

Regional Minority Nationalist Attitudes towards European Integration

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Abstract

In light of a recent growing interest in a 'Europe of the regions,' this project focuses on the attitudes towards the EU at the regional level. The project is inspired by recent scholarly observations of an increasing tendency of the regions to try to by-pass the central state to gain more autonomy and to achieve their policy goals at the EU level.

The purpose of the project is to answer empirically whether there is greater support for European integration in regions dominated by minority nationalisms than in other regions within and across the EU member-states. Furthermore, the project investigates whether there is a difference in the level of support for the EU between linguistically distinct regions and regions where no distinctive language is spoken, and whether there is a difference between regions where the regional minority nationalism is politicized and regions where it is not.

To answer the above posed questions, I use statistical analysis of data collected through the European Election Studies survey of 1999. The results indicate that overall, support for European integration is actually lower in minority nationalist regions than in other regions. Furthermore, the results confirm that there is indeed a difference between different types of minority nationalist regions, as linguistically distinct regions, politicized or not, tend to be more positive towards the EU, while politicized but not linguistically distinct regions tend to be less positive towards the EU than non-minority regions.

Introduction

After half a century of formal integration, Europe remains an amalgam of multinational states. From Scotland to Wales, Catalonia to Corsica, and Flanders to Brittany, strong regional and ethnoterritorial identities seek greater voice, greater resources, and greater autonomy – if not outright independence and statehood. Given the rise in regional assertiveness, it is no surprise that interest and speculation in a ‘Europe of the Regions’ has grown. In brief, the now-familiar suggestion is that nation-states will fade away in favor of regions and super-regions that can survive and thrive within the EU and in the global economy. This vision is reinforced by the increasing tendency of both the EU and the regions to try to by-pass the central state.

(Downs 2002, 172)

Today the European Union (EU) is characterized by a number of paradoxes, all of which make the study of European integration all the more fascinating. First, the trend of a simultaneously centralizing and decentralizing EU can be observed, with power shifting vertically from the nation-states to the EU level, and from the EU level to the regional level. Second, there are contradicting trends of ‘Euroskepticism’ and ‘Europhoria,’ both among and within EU member-states. Third, contradicting trends of state nationalism characterized by Euroskepticism and xenophobia, and minority nationalism characterized by Europhoria and openness, can be observed (Keating 2001). Fourth, there is a trend of diminishing focus on sovereignty among regions and ethnoterritorial minorities, breaking the traditional linkage between nationalism/regionalism and protectionism (Keating 1996). Fifth, an increased emphasis on minority protection initiated at the EU-level is occurring, often contradicting nation-state level policies.

What these five paradoxes and contradictions have in common is that they involve a new political mobilization of regional minority nationalisms at the EU level. This leads me to the greatest paradox of all – the suggestion that the populations in minority nationalist territories are among the most positive towards European integration, in most cases more positive than their majority compatriots. In the light of the failed ratification process of the European Constitution,

particularly through the referenda in France and the Netherlands, the salience of citizen support for the EU and for European integration, and subsequently the salience of the puzzle of EU support among regional minority nationalisms become clear.

The aim of this paper is to answer empirically the following questions: Is there greater support for European integration in regions dominated by minority nationalisms than in other regions within and across the EU member-states? Is there a difference in the level of support for the EU between linguistically distinct regions and regions where no distinctive language is spoken? Is there a difference between regions where the regional minority nationalism is politicized compared to regions where it is not? Finally, is there greater support for European integration at the regional level in federal than in unitary member-states?

Research on European integration and the development of the European Union has traditionally fallen under the umbrella of studies in international relations, treating the EU mainly as an international organization (Slocum and van Langenhove 2004). In the course of a deeper European integration and a recent new wave of regional integration, an increased popularity of social constructivism has been observed in the scientific study of regional integration on the one hand, and an increased tendency to look upon the EU as a single polity, on the other hand (Downs 2002; Hettne 2002; Keating, Loughlin, and Deschouwer 2003; Loughlin 2001; Risse 2004; Slocum and van Langenhove 2004). In recent years, the European Union has transformed into a political hybrid without a contemporary or historical equivalent, inspiring scholars in various academic fields to question the relationship between nation and state, centralization and decentralization, and even the existence of the nation-state itself in a future Europe (Biersteker 1999; Guibernau 1999; Keating 2001; Keating, Loughlin, and Deschouwer 2003). Montserrat Guibernau looks upon the European Union as “a living laboratory in which experiments about

new ways to understand sovereignty, territoriality and identity are currently being tested” (Guibernau 1999, 149). These words illustrate the essence of the difficulty and delight of studying the European Union today – at an intersection where a number of academic fields, literatures, and themes meet, interact, and engage in numerous theoretical debates. The research question of this study is placed in the midst of this intersection, and thus can be placed within or on the border of a number of different literatures.

Within the field of international relations, the research question can be placed within a large literature on European integration in general and European regionalism in particular. Whereas the concept of a ‘Europe of the Regions’ goes back to the 1960s, the new wave of regional integration that has its roots in the mid-1980s has given rise to a whole literature on what has been named the “new regionalism” (Hettne 2002; Keating 1998). Although the new regionalism is seen as a world-wide phenomenon, nowhere else has it seen an equivalent to the extent of regionalization in Europe, which has consequently come to serve as a paradigm for this concept (Hettne 2002; Keating 2004). The new regionalism literature stresses the importance of local and regional levels for economic development and change, but also the social construction of the region, and the role of collective identities in facilitating social change (Keating 1998, 2004; Keating, Loughlin, and Deschouwer 2003).

The role of identity emphasized by the new regionalists indicates an overlap with a large literature within comparative politics, that on ethnicity and national identity. It is in this literature (but overlapping with the literature on regionalism) that the theme of the main inspiration to my research questions belongs – the question of minority nationalism. One scholar in particular has dominated the minority nationalism literature – Michael Keating (Keating 1988, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2004; Keating and Hooghe 2001; Keating, Loughlin, and Deschouwer 2003; Keating and

McGarry 2001). Keating defines minority nationalism as involving “the denial of exclusive claims on the part of the state nationalism and the assertion of national rights of self determination for groups within it” (Keating 1996, 18). Further, he initiated the theoretically and empirically useful distinction between ethnic and civic minority nationalism (Brubaker 2004; Keating 1996; Newman 2000), and coined the term *New Minority Nationalisms*, defining these, which are also called regional nationalisms, as “post-nation-state in inspiration, addressing a world in which sovereignty has ceased to be absolute and power is dispersed” (Keating 1996, 53).

Michael Keating’s writings thus constitute the most immediate theoretical basis and inspiration for the analysis that I intend to conduct, and my hypotheses are largely framed and formulated out of this context. My contribution to the literature lies in the utilization of quantitative methodology to add knowledge about why minority nationalisms have a more positive attitude towards European integration than their non-minority nationalist compatriots. To my best knowledge, although the phenomenon has been identified by many scholars, no such quantitative empirical analysis has been conducted to date.

Based on the above-introduced research question, and supported by statements in the scholarly literature on the new regionalism and minority nationalism in the European Union, I intend to test the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: *There is a greater support for European integration in regions dominated by minority nationalisms than in other regions across and within the EU member-states, all else equal.*

The logic behind the first hypothesis, and thus behind my main research question, is a broad agreement in recent scholarly literature on regionalism and minority nationalism in the EU that a deepened European integration has provided incentives to minority nationalist and

regionalist groups to rethink their policy stance on European integration, switching from a protectionist, anti-European position to an outward-looking, pro-European position (Downs 2002; Keating 1996, 2004). I thus assume a positive relationship between the dependent variable - *support for European integration* - and the first independent variable of interest – *regional minority nationalism status* - assuming a greater support for European integration in regions dominated by minority nationalisms than in other regions.

Hypothesis 2: *The level of support for European integration by minority nationalisms is different in the case of ethnic/linguistic minority nationalism than in the case of civic/politicized minority nationalism, all else equal.*

As briefly discussed above, the distinction between ethnic and civic minority nationalism stems from Michael Keating, who defines the membership in an ethnic minority nationalism as ‘given,’ or ascriptive, based on language, race or religion, and the membership in a civic minority nationalism as largely territorially based, but still encompassing common values and institutions (Keating 1996). Based on this distinction, I will distinguish between three different types of minority nationalist regions. The first category represents civic minority nationalist regions, in which the minority nationalism has been politicized through the existence of one or more regional political parties (which will be defined as political parties which in some form support a greater decentralization of political power to that region), but in which no distinct language, different from that of the central state, is spoken. The second category represents ethnic/linguistic minority nationalist regions, in which a majority of the citizens speak a language distinctive from that of the nation-state to which that region belongs, but where the national minority is not politicized. The third category represents politicized ethnic/linguistic minority nationalist regions, in which a distinctive language is spoken, and in which one or more regional political parties are present. I assume an ambiguous relationship, positive or negative, between

the dependent variable and the second independent variable of interest – *type of minority nationalism*.

Hypothesis 3: *The level of support for European integration in regions dominated by minority nationalisms is greater in federal member-states than in unitary member-states, all else equal.*

A positive relationship between regional minority nationalist attitudes towards the EU and a federal type of government has been indicated in the literature, as some scholars hypothesize that minority nationalist regions that resemble federal units tend to be more positive towards the EU, since they have the institutional means in place to represent their interests within the complex European governance structure (Bullman 2001). Thus, based on existing research, the third independent variable of interest – *federal type of government* – is assumed to have a positive relationship with the dependent variable.

Data:

The primary data source used in this analysis is the European Election Study (EES) Surveys of 1999, an individual-level cross-sectional data-set.¹ One of the advantages of this data source is its scope. Only one other data source of its magnitude exists in the Euro-barometer surveys conducted by the European Commission twice a year. The Euro-barometer surveys could have been a preferable choice of data source for the purpose of this paper for several reasons. First, the overall sample size is slightly larger than that of the EES. Second, the

¹ The data were originally collected for the European Election Study Workgroup, consisting of Cees van der Eijk, Klaus Schoenbach, Hermann Schmitt, Holli Semetko, Wouter van der Brug, Mark Franklin, Sören Holmberg, Renato Mannheimer, Jacques Thomassen and Bernhard Wessels. Fieldwork was carried out by a consortium of European survey organizations, co-ordinated by IPSOS (Hamburg, GFR). This study has been made possible with grants from the University of Amsterdam, the Dutch National Science Foundation (NWO, the Netherlands), The Bundespresseamt (Bonn, GFR), the CIS (Madrid, Spain), the University of Mannheim, the ISPO Institute (Milan, Italy) and Trinity College (Hartford, Conn., USA). Neither the original collectors of the data nor their sponsors bear any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations published here. The data are distributed by Steinmetz Archive, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and associated data-archives.

interviews are conducted in person, which usually enables both a higher response rate and more honest answers by the respondents than if the interviews are conducted by telephone. Finally, the Euro-barometer surveys use regional classifications with a greater number of regions (223 as opposed to 142 in the EES), which largely correspond to the regions defined by the Eurostat, the statistical office of the EU, through which data on a number of additional variables at the regional level could have been retrieved. I chose, however, to use the EES for one main reason – the inclusion of survey questions on the respondents’ intention to vote for regional parties at a national election and the respondents’ preferences of local over national newspapers.

Another advantage of the data is the fact that identical surveys (with some slight differences between countries and over time) were simultaneously conducted in all EU member states, which vastly increases the comparability of the data across member-states. A total of 13,549 interviews were conducted in the 15 EU member-states in June 1999 (Schmitt et al. 1996; van der Eijk et al. 2002; van der Eijk, Oppenhuis, and Schmitt 1993), with a response rate of 40.24%.² The population universe for the surveys was citizens of EU-countries living in the country surveyed (able to speak the country’s language), 18 years and older, and the samples were designed as multi-stage probability samples in the single countries. The interviews were conducted by telephone immediately after the elections to the European parliament in June 1999. The fact that each individual interviewed was not only coded on the country in which the interview took place, but also on which region, is what makes the data extraordinarily useful for

² The sample size in Luxembourg was around 300, in Austria, Belgium, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Sweden it was around 500, in Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, and the United Kingdom it was around 1,000, and in Italy it was around 3,700. The response rate does not include the samples from Italy and Spain, for which no information was given. For more details about the European Election Studies Surveys, see the survey codebooks and documentation, available through the web site of the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), at <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/>, or on the European Election Studies web site at <http://www.europeanelectionstudies.net/>.

the purpose of this analysis. In addition to this, the datasets have been widely used in scholarly analysis since their release.³

I chose to operationalize the construct *EU-attitudes* with three separate dependent variables using three different questions from the EES survey, because they capture slightly different variations of citizens' attitudes towards European integration. The first question asked whether the respondent sees his or her country's EU-membership as a good thing or a bad thing.⁴ I constructed a dummy variable coded 1 if the respondent answered 'a good thing,' and 0 otherwise. The second question asked the respondent to place his or her view, on a 10-point-scale, on whether European unification should be pushed further (=10) or has gone too far (=1). To ensure the capturing of the variation in values along the scale, this variable was kept in its original format. The third question that I chose to use to operationalize the construct *EU-attitudes* was actually a set of two questions, asking the respondent whether he or she was satisfied with the way democracy works in the EU on one hand, and in his or her country on the other hand. With answer options ranging from 1 = very satisfied to 4 = not at all satisfied, I reversed the direction of the scale on both questions and created a new variable of the ratio of the values on the two variables. This enabled easier interpretation of whether the respondent was more satisfied with EU democracy than with democracy in his or her own country (captured by a value greater than 1), whether he or she was equally satisfied (captured by a value equal to 1), or whether he or she was less satisfied with EU democracy than with democracy in his or her own country (captured by a value less than 1).

In addition to the dependent variables, the EES Survey was also used as a source for six of the control variables. First, a question asking whether the respondent voted in the European

³ For an overview, see the codebooks of the survey at <http://www.europeanelectionstudies.net/>

⁴ The exact wording of all survey questions can be found in the appendix.

Parliament elections held shortly before the interview was used to create a dummy variable coded 1 if the respondent reported that he or she voted, and 0 otherwise. Second, a question asking which party the respondent would vote for if elections to his or her country's parliament were held the following day was used to create a dummy variable coded 1 if the respondent reported that he or she would vote for a regionalist political party, and 0 otherwise. Decisions about whether a party should be classified as regionalist or not were made for each case listed in the EES99 codebook consulting the literature on political parties (Day 1988). Third, a question asking the respondent which newspapers he or she reads regularly was used to create a variable for local versus national newspaper preferences, coded 2 if the respondent mentioned a local but not a national newspaper, 1 if the respondent mentioned both a local and a national newspaper, and 0 if the respondent mentioned neither a local nor a national newspaper (no respondents reported reading a national but not a local newspaper regularly). Finally, three questions asking about the respondent's sex, year of birth, and age when he or she stopped full-time education were used to create a dummy variable for sex, a variable for age in years, and a variable for education.⁵

[Table 1 about here]

After the cleaning process, a total of 8,679 individuals remained in the analysis sample. As is often the case in studies using large-scale survey data, the cleaning and recoding of the individual level survey data to prepare it for the analysis involved several steps leading to a gradual decrease of the sample size, which are summarized in table 1. First, since the aim of this paper is to analyze variance between individual attitudes in different regions of the EU, cases

⁵ Although I initially intended to include a variable based on the respondent's answer to a question about household income, I decided against this since the response rate was so low that it would have decreased my sample size by almost half.

where the region in which the interview was conducted was not stated were dropped.

Unfortunately, and for a reason not stated in the EES99 codebook, none of the interviews conducted in Italy were coded on the variable region, thus leading to the decision to drop all the Italian cases, since there would be no variance among individuals at the regional level, and analysis would thus be meaningless. Second, data was missing on one or more of the variables included in this analysis for an additional 1,162 respondents, which were consequently dropped from the analysis sample.

The basic descriptive statistics of the analysis sample shown in table 2 reveal a few noteworthy findings. First, only 11% of all respondents report that they consider their country's EU-membership a good thing, a result that sends a strong message about the importance of those who actually do support European integration. Second, the mean of the reported values on the 10-point EU-depth scale indicates that on average, the respondents leaned slightly towards evaluating European unification as something that 'should be pushed further.' Third, the fact that the average score on the ratio of EU-democracy and nation-state democracy is greater than one suggests that on average, the respondents were more satisfied with EU-democracy than with democracy in their own countries. Fourth, as the magnitudes of the averages on the three regional minority nationalist categories indicate, the number of respondents belonging to each of these categories varies immensely, with only 78 respondents residing in linguistic but not politicized regions, whereas 651 respondents reside in politicized non-linguistic regions, and 812 respondents in politicized linguistic regions.

[Table 2 about here]

Methods

The reason why I chose to use quantitative analysis, specifically, multivariate regression analysis, to answer the research questions is threefold. First, this method poses a unique way of estimating relationships between a number of explanatory variables and the dependent variable with an accuracy that is superior to other methods. Second, this method is particularly useful considering the nature of the data I am utilizing for the analysis - large-scale survey data representative of the populations of all EU member states. Third, the previous use of multivariate regression analysis in the research on the topic of this paper is limited, and may lead to insights that would otherwise be lost, or found at a later point.

To test the hypotheses described above, and to answer the research question of this paper, the independent variables will be regressed on each of the three dependent variables, in the case of the first dependent variable (here called EUmemgood) estimating a binomial probit model, and in the case of the remaining two dependent variables (here called EUdepth and demEUcounratio) estimating two Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) models.⁶

The three regression equations to be estimated can be summarized in the following equation:⁷

⁶ The choice of the binomial probit model for the first regression model is motivated by the fact that the dependent variable is a dummy variable, a case in which the use of OLS-regression encounters four major problems. First, a dependent variable that can only take the values 0 or 1 results in a binomial error term, which violates one of the seven Classical Assumptions of OLS, and would thus fail to yield meaningful estimates. Second, the error term is inherently heteroskedastic, violating another of the seven Classical Assumptions of OLS. Third, running an OLS regression with a binomial dependent variable would result in an inaccurate measure of the overall fit of the model, since the usual measure in OLS, adjusted R^2 , measures how well the estimated model fits the data, and since a linear model of a dataset with values spread only along two levels of Y would inherently provide an adjusted R^2 that does not say much about the actual fit. A final problem using OLS for regressions with binary variables is that the estimated model, which is linear, can predict values outside the meaningful range of 0 and 1.

⁷ Initially I intended to include both country and region dummy variables, but this proved to be unsuitable due to lack of variation. All models were tested for multicollinearity, however with negative results.

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{POLMIN}_i + \beta_2 \text{LINGMIN}_i + \beta_3 \text{POLLINGMIN}_i + \beta_4 \text{FED}_i + \beta_5 \text{EPVOTE}_i + \beta_6 \text{VOTEMIN}_i + \beta_7 \text{LOCALNEWS}_i + \beta_8 \text{MALE}_i + \beta_9 \text{AGE}_i + \beta_{10} \text{EDU}_i + e_i$$

where

$Y_1 =$	Assessment of own country's membership in the EU as a generally good thing (1,0)	
$Y_2 =$	Assessment of whether European unification 'should be pushed further' or 'has gone too far' (scale: 10 = should be pushed further to 1 = has gone too far)	
$Y_3 =$	Relative satisfaction with how democracy works in the EU compared to own country (Ratio)	
LINGMIN =	Ethnic/linguistic regional minority nationalism	} reference: non-minority region
POLMIN =	Politicized regional minority nationalism	
POLLINGMIN =	Politicized linguistic regional minority nationalism	
FED =	Federal government	
EPVOTE =	Voted in most recent European Parliamentary elections	
VOTEMIN=	Reported intention to vote for minority-nationalist or regional party in national parliamentary elections	
LOCALNEWS =	Newspaper preferences (2,1,0)	
MALE =	Male	
AGE =	Age in years	
EDU =	Age when stopped full-time education	

As briefly explained in the introduction, the inclusion of the first key independent variable - *regional minority nationalism status* – was motivated by the assumption that the greatest support for the European Union increasingly stems from minority nationalist regions seeking to bypass their nation-states to achieve their policy goals at the EU level. I thus hypothesize a positive relationship between regional minority nationalism status and EU support. The decision whether or not a region should be classified as a region dominated by a minority nationalism was based on previous analyses of regional secessionism and minority nationalism in Europe and carefully assessed in each case, resulting in the identification of 28 regions dominated by minority nationalisms, dispersed among eight of the 14 member-states included in the analysis.⁸

⁸ The number of member-states is, as explained above, 14 due to the dropping of the Italian cases.

In Austria, the regions Burgenland and Carinthia were included due to the relatively large numbers of inhabitants in these regions speaking the languages of the neighboring countries Hungary, Croatia, and Slovenia (Cordell and Wolff 2004). In Belgium, the Flemish regions Limburg, Oost-Vlaanderen/West-Vlaanderen, and Antwerpen/ Limburg/Vlaams-Brabant were selected, motivated by their longstanding linguistically- based, autonomy-seeking movement (Hendriks 2001; Hooghe 1995; Laible 2001; Lynch 1996). In Denmark, the largely German-speaking region South Jylland was selected (Cordell and Wolff 2004). In Spain, the linguistically distinguished regions Cataluña, Galicia, and Pais Vasco (the Basque country) were selected (Folch-Serra and Nogue-Font 2001; Keating 1996; Keating, Loughlin, and Deschouwer 2003; Morata 1995). In addition, all Spanish regions in which a regionalized political party was in place, i.e. Andalucia, Aragon, Asturias, Baleares, Canarias, Cantabria, Castilla Leon, Valencia, Extremadura, Navarra, Rioja, Ceuta, and Melilla, were selected (Day 1988). In France, the largely German-speaking Alsace, and the autonomy-seeking Bretagne were selected (Cordell and Wolff 2004; Lynch 1996). In Finland, the largely Swedish-speaking region South Finland was selected (Cordell and Wolff 2004). In Germany, the partially autonomy-seeking Bavaria, in which a number of regionalist parties exist, was selected (Anderson 1999; Bullman 2001; Day 1988; Gerstenlauer 1995). Finally, in the United Kingdom, Scotland and Wales were selected, motivated by linguistic distinction and autonomy-seeking (Cordell and Wolff 2004; Keating 1996; Keating and Jones 1995; Loughlin 2001; Lynch 1996; Newman 1996), and Northern Ireland was selected based on its characteristic as the only large-scale religious minority nationalist region in the EU (McGarry 2001; Newman 1996).

The second key independent variable - type of minority nationalism – is represented by a set of four dummy variables coded 1 if the respondent belongs to an ethnic/linguistic regional

minority nationalism, to a politicized regional minority nationalism, to a politicized ethnic/linguistic regional minority nationalism, or to a non-minority region and 0 otherwise. As indicated in the introduction, I hypothesize an ambiguous relationship between the variable type of minority nationalism and attitudes towards the EU.

The third key independent variable - federal government - is represented by a dummy variable coded 1 if the respondent interviewed in a federal state and 0 otherwise. What constitutes a federal state is based on Will Kymlicka's definition of a federal state as "a political system which includes a constitutionally entrenched division of powers between a central government and two or more subunits (...) defined on a territorial basis, such that each level of government has sovereign authority over certain issues" (Kymlicka 2001, 94). Since only three member-states are purely federal states – Austria, Belgium, and Germany – only the 30 regions of these three member-states will take on the value 1 on the federal variable. As explained in the introduction, I hypothesize a positive relationship between federalism and regional attitudes towards the EU.

Studies of turnout in European Parliamentary elections, from the first election in 1979 until today, have found evidence of a strong relationship at the individual level between voting in European Parliamentary elections and having a positive attitude towards the EU (Inglehart and Rabier 1979; Niedermayer 1990; van der Eijk, Franklin, and Marsh 1996). Based on this thesis, I include this variable to capture any positive association to the dependent variables.

In their article on party response to European integration, Gary Marks and Carole Wilson build on the cleavage theory of Lipset and Rokkan and extend their centre-periphery dimension with a distinction between territorially dispersed and territorially concentrated peripheral minorities (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Keating 1988; Marks and Wilson 2000). They argue that

political parties representing the former are likely to oppose all central authorities, whereas political parties representing the latter tend to be supportive of European integration because it “can facilitate decentralization of authority from the central state to their region or ethno-territorial nation” (Marks and Wilson 2000, 438). Based on this, I hypothesize that the existence of a minority nationalist or regional party will lead to a more positive attitude towards European integration. Whereas the existence of a minority-nationalist or regionalist party alone, as captured in the dummy variable politicized regional minority nationalisms, tells us something about the existence of such a party, the inclusion of an individual level variable on the intended voting for such parties is thought to capture the magnitude of the support for it. Likewise, I hypothesize that intended voting for a minority-nationalist or regionalist party is positively correlated with a positive attitude towards the EU.

The inclusion of a control variable on newspaper preferences is based on the key assumption that there is a greater chance of a general positive attitude towards the EU at the regional level than at the nation-state level, including media-coverage and thus I hypothesize that individuals who prefer local or regional newspapers over national newspapers are more likely to have a positive attitude towards the EU, all else equal.

Finally, the inclusion of the demographic variables sex, age and education is standard procedure in individual level survey data analysis, which is the main reason for including them in this analysis.

Results

Table 3 displays the effects of each of the independent variables on each of the three outcome variables. Based on these results, the following conclusions can be drawn. Overall, the results of the three different regressions were mixed, considering the fact that they were chosen

to represent the same overarching construct – *EU attitudes*. All key independent variables were statistically significant at least at the 5% level and all control variables at least at the 10% level in at least one of the three regressions.⁹ Furthermore, overall the models explain between 2.7% and 3.3% of the variation in the dependent variables, which is considered fairly good for cross-sectional data analysis. Looking at the individual coefficients of the independent variables across the models, however, the results are mixed.

The results of the regression of the first dependent variable - whether or not the respondents consider their country's EU-membership a good thing - indicate that regions dominated by minority nationalisms are associated with a *less* positive EU attitude than in non-minority regions, although the different categories yield coefficients with different signs.¹⁰ Living in a politicized but not linguistically distinct minority nationalist region is associated with a 7.3 percentage point lower probability of considering EU-membership a good thing than in non-minority regions, all else equal. On the other hand, living in a politicized linguistically distinct minority nationalist region is associated with a 2.8 percentage point *higher* probability of considering EU-membership a good thing than in non-minority regions, all else equal.

[Table 3 about here]

Likewise, although not statistically significant, the coefficient for linguistically distinct but not politicized minority nationalist regions also had a positive sign. These results provide a first indication that there is a difference between regions dominated by ethnic/linguistic minority

⁹ The regressions were estimated using robust standard-errors, since several of the variables showed signs of heteroskedasticity in the Breusch-Pagan test.

¹⁰ Substituting the three regional minority nationalism categories with one single regional minority nationalism status dummy variable yielded a result indicating that living in any minority nationalist region is associated with a 1.6 percentage points lower probability of considering EU-membership a good thing than in non-minority regions, all else equal, significant at the 10% level, thus supporting this conclusion.

nationalism and regions dominated by civic/politicized minority nationalism in the level of support for European integration.

The results of the regression of the second dependent variable – to what extent the respondent thought that European unification should be pushed further (=10) or has gone too far (=1) – showed statistically significant coefficients on all three minority nationalism categories, however somewhat surprisingly with the opposite signs as in the case of the first dependent variable. The results indicated that living in a politicized but not linguistically distinct minority nationalist region is associated with a 0.4 point higher score on the ten-point EU-depth scale than in non-minority regions, all else equal. Living in a politicized linguistically distinct minority nationalist region, on the other hand, is associated with a 0.3 point lower score on the ten-point EU-depth scale than in non-minority regions, all else equal. Living in a linguistically distinct but not politicized minority nationalist region, finally, is associated with a 0.8 point lower score on the ten-point EU-depth scale than in non-minority regions, all else equal. Overall, these results confirm the differences between the different types of minority nationalist regions, thus supporting the conclusion enabled through the first regression. Moreover, and more interestingly, these results also confirm the exact nature of these differences – that linguistic minority regions, politicized or not – tend to consider their country's EU-membership a good thing to a higher degree than non-minority regions, but on the other hand tend to think that European integration should be pushed further to a lesser degree than non-minority regions, whereas merely politicized minority regions have the opposite relationship to non-minority regions. A possible reason for this pattern could on one hand be that linguistic minorities have more at stake, and are in many cases a direct object of nation-state oppression through minority/language legislation, and on the other hand that merely politicized minorities may have other objectives than seeking

the protection of their cultural heritage that may result in a greater degree of regional protectionism, such as gaining economic wealth. These suggestions are supported by the results of the first regression, whereas the opposite signs of the results of the second regression may have a more complicated explanation.

This pattern was not supported by the results of the regression of the third dependent variable – the ratio of the satisfaction with democracy in the EU and in the respondents' countries, as the results showed statistically significant negative coefficients for two of three minority nationalism categories. Living in a politicized but not linguistically distinct minority nationalist region is associated with a 0.1 point lower score on the ratio of EU-democracy and nation-state democracy than in non-minority regions, all else equal. Likewise, living in a politicized linguistically distinct minority nationalist region is associated with an identical 0.1 point lower score on the ratio of EU-democracy and nation-state democracy than in non-minority regions, all else equal. The small relative magnitude of these coefficients, however, gives these results less practical significance than the results of the first two regressions.

Running three separate regressions substituting the three regional minority nationalism categories with one single regional minority nationalism status dummy variable yielded results indicating that living in any minority nationalist region is associated with a 1.6 percentage points lower probability of considering EU-membership a good thing than in non-minority regions, all else equal (significant at the 10% level), and that living in any minority nationalist region is associated with a 0.1 point lower score on the ratio of EU-democracy and nation-state democracy than in non-minority regions, all else equal (significant at the 0.1% level). These results support the overall conclusion that regions dominated by minority nationalisms are associated with a *less* positive EU attitude than in non-minority regions, thus rejecting the first null hypothesis of an

indifferent support for European integration in regions dominated by minority nationalisms compared to other regions, but in the *opposite* direction, and thus disconfirming the existing assumption in recent scholarly literature that inspired this paper.

Furthermore, the overall results also clearly indicate that there is a difference between regions dominated by ethnic/linguistic minority nationalism and regions dominated by civic/politicized minority nationalism in the level of support for European integration, thus also rejecting the second null hypothesis posed in this paper.

Different from the results of the first three key independent variables, the three models yielded a statistically significant coefficient only on the relationship between the first dependent variable and the fourth key independent variable – federal government. The results indicated that living in a federal state is associated with a 2.4 percentage points lower probability of considering EU-membership a good thing than in unitary states, all else equal. Based on this result, we can reject the third null hypothesis in favor of its alternative hypothesis, however again in an opposite direction, thus disconfirming Bullman’s assumption quoted above (Bullman 2001) – that the level of support for European integration in regions dominated by minority nationalisms is greater in federal member-states than in unitary member-states, all else equal. As a possible reason for this result, one could hypothesize that regions and minority nationalist territories in unitary nation-states tend to be more positive towards the EU than their counterparts in federal nation-states since they don’t enjoy much autonomy in the first place and thus have less to lose and more to gain by supporting a deepening EU integration.

Beside the effects of the key independent variables on EU attitudes, a few interesting conclusions can be drawn about the control variables. On one hand, the results suggest that voting in the European Parliament elections is associated with a 4.4 percentage points lower

probability of considering EU-membership a good thing, than abstaining from voting, all else equal. On the other hand, EP-voters are associated with a 0.6 point higher score on the ten-point EU-depth scale (meaning a more positive EU attitude) than non-voters, all else equal, and with a 0.1 point higher score on the ratio of EU-democracy and nation-state democracy than non-voters, all else equal (all coefficients significant at the 0.1% level).

One control variable which turned out to be an outstandingly strong predictor of EU-attitudes was the intended vote for a regionalist political party, a particularly interesting variable when compared to the minority nationalism coefficients. The results indicate that the intention to vote for a regionalist party is associated with a 25.4 percentage points higher probability of considering EU-membership a good thing than if not, all else equal (significant at the 0.1% level). However, corresponding to the change in directions of the EP-election variable and the minority nationalism variables, intending to vote regionalist is associated with a 1.6 point lower score on the ten-point EU-depth scale than if not, all else equal (significant at the 0.1% level) and with a 0.2 lower score on the ratio of EU-democracy and nation-state democracy than if not, all else equal (significant at the 0.1% level). Although this variable was not included as a key independent variable, the result on the first dependent variable in particular is of great practical significance, supporting a strong positive relationship between minority regionalism and support for the EU. This supports the assumptions of existing research as outlined in the introduction, and opposes the overall results of the minority nationalism variables. A possible reason for these opposing results could be that the results of the minority nationalism variables include all respondents residing in the regions in question whether they actually belong to the minority or not, whereas the regionalist voting variable only captures the respondents who most likely do belong to the minority in question.

Discussion

When interpreting the results of this analysis, it is important to keep in mind that the shown effects of the independent variables on the three dependent variables representing EU-attitudes should not be interpreted as causal, but rather as mere associations, mainly due to the possible existence of confounding variables. The units of analysis, the individuals interviewed through the European Election Studies, are with great certainty different from each other in many other ways than the variables included in this analysis can capture, and it is quite likely that other factors that are not included in the model have an influence on their attitudes towards the EU. One possible omitted variable that may confound the results is the household income, which I chose to exclude from the analysis due to the low response rate, although the education variable at the individual level probably captures the same effects. Another set of variables that could possibly have contributed to increasing the explanatory power of the model are regional level socio-economic variables, such as the economic wealth of the regions, the annual economic growth of the regions, the unemployment rates in the regions, and the inflow into the regions of financial support from the EU through the regional/structural funds. The only reason why these variables were not included in this analysis was the unavailability of data comparable across the regions. A possible solution to this problem would have been to use Euro-barometer data instead of EES data, as the regions defined by the Euro-barometer surveys are largely the same as the regions defined by Eurostat, the official statistical office of the EU and a provider of cross-national and cross-regional data on several variables. As stated in the data section, however, I chose the EES due to the greater number of questions asked that are of interest for the purpose of this paper.

Another limitation of the results of the analysis that all research using survey data has to deal with is the fact that results are based on a very small sample of the population universe. Although the survey used probability sampling, thus yielding a sample frame representative of the EU population, the low response rates and the further loss of cases due to missing values on the variables used in this analysis must be considered a strong limitation of the generalizability of the results. A partial solution to this problem could have been reached by using a different data-set, such as the Euro-barometer survey data. However, this would have limited some of the other aims of this paper. Another possible and more desirable solution could have been reached by using data from the 2004 European Election Studies surveys, providing both a more recent data-set and possibly a more complete one, but the usage of data from these surveys is restricted to the limited number of researchers who were part of conducting the surveys, and will be for another two years.

Conducting multiple regression analysis using variables that have not been analyzed in a similar manner in earlier research poses specific difficulties, since there are no precedents as to how to build the regression models. Thus, one of the most immediate suggestions for future research is to utilize quantitative analysis to a larger extent when examining questions like the ones posed in this paper, extending the knowledge of what factors are associated with support for European integration. Considering the failed ratification process of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, as well as the consistently declining turnout rates in elections to the European Parliament, citizen support for the EU is of utmost importance to the legitimacy of this political entity, thus ascribing a vast practical value to future analyses of questions like the ones posed in this paper.

Besides the suggestion to conduct more research like this, another suggestion would be to conduct modified versions of this analysis to gain even further knowledge of the conditions of support for European integration. One such suggestion would be to look at specific countries in which the different categories of minority nationalist regions are present, for example the United Kingdom or Spain with regions dominated by both politicized ethnic/linguistic minority nationalism, and politicized non-linguistic minority nationalism. A large advantage of looking at one specific country is the possibility of using country-specific data-sets, which in many cases are more comprehensive, and thus provide increased possibilities of including additional variables in the analysis.

Yet another suggestion for future research would be to compare the relationship between regional minority nationalism and support for European integration over time, adding a time-series component to the analysis. Although such an analysis could provide additional knowledge of the change in this relationship, and thus enhance the possibility of finding causal relationships, the largest problem with such an analysis would yet again be the limited availability of data, since the consecutive survey results are not based on panel surveys and since some of the survey questions are not repeatedly asked.

Finally, as has been addressed several times in this paper, the use of Euro-barometer survey data would be a plausible alternative that deserves investigation through future research, although some of the variables included in this paper would have to be excluded.

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Figures and Tables

Table 1: The Cleaning of the Survey Analysis Sample

Cleaning step	European Election Study (1999)
Original sample size	13,549
No region stated	-3,708 ¹
Missing values on other variables	-1,162
Analysis sample size	8,679

¹ The reason for the magnitude of this number is that interviews that were conducted in Italy were not coded on region.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the Analysis Sample

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
EUmemgood	8679	0.112225	0.315661	0	1
EUdepth	8679	5.880862	2.822448	1	10
demEUcounratio	8679	1.129412	0.654168	0	4
lingmin	8679	0.008987	0.094379	0	1
polmin	8679	0.075009	0.263421	0	1
pollingmin	8679	0.093559	0.291231	0	1
fed	8679	0.213158	0.409562	0	1
EPvote	8679	0.644314	0.478748	0	1
natelecregvote	8679	0.014403	0.11915	0	1
localnews	8679	0.639475	0.919114	0	2
male	8679	0.490033	0.49993	0	1
age	8679	45.00945	16.23249	18	93
edu	8679	18.13999	7.681828	0	69

Table 3: Results of regression analyses (robust standard errors in parantheses)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Dependent Variable 1</i>	<i>Dependent Variable 2</i>	<i>Dependent Variable 3</i>
	<i>EUmemgood</i>	<i>EUdepth</i>	<i>demEUcounratio</i>
Politicized minority status	-0.073 (0.009)***	0.395 (0.111)***	-0.108 (0.022)***
Linguistic minority status	0.017 (0.039)	-0.823 (0.292)**	0.048 (0.078)
Politicized linguistic min. status	0.028 (0.013)*	-0.301 (0.108)**	-0.112 (0.026)***
Federal government	-0.024 (0.008)**	0.016 (0.073)	-0.021 (0.015)
Voted in EP-election	-0.044 (0.008)***	0.606 (0.064)***	0.066 (0.015)***
Intended vote for reg./min. party	0.254 (0.049)***	-1.574 (0.281)***	-0.213 (0.049)***
Local news preference	0.0005 (0.004)	0.061 (0.032)†	0.013 (0.008)†
Male	-0.004 (0.007)	0.463 (0.060)***	0.148 (0.014)***
Age	0.001 (0.0002)***	-0.009 (0.002)***	-0.001 (0.0004)**
Education	0.0007 (0.0004)	0.009 (0.004)*	0.008 (0.001)***
Constant		5.497 (0.110)***	0.929 (0.026)***
Pseudo R ² / R ²	0.0270	0.0276	0.0323
N	8679	8679	8679

Notes: † Significant at 0.10 level; * Significant at 0.05 level; ** Significant at 0.01 level; ***Significant at 0.001 level.

Appendix

European Election Studies Variables and questions:

- VAR052** Which newspaper or newspapers do you read regularly?
- VAR094** A lot of people abstained in the European Parliament elections on June 10 while others voted. Did you cast your vote?
- VAR096** If there were <elections to your country's parliament> tomorrow, which party would you vote for?
- VAR136** Generally speaking, do you think that <your country's > membership of the European Union is a good thing, a bad thing, or neither good nor bad?
- VAR138** Some say European unification should be pushed further. Others say it already has gone too far. What is your opinion? Please indicate your views using a 10-point-scale. On this scale, 1 means unification 'has already gone too far' and 10 means it 'should be pushed further'. What number on this scale best describes your position? You may use any number between 1 and 10 to specify your views.
- VAR153** On the whole are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in <name of your country>?
- VAR154** All in all again, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in the European Union?
- VAR170** (Region)
- VAR159** Respondent is ... [sex to be filled in by interviewer]
- VAR160** What year were you born?
- VAR161** How old were you when you stopped full-time education?