

Transnational Solidarity and Public Support for the EU Enlargement¹

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Transnational Solidarity and Public Support for the EU Enlargement. What makes people support the European Union project has been a topic of constant research in the social sciences during the last decades. The key explanations of attitudes towards EU integration and enlargement processes are mainly related to identity issues, trust in political institutions, post-materialism, cognitive mobilization and utilitarianism. This paper revisits these explanations and adds a new ingredient to the debate, namely the role of solidarity in confining sceptical attitudes towards enlargement. We hypothesize that a deficit of transnational solidarity at the level of citizens is related to an attitude of reluctance about further EU enlargement. For this purpose, we employ a multilevel approach on individual-level data from the European Values Study 2008 – 2009 and contextual data for 42 countries. Our findings support the idea of a significant, positive relation between transnational solidarity and pro-enlargement attitudes.
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Introduction

Public opinion in relation to the EU has continuously varied over time, within and among societies, but was usually described as being in a state of ‘permissive consensus’ (Lindberg – Scheingold 1970). However, there are recent evolutions showing this permissive consensus of the European citizens may be close to an end and be replaced with more active forms of doubt: the decreasing turnout in the European elections and the growth of Eurosceptic parties (Lecheler – de Vreese 2010); the initial rejection of the Nice Treaty by the Irish voters (2001); the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty by referendum in France and Netherlands (2005); the failure of the initial referendum for the Lisbon Treaty in Ireland (2008). In the light of these rising forms of opposition, public attitudes towards the European project are expected to be increasingly taken into account in the elite-centred EU decision-making process (Maier – Rittberger 2008).

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For the EU officials, the process of enlargement represents a component of the process of integration (Karp – Bowler 2006), with rather positive effects on the strength of EU institutions. Still, at the citizen's level, there are Europeans who do not see the enlargement in the same positive light and are not particularly welcoming to new entrants (Lecheler – de Vreese 2010; Karp – Bowler 2006). They may even regard enlargement as a threat to integration. Therefore, understanding the mechanisms of public opinion towards enlargement is crucial for the European Union's future policy and institutional development. In spite of a solid literature dedicated to attitudes about the enlargement of the European Union (see among others Azrout – van Spanje – de Vreese 2012; Jones – van der Bijl 2004; Lecheler – de Vreese 2010; Maier – Rittberger 2008; Karp – Bowler 2006; de Vreese – Boomgaarden 2006), it is rather unclear how the new waves of enlargement and the critical evolutions of the last decade impact the citizens and their adherence to the European construct. Such changes definitely impact the structure of public opinion towards the European project and take the challenge of 'togetherness' to new limits. That is why it is likely that some form of solidarity sense with other European fellows or countries – mainly transnational solidarity – might be a central issue for understanding how individual beliefs on European enlargement are stirred in times of deep challenges and controversies.

This is mainly what this article investigates: is there a role of solidarity in confining anti-enlargement attitudes among European citizens? In other words, we hypothesize that a deficit of transnational solidarity at the level of citizens springs into scepticism towards further EU enlargement. For this purpose, we employ survey data from the European Values Study⁴ 2008 – 2009. These data are collected prior to the Eurozone crisis, but they are able to capture the impact of the 2004 and 2007 waves of enlargement. The article starts with an extensive discussion of the main explanations of the attitudes towards European integration and enlargement. Next, it introduces the proposed additional explanation to the existing ones, namely the dimension of transnational solidarity. The following sections are dedicated to testing the impact of transnational solidarity on attitudes towards EU enlargement for 42 European countries in a multilevel approach, while controlling for the alternative explanations in the literature. The main findings and conclusions are then discussed extensively.

⁴ EVS (2011): European Values Study 2008 (release 3, 2011), 4th wave, Integrated Dataset. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne, Germany, ZA4800 Data File Version 3.0.0 (2011-11-20) doi:10.4232/1.11004.

What drives public support for EU enlargement?

The most common interpretation of the enlargement issue is that it is a test of the depth of support for integration in general (Karp – Bowler 2006). Consequently, common lines of reasoning are employed to explain the public attitudes towards EU integration and enlargement: identity theories, multi-level-governance models (Hooghe – Marks 2009), value models (Inglehart 1970), cognitive mobilization models (Inglehart 1970; Janssen 1991), and utilitarian/instrumental models (Gabel – Palmer 1995; Gabel 1998a). All these perspectives are considered in defining our analytical models.

Identity and its territorial dimension is a critical ingredient in analyzing the attitudes towards the EU (Hooghe – Marks 2004, 2008; Weßels 2007; McLaren 2007). It became more salient within the framework of multi-level governance models that pointed towards a tension between the rapid jurisdictional changes determined by European integration and relatively stable identities (Hooghe – Marks 2009). Empirical studies show that Europeans conceiving themselves in terms of exclusive national identifications are more hostile to the European project than those who identify themselves in terms of multiple identities that include elements of supranational identity (McLaren 2007). Asserting that national, local, regional and supranational identities are bound in a complex multileveled pattern, Hooghe and Marks (2009) argue that what seems to matter even more for the attitude one has towards the European project is the extent to which a territorial identification is exclusive (see also Marks 1998). We will consider these multiple identities from the ‘nested identities’ perspective, suggesting that multiple territorial identifications (like both local and supranational) are possible and compatible due to the simultaneous existence of inclusion and differentiation mechanisms (Calhoun 1994; Brewer 1999; Medrano – Gutiérrez 2001).

Identities are ‘at work’ and cleavages between nations at the EU level become manifest due to the perceived threats addressed to those characteristics considered essential for the national identity (Rokkan 1973; Hix 1999). Among these we find perceptions of realistic (economic) and symbolic (cultural) threats (McLaren 2002) related to the allogeneous groups. Even though initially a political issue in the context of European integration (Hooghe – Marks 2008), the emotional connection between immigration and loss of national identity sprung out as a public issue. Public reflection over immigration and the boundaries (be they physical, social or cultural markers) on which national identities are delimited creates, at individual level, the circumstances to reconsider the in-group/out-group identifications or to redefine the estrangement in connection with the perception one has of immigration. Empirical studies indicate that perceived cultural threat and anti-immigration

sentiments are relevant factors explaining the hostility towards EU (McLaren 2002; de Vreese – Boomgaarden 2005; Boomgaarden – Freire 2009).

Trust in the national political institutions is another relevant variable used to explain the support for the EU. The general trend of declining trust in democratic institutions is one of the reasons identified by Krouwel and Abts (2007) for the rise of sceptic attitudes towards the European project. Analyzing the support for the EU as interplay between the popular perceptions (operationalized as trust and self-ascribed agency) of national and supranational institutions, Sánchez-Cuenca (2000) shows that the better the opinion of the supranational institutions one has and the worse of the national institutions, the stronger is the support for integration. McLaren's (2007) findings are divergent to a certain degree, suggesting that those who are more trusting or distrusting with their national institutions are also more trusting or distrusting with the EU institutions, meaning that the attitudes towards the national institutions tend to be generalized to the EU level (see also Anderson 1998).

Post-materialist orientations are among the first variables used in assessing the support for supranational constructions as it is EU. The socialisation hypothesis (Inglehart 1971, 1977, 1990, 1997) suggests that the materialistic, survival values of modernity are gradually replaced by the post-materialistic, self-expression values of postmodernity through intergenerational population replacement. The more one is oriented towards 'post-bourgeois' values (post-materialism) the more positive is his attitude towards European integration (Inglehart 1971: 976-977). This hypothesis is questioned by Anderson (1998) who's country by country analysis indicates that post-materialism is not a strong determinant of the EU support, and moreover it acts in different manners in different countries: while significant only in Germany and Denmark, it displayed a negative relation in the latter case (actually meaning that not post-materialists, but materialist were more supportive of EU in Denmark). Gabel (1998b) finds that post-materialists' support for the EU is greater compared with that of materialists' in the original member states (West Germany, France, Italy Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg), but also finds evidence that the relation is exactly the opposite in what concerns the countries that joined later (Denmark, Ireland Greece, Portugal, Spain).

Cognitive mobilization is widely discussed as an explanation for variations in support for the European project. European politics is more abstract than local politics, therefore more skills may be required in order to process such information (Inglehart 1970; Janssen 1991). Thus, people who are more cognitively mobilized are likely to regard European integration as a less threatening and more familiar process (Inglehart 1970) and be more supportive to the EU. Cognitive mobilization is operationalized frequently as political

knowledge, self-reported or factual (McLaren 2007; Karp – Banducci – Bowler 2003), interest in politics (Anderson 1998; Weßels 2007), news exposure (Inglehart 1970; Karp – Banducci – Bowler 2003), education (Inglehart 1970; Weßels 2007) or combinations of them. Most of the empirical research supports the hypothesis of a negative and significant relation between cognitive mobilization and support for EU, still with various degrees of intensity. However, while the effects of political knowledge, interest in politics, and education are largely undisputed, there are scholars that cast doubt on the presence of significant effects of political discussions (McLaren 2007) or news consumption (Karp – Banducci – Bowler 2003) on pro-European attitudes.

One of the highly influential perspectives in explaining public attitudes towards EU is the utilitarian one. According to it, perceptions on integration and enlargement are largely driven by concerns over the socio-economic effects these processes have (or are expected to have) upon the individual, the community or the society as a whole. A positive perspective on such effects is associated with high support for the European project (Gabel 1998b; Hooghe – Marks 2009). Those perceiving the EU enlargement as a loss in socio-economic terms are more likely to hold negative attitudes towards it (Karp – Bowler 2006; McLaren 2007; Hooghe – Huo – Marks 2007).

Age and gender are examples of intensively used explanatory socio-demographic variables. Younger people are more favourable to European integration (Inglehart 1970) or have a stronger European identity, as they are more open to change (De Winter – Syngedouw – Goeminne 2009) or due to their higher mobility across nation borders (Hooghe – Marks 2009). Empirical analyses also suggest that men are generally less Eurosceptic (De Winter – Syngedouw – Goeminne 2009).

Apart from this common line of reasoning integration-enlargement, there are arguments in favour of disentangling the causes behind the two processes, at least in terms of depicting them in finer nuances (Lecheler – de Vreese 2010). Among these, Karp and Bowler (2006: 382) argue in favour of only a partial overlapping between attitudes about enlargement and attitudes about integration, given the different impacts of instrumental concerns: their presence creates opposition to enlargement, but sometimes supports further deepening. Jones and van der Bijl (2004) propose a transactions-affinities approach in investigating the public opinion on EU enlargement, focused on ‘how countries view each other within the European project’. According to their argument, support for enlargement towards one country or another will be judged based on religious and cultural affinities, geographical proximity, a tradition of trade relationship and historical relations.

Transnational solidarity and scepticism towards the EU enlargement

Although the debates about the reasons behind the attitudes towards the European project are numerous, no theoretical or empirical attention has been paid to solidarity as a constraining factor of sceptic attitudes towards EU integration and enlargement. That is notable since, quite often, public or political discourses and even European documents (e.g. the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union) claim that solidarity is among the civic values that lay at the very foundation of the united Europe. One of the reasons might be the fact that solidarity is a fuzzy concept, showing much variation in its contextualization and understanding (e.g. Stjernø 2005; de Beer – Koster 2009; Ellison 2012). And indeed, as Bayertz (1999: 3) puts it, the term solidarity, having its roots in the Roman law of obligation (*'obligatio in solidum'* – a principle of mutual responsibility between the individual and his communities of appurtenance), has been generalized, since the end of the 18th century, to the fields of morality, politics, and society. In the field of sociology, solidarity is regarded both as a societal characteristic (in an old, traditional, perspective) and as an individual one (in a rather current way).

Early sociological theory conceived solidarity as an integrative mechanism, some sort of cement that sticks people together, being at the core of societies (Durkheim 1965 [1895]). Thus, solidarity (organic solidarity, sprung from the division of labour) is a condition making a society possible. Societies are identified most often with the political community that is the nation state. Consequently, the latter represents a reference frame of solidarity. In a subsequent logic, if the European Union is to be framed as a political community, solidarity should necessarily be at its basis (i.e. institutions, policies).

However, sociology today rather sees solidarity as embodied in individuals (de Beer – Koster 2009). In a loose interpretation solidarity is a bond between different people (Abela 2004: 73; de Beer – Koster 2009: 15). For Janmaat and Braun (2009), the concept of social solidarity reflects an individual quality and refers to feelings of sympathy and commitment to other people (see also de Beer – Koster 2009: 16). Arnsperger and Varoufakis (2003: 158) define it as a reaction to a condition which afflicts certain 'others' independently of their personal or social character⁵. In a more specific approach, Stjernø (2005: 2) regards solidarity as 'preparedness to share resources with others by personal contribution to those in struggle or in need and through taxation and redistribution organised by the state'. This preparedness to share may originate in various reasons that can be reduced to either morality, or reciprocity. Summing up, solidarity works as a latent affective, moral, or axiological

⁵ Some authors (e.g. Popa 2010) consider a common identification as a condition for solidarity.

(normative) orientation towards various sorts of groups, ranging from close relatives (family) to remote groups (humankind). Hence, solidarity as an individual characteristic may target social groups at several levels: family/local solidarity, social solidarity, and global solidarity (Abela 2004; Kankaraš – Moors 2009; Stănuș 2012); or subnational, national, transnational, and international (Radtke 2007). Having solidaristic attitudes towards people belonging to categories other than the individual's national group could be interpreted, on the one hand, in the logic of universalistic ethics or moral. On the other hand, the categories of 'others' this paper addresses (other Europeans and immigrants) are of relevance to the EU and its institutional fabric, given the redistributive mechanisms that are explicitly linked to solidarity.

No matter how it is conceived, either as a societal characteristic, or as being embodied in individuals (in form of an affective expression or axiological, moral, legal or normative duty), solidarity should definitely ground the society, institutions and mechanisms the EU represents; and it should target the society EU represents. Consequently, solidarity should impact the other attitudes people have towards EU, its policies and enlargement. This argument is convergent with the one of Preuss (1999: 285-287), stating solidarity as both an effect and a precondition of the supranational character of the European Union.

Nevertheless, this article approaches solidarity from an individual perspective as concern for the others (see Kankaraš – Moors 2009). Our argument is that a deficit of concern (solidarity) for other categories (of individuals) than the national and subnational ones may contribute to opposition towards the EU enlargement. We shall refer to this form of solidarity as transnational. In the next sections of this paper, we explore whether transnational solidarity does confine opposition to enlargement.

Data and methodology

This paper employs data from the European Values Study (EVS) 2008 – 2009, originally including 47 countries. There are two main reasons for using this database. On the one hand, it contains variables measuring the concept we are interested in, namely transnational solidarity. On the other hand, it covers a larger array of societies than the Eurobarometer Studies, often used when studying attitudes towards EU.

Nevertheless, we excluded from the dataset Russia, Georgia, Belarus, Armenia and Azerbaijan, due to the fact that there was no official partnership or prospective position regarding a possible EU integration at the time EVS data were collected. The remaining dataset includes 42 countries. All the samples were weighted with the weights provided by EVS and the number of cases was set to 1,500 for each sample. Before any analysis was performed, the dataset contained 60,019 observations (258 additional observations were also

eliminated from the dataset, having their weights equal to 0). We have run a first set of analyses on this dataset.

An additional series of analyses were run on a dataset, including only respondents from the 27 member states at the moment of data collection. This reduced dataset includes 40,308 observations. The purpose of the EU27 analysis is twofold: first, it allows a continuous comparison of predictors' effects across models, in order to control for influences of candidate countries, but also to check the robustness of the independent variables. Second, it provides the opportunity to contrast old EU members and new EU members by a dummy variable.

The method employed is multilevel linear regression. For this purpose, we have used STATA 12, the maximum likelihood estimation method (the *xtmixed* routine). The first level is represented by individuals and the second by countries. The multilevel design is appropriate to clearly estimate how much of the variance in the dependent variable is due to individual characteristics and due to country-level characteristics.

The multilevel analysis performed consists in several steps (Tables 1 and 2). First we estimate a null model (Model 0), meaning a model where no explanatory variable is imputed. This model allows us to estimate the variance that exists at each level and to determine the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC – the proportion of total variance among countries). We estimate then seven random intercept models (Model 1 to Model 7), systematically testing the relation hypothesized, with controls for alternative explanations introduced in a stepwise manner. Random intercept models estimate only the random 'country effect' (the among countries differences). Model 1 tests only the effect of solidarity on the attitudes towards EU enlargement when controlling, at aggregate level, for GNI per capita and EU membership status. Models 2 to 6 successively control for exclusive identifications, identity threats, post-materialism, cognitive mobilization, gender and age at individual level, and for country-level variables.

For each model we report the number of cases at individual level, the number of parameters, the variance components (explained variances at individual and country level), the ICCs, the deviances (a goodness of fit measure), the BICs (Bayesian Information Criterion – a model parsimony measure). A decrease of the reported values of the latter two generally indicates a better fit.

The results are depicted in Table 1 for the 42 countries dataset and in Table 2 for the EU27 dataset. All the discussions refer to the analyses performed on the 42 countries dataset, unless specified otherwise.

Dependent variable

Support for EU enlargement is measured on a scale from 1 to 10 as opinion about the statement 'Some say that the European Union enlargement should go further. Others say it has already gone too far.' (v262), where '1' means 'has gone too far' and '10' means 'should go further'. Thus, higher scores reflect more support for the idea of EU enlargement.

Two aspects need to be emphasized in relation to the dependent variable. First, it doesn't employ a candidate country referential. This might be interpreted at the same time as a strong point or as a drawback. The strong point relies on its ability to measure openness to the general idea of EU enlargement. The drawback is that it blocks any direction of individualized candidate country investigation in terms of the transactions-affinities approach. Second, this question is the only item referring to the enlargement issue available in the EVS 2008 – 2009 dataset. This poses a threat in terms of its ability to provide a solid image of the phenomenon under investigation. Such a limitation cannot be completely rejected due to the nature of the available data. Still the question is formulated very similarly to the standard unification question⁶ frequently used as a single measure of support for EU integration in many recent researches (Boomgaarden – Freire 2009; Dowley – Silver 2011) with very solid results. It is unlikely that our enlargement indicator performs differently.

Independent variables – individual level

Transnational solidarity is measured as an additive index that combines an indicator capturing the concerns one has for other Europeans and the concerns for immigrants in country ($r=0.472$). The exact phrasing of the question is: 'To what extent do you feel concerned about the living conditions of: Europeans (v288), immigrants in [country] (v292)?'. The answers are measured on a scale of 1 to 5 where '1' means 'very much' and '5' means 'not at all'. In our analysis the scale was reversed and ranges from 2 to 10. Thus, a higher value would indicate a stronger transnational solidarity. According to our hypothesis, higher levels of solidarity should favour positive attitudes towards the EU enlargement process.

To assess the level of territorial identification construct, we use an indicator that captures each individual's multiple relative identification on a scale of nested geographical spaces ranging from locality to world as a whole. The measure is constructed from the following two questions 'Which of these geographical groups would you say you belong to... [first of all]... [and

⁶ The statement is usually formulated as: 'Now thinking about the European Union, some say European unification should go further. Others say it has already gone too far.' (European Social Survey).

secondly]?’ (v253 and v254). The possible answers were: ‘locality or town where you live’, ‘region of country where you live’, the country, ‘Europe’, and ‘the world as a whole’. This may be considered as a scale of territorial proximity (ranging from 1-locality or town to 5-world as a whole) and our indicator is calculated as mean of each individual's choice across both questions. Consequently, the resulting measure values range from 1 to 5, where 1 would mean exclusive local territorial identification, 5 exclusive cosmopolitan identification and all the other values represent ordered means expressing various forms of multiple inclusive or other exclusive identifications. Thus, we will explicitly test if lower-order territorial layers of identification favour more hostile attitudes towards EU enlargement.

Perceived identity threat is measured by an additive index. It relates the perception of the country's number of immigrants with the feeling of estrangement due to the perceived number of allogeous people ($r=0.604$). The two statements that agreement is measured for are: (v274) ‘Because of the number of immigrants in [country] I sometimes feel like a stranger’ and (v275) ‘Today in [country], there are too many immigrants’. The answers are measured on a five-point scale where ‘1’ means ‘agree strongly’ and ‘5’ means ‘disagree strongly’. The index scale ranges from 2 to 10. Prior to the analysis the scale was reversed. The higher the score the more the identity is perceived as being threatened. According to the literature, the more one feels that his/her identity is threatened, the more reluctant he/she is about broadening the EU space.

Trust in political institutions at national level is measured as an additive index combining the level of confidence people have in parliament and government. The two questions are as follows: ‘How much confidence do you have in... [Parliament] (v211) ... [Government] (v222)?’ ($r=0.625$). The answers were measured on a four-point scale where ‘1’ means ‘a great deal’ and ‘4’ means ‘none at all’. Prior to the analysis we reversed the scale. The index scale ranges from 2 to 8. Thus a higher score would indicate higher confidence in political institutions. According to McLaren (2007) and Krouwel and Abts (2007), more confidence in national political institutions should be reflected in stronger support for the European project.

Post-materialism is measured based on the classical index proposed and used by Inglehart (1971, 1977). The exact question is ‘There is a lot of talk these days about what the aims of this country should be for the next ten years. On this card are listed some of the goals which different people would give top priority. If you had to choose, which of the things on this card would you say is most important? (And which would be the next most important?)’ (v201; v202). The respondent has to choose and rank two of the four possible answers: ‘maintaining order in the nation’, ‘giving people more say in important

government decisions', 'fighting rising prices', 'protecting freedom of speech'. The possible combinations of the four items generate three categories of orientations: materialists (respondents choose the first and the third answer), post-materialists (respondents choose the second and the fourth answer), mixed (respondents choose one the other possible combinations). The index was transformed into dummy variables. At individual level the reference category is that of mixed orientations. Post-materialist value orientations are expected to feed attitudes in favour of enlargement.

Cognitive mobilization is measured using three separate variables: political discussions, political news consumption, and education. For political news consumption the question wording is: 'How often do you follow politics in the news on television or on the radio or in the daily papers?' (v281). The possible answers are: 'every day', 'several times a week', 'once or twice a week', 'less often', 'never'. We constructed a dummy variable recoding the answers as follows: the first two categories of answers were collapsed and denote persons who are 'very interested in politics' (coded '1'); all the other answers became 'not interested in politics' (coded '0'). For political discussions the question is: 'When you get together with your friends, would you say you discuss political matters frequently, occasionally or never' (v7). The possible answers are 'frequently', 'occasionally' and 'never'. In our analysis we use two dummy variables; the reference category is composed by the people that discuss politics occasionally. Education is measured with a proxy variable indicating the number of years of education: the age when completing full time education. Cognitive mobilization is expected to be positively related to support for further enlargement.

Finally we control for age and for gender (using men as the reference category). The cases of refusal to answer ('I will not answer') and indecision ('I do not know') were treated as missing values⁷ for all the variables included in the analysis.

Unfortunately, EVS 2008 – 2009 data do not provide any measures of individual instrumentalism in connection with the processes of European integration and enlargement. Thus, even though important in the literature, the individual level utilitarian dimension could not be captured in our analysis.

Independent variables – country level

In the literature, the list of country-level indicators holding an impact on the level of scepticism towards EU is mostly composed by macroeconomic data

⁷ The missing values for the 42-countries analyses are as follows: 7,171 for support for EU enlargement; 2,143 for transnational solidarity; 1,807 for territorial identification; 4,214 for perceived identity threats; 3,968 trust in political institutions at national level; 2,745 post-materialism; 463 for political news consumption; 541 for political discussions; 3,880 for education.

(Eichenberg – Dalton 2007; Gabel 1998a; Garry – Tilley 2009), even though extended in later studies (Sánchez-Cuenca 2000; Lubbers – Scheepers 2007; Kuhn 2012). In order to control for the contextual effect of countries' relative wealth, we used the logarithm of gross national income (GNI) per capita (Atlas method) for the year 2008. Wealthier countries are expected to be more reluctant about enlargement.

Considering the nature of the data we have (many non-EU countries), we also control the effect of EU membership with a dummy variable in the first series of models (Table 1). In the second series of models (on EU27 countries), we control for 'old EU membership', namely the 15 member states at the moment of the first wave of enlargement towards Eastern Europe (Table 2). At this level, we have feeble expectations to find a clear pattern of differentiation between categories.

Analysis and results

First, we performed a descriptive analysis on the dependent variable. Data show that citizens of non-EU countries perceiving their future inside the European community (ex. Macedonia, Albania, Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina) tend to be the most favourable to the enlargement process. They are followed by respondents coming from countries joining EU in the 2004 and 2007 waves (ex. Bulgaria, Romania, Poland) or negotiating accession at the moment the data were collected (ex. Turkey, Croatia). The most reluctant to the idea of EU enlargement are citizens coming from the 'old' member states, namely the United Kingdom, Austria, Finland, Luxembourg, France, and Germany⁸.

Second, we present the results of the multilevel linear regression models⁹ run on the 42 countries dataset (Table 1)¹⁰. The null model (Model 0) tells us how much of the variance can be attributed to the individual and to the country level. The overall mean level of support for enlargement across the 42 countries is of 5.399 (SD=2.957), on a scale from 1 to 10¹¹. The variance among countries is smaller (1.092) than the variance among individuals within countries (7.603). The ICC value tells us that 12.56% of the total variance in attitudes towards enlargement can be attributed to differences among countries.

⁸ An interesting finding is that Latvian results are very similar to these.

⁹ Possible multicollinearity effects were tested and rejected. In a country by country analysis, the highest level of the VIF is of 1.63.

¹⁰ The results in Table 2 are commented briefly in the discussion section of the paper.

¹¹ On the EU27 dataset, the mean support for EU enlargement is slightly lower, 4.973 (SD=2.829).

Table 1: Multilevel regression model of support for EU enlargement (42 countries)

Variables	Null model	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Constant	5.297***	12.196***	11.617***	12.869***	12.614***	12.807***	12.634***	12.924***
<i>Individual level</i>								
Transnational solidarity		.154***	.139***	.111***	.087***	.090***	.095***	.100***
Territorial identification			.300***	.220***	.228***	.203***	.201***	.186***
Identity threat				-.257***	-.248***	-.244***	-.236***	-.233***
Trust national institutions					.185***	.185***	.192***	.196***
Post-materialism						.219**	.228***	.214***
Materialism						-.107*	-.086+	-.058
Follow politics frequently							-.097	-.034
Discuss politics frequently							-.076+	-.055
Discuss politics never							-.011	-.001
Education age							.015***	.008*
Age								-.010***
Male								.119***
<i>Country level</i>								
lnGNI		-.7464***	-.7486***	-.6945***	-.7499***	-.7679***	-.7822***	-.7687***
EU member		-.4217*	-.4347*	-.3896*	-.3145†	-.309†	-.3062†	-.300†
Whole model	8.695262	7.8767670	7.8136898	7.4659810	7.3977955	7.3836920	7.3482014	7.3097570
Level 2 variance	1.092236	0.3403284	0.3517412	0.3089438	0.2940834	0.2933263	0.2978720	0.2891292
Level 1 variance	7.603027	7.536439	7.461949	7.157037	7.103712	7.090366	7.050329	7.020629
Intra-cluster correlation	0.1256127	0.0432066	0.0450160	0.0413802	0.0397528	0.0397262	0.0405367	0.0395539
Deviance	270034.58	262644.79	255695.54	243071.62	232831.15	226832.38	212482.15	212293.88
N	52848	51425	50220	47971	46033	44893	42080	42080
LI	-135017	-131322	-127848	-121536	-116416	-113416	-106241	-106147
BIC	270067	262710	255771	243158	232928	226950	212642	212475

Note: *** p ≤ .001; ** p ≤ .01; * p ≤ .05; † p ≤ .10

In Models 1-7 we gradually examine how the individual-level variables relate to support for enlargement when controlling for country-level variables. The deviance and BIC measures decrease gradually from Model 0 to Model 7, indicating an improvement of the fit. At country-level, we notice the significant negative effect of GNI per capita on support for enlargement (the higher the GNI per capita the more reluctant about enlargement) across all models. The membership status also appears to have a (significant) negative effect.

Table 2: **Multilevel regression model of support for EU enlargement (EU27 countries)**

Variables	Null model	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Constant	4.905***	12.300***	11.880***	11.329***	12.702***	12.980***	13.112***	-13.466***
<i>Individual level</i>								
Transnational solidarity		.202***	.183***	.137***	.112***	.115***	.116***	.123***
Territorial identification			.162***	.112***	.117***	.103***	.098***	.090***
Identity threat				-.274***	-.266***	-.260***	-.256***	-.252***
Trust national institutions					.199***	.200***	.210***	.214***
Post-materialism						.225**	.244**	.231**
Materialism						-.103*	-.082	-.046
Follow politics							-.156*	-.075
Discuss politics frequently							-.062	-.036
Discuss politics never							-.044	-.033
Education age							.012*	.003
Age								-.011***
Male								.117**
<i>Country level</i>								
lnGNI		-.814**	-.837**	-.570*	-.796**	-.822**	-.852**	-.836***
'Old EU' country		-.133	-.130	-.279	-.074	-.067	-.050	-.058
Whole model	8.072769	7.553080	7.486767	7.163610	7.076583	7.065491	7.053700	7.000431
Level 2 variance	0.699774	0.287552	0.294761	0.292441	0.271395	0.273546	0.287613	0.271515
Level 1 variance	7.372995	7.265529	7.192006	6.871170	6.805188	6.791945	6.766088	6.728916
Intra-cluster correlation	0.086683	0.038071	0.039371	0.040823	0.038351	0.038716	0.040775	0.038785
Deviance	179509.46	174691.94	170275.36	162677.87	155489.32	151092.9	144032.07	143863.59
N	35635	34760	33978	32677	31343	30504	29150	29150
LI	-89755	-87346	-85138	-81339	-77745	-75546	-72016	-71932
BIC	179541	174755	170348	162761	155582	151206	144186	144038

Note: *** p ≤ .001; ** p ≤ .01; * p ≤ .05; † p ≤ .10

Model 1 shows a significant positive effect ($b=0.154$) of transnational solidarity on support for EU enlargement. The individual-level variance goes down to 7.536 and the country-level variance goes down to 0.340, compared to the null model. Solidarity still has a significant positive effect ($b=0.139$) in Model 2, where territorial identification is controlled for. Compared to model 1, the individual-level variance decreases to 7.461, while the country-level variance goes to 0.351.

Model 3 introduces control for perceived identity threat, which appears to have a significant negative effect on the attitudes towards enlargement.

Transnational solidarity continues to have a significant positive effect ($b=0.111$) on support for enlargement, only being slightly smaller than in the previous models. The individual-level variance decreases to 7.157 and the country-level variance goes down to 0.308. An index of trust in national political institutions is added in Model 4, with a significant positive effect on support for enlargement. The impact of solidarity remains significant and positive ($b=0.087$). Compared to previous models, both variances go down, to 7.103 at individual level and 0.294 at country level.

Solidarity still holds a significant and positive effect ($b=0.090$) on support for EU enlargement when we additionally control for post-materialist and materialist orientations (Model 5). Post-materialism has a significant positive effect on attitudes towards enlargement, while materialism has no significant effect when the reference category is that of respondents with mixed orientations. The individual-level variance is at 7.090 and the country-level variance at 0.293.

In Model 6 we control additionally for cognitive mobilization. Education appears to be in a significant positive relation with support for enlargement. Apparently, the other measures of cognitive mobilization have no significant effect on the dependent variable. However, the relevance of transnational solidarity for explaining pro-enlargement attitudes continues to be significant and positive ($b=0.095$), although the number of alternative explanations controlled for has increased. In this model, the individual-level variance goes down to 7.050 and the country-level variance goes to 0.297.

The last model (no. 7) supplementary includes controls for age and gender. Solidarity continues to have a significant positive effect ($b=0.100$) on support for EU enlargement. We see that age has a significant negative effect on pro-enlargement attitudes. Men are significantly more supportive to EU broadening than women. The individual-level variance goes down to 7.020 and the country-level variance goes down to 0.289.

Discussion

Overall, the relations tested did work in the theorized and expected way. The sequence of multilevel regression models indicates transnational solidarity as a relevant and reliable predictor of attitudes towards EU enlargement. Increased levels of transnational solidarity appear to confine anti-enlargement attitudes at all times. In other words, support for the EU enlargement is enforced when the object of our solidarity goes beyond kinship, own ethnic group or nationality. This finding brings strong support to our hypothesis. Moreover, transnational solidarity displays a remarkable stability in its capacity of explaining support for EU enlargement across our regression models. It holds a statistically significant impact on the dependent variable no matter what combination of

predictors is considered, having rather small variations in the values of unstandardized coefficients. Due to its clearly-stated reliability, we believe that transnational solidarity should be thoroughly considered in future analyses of public attitudes towards EU in general and support for EU enlargement in particular.

Next, we shall review the main findings in relation to the alternative predictors controlled. Our empirical assessment of the territorial identification theory confirms that lower-order territorial layers of identification favour opposition to enlargement. These results confirm the studies of Hooghe and Marks (2008) on the relation between identities and scepticism towards EU. They also supplement Weßels' (2007) findings that identification with Europe, as declared attachment and assumed citizenship, has a negative impact on sceptic attitudes towards the European project.

A perceived identity threat is a significant predictor of attitudes towards the enlargement. The more one perceives the presence of immigrants as a symbolic aggression to his/her identity, the more reluctant to further enlargement he/she will be. Such a finding raises an important challenge towards the role of migration policies in preserving (or strengthening) support for the European Union.

Like solidarity, trust in political institutions at national level favours pro-enlargement attitudes. Our findings on EVS data support previous conclusions about people's tendency to tie their support for EU to their feelings for the government, as a proxy to rely on (Anderson 1998). The more confident one is in the domestic political institutions, the more optimistic about broadening the European project he/she will be.

An interesting result that surely needs further attention concerns the post-materialist orientations. Our results contradict some of the recent work, concerning the relation between post-materialist orientations and EU support. Model 5 and Model 6 offer limited evidence for an opposite relation between post-materialists and materialists compared to the mixed category. While post-materialist are more favourable to enlargement than those having mixed orientations, the materialist are more reluctant about it. The positive impact of holding post-materialist values is significant in all models, which rather confirms Inglehart's (1971) insights that post-materialists tend to be more supportive towards supranational constructions.

Our results express several doubts concerning the impact of cognitive mobilization. The findings concerning this dimension must be discussed separately on each indicator. There is no significant relation between political news consumption and attitudes towards enlargement. In Model 6, we see that people who discuss politics frequently are more reluctant about enlargement than those who declare they discuss politics occasionally (however the level of

confidence and the next model question this relation). Therefore our findings rather confirm McLaren's (2007) and Karp, Banducci and Bowler's (2003) suggestion that political discussions and (political) news consumption might not have significant effects on attitudes towards EU. Nevertheless, in what concerns education, our results offer limited support to the finding that more educated people are more favourable to the European project (see also De Winter – Syngedouw – Goeminne 2009).

Control variables as age and gender work in accordance with the previous findings. Age appears to be in a negative relation with support for enlargement. Men are significantly more optimistic about further enlargement than women.

A further discussion on country-level effects is needed. As expected, a country's relative wealth follows a negative relation with support for enlargement: the wealthier the country, the more reluctant its citizens are to accept new members in the EU club. Still, this partially contradicts Karp and Bowler's (2006: 382) finding about the enlargement optimism of countries that are net contributors to the EU.

Candidate countries are more favourable to further enlargement than member states¹² (although quite on the edge of statistical significance, see Table 1), which is by no means an unexpected conclusion. However, our data show no significant differences in support for enlargement between the old members (EU 15) and the new members of the European Union (see Table 2).

A final discussion should envisage the two broad categories of the models we have run: on the 42 countries dataset (the main reference of analysis, Table 1) and on the EU 27 dataset (Table 2). The results are similar, both in terms of directions of the effects, and in their statistical relevance. Of course, the overall estimates are better in the first series of models, given the higher number of observations considered. Transnational solidarity as a predictor of support for EU enlargement performs similarly well in both categories of models, showing stable and reliable effects on the dependent variable. This brings strong support in favour of our hypothesis.

Conclusions

The empirical analysis on EVS 2008 – 2009 data did offer a substantive confirmation of our expectations on the role of transnational solidarity in confining anti-enlargement attitudes. Hence, transnational solidarity appears to be a relevant and highly reliable predictor of support for the EU broadening.

¹² Several studies use an alternative measure, namely the length of EU membership, with various results: it is negatively related to Euroscepticism (Weßels 2007); it increases support for the EU (Anderson – Kaltenthaler 1996; Lubbers – Scheepers 2007); it doesn't shape any consistent pattern, neither of support nor Euroscepticism (Sørensen 2008). We were forced to disregard this solution, as membership length is strongly correlated with the logarithm of the GNI per capita ($R^2=0.414$), thus posing risks of multicollinearity.

Apparently, in order to enforce the process of enlargement (and integration), the EU needs to develop among its citizens a sense of concern for the others that transcends kinship, ethnic group or nationality. Such a finding might have serious implications in terms of future policy for the European Union: the challenge of building transnational solidarities at individual level, and not at regional or state level. Successful to a certain point in providing solidarity at macro level via its institutions, the EU needs to identify ways for extending transnational solidarity at micro level.

Apart from this important finding, our analysis on EVS data confirms the significant impact (positive or negative) on support for EU enlargement of several individual-level variables: territorial identifications, perceived identity threats (mainly in relation to immigrants), trust in national institutions, post-materialist orientations, education, age, and gender. Similarly, at country level, the effects of GNI and EU membership on attitudes towards enlargement are confirmed by our analyses. There is no empirical support for the impact of political discussions, political news consumption (both at individual level), and EU 15 membership (country-level).

Beyond these conclusions, there are several limitations of our analysis, most of them due to the specific of the data employed. We were unable to control for possibly important variables (see Gabel 1998a; Eichenberg – Dalton 2007), such as inflation, unemployment or GDP growth, because comparable data were not available for all the countries included in the sample. Another serious limitation comes from the lack of a measure for instrumental concerns of the individuals (egocentric or sociotropic) in relation to the European project, often referred to as strong predictors of support for enlargement (Karp – Bowler 2006). In spite of such limitations, our analysis provides solid evidence in favour of adding transnational solidarity in future explanatory models of attitudes towards EU enlargement and very likely towards integration. Combined with a constant effort of developing and testing additional measures of transnational solidarity in long-term comparative surveys, this might be an important step further towards a substantial understanding of public support for supranational constructions.

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