable. Most participants passed three of these checks fairly easily. Only one participant failed the attention check embedded in the questions on trust in institutions, another one failed the robot detection question, and six participants failed the attention check at the end of the conjoint experiment (i.e. they selected at least one attribute that did not actually appear in the conjoint experiment even if they also selected one or more attributes that did appear in it). Five of these six participants have also failed at least one of the other three attention checks, including the one on social media – see below – and were eliminated. Another participant was eliminated for failing the attention checks on trust in institutions and on social media. Thus, a total of six participants were eliminated as unreliable. With one exception, their response times ranged between five and eight minutes. This brings the number of reliable participants to 113.

48 participants failed the attention check on social media. This number comes down to 43 after five participants that failed one or more of the other attention checks are excluded. Among these 43 participants the average response time is 749 seconds (12.5 minutes) against 999 seconds (16.7 minutes) among the 70 participants that passed the social media attention check and all other attention checks. While this difference is statistically significant at $p=0.004$, 12.5 minutes does not seem like a carelessly short response time. Indeed, the difference in the median values (666 against 814 seconds, or 11 vs. 13.6 minutes) is even smaller. Thus, we think the results from these 43 participants can be reliable.

Response time in conjoint experiment: As the figure below demonstrates, among the 113 reliable participants, median values of response times per task diminish consistently, as participants get familiar with the particular structure of this experiment. Response time for the binary choice, in

which participants study the eleven attributes of a new pair of parties, falls from about 100 seconds in the first task, to about 20 seconds in the 8th task. Likewise, response time for the ordinal choice, in which participants make additional choices for a familiar pair of parties, falls from about 30 seconds in the first task, to about 5 seconds in the 8th task. This seems like sufficient time dedicated by participants to understand the experiment early on, followed by a reasonable learning curve.



Manipulation checks: Of the 113 reliable participants, 47 did not select the EU at all as the main topic of the research after completing the experiment, and another 54 selected it but as one among a few topics. Only 12 selected the EU as the sole topic, but even they did not realize that this study is about incumbency and eurosceptic parties, as response in the open field show. This finding increases the expected reliability of the results from the full scale experiment to be administered, as it suggests that they are unlikely to be conditioned by participants' perceptions of the purpose of the study.

Bias check: Of the 113 reliable participants, only 10 thought that the survey was politically biased, mostly against their values and political preferences. This finding suggests that results from the full scale experiment to be administered are unlikely to be conditioned by participants' values and political preferences.