Populism and attitudes towards the EU in Central Europe

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Simona Kustec Lipicer (ur.)
Politične vsebine in volilna kampanja

Alenka Krašovec (ur.)
Volitve v Evropski parlament 2009

Tomaž Deželan
Nasproti evropskemu federalizmu?

Simona Kustec Lipicer, Samo Kropivnik, Tomaž Deželan, Alem Maksuti
Volilni programi in stališča

Drago Zajc, Samo Kropivnik, Simona Kustec Lipicer
Od volilnih programov do koalicijskih pogodb

Janko Prunk, Metka Rangus
Sto let življenja slovenskih političnih strank: 1890–1990

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The Development of Civil Society in the Countries on the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1980s

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Damjan Lajh, Meta Novak
Organizirana civilna družba v procesih odločanja na ravni Evropske Unije

Meta Novak
Izražanje političnih mnenj v anketah

Danica Fink-Hafner, Matej Knep, Meta Novak
Razvoj slovenskih zelenih strank v primerjalni perspektivi

Danica Fink Hafner, Boštjan Slatenšek
Teokracija: Talibski režim v Afganistanu 1996–2001

Elena Nacevska
Women in Politics in Western Balkan Countries

Tomaž Deželan
Izzivi politične participacije mladih

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Marko Lovec (ed.)

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Contents

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Foreword (Milan Brglez)[1]

Dear colleagues and fellow researchers,
honourable representative of the European Commission in Slovenia Mr Zoran Stančič,
ladies and gentlemen,

it really is a great pleasure to be joining you today at this round table, which seeks to unveil some of the more concrete numbers and phenomena underlying a common European challenge that seems to be growing by the day—the rise of political populism, particularly the one characterised by a significantly nationalistic aspect. In the last three and a half years, I have had the opportunity to experience first-hand the conceptions and misconceptions of trending European populism, which is bringing about alarming changes in our supranational and national political landscapes. And the problem certainly is real. In this respect, I am very grateful to the team of dedicated researchers that have taken on a project that will be presented in greater detail later on, and whose conclusions can prove useful in constructing a more responsible and inclusive political space that will be able to effectively respond to harmful populisms.

The discourse on European populism, however, is neither recent let alone new. Merely browsing through past mainstream political commentaries reveals that the European public sphere has been intensively dealing with this issue for more than a decade. In the aftermath of the last election to the European parliament in 2014,

[1] This speech was delivered by the President of the National Assembly of Slovenia at the presentation of the results of this research on 14 March 2018 at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana.

there was virtually no newspaper or political magazine across our continent that would not speak of "Europe's swing to the populist right". It turned out, however, that populists were able to delve much deeper into the fabric of European societies than we had thought. In order to understand how to react to the rise of their ideas, we must understand what populism actually is, where its roots in contemporary Europe lie, and how one can derail it from its climb to further power. I am in no way suggesting that I possess such answers—at the moment it actually seems that no one does. Nonetheless, I wish to briefly share with you some of my own points of view that I will be happy to elaborate upon later on.

Approximately a decade ago, Europe witnessed one of the most harmful collapses of the global financial and economic system. Countries and companies crumbled under the weight of their debts, individuals would lose their homes, jobs and livelihoods, and the youth somewhat lost its prospects. In this downward spiral, the EU chose to focus predominantly on saving the Eurozone as one of the key features of the European project. European governments more or less jointly agreed to this approach, and undertook a process involving restrictive fiscal agreements and painful austerity measures that most of all hurt the middle classes and those who already had the least. Those who were "too big to fail" received favourable treatment, regardless of the fact that they were often part of the original problem itself. To put it in very general and simplified terms—Europe thus forgot about the individual. It forgot about his or her inherent right to a life of dignity, a fundamental idea and value that the existing European project was actually built on. Slovenia, unfortunately, was no different at that time.

This forgetfulness brought about a breakdown of a specific trust link between the body politic and political elites. And as Adorno notes, the public and political spaces are in their essence completely open to those seeking to satisfy their basic emotional needs in relation to their most primitive and irrational desires and fears, rather than those susceptible to rationally articulated interests. The aforementioned breakdown of trust broadened Adorno's space and gave populists a new opportunity to thrive on the misery of the losers of globalisation and the European project.

According to Margaret Canovan, one of the leading thinkers in this field, the universal features common to all populisms are their appeal to the people and anti-elitism. Such a definition, however,

does not reveal much about the social content of populism that—particularly in the case of Europe today—can be very specific. While contemporary agonistic politics is indeed based on the dichotomies of "Us versus Them", existing populists do not place their focus merely on the somewhat traditional populist socio-economic space of a conflict between the "common man" on the one side and financial and political elites on the other. To a degree, of course, they do. Otherwise populists across Europe would not have been able to attract the sympathy of the working classes with the argument that their governments have concluded a pact with the inhuman Brussels bureaucracy in order to keep the common people away from any kind of social and political power.

Nevertheless, populists today fuel this conflict, this dichotomy with an important additional aspect—fear of the foreign. The ongoing migration crisis has offered them a convenient scapegoat that enables them to construct an external threat to the welfare of "our" people and create new lines along which the political space can be divided. And this is a very dangerous line. Not only because it is a line that borders exclusionary ideologies that have historically pushed Europe into actual conflict. It is dangerous because populists are drawing these lines using language that was constructed precisely because of the disastrous consequences of stepping over such lines. The vocabulary of fundamental human rights today is being abused by populists in order to further their increasingly illiberal ideas. According to them, individuals are not endowed with fundamental rights by the virtue of their personhood—them being human—but rather along the lines of nationality, citizenship or even ethnicity. Donald Trump managed to swing the election in his favour precisely because he said he would put America and Americans first. But at whose expense?

In Europe, it seems this approach comes at the expense of those seeking shelter from conflict and extreme poverty, as well as those seeking to harvest the benefits of a common European labour market. That is why it is unfortunately no longer rare to hear deputies of our National Assembly saying that we should not employ foreign nationals in our country before every Slovenian has a job, and that we should guarantee *human* rights to Slovenian citizens first and only then to others. This is not an accidental misconception of the existing social, legal and political order. This is a conscious attempt to break down the fabric of what constructs contemporary Europe, and it is the reason why populism is becoming so dangerous. When British

voters decided that the United Kingdom should leave the EU, the vice-president of the leading French National Front tweeted: "Their world is collapsing. Ours is being built." I believe this new world order is absolutely nothing to look forward to. It is an order that puts into question the fundamental ideas of constitutional democracy on the one hand and the civilizational achievements of the European project on the other. When I was skimming through the Slovenian results of the survey under discussion today, I was relieved to see that, in general, the majority of Slovenians is still in favour of the European project for one reason or another, and that even those who speak critically of the EU are not *per se* anti-European. Nevertheless, uncertainties remain, especially given that louder calls for a more security-driven European project come at the expense of losing the support of those who praise the progressive normative achievements that gave Europe its global reputation as the cradle of human rights and prosperity—the achievements that today's populists bluntly reject. As Time journalist Simon Shuster said, by voting for Brexit, the British people clearly demonstrated that the integration of the West is neither inevitable nor irreversible. Populists do have the power to create an international order where fundamental past agreements are opened up for renegotiation in the interests of nation states that simply no longer feel bound by the established order.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Europe certainly requires change and, in a political sense, a move away from what Tariq Ali labelled as the consensus of the "extreme centre". Nonetheless, I believe that such change does not necessarily have to come from a radical political group, be it left or right. When the increasingly popular Belgian theoretician Chantal Mouffe speaks of the need for a rise of left-wing populism, she is only half right. True, the centre-left has lost a large part of its body politic to right-wing populists because it was unable and unwilling to address their alienation from the social and political space. We need to reinvent the language and approaches for advocating a more inclusive economy and democracy that is able to balance between both equality and liberty. However, left-wing populism that hides nothing or very little behind its formal veil is bound to drown in the pool of its own idealism. Greece is a perfect example of what happens when left-wing populism fails to deliver on its promises. It produces even harsher

counter effects on the other side of the spectrum, which was clearly seen with the rise of the Golden Dawn and many other right-wing populist parties across Europe.

In EU member states, the most fundamental responsibility of decision-makers is to clearly and concretely articulate to the people that it is the rule of law, the principles of inclusiveness, equality and non-discrimination, and a sense of social justice that guides public policy. And in order to preserve and further develop the European project, the great broadness of the latter must be brought to the attention of the body politic and decision-makers alike. The EU is not merely a bundle of structural and cohesion funds that we may use whenever we like. The EU is not and should not be a menu of choice—rather, it is a conscious decision to *integrate* that we have made in order to manage together the challenges that are simply too big to be managed by nation states alone. That is why devising a fully functioning Social Union and a common asylum and immigration system that will both reflect genuine solidarity among member states is of utmost importance. Europe's future must be based on solidarity and inclusion, not self-preservation and exclusion. The latter two will only enable populism to thrive.

Thank you for your invitation and attention. I am looking forward to our discussion later on.

Introduction by the editor

Populism is one of the most significant phenomena in the recent years. Some of the major recent events, such as the victory of Donald Trump in the presidential elections in the United States, or the British vote to leave the European Union—the former marking an end of a liberal internationalist era in United States' foreign policy and the latter the reversal of one of the greatest achievements of the liberal internationalism, the European integration—have been attributed to the impact of populism.

From the perspective of modern political science, populism is not new but is in fact as old as representative democracy itself. Defined as a political strategy to take power based on popular vote by referring to the gap between ordinary citizens and elites, it highlights the limitations of representative institutions on the one hand and of democracy on the other.

What has been particular for the recent rise of populism is the role of international politics. For a long time, international relations were considered separate from the domestic political games based on an assumed indivisibility of national interest. The development of the liberal international order enabled governments to profit from the transfer of authorities to international institutions in terms of leverage gained against domestic blockades. While growing interdependence acted as a constraint against nationalism, it also created systemic risks due to a growing share of transactions taking place in a decentralised environment that is increasingly affected by multipolarity and diverging interests. As systemic crises such as the global financial and economic crisis unfold, national elites fall victim to their own success—growing interdependence and external constraints—resulting in loss of legitimacy.

European integration was launched precisely to help contain nationalism by building on interdependence and to increase the weight of middle-sized and small European countries by pooling their sovereignties. However, as the Eurozone crisis and the migrant and refugee crisis demonstrated, the European Union (EU) suffered from the same illness of weak community-level institutions to deal with the diverging effects and asymmetric shocks that were enshrined in a decentralised system of governance.

A specific thing about the new member states of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) is that in the context of a collapse of their communist regimes, the EU as an international organisation—among other actors and organisations supporting the international liberal order—filled the vacuum, transforming the societies through conditionality and learning, facilitating a transfer of European norms, institutions and policies in the process of accession. Thus, for CEE countries, the crises of the EU had all the more profound impact on the legitimacy of the liberal political institutions, as these were largely "imported" and not "indigenous".

The purpose of this research is to reflect upon the recent rise of populism and anti-EU sentiments in CEE by combining existing literature and data with a new empirical research and analysis, with one eye on general theory and the other on the particular context of the region.

Chapter one engages with the common discourses suggesting that the rise of populism and anti-EU attitudes in CEE are mostly due to the poor quality of domestic institutions, which declined further after EU accession, thus blaming 'input legitimacy'. Taking a sceptical stance, chapter one wants to test this against the role of economic transformation in these countries as an 'output variable'. It reviews the literature to establish the role of domestic political institutions and economic change that are described as broader or structural variables, i.e. variables related but not necessarily leading to the rise of populism. It pays specific attention to the CEE countries that went through substantial institutional and economic reforms, which were often imposed without any real political debate. In the empirical part, this chapter uses existing data on institutional quality and economic transformation in five CEE countries (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia), also known as Central European new member states, referring to both objective measurements and subjective ones in terms of opinion polls on a fifteen-year

time scale to determine the correlation with the rise of populism and changes in the attitudes towards the EU.

The second chapter deals with the sudden rise of populism and in particular the Eurosceptic type of populism in the five CEE countries. As relatively small countries, they would be expected to pursue pro-European policies, which makes the rise of Euroscepticism particularly ambiguous. However, a mixture of an elitist approach and unrealistic expectations is considered to have created the perfect conditions for populists to flourish during the crises of the EU. Using foreign-policy analysis as a framework, chapter two looks into how the EU's two major crises in the recent years as the context of the rise of populism—i.e. the Eurozone crisis and the migrant and refugee crisis—resonated in the attempts of political parties in Central Europe to improve their election results through populist and Eurosceptic framing, and under what conditions particular actors were successful in doing so. By comparing individual crises and countries, this serves as a basis for locating the mechanisms facilitating the rise of populism and Euroscepticism.

Chapter three presents the results of a series of original national-level opinion polls, aimed at locating in more precise terms the types of positions linked with nationalist populism in CEE. It is based on a specialised survey on populism and attitudes towards the EU that was conducted in five CEE countries: Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia, all small Central European member states (Poland, which is a mid-sized country, was not involved in the survey).[1] In the survey, respondents were asked about their general attitudes towards the EU, different EU policy areas and general political norms and values. A comparative analysis looks at the similarities and differences across issues and countries to establish the role of particular issue areas as outputs and the general norms and values as inputs into the process, indicating the sources of populism and EU-related attitudes.

The fourth chapter features a detailed case study of Slovenia, drawing on the survey described in the preceding chapter and searching for determinants of a populist voter through a regression of different positions on the demographic variables. Slovenia is one of the smallest CEE countries and started out as the most open and most quickly progressing country with the most pro-EU attitudes, which

1 The availability of data was based on EU project funding.

was significantly affected by both of the recent EU crises, making it a perfect example to test the role of the external environment. The chapter looks into how different demographic variables indicating input legitimacy (such as media consumption, party preferences), output legitimacy (socioeconomic status) or both (education) intersect with general positions on the EU, EU policies in different areas and political norms and values. Using socioeconomic locators and political profiles, chapter four establishes the role of institutions and economics for populist and nationalist tendencies.

The conclusion summarises the main findings of the research, and sets them in the context of recent developments in the international and European order, such as growing nationalism and the ideas of differentiated or flexible integration.

I:
A REVIEW OF EXISTING LITERATURE AND DATA

Chapter 1: "Poor" students or poor students? Institutional quality and economic change as drivers of populism in CEE in a longitudinal perspective

Stellamarina Donato, Marko Lovec

Introduction

While populists have also been on the rise elsewhere in Europe and the world, the scope of this trend in CEE has been dramatic. In the last fifteen years, populist parties have gone from being a marginal to being a dominant political force in CEE, winning on average almost half of the votes for parliamentary parties in the most recent elections. Populists have become a problem for the EU, which is being blamed for much of the distanced decision making. In the EU, the source of the problem has largely been attributed to the quality of domestic institutions in CEE countries. The EU has responded by proposing more conditionality and multi-speed integration in order to reinforce the accountability of domestic elites in CEE.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the mechanisms underlying the rise of populism. In particular, this chapter aims at testing the role of institutional quality in influencing the strategies of domestic political actors through input legitimacy as opposed to output legitimacy, as represented or approximated by economic transformation.

For this purpose, a model was designed taking into account the complex causal relationships between different variables, including the reverse causality effect. A cross-comparative analysis of five CEE countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia), also known as the new Central European new member states, covering the period 2002–2017 demonstrates that while perceptions related to the quality of institutions are an important driver of the rise of both populism and anti-EU attitudes in the four out of five cases, the actual quality of institutions is not a particularly important driver, except in countries with more adverse problems in this area,

namely Hungary and Poland. In contrast, economic welfare, which is not a central driver when judging public perceptions, becomes an important structural condition facilitating the rise of populists and anti-EU attitudes in all but one case and particularly in cases of relatively economically more advanced and integrated countries characterised by better functioning institutions such as the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Hungary, which are more exposed to external shocks. Apart from the countries with more adverse institutional problems such as Hungary and Poland, populists have not significantly affected the other variables, indicating that the reverse causality effect was limited.

The findings suggest that the institutional quality issue is to a large extent a rhetorical supplement for the lack of a viable alternative to existing economic governance, which is in fact the key structural driver of populism. It implies that not only will the policy approach focused on quality of institutions be insufficient in addressing the growing populism if not matched with proper economic policy, but it might make the state of populism even worse, as more conditionality and differentiated integration proposed by the EU are likely to hinder the access of CEE elites to resources in the ongoing internationalisation process, making it even more difficult to pursue pro-European politics.

The literature

Populism as politics, polity and policy

Populism is a phenomenon that is not easy to define. It is typically related to tensions between the elites and the ordinary people. The tension between the elites and the ordinary citizens is due to the support or legitimacy obtained from the majority, e.g. in the elections, and the actual real benefits this majority gets from the electoral support (Dornbush and Edwards, 1991).

Populism is typically defined as a political ideology (Mudde, 2004) that sees the existing elites as a corrupt part of the body politic. According to Mudde's conceptualisation (2004: 543), populism is "an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite', and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people".

Populism as a strategy is used by populist leaders or movements

to muster support from dissatisfied citizens, where populism itself is framed in the pathologic process of representative politics (Taggart, 2002). A declared feature is the refusal to comply with the old rules of power, as they are—in the rhetoric of populists—created and exploited by the corrupt elites (Acemoglu, Egorov and Sonin, 2010). Populists criticise national representative institutions at all levels to side with the common people. However, this does not necessarily mean that their coming to power would bring real improvements in these institutions. According to the literature, institutional quality is a more general issue that is not specifically related to populism. As shown by Chesterley and Roberti (2016), populists and non-populists alike, being rational actors, are tempted to avoid democratic control.

Mudde and Kaltwasser (2017: 6) further describe populism as a "thin-centered ideology", "a view of how the world is and should be", following "a body of normative ideas". According to Spruyt, Keppens and Van Droogenbroeck (2016), voters in normal circumstances tend to move towards centrist party solutions and avoid too radically left or right-wing agendas, since these mean amplifying the views and preferences of the voters on the other side. Due to a lack of specific tools and avoidance of the horizontal cleavage (i.e. on the left–right political spectrum), which allows them to appeal to the unity of the people, populists do not identify themselves with a particular ideology or program, but rather refer to corruption and perversion of democracy. Instead of using the horizontal cleavage, populist use a vertical cleavage, in terms of blaming and excluding the top (the elites) and bottom parts (marginalised groups such as immigrants) of the society, which allows them to create a perception of a 'flattened' political body.

There is, however, one circumstance in which voters do tend to opt for non-centrist solutions—these are crises. According to Chesterley and Roberti (2016), the reason is that at a time of crisis voters discount the future differently. This is also related to how populism could be an outcome of people's lack of trust in political institutions—where they are absent or failing, as for example shown by a recent research by Dustmann et al. (2017).

To conclude in the words of Mény and Surel (2002), populism is a general ideological programme whose main features correlate with the stakes of both democracy itself on the one hand and representative democracy on the other.

Central and Eastern Europe

The problem of populism in CEE was identified relatively early. Rupnik (2007), for example, refers to "a widespread disenchantment with democracy" in CEE following its transition from communism. The backlash is aimed at the failures in the implementation of the liberal paradigm, which entails the primacy of the constitutional order on one side and the need for economic liberalisation on the other.

The liberal integration of CEE countries following their EU accession has disregarded the differences and specific needs of the new members, treating them as a homogenous group and allowing for no or only limited differentiation on the individual level. As a result, rather than taking the usual political forms, the dissenting voices in CEE immediately took the form of populism. In this respect, Učeň (2007) points out that in CEE "radical ideological components are becoming overshadowed by pure anti-establishment appeal".

For Korkut (2012), the problem was that the transition was an elite-led and apolitical process. In most ex-communist countries, acceptance of the full process and policy package of market economy and political liberalisation was integrated in national politics in the pursuit of an elitist pattern and not in terms of rational provision of welfare practices. In post-1989 democracies, the baton of this process was taken by a new elite of expert politicians. The predominance of their discourse was assured through the use of TINA (There Is No Alternative) politics: rational, necessary measures in order to promote and comply with Western standards of liberal democracy guaranteed their presence in power. CEE states and their citizens have become mere subjects of elites' ideas and power upon whom the decisions are simply imposed. The welfare state was reformed in the process; the hegemony of market economy was institutionalised using liberal politics. This has hampered real integration into the EU system in political, economic and cultural terms, and the integration has become rather abstract and impersonal.

From a more recent perspective, Krastev (2012) outlines the contradictions of Europe as a democratic apparatus (from the perspective of CEE): the European project is "policy without politics on the European level and politics without policy on the nation-state level".

The EU itself is rooted in the conception of supranational, transnational and integrationist (Dustmann et al., 2017). The deeper and wider conceptualisation of identity and community paved the way

for the birth of most of the populist parties currently active in the EU.[1] Particular problems and failures related to the EU-level governance such as the economic crisis, migration and terrorism, where institutions failed or were not available (Dustmann et al., 2017), led to general disenchantment and search for alternative identities. Weak and underdeveloped institutions in CEE countries posed a particular danger of a rise of populism and illiberal democracy (Bugarič and Ginsburg, 2016).

A particular feature of populism in CEE is its authoritarian character. This can be explained by the authority of economic policy and pressures on domestic institutions that led to concentration of power. According to Krastev (2007), populism is in conflict with the entire set of liberal practices and policies in CEE. Populism appears to be "the new condition of the political in Europe", where "the real clash is between elites that are becoming ever more suspicious of democracy and the angry publics that are becoming ever more hostile to liberalism" (Krastev, 2007).

Research design

According to the literature presented above, institutional quality and material welfare as political input and output variables are not specifically related to the rise of populism as such but are rather more general issues. However, as also explained above, such a link does exist in the case of CEE countries for particular reasons, such as their weak political voice in the process of integration and enforcement of liberal economic reforms resulting in additional pressure on the fragile domestic institutions. The link is not necessarily direct and can take different forms. While public perception could be considered as the most specific operating mechanism, this would not take into account the possible gap between the perceived and the actual role, for example, of institutions. This sort of gap might indicate influence of other variables, including political framing. The relation between institutional quality and material welfare on the one hand and populism on the other could also work in the opposite direction—e.g. populists could distract from real problems to legitimise institutional

1 For a long time, political pressures in CEE were channelled inwards and were not directed against the EU. One of the reasons was the relatively weak post-communist identity of CEE countries and their attachment to the EU because of the initial success of post-communist liberalism (Krastev, 2007: 58).

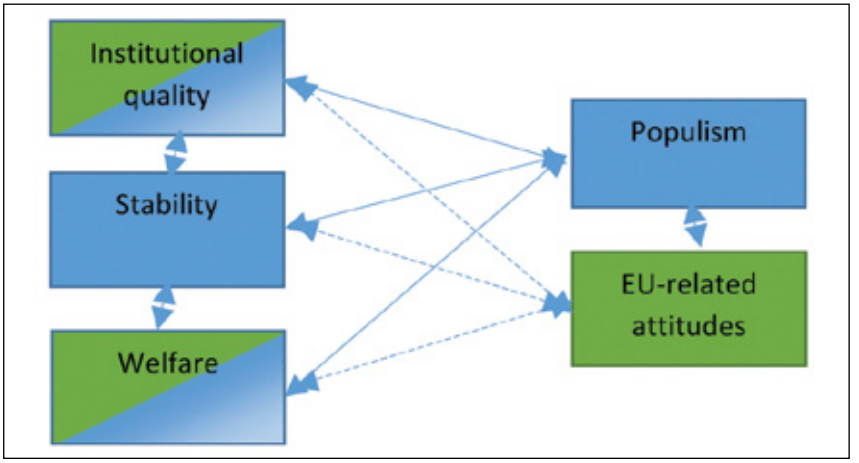
and policy changes such as concentration of power or redistribution, which, while enabling them to deliver in the short turn, would typically have negative long-term effects (Acemoglu, Egorov and Sonin, 2010). Moreover, links between the quality of institutions and economic welfare have also been established in the literature.

As explained above, political stability is a specific variable influencing the rise of populism by blurring the long-term utility of political choices in the eyes of voters. Political stability is also linked to other variables and can be a reason for changes in both institutional quality and welfare and/or the effect of such changes.

Finally, the role of populism and attitudes towards the EU is not necessarily the same, depending on the extent to which institutional, policy and stability issues are actually related to the EU dimension (in perceptions and in reality). Nevertheless, populism and attitudes towards the EU are related independent of other links through tensions between populists trying to scapegoat the EU and the EU trying to preserve its legitimacy by putting pressure on populists.

The links between different variables are presented in Figure 1.1: a full line stands for a specific role of populism and a dashed line for other links. Blue stands for objective indicators and green for perceptions.

Figure 1.1: An explanatory model



Indicators for the different variables are presented in Table 1.1. The level of populism is estimated by the share populist political parties hold in parliament. Election result can be considered a strong and reliable indicator of the strength of populist forces, e.g. in comparison to opinion polls. However, election results are still affected by the characteristics of different political systems, which may for example favour larger or smaller parties. The list of populist parties included is based on secondary literature with details available in the Appendix to this chapter.

Table 1.1: Variables and indicators

Variable		Indicator	Value	Source
Independent				
Political	Institutional quality	World Bank Institutional quality indicators	Percentile	World Bank
		Satisfaction with democracy	% very satisfied & satisfied	Eurobarometer
	Stability	Coalition collapse before the end of term		National electoral commissions
Economic	Economic welfare	GDP growth	% change	Eurostat
		Satisfaction with finance	% very satisfied & satisfied	Eurobarometer
	Inequality	GINI	Value	Eurostat
	Convergence	Real	%	Eurostat
Dependent				
	Populism	Populist party election result	% (of those above the threshold)*	National electoral commissions
	EU-related attitudes	Trust in the EU	% trust	Eurobarometer

*For the full list see Appendix.

For an estimation of EU-related attitudes, trust in the EU is used. As an objective indicator for political drivers we used the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI),[2] and as a subjective indicator we used the level of satisfaction with democracy. For economic welfare, we used economic growth and the Gini coefficient. Economic growth serves as an approximation of changes in welfare, and Gini describes the distribution of welfare. In addition, convergence is used to estimate the actual EU output legitimacy. As a subjective indicator of welfare we chose satisfaction with the finan-

2 The WGI account for six dimensions of aggregate governance indicators: Voice and Accountability; Political Stability and Absence of Violence; Government Effectiveness; Regulatory Quality; Rule of Law; Control of Corruption.

cial situation. Instability is estimated by government collapses. And for perceptions, we used standard Eurobarometer questions to allow comparisons.

Results

Czech Republic

Table 1.2: Populist parties and coalition collapses in the Czech Republic

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Populists							**10.88% (VV)**			**18.65% (ANO)** 6.88% (Dawn)				**29.64% (ANO)** 10.64% (SPD)	
Coalition collapse	x	x		x		x				x	x				

Bold = coalition member; x = coalition collapse. For party descriptions see Appendix.

In the Czech Republic, the share of populists went from zero to 10% in 2010, roughly doubled in the 2013 election and again in 2017 when it reached over 40%, which was close to the CEE average. ANO (see Appendix), which was already a coalition party after 2013, became the leading coalition party in 2017. Trust in the EU, which was below average started to decline further in 2008, reaching its lowest levels in 2012–2014 and 2016 when less than a third of the population trusted the EU. Moreover, the gap to the CEE average increased to 10 percentage points. The declining level of trust in the EU after 2007 was followed by growth of populism.

Institutional quality was above the CEE average. It remained on approximately the same level throughout the observed period, with declines in 2004, 2007, 2009–2010 and 2012–2013. Compared to the average institutional quality in CEE, which saw an overall decline, Czech institutions performed better in relative terms, especially towards the end of the period. Satisfaction with democracy was also above the CEE average throughout most of the period, with the exception of 2011 and 2012. It peaked at 60% in 2006, followed by a drop with the lowest point at 30% in 2011–2013, and a U-turn to peak at 60% again in 2016. Relatively low satisfaction with

democracy in the years preceding the rise of populist parties implies an impact on this rise.

Economic growth was on par with the average CEE levels, which is good considering the somewhat higer GDP as a starting point. It exceeded the average in 2005–2006 and 2015, and fell slightly behind between 2007 and 2014, which can be explained by stronger economic integration and a higher development level resulting in stronger crisis effects. There was a relatively sharp decline in growth during the global crisis in 2009 and during the second dip in the Eurozone crisis of 2012–2013. Declines in growth happened just before the rise of populists, the declines in institutional quality, the growth in dissatisfaction with democracy and lower trust in the EU. Economic convergence was above average, with slight declines in 2006 and 2009–2012 as a result of the crisis. Changes in convergence were followed by corresponding changes in trust in the EU, satisfaction with democracy and with the financial situation. The Gini coefficient was below the CEE average. Satisfaction with the financial situation was above the CEE average and mostly had a positive trend, interrupted by a sharp decline in 2007.

Czech government coalitions were highly instable, with collapses in 2004–2005, 2007–2009, 2013–2014, which correlates to the declines in institutional quality and satisfaction with democracy.

To summarise, the Czech Republic is a relatively advanced CEE country in institutional and economic terms. The decline in growth as a result of the global financial and Eurozone crisis led to very low satisfaction with democracy and weakening trust in the EU, as well as growth in the share of populists in parliament. Interestingly, the economic downturn was not expressed as much in satisfaction with the financial situation but rather in terms of satisfaction with democracy.

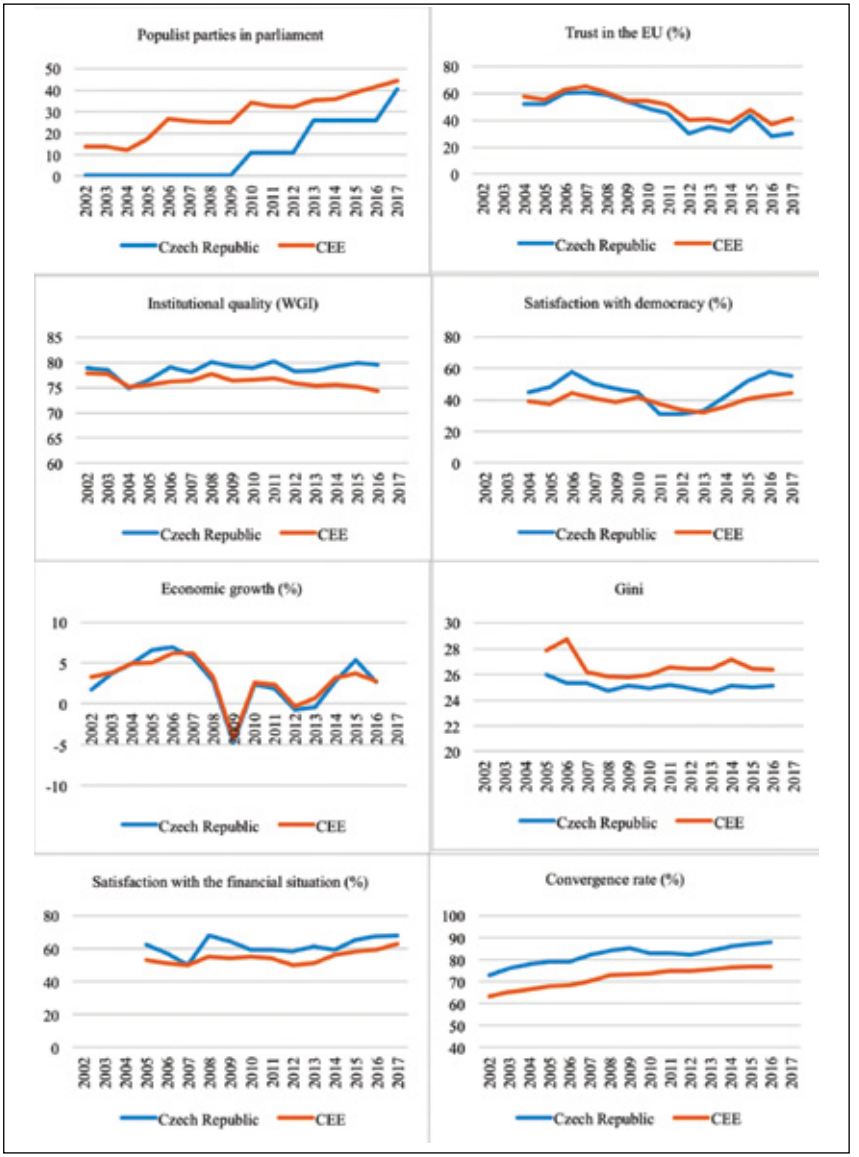
Hungary

Table 1.3: Populist parties and coalition collapses in Hungary

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Populists	41.07% (MDF, FIDESZ)		42.03% (FIDESZ+KDNP) 5.04% (MDF)				**52.73% (FIDESZ+KDNP)** 16.67% (JOBBIK)				**44.87% (FIDESZ+KDNP)** 20.22% (JOBBIK)				
Coalition collapse	x					x									

Bold = coalition member; x = coalition collapse. For party descriptions see Appendix.

Figure 1.2: Indicator values for the Czech Republic



In Hungary, the share of populists was already high in the beginning of the observed period. It increased further in 2006 and rose substantially again in 2010 when FIDESZ won the elections. It then declined slightly in 2014. Trust in the EU was above the CEE average in most of the period, except for 2007–2010. It declined in 2007 and the following years, reaching its lowest points in 2008–2009, 2012 (when it stood at 40%) and 2016. The rising shares of populists in parliament followed these drops in trust.

Institutional quality was above average at the outset of the period, but the overall negative trend—it declined in 2003–2005, 2007–2009 and after 2011–brought it below the CEE average in 2008. The decline began before populists came to power. The quality improved slightly in 2006 and remained stable in 2010–2011, which correlates with new governments taking over and creating positive expectations. However, the decline soon continued. The changes in institutional quality correspond with the change in the levels of trust in the EU. Satisfaction with democracy was below average, with huge fluctuations over time, from 45% in 2006 to as low as one quarter of respondents in 2009. Peaks in 2006 and 2015 coincided with elections. Satisfaction also correlates with the changes in trust in the EU.

Economic growth was below average between 2004 and 2012. Sharp declines in 2007, 2009 and 2012 were followed by growth in the shares of populists in parliament, as well as lowest satisfaction with democracy and trust in the EU, low financial satisfaction and declining economic convergence levels. Satisfaction with the financial situation was relatively low, especially in the period 2007–2012, when it stagnated around 25%, which was a result of the decline in growth. The changes in satisfaction with the financial situation correlate with the changes in satisfaction with democracy, which were followed by the rise of populists. The country increasingly lagged behind the rest of the EU, e.g. in 2006–2007, 2012 and 2016, as a result of lower growth levels, which was followed by growing financial dissatisfaction and distrust in the EU. Furthermore, government collapses in 2004 and 2009 were also followed by higher success of populists.

To summarise, Hungary started out with above-average institutional quality levels. But the role of populists was also relatively strong. Hungary faced economic problems such as declining growth, high inequality and dissatisfaction with the financial situation. Satisfaction with democracy was extremely low in the years preceding the rises of populists. The problems were further deepened by the global

Figure 1.3: Indicator values for Hungary

and European economic crises. The rise of populists was followed by declines in institutional quality and more negative attitudes towards the EU.

Poland

Table 1.4: Populist parties and coalition collapses in Poland

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Populists		**27% (PiS)** 11.4% (SRP)		32.11% (PiS)				29.89% (PiS)				**37.85% (PiS)** 8.81% (Kukiz15)			
Coalition collapse		x	x												

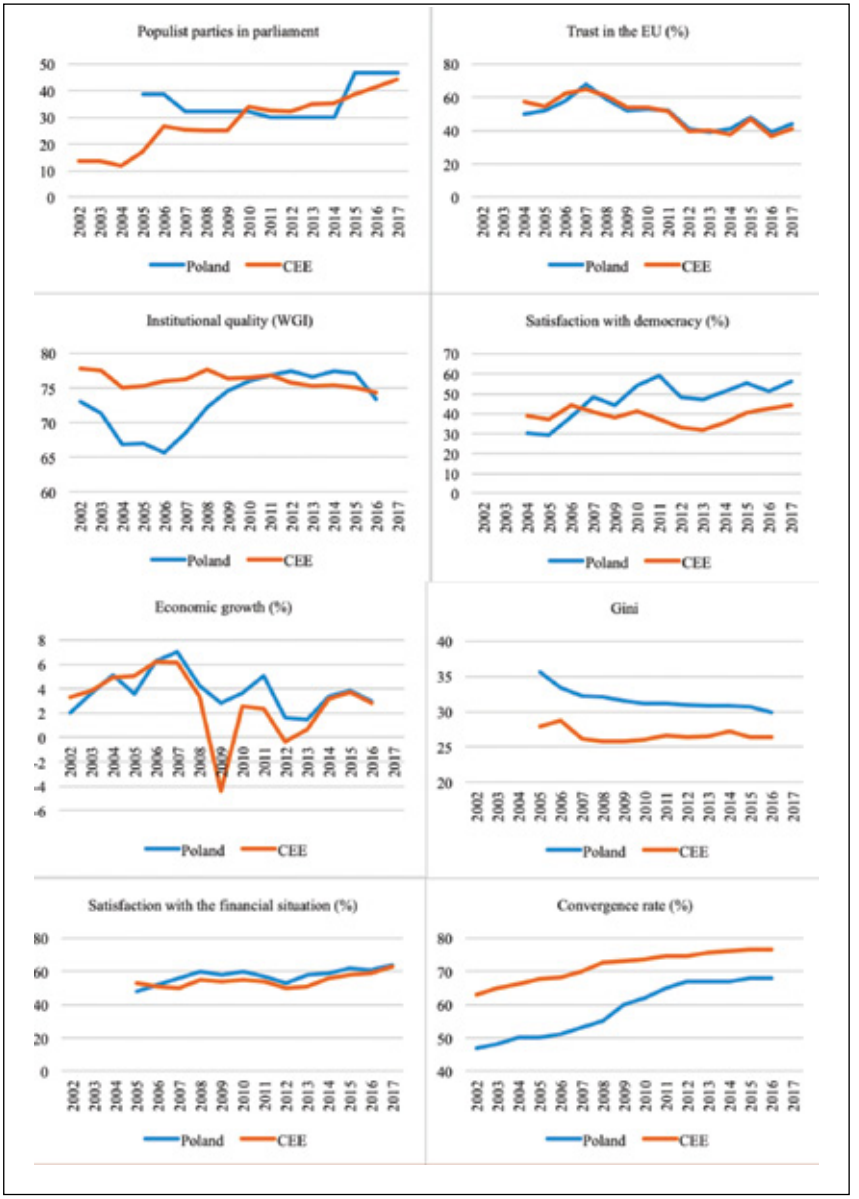
Bold = coalition member; x = coalition collapse. For party descriptions see Appendix.

In Poland, the share of populists in parliament declined in 2007 when the PiS lost the election, and again in 2011 when they lost further support. It increased in 2015 when they returned to power. In the beginning of the observed period, Poland was the only CEE country where populists were the leading coalition party. A positive change in the period 2007–2015 was followed by a U-turn. Trust in the EU went from just below the CEE average to above average in 2007 when it peaked at almost 70%. In subsequent years, it was close to the CEE average. The decline of populists followed high levels of trust in the EU, while low levels were followed by a return of populists.

The decline of populist was followed by a substantial improvement in institutional quality, which increased by over 10 percentage points from the low levels in 2004–2006 to even exceed the CEE average in the period 2011–2015. However, stagnation in absolute terms between 2012 and 2015 was followed by a sharp decline in 2016 after populists took over. Improvements in institutional quality were followed by higher levels of satisfaction with democracy, which went from about 20% in 2004 to 60% in 2011. It declined to 50% in 2012–2013 and rose again afterwards. Changes in satisfaction with democracy correspond to changes in trust in the EU.

Economic growth also went from below to above the CEE average. Between 2007 and 2014, Poland had above-average growth rates and was the least affected by the crisis, which can in part be explained by its greater size, lower development level and weaker

Figure 1.4: Indicator values for Poland



economic integration. After 2013, Poland's relative advantage to the rest of CEE melted. Economic growth trends were followed by corresponding trends in satisfaction with democracy and populism. The Gini index was extremely high at the outset of the period. It declined, particularly in the first years, but remained relatively high. Apart from 2005, satisfaction with the financial situation was above-average. It declined in the 2011–2012 period. The change in satisfaction with finances followed a corresponding trend in the Gini index and economic growth. It correlates with satisfaction with democracy. As a result of above-average growth, Poland closed half of its development gap with the rest of CEE in the period 2009–2012. This was followed by the gap slightly widening again in the 2013–2017 period.

Government collapses in 2005 and 2006 were a result of a decline in institutional quality, dissatisfaction with democracy, low satisfaction of households with their financial situation and extremely high inequality levels.

Poland was a positive example of how political and economic indicators improved with the weakening of populists' power. Poland was also one of the countries that was least affected by the global economic crisis. However, Poland still faced problems such as a relatively high Gini index and relatively low growth levels considering the overall development level. The European economic crisis brought stagnation in convergence and institutional quality, as well as low levels of trust in the EU. After that, populists returned to power.

Slovenia

Table 1.5: Populist parties and coalition collapses in Slovenia

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Populists	6.27% (SNS)				5.4% (SNS)						5.97% (ZL)				
Coalition collapse								x		x	x				x

Bold = coalition member; x = coalition collapse. For party descriptions see Appendix.

In Slovenia, the share of populist parties in parliament was well below the CEE average throughout the observed period—they were an insignificant actor. After the SNS failed to enter parliament in 2011, not a single populist party was represented there in the

2011–2013 period. In 2014, the ZL entered parliament. Trust in the EU started off slightly above average and peaked in 2008. In 2009, it went below average and stayed there until 2017. It was significantly below the CEE average in 2009–2011 and 2013.

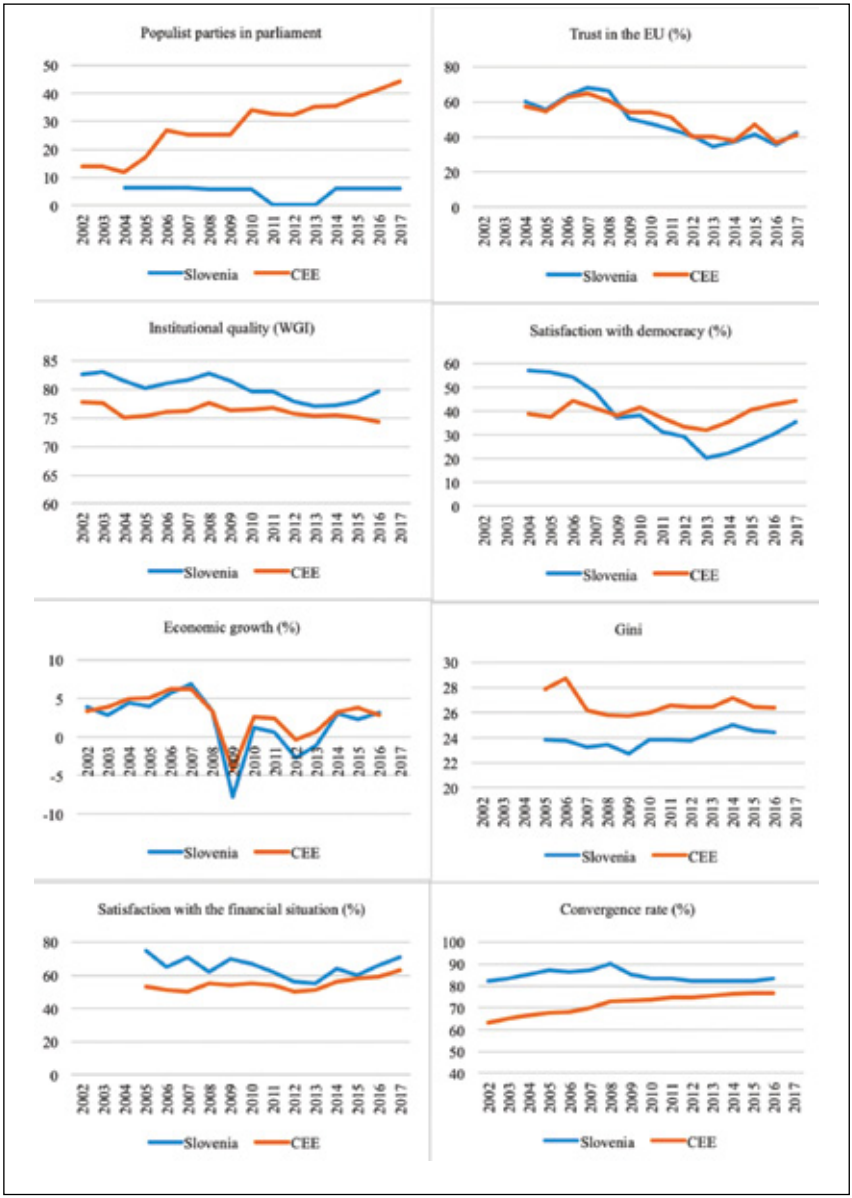
Institutional quality was above average. It declined slightly after EU accession, but rose back to roughly the same level by 2008. It declined a bit more in 2010 and the 2012–2014 period. It increased again in 2015 and the subsequent years, regaining its position in relative terms compared to the rest of CEE. Satisfaction with democracy went from substantially above the CEE average in 2004–2007 to below average in 2009 and subsequent years. It reached the lowest point in 2013 when no more than 20% of respondents were satisfied with democracy. Afterwards, satisfaction started to improve but remained low. After satisfaction declined in 2009 and 2013, the share of populists changed and trust in the EU fell. Moreover, declines in satisfaction with democracy followed declines in institutional quality.

In the early years of the observed period, economic growth was slightly below the CEE average, which is reasonable given the country's higher development level. Due to its strong economic integration, Slovenia faced a steep decline in 2009 and the 2012–2013 period. The decline in economic growth was followed by changes in the share of populists in parliament, a decline in institutional quality, as well as lower satisfaction with democracy and trust in the EU. Gini was below average but the gap did narrow down slightly, and the changes were followed by corresponding changes in satisfaction with the financial situation. Convergence with the EU, which peaked at 90% in 2008, declined to the pre-accession level. Much of the head start compared to the rest of CEE was lost. Convergence only started to pick up again in 2016. The changes in convergence were followed by corresponding changes in satisfaction with democracy and trust towards the EU. Satisfaction with the financial situation was above the CEE average throughout the period.

Political instability in 2011, 2013 and 2014 followed the declines in growth and convergence, institutional quality, trust in the EU, satisfaction with democracy and satisfaction with finance, and correlated with changes in the shares of populist parties in parliament.

To summarise, Slovenia was an advanced country in political and economic terms with a high level of quality of institutions and low importance of populists. Slovenia was affected relatively strongly by both the global and Eurozone crises, leading to a decline in

Figure 1.5: Indicator values for Slovenia



institutional quality, dissatisfaction with democracy, high instability and political volatility. Trust in the EU went from above to below average levels.

Slovakia

Table 1.6: Populist parties and coalition collapses in Slovakia

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Populists			**29.14% (DSD)** **11.73% (SNS)**				34.79 (DSD) **12.14% (SAS)** 5.07% (SNS)		**44.41%(DSD)** **5.88%(SAS)**				**28.3% (DSD)** 12.1% (SAS) 8.64% (SNS) **8.04% (L'SNS)** 6.6% Wearefamily		
Coalition collapse								x							

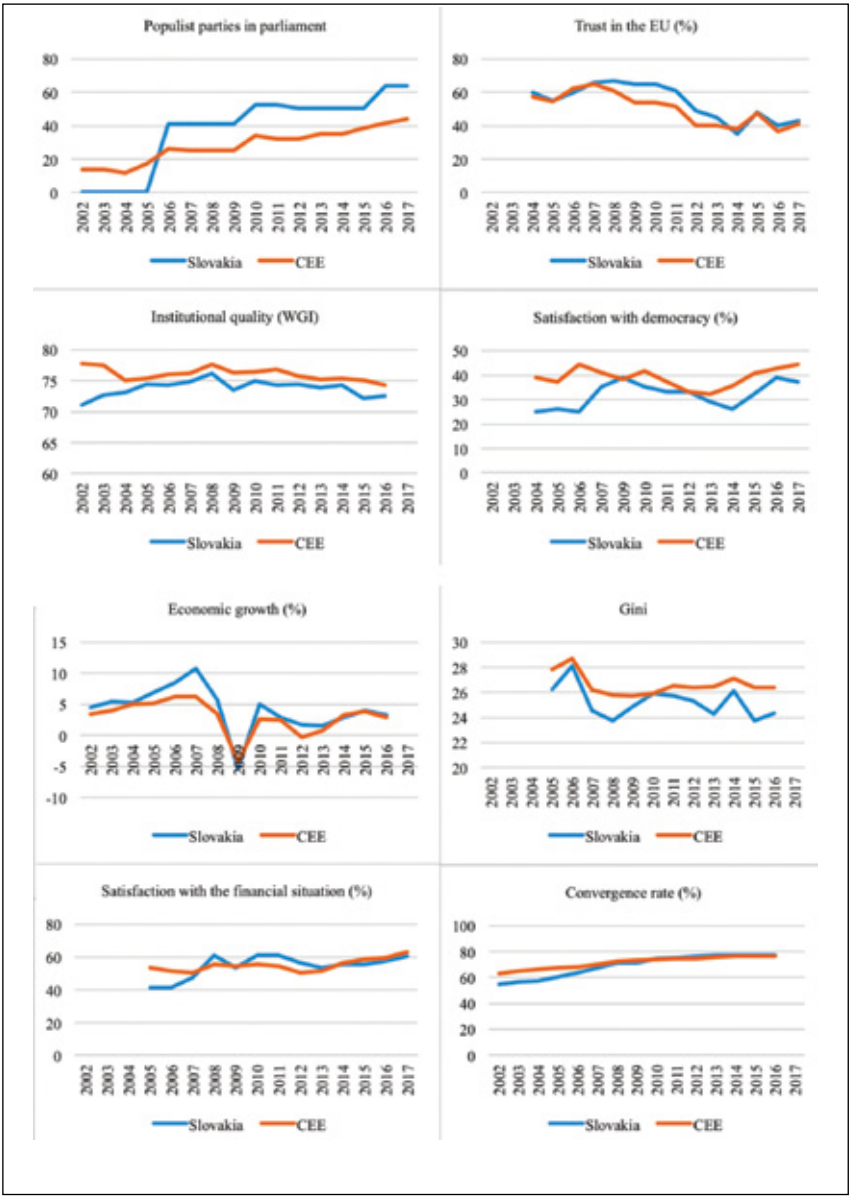
Bold = coalition member; x = coalition collapse. For party descriptions see Appendix.

In Slovakia, there was a surge in populist party presence in 2006 with the DSD and the SNS forming a government coalition, and the levels remained high in the subsequent years. Further increases followed in 2010 and 2016. Trust in the EU—which was on par with the CEE average, with the exception of the period 2008–2013, when it was above average (most of this period trust was at 60% or higher)—started to decline in 2009, reaching its lowest point in 2014.

The quality of political institutions was below CEE average but the gap was reduced, especially in the first years, while the gap widened up again somewhat in 2009 and 2015. The institutional quality curve has a convex shape. Satisfaction with democracy was at very low levels in the period 2004–2006 (about 25% of people were satisfied). It increased rapidly afterwards, reaching 40% in 2009, which was the CEE average at the time. This was followed by a decline, with the lowest point in 2014, again at about 25%, and another increase to 40% in 2009. During most of the period, levels of satisfaction were below the CEE average. Extremely low levels of satisfaction with democracy in the early years of the observed period were followed by a rise of populists in 2006.

Economic growth was above average until 2014, apart from a bit steeper drop in 2009. The changes in growth were followed by corresponding changes in institutional quality. The Gini index was below average. In the early observed years, the peaks in Gini levels

Figure 1.6: Indicator values for Slovakia



correlate with low satisfaction with the financial situation. Growth levels influenced convergence. Slovakia reached the average CEE level in 2010. Changes in convergence were followed by changes in trust towards the EU. Very low levels of financial satisfaction in the period 2005–2006 were followed by a rise of populism. Financial satisfaction levels also correlate with satisfaction with democracy.

The case of Slovakia shows that low satisfaction with democracy and finance influenced the rise of populists soon after accession. This was followed by a period of improvements in both political and economic indicators, interrupted by the economic crises, which brought a decline of growth and an increase in the Gini index, resulting in lower levels of satisfaction with democracy and the share of populists increasing to a majority parliament.

Discussion and conclusion

Table 1.7: Overview of findings

		Populism	**EU attitudes**	**Political**		**Economic**				**Stability**
		Parties	Trust	WGI	Satisf.	Growth	Gini	Conv.	Satisf.	Coal. collapse
Populist	%	x		**HU PL**	**HU**					**SI**
EU-related attitudes	Trust	**CZ HU PL**	x	**HU**	**CZ HU PL SI**					**SI**
Political	WGI	**HU**	**HU**	x	**PL SI**					**CZ PL SI**
	Satisf.	**CZ HU SI SL**	**CZ HU PL SI**		x				**HU PL SL**	**CZ PL SI**
Economic	Growth	**CZ HU PL SI**	**CZ HU SI**	**CZ SI SL**	**CZ HU PL SI**	x		**CZ HU PL SI SL**	**HU PL**	**SI**
	Gini						x		**PL SI SL**	**PL**
	Conv.		**CZ HU SI SL**		**CZ PL SI**			x	**CZ HU**	**SI**
	Satisf.	**HU SL**			**HU PL SL**				x	**PL SI**
Stability	Coal. collapse	**HU SI**	**SI**	**CZ SI**	**CZ SI**	**SI**				x

Legend: Right = dependent variable; down = independent variable

The indicative correlations are presented in Table 1.7. According to the research, institutional quality is an important driver of populism and negative EU-related attitudes only in the case of Hungary, where negative changes in the WGI are consistently followed by rising shares of populists and lower trust in the EU. Indeed, institutional

quality issues in Hungary have become much deeper compared to other CEE countries, which might explain the pivotal role of this factor. Institutional quality plays a slightly more important role when it comes to satisfaction with democracy, where corresponding changes were noted in both Hungary and Poland. Once again, these are countries where institutional quality problems were more intense. Changes in institutional quality were followed by corresponding (negative) changes in stability in the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovenia.

Satisfaction with democracy is a much more significant factor when it comes to explaining the rise of populists and negative attitudes towards the EU. Low levels of satisfaction were followed by rising shares of populists in all countries but Poland and by more negative EU-related attitudes in all countries but Slovakia. In several cases, changes in satisfaction with democracy were also followed by corresponding changes in financial satisfaction. Satisfaction with democracy influenced the stability in the same countries as changes in institutional quality. The difference between the actual changes in institutional quality and perceived quality of democracy shows that the quality of political institutions is not really such an important factor but is rather a way in which dissatisfaction is framed or expressed—by populists and non-populists, domestic politicians and Brussels alike.

As far as economic or output indicators are concerned, economic growth was an important driver of populists rising in all countries but Slovakia. It was moderately important for changes in attitudes towards the EU (it was not relevant in Poland and Slovakia, which were least affected by the crisis). Moreover, it affected institutional quality in Czech Republic, Slovenia and Slovakia, where the levels of institutional development were higher before the crisis, and it also had an impact on satisfaction with democracy, where sequences of corresponding change were established in all countries but Slovakia. Inequality levels also had some importance for financial satisfaction, especially in the early years of the observed period and in countries where it was high. Economic convergence played a role for EU-related attitudes in all countries but Poland, which started as the least developed country. It also affected satisfaction with democracy in all three CEE countries that faced substantial fluctuations in the given period—either positive, as in the case of Poland, or negative, as in the cases of the Czech Republic and Slovenia. Satisfaction with

the financial situation influenced satisfaction with democracy in the same cases were a reverse link was established. It influenced the rise of populists in the early years of the observed period in Hungary and Slovakia, where it was related with high levels of inequality. All this shows that economic effects were much more important than typically perceived.

From the perspective of the difference between the actual and the perceived role, it is interesting to observe the role of populists and EU-related attitudes as independent variables. Populists affected the quality of institutions in Poland and Hungary, where institutional quality issues are more profound, but played a minor role in other CEE countries. Changing attitudes towards the EU (decline in trust) were important for the rise of populists in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, as well as satisfaction with democracy in all but Slovakia. The limited impact of populists on other variables shows that the drivers were more or less external, which is also proven by the significant role of EU-related attitudes.

To summarise, this research demonstrates that institutional quality is, indeed, much less of a key driver of populism than structural economic factors. Moreover, insufficient politisation of economic governance is not only likely to be a mechanism underlying a rise of populism but also leads—due to a lack of alternative economic policies among populists— to further growth of populism and even to more authoritarian forms of populism, which, ironically, seem to be the only ones capable of sustaining the economic change through concentration of power and by scapegoating existing (EU) elites and institutions.

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Appendix: Populist parties in the five CEE countries included in the research

Czech Republic

Party	History	Result	Ideology	European alliance / EP group
ANO—yes	– Created in 2012 by tycoon Andrej Babiš – Roots in the movement ANO (Akce Nespokojených Občanů – Action of dissatisfied citizens)	– 18.7% in the 2013 election – Won the 2017 election	– Centre-right anti-corruption, anti-establishment – The Czech Republic should be run like a business – Soft Euroscepticism (on deepening and the Euro)	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
SPD (Svoboda a přímá demokracie—Freedom and Direct Democracy)	– Created in 2015 by Tomio Okimura – Shares the name with the EU Parliament Eurosceptic political group Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy	– 22 seats in the 2017 election	– Anti-immigration, anti-Islam and pro-direct democracy – Eurosceptic; endorsed by Marine Le Pen's National Front before the 2017 election	Movement for a Europe of Nations and Freedom
Úsvit – Národní koalice (Dawn—National Coalition)*	– Founded by Okimura, an independent senator attached to the Christian Democratic parliamentary group and by members of the Public Affairs party	– In the 2013 election, the party got 6.88%, winning 14 seats	– Direct democracy at all levels (referendums, direct election, presidential system and stronger separation of powers) – Against corruption, nepotism, cronyism and kleptocracy	
VV (Věci veřejné—Public Affairs)	– Led by anti-establishment investigative journalist and writer Radek John and later by Jiří Kohout	– 10.88% in the 2010 election (24 seats in the lower chamber in 2010–2013)	– Transparency and fight against political corruption, direct democracy – Supported various right-wing policies (but was not anti-immigrant) – Pro-EU	

*June 2014 to August 2015. (Úsvit přímé demokracie Tomia Okamury—Tomio Okamura's Dawn of Direct Democracy: since May 2013; Úsvit přímé demokracie—Dawn of Direct Democracy: June 2013 to June 2014)

Source: Pirro (2013); van Kessel (2015); FEPS (2016); National election commissions; party web pages and media reports

Hungary

Party	History	Result	Ideology	European alliance / EP group
Fidesz Magyar Polgári Szövetség—Civic Alliance	– Founded in 1988, anti-communism and libertarian – By 1998 it became the most important conservative political force in Hungary – Led by Viktor Orbán	– Important nationally and locally since the 2010 general election	– Nationalism, national, economic and social conservatism, Christian democracy – Soft Euroscepticism (anti-immigration)	European People's Party
Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom—The Movement for a Better Hungary	– Founded in 2003, led by Gábor Vona – After 2014 it started to reposition itself as a more moderate "modern conservative people's party".	– Third largest party in the National Assembly since the 2014 parliamentary election	– Social and economic nationalism – Anti-globalism, far right – Blames EU accession for most of the problems in the country, is for EU reform	
MDF (Magyar Demokrata Fórum—Hungarian Democratic Forum)	– Founded in 1987 and dissolved in 2011 – Born as a forum aimed at discussing "radically democratic grassroots politics" and at offering a third way between capitalism and communism	– Ruled from 1990 to 1994 – In alliance with Fidesz from 1994 to 2006	– Conservatism, Christian democracy, nationalism and right-wing populism	Alliance of European Conservatives and Reformists

Source: Pirro (2013); van Kessel (2015); FEPS (2016); National election commissions; party web pages and media reports

Poland

Party	History	Result	Ideology	European alliance / EP group
PiS (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość—Law and Justice)	– Founded by Lech and Jarosław Kaczyński in 2001	– Occupies the largest number of seats in parliament	– National and Christian democratic social conservatism, anti-immigration and state intervention – Euroscepticism	Alliance of Conservatives and Reformist
SRP (Samoobrona Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej—Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland)	– Founded in 1992 by Andrzej Lepper – Led by Lech Kuropatwiński	– Its alliances have changed throughout the years	– Isolationist, agrarian and nationalistic, where left-wing populist economic policies merge with religious conservative social policies.	A founding member of the EU Democrats, which aim to unite "centrist" EU-critical parties to improve democratisation
Kukiz'15	– Political movement led by former musician Paweł Kukiz	– Won 42 seats in the 2015 election in cooperation with the far-right National Movement party	– Anti-establishment, lacking a coherent programme, broad coalition, including far-right – Against particracy, for change of electoral law, separation of powers, civil liberties, obligatory referendums	

Source: Pirro (2013); van Kessel (2015); FEPS (2016); National election commissions; party web pages and media reports

Slovakia

Party	History	Result	Ideology	European alliance / EP group
Smer-SD (Smer–sociálna demokracia—Direction Social Democracy)	– Founded in 1999 – Led by Robert Fico	– Holds 49 seats out of 150 in the National Council and is the largest party	– Left-wing nationalism and a pro-European attitude (anti-immigration)	European Socialists; Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
SaS (Sloboda a Solidarita—Freedom and Solidarity	– Founded in 2009 by Richard Sulík		– Liberal, libertarian centre-right – Soft Euroscepticism (opposes the mechanisms and bureaucracy of the EU)	Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists
ĽSNS or Kotleba (Naše Slovensko—People's Party Our Slovakia)	– Founded in 2010 – Led by Marian Kotleba		– Far-right national populist, neo-Nazi authoritarianism, reactionary politics, right-wing populism, anti-globalism and anti-immigration	Alliance for Peace and Freedom
Sme rodina—We Are Family	– Founded in 2015 – Led by Boris Kollár	– Won 11 seats in the National Council in the 2016 parliamentary election	– Centre to right-wing populism, national conservatism, economic liberalism, anti-immigration – Euroscepticism	
SNS (Slovenská národná strana—Slovak National Party)	– Founded in 1989 – Led by Andrej Danko		– National, economic and social conservatism, right-wing populism – Euroscepticism	Movement for a Europe of Liberties and Democracy; Europe of Freedom and Democracy

Source: Pirro (2013); van Kessel (2015); FEPS (2016); National election commissions; party web pages and media reports

Slovenia

Party	History	Result	Ideology	European alliance / EP group
ZL (Združena levica—United Left)	– Founded in 2014; replaced in 2017 by The Left, which merged together the Democratic Labour Party (DSD) and the Party for Sustainable Development (TRS)		– Democratic socialism, eco-socialism, anti-capitalism – Euroscepticism	Party of the European Left
SNS (Slovenska nacionalna stranka—Slovenian National Party)	– Founded in 1991 – Led by Zmago Jelinčič Plemeniti	– Struggling to have parliamentary representation since 2011	– Nationalism, different political positions, chauvinism, – Euroscepticism	

Source: Pirro (2013); van Kessel (2015); FEPS (2016); National election commissions; party web pages and media reports

Chapter 2: Crises of the EU and the rise of populism and Euroscepticism in CEE

Ana Bojinović Fenko, Jure Požgan, Marko Lovec

Introduction—the internal and external dimensions of state interest in the CEE states

It was only after the Cold War had ended that the EU member states of CEE gained sovereignty and started their democratic political transition. A common feature of the five states was their foreign policy aim to become members of the EU, which they all pursued as a priority goal after the crumbling of the bipolar world system. This goes in line with liberal theories within International Relations, which posit that small and open economies depend on the international (and now EU) order pooling them into alliances and stable political and economic institutional cooperation (such as the EU).

By exposing in public debates mainly the benefits and rarely the costs of EU membership, the CEE countries' governments managed to succeed in gaining public support for this foreign policy objective (either through public opinion polls or in accession referenda). Such a one-sided "debate" also caused extremely high irrational expectations from EU accession on the side of the people in CEE.

The expectations of Slovenians were that membership would assure stability of democracy, freedom of movement and economic opportunities, as they dreamt the country would become a second Switzerland (Bojinović Fenko and Svetličič, 2017). In Hungary, the reference point for prosperity was the level of economic development of Austria (Ugrozdy, 2016: 107). Poland defined its Euro-Atlantic integration as a "return to Europe." Its aim was to escape communism and Russia's sphere of influence, but also to geopolitically balance with neighbouring Germany and in general to catch up with the biggest EU member states economically (Germany, the UK and France)

(Stormowska and Dufour, 2016: 169). In the Czech Republic, all governments agreed prior to its EU accession on the importance of membership; only the Czech president took a stand against the accession conditions negotiated by the government (Bartovic, 2016: 50).

Euroscepticism was underrepresented in domestic debates during the accession process within all five CEE states. Accession referenda results (Table 2.1) show that the governments managed to persuade voters who were not supportive or were sceptical about EU accession not to vote.

Table 2.1: Accession referenda in the EU member states of CEE

	Date	Turnout	In favour
Slovenia	23 March 2003	60.3%	89.6%
Hungary	12 April 2003	45.6%	89.6%
Slovakia	16–17 May 2003	52.1%	92.5%
Poland	7–8 June 2003	58.9%	77.5%
Czech Republic	15–16 June 2003	55.2%	77.3%

If the unrealistic expectations and absence of rational national debate served as a context for what was a suppressed potential Eurosceptic political stance, the inability to effectively integrate into EU decision-making structures and failure to achieve the abovementioned irrational expectations about economic prosperity raised the acknowledgment of "suboptimal" gains a couple of years into the membership. One may presume that poor performance of the EU as an organisation in some of the crises of the recent decade may have served as an additional fuel for the Eurosceptic political stance. Two effects can be highlighted from this experience.

First, it seems that debating the EU was and remains reserved for national political elites. In Slovakia, "discussing Europe is mostly confined to the circle of political and business elites", whereas in the public sphere, the EU is at best discussed as a resource for the state budget (Benje, 2016: 196). Researchers thus note the so-called Slovak paradox (ibid.)—high enthusiasm for the EU on the one side and citizens' disconnection from domestic political actors on the other, resulting for example in a staggeringly low turnout in elections to the European Parliament of only 13.05%. A similar effect can be observed in the Czech Republic, where it is reflected in extremely low citizens' knowledge of EU affairs—e.g. a national opinion poll

in 2014 provided alarming information that 68% of Czechs cannot recall the name of even a single MEP (Bartovic, 2016: 51–52). These results are not as problematic *per se*—disconnection of the domestic public from EU affairs increases with the bloc's complexity, and an elite-driven debate about the effects of the EU in national societies can also be seen in other member states, even those that have been members much longer. In this regard, the preliminary finding is that EU affairs entered domestic political debate in the five CEE states in somewhat ideal conditions for populism—opening up the political space against the previous usurpation of the topic by the national political elites. Interestingly, however, while many new domestic populist political parties in the CEE states chose Euroscepticism as their platform, the nature and the success of these parties differs. In Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, Eurosceptic populist parties of the extreme to centre right have come to power to lead national governments, whereas in Slovakia, the Eurosceptic ruling party is leftist populist. In Slovenia, however, Euroscepticism is not widely present in domestic political parties nor has it achieved high results—the only successful Eurosceptic party is from the extreme left, and it succeeded to get into parliament by a small margin in 2014 (see below). It is thus interesting to observe the nature of Eurosceptic arguments of right or left-wing populist parties in view of their effect on national politics.

The second effect of opening up national politics on EU affairs in the member states of CEE was a foreign policy–related argument, a populist discourse that the EU was a project run by the European political elite (big member states) against small/less powerful member states.[1] This is an argument of disproportion in an equal sovereign member state's influence at the EU level, where small member states are supposed to be positively discriminated (e.g. in political representation of nationals in the European Parliament and in the Council voting calculus). A case in point is the abovementioned Eurosceptic

1 This type of small-state-vs-the-EU-elite stance is not uncommon, or limited to new CEE member states. When EU member states' governments boycotted Austria's right and extreme right government parties (the Christian Democrats—ÖVP and the Freedom Party of Austria—FPÖ) in 2000, this provoked a national discourse of EU diplomatic sanctions against Austria, resulting "in the formation of a rather patriotic sentiment throughout the country: the EU having taken an unjustified offending stance towards the country of Mozart" (Raich, 2016: 11).

voice of the Czech president that the EU political elite overran Czech politicians in accession negotiations. The result is scapegoating: "Brussels wants this, Brussels demands" that has often been the governments' justification of unpopular national reforms in Slovenia (Bojinović Fenko, 2016), Hungary (Ugrozdy, 2016), the Czech Republic (Havlik and Havlik, 2018) and Slovakia (Benje, 2016). For Poland, as a larger state with greater capabilities, we can assess that despite the goal of joining the big EU member states in terms of influence in EU politics, where it aimed at "acting as a bridge between the EU and the Eurozone /…/ to ensure the inclusiveness of all projects of integration" (Stormowska and Dufour, 2016: 169), Poland failed to achieve the political power at the EU level that it expected to achieve. While scapegoating is a well-known and common two-level game (Putnam, 1988) effect, which member states' governments use for "selling tough common agreements" in the Netherlands, Italy, Austria or France to name only the recent member states where Eurosceptic parties were highly successful, it is their particular political, economic and historical context that makes the CEE countries different. As the case of Hungary highlights, the "political right and the widely EU-sceptic far-right are keen to point out the—perceived or real—double standards Member States have to face in their European pursuits. This makes for a general understanding that the EU is not a level playing field" (Ugrozdy, 2016: 107).

This stance intensified greatly during the EU crises (namely the economic and financial crisis and the migration crisis). In Slovakia, references to double standards in managing the Greek bailout were reported, stating that "fiscally responsible Slovakia was being pressured into reallocating resources to an 'irresponsible' member state (Greece), whose citizens' incomes are much higher than those of the average Slovak", resulting in a perception of "a breach into Slovak sovereignty and a direct intrusion into the Slovak taxpayer's wallet" (Benje, 2016: 195–197). In Slovenia, the discourse of necessary solidarity but by no means double standards to the detriment of other member states was exposed during the Greek bailout as well. This only intensified in the cases of Luxleaks and pre-Brexit vote demands by the UK, with the argument that the EU should not have an elitist preference of some member states over the other (Bojinović Fenko, 2016: 205). A drop in trust in the EU was directly acknowledged by Polish citizens in 2014 as an effect of the economic and financial crisis (Stormowska and Dufour, 2016: 170), exposing

that a potential further exacerbation of "challenging times" would continue to weaken Poles' support for the EU (Cichocki, 2011: 274). Moreover, the Visegrad Four have all expressed a highly dissenting opinion as to the EU's management of the migration crisis.

As shown above, multiple contexts contributed to the rise of populism, which also includes Eurosceptic standpoints in the EU member states of CEE. The opening up of national politics after EU accession—in the context of only positive expectations because a balanced debate on the effects of EU membership had been absent up until then—contributed to domestic populism; a discourse of national political elites against the general public with diverse populist parties and their different success in elections. Moreover, the international and particularly the EU order in the crises resulted in the loss of legitimacy for the previously praised European project—by which CEE states identified themselves—and exposed its possible asymmetrical effects on individual member states in terms of elitist big EU powers vs unequal, second-class CEE member states.

The aim of this chapter is first to more precisely conceptualise the link between populism and the two origin levels of Euroscepticism demonstrated above—the domestic and the EU level. In the empirical part, we first map the nature of populist and Eurosceptic political parties in the five EU member states of CEE. In the next section, we pursue an empirical investigation into the standpoints of political parties and governments in the five CEE states using two case studies of recent EU crises—the economic and financial crisis and the migration crisis. We pursue the following research questions: Was the particular EU crisis used in framing populist parties' positions? Does the Euroscepticism of populist parties originate from opposition to the domestic elites (within the fight for power) or the EU elite (aiming at a better position for the member state within the EU)? And finally, which type of interest underlying populist parties' Euroscepticism was most successful in domestic elections?

The link between populism and Euroscepticism in the EU member states of CEE

International Relations (IR) theory presumes that the position of a state according to its power in the international system defines its foreign policy behaviour. Viewed only from this perspective, the five EU member states of CEE would essentially all have to pursue very

similar foreign policy actions towards EU integration as they account for small powers. Small states[2] usually practice multilateralism, focusing on regional affairs, promoting cooperation, counting on big states and striving for good neighbourly relations (Hey, 2003); which well explains the CEE states' aspiration for EU membership. Contrary to this, the above accounts of small CEE states' rising and diverse Euroscepticism cannot be accounted for by the approach conceptualising small states' action within international organisations (Baillie, 1998).[3] Euroscepticism refers to "the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration" (Taggart, 1998: 366). The dominant scholarship differentiates between 'hard' and 'soft' Euroscepticism, with hard Euroscepticism implying "outright rejection of the entire project of European political and economic integration", and soft Euroscepticism involving "contingent or qualified opposition to European integration" (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2004: 3–4; Pirro and Taggart, 2018: 256). If the EU generally brings about more benefits than costs to small member states, Euroscepticism does not seem as rational or sensible foreign policy behaviour from the perspective of IR. One of the potential small state foreign policy strategies is also a critical approach (Elgström, 1983). Soft Euroscepticism could be seen as a critical approach to mainstream EU policies, however, the presumption is that critique should be applied in a field where a small state has high comparative advantage, ideal national practice of policy solutions, or a really good track record of international action. Euroscepticism as defined above draws mainly from criticism against elite politics, and therefore does not seem to fit this outline. Also, the accounts of Euroscepticism in the five EU member states of CEE show a rather weak and fragile position towards the EU, not a leading one. Therefore, we will apply the Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) approach on the link between internal politics

2 However defined by quantifiable or qualitative criteria (see Maass, 2009), we take it as a presupposition that all five states in question are small states in terms of their influence in the international system. We do recognise, however, that their relative power positions within the EU differ.

3 Small states generally pursue foreign policy strategies such as conflict avoidance, ensuring non-competitive relations (bi- and multilateral cooperation), assuming the role of a negotiator or an honest broker, and profiting from their comparative advantage, including geographical position or historical context, and consequently ensuring their national interest through a niche approach (Baillie, 1998).

and foreign policy, opening up the black box (Hudson and Vore, 1995: 209–210; Kubálková, 2001: 16) in search of additional weight of internal (rather that external) factors on a government's decision to pursue a Eurosceptic foreign policy position.

The influence of domestic factors and actors on foreign policy decision-making has been extensively conceptualised and also empirically researched in FPA.[4] With more direct reference to our problem, the literature also exposes strong influence of domestic constituencies in form of individual or group decision-makers (Allison, 2012; Kinsella, Russett and Starr, 2013; Hill, 2016; Morin and Paquin, 2018), political parties and government–opposition dynamics (Neack, 2008; Hudson, 2014), the media and interest groups (Neack, 2008; Beach, 2012: 76–83; Hill, 2016: 277–282; Morin and Paquin, 2018), and NGOs termed as the broader society and expert institutions, like think-tanks (Hudson, 2014: 146–149; Morin and Paquin 2018: 195–200). In the case of Euroscepticism, the public opinion drawing on the support for political parties' negative stance towards the EU seems to matter the most. There is ample empirical evidence of the importance of public opinion in shaping foreign policy content, but this research is related to big powers (e.g. regarding the US and its military operations). One such finding asserts that elite (expert) public opinion tends to be more supportive of official foreign policy (Kinsella, Russett and Starr, 2013: 113). Moreover, those with more conservative views on domestic issues, such as praying in schools, environmental regulation, homosexuality and welfare, also tend to adopt a hard-line attitude and are more inclined to advocate militant foreign policy; in general, they tend to be more hawkish on foreign policy issues (Kinsella, Russett and Starr, 2013: 113–114). In this paper, we also take into account the consideration that governments (and political parties) make use of foreign policy issues to influence the domestic public opinion (Morin and Paquin, 2018: 176–182) and the media (Morin and Paquin, 2018: 184–186).

In the introduction, we pointed to the political discourse by which

4 Authors agree on the importance of the following domestics factors: national attributes (Hudson, 2014), the nature of the political system (Breuning, 2007: 117–120; Alden and Aran, 2012: 50–53; Morin and Paquin, 2018: 128–133), culture (Hudson, 2014), political and strategic culture (Kinsella, Russett and Starr, 2013: 102–105) and domestic institutions (Alden and Aran, 2012: 53–54; Morin and Paquin, 2018) and finally public opinion (Neack, 2008; Beach, 2012: 70–75; Hill, 2016: 277–282; Morin and Paquin, 2018).

several political parties in the CEE states define EU integration as a project of the political elite against the less powerful mass (either at national or at EU level). Populism can be considered a political strategy, an ideology or discourse. In the literature, there is a consensus on the core analytical elements of its definition. Mudde (2004: 543) defines this phenomenon as "an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite', and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people". In line with this, populism is characterised by the following four elements: (a) criticism of the elites and the establishment in general; (b) the importance of popular sovereignty; (c) immanent tensions between the elites and the people, and (d) misrepresentation of the popular will in politics (Pirro and Taggart, 2018: 255–256). When it appears or gains momentum, populism impacts the entire domestic political scene, including the government, which has to position itself with regard to this political strategy. Based on the model proposed by Pirro and Taggart (2018: 259), mainstream political parties can opt to either engage or disengage from competition with their populist competitors. They can use an active approach, directly addressing the competition, or a passive approach of not addressing the competitors directly. In the case of engagement, they can either actively collaborate or passively co-opt, while in case of disengagement, they can actively isolate or passively ignore the populists on European issues. Populism is thus understood in this paper as a political strategy and discourse of presenting a Eurosceptic policy programme.

Euroscepticism in the observed EU member states of CEE gained considerable ground during the global and EU crises of the last 10 years (detailed empirical evidence in Table 2.2 below), when the EU failed to address emerging challenges effectively as an organisation. The crisis refers to a moment of choice about "stark alternatives" that demand action, a significant change that produces "distinct legacies" (Pirro and Taggart, 2018: 257–258). In Foreign Policy Analysis in particular, a foreign policy crisis situation resulting from fear of catastrophe often leads to deliberate attempts to build consensus and to spread the responsibility for decision-making to a wider group than usual (Hill, 2016: 63). This definitely deviates from the above accounts of the CEE states' domestic diversity in approaches to dealing with EU crises, but could on the other hand confirm the listed engagement response options of mainstream parties to populist

positions (active collaboration or passive co-opting). Recent EU crises have also been considered as a key driver of contemporary populism although the link has been under-theorised (Minkenberg, 2002; Moffitt, 2015). We intend to investigate the link between Euroscepticism and populism using a conceptual framework of the domestic and external aspects of states' national interest. Alons (2007) defines states' interest as a construct of political, economic and ideological subsets in two dimensions: the external and the internal. While the external dimension refers to the nature and quality of a state's relations in world politics and to its power position in the international system, the internal dimension refers to the government's direct political, economic and ideological interests, which support its positive public perception and ensure it remains in power. We apply this conceptual scheme to Eurosceptic interests of domestic political parties and governments in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Euroscepticism applied in populism as an element of internal and external dimensions of state and government interests in the EU member states of CEE

EXTERNAL		INTERNAL (DOMESTIC)
Criticism of a weak position and low influence of the (unprivileged) CEE state within EU decision-making	**Political interest**	Fight for power (to remain in office)
Bypassing the EU as the authority in international trade agreements to gain national/government profit	**Economic interest**	Improving national economic performance/ conditions for the masses (jobs, prosperity)
Presenting the CEE state's role as being exploited by the EU elite/big member states—double standards in the EU project	**Ideological interest**	Scapegoating the EU for domestic unpopular reforms or unsuccessful policies; 2-level game, nationalism

Source: own elaboration based on Alons (2007: 215)

The internal dimension of Euroscepticism can be recognised as populism for domestic purposes—the application of a Eurosceptic platform by political parties for the purpose of the fight for power in the struggle of the masses against the national elite (political interest), to show where national economic performance needs to be improved or is hindered by the EU (economic interest), or to defend Euroscepticism as an instrumental reference to the EU's failure in crises in order to raise national government's value (scapegoating). The external dimension of state interest can be linked to political parties and national government applying Euroscepticism in criticism of the state's weak position and influence within EU decision-making

(political interest), referring to the status they expect (e.g. Poland on the same level as big powers, Hungary as equal to Austria). The economic interest refers to bypassing the EU as the authority in international trade agreements to gain national/government profit, whereas stressing the CEE state's role as disadvantaged and exploited by the EU elite/big member states due to double standards is a representation of an external ideological interest.

Populism in the EU member states of CEE

As shown in the definition of the problem, there was no open political debate on EU-related issues prior to accession in all five CEE states but rather it was a predetermined identity-related foreign policy goal for the post-Communist states. As demonstrated in Table 2.3 and Figure 2.1 below, populism has been in rise in the CEE states since EU accession, particularly in the period 2009–2010, in 2012 and after 2014 (for details on individual parties, see Appendix to Chapter 1).

Table 2.3: Parliamentary populist and Eurosceptic parties in CEE states (share of votes); 2004–2018

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Czech Republic							**10.88% (VV)**			**18.65% (ANO) €** 6.88% (Dawn)				**29.64% (ANO) €** 10.64% (SPD) €	
Hungary	41.07% (MDF, FIDESZ)		42.03% (FIDESZ+KDNP) 5.04% (MDF)				**52.73% (FIDESZ+KDNP)** 16.67% (JOBBIK) €				**44.87% (FIDESZ+KDNP) €** 20.22% (JOBBIK) €				**49.27% (FIDESZ+KDNP) €** 19.06% (JOBBIK) €
Poland		**27% (PiS)** 11.4% (SRP)		32.11% (PiS)				29.89% (PiS) €				**37.85% (PiS) €** 8.81% (Kukiz15)			
Slovakia			**29.14% (SSD) 11.73% (SNS) €**				34.79 (SSD) **12.14% (SAS) €** 5.07% (SNS) €		**44.41% (SSD) 5.88% (SAS) €**				**28.3% (SSD) €** 12.1% (SAS) € 8.64% (SNS) € **8.04% (L'SNS) €** 6.6% Wearefamily €		
Slovenia	6.27% (SNS) €				5.4% (SNS) €						5.97% (ZL) €				**9.33% (ZL)* €** 4.17% (SNS) €

Bold = government coalition member; € = Eurosceptic; *Support for minority government

Euroscepticism, which was practically non-existent before 2009 (JOBBIK in Hungary being an exception), was on the rise in the periods 2009–2011, 2013–2014 and after. A general initial finding

is that populism as a political strategy of state-level parties emerged before Euroscepticism in all five EU member states of CEE. However, Euroscepticism has been used as the main frame for the populist strategy in Visegrad four since 2009/2010. As for Slovenia, the trend is identical for populist and Eurosceptic parties (see Figure 2.1 below).

Figure 2.1: Parliamentary populist and Eurosceptic parties in CEE (share of votes)

Source: National election commissions (for details on individual parties, see Appendix to Chapter 1).

The first wave of the rise of populism can be linked to the weakening of conditionality mechanisms following EU accession, which has affected institutional quality in the CEE states. Due to the benefits related with the EU membership, Euroscepticism was marginal at the time. Conversely, the second wave of the rise of populism and Euroscepticism (2009–2011) can be linked to the global and European financial and economic crisis. In this second wave, Euroscepticism increased more than populism, spurred by the prolonged effects of the crisis in the Eurozone and the opening up of the domestic political debate for negative effects of EU membership as the latter failed to provide the expected results for the domestic general population but mostly benefited domestic elites. This was followed by a third wave characterised by an increase in the share of populist and Eurosceptic parties (2013–2014 and after), which can be explained with the series of EU crises: the specific Eurozone and banking crisis and second recession period, Brexit, the migrant and refugee crisis, as well as other events contributing to the ongoing crisis of European integration. Weak management of crises by the European Commission and the European Council offered a pretext for populist Eurosceptic parties to fruitfully continue to pursue and step up their Eurosceptic positions, adding also the criticism of double standards imposed by the EU political elite against less powerful EU member states.

Case studies

We will review two case studies to answer our research questions. In both case studies of EU crises (Eurozone and migration crisis), we will investigate the same data:

1) The relevance /impact of the EU crisis on domestic affairs; measured on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means no impact and 5 refers to a high impact of the crisis.
2) Presence of populist blaming the EU crisis for internal problems (YES/NO).
3) The functional pretext or the source of Euroscepticism in terms of political, economic or ideological state interest.
4) The level of origin of criticism against the EU (the dimension of Euroscepticism—INTERNAL or EXTERNAL).
5) The domestic impact of populist blaming—what was the response of mainstream parties to populist parties' Eurosceptic positions

(engagement—active collaboration or passive co-opting vs disengagement—active isolation or passive ignorance).

We compare the findings on all five variables to answer the research questions in the Conclusion.

The Eurozone crisis

Slovenia—a small and open economy and the first of the five CEE states to join the Eurozone (in 2007)—was strongly affected by the global financial crisis and the Eurozone crisis, which resulted in substantial political turmoil. In 2011, the crisis led to the collapse of the centre-left government led by Borut Pahor, followed by a new parliamentary election. While some of the parties, such as the newly emerged Positive Slovenia (*Pozitivna Slovenija*—PS) led by former businessmen and Mayor of Ljubljana Zoran Janković, criticised the EU's austerity programme and argued for a new economic policy (a "new deal") that would create jobs for the people, most of them blamed their predecessors in power, and were committed to implementing the structural reforms devised by Brussels. The PS won the election but was unable to form a government. More overt populists and Eurosceptics, such as the Slovenian National Party (*Slovenska nacionalna stranka*—SNS), however, actually failed to reach the threshold to get into parliament in 2011. Things changed in the 2014 election, when the United Left (*Združena levica*—ZL), a party akin to Syriza in Greece and Podemos in Spain, criticising the Eurozone policy of austerity, entered parliament. However, the ZL remained isolated in its views. By 2014, Slovenia was able to stabilise its public finances through painful fiscal measures, and the new centre-left coalition adopted a strong pro-EU approach. The new Finance Minister Dušan Mramor was very much in line with Eurozone policies, and was particularly tough on his Greek counterpart from Syriza, arguing "they should follow the Slovenian example" (Varoufakis, 2017).

In **Slovakia**—another Eurozone member of CEE (since 2009)—the bailout programme to help Greece resulted in early elections in 2010. The government led by Robert Fico from Direction Social Democracy (*Smer–sociálna demokracia*—SSD) supported Slovak participation in the programme for strategic reasons (considering stability of the Eurozone as crucial for Slovakia), while the right-wing partner Slovak National Party (*Slovenská národná strana*—SNS) renounced its support. The SSD won subsequent election, but a government coalition

was formed by right-wing parties that rejected Slovak participation in the programme (Slovakia was the only Eurozone member which did not take part). The new Prime Minister Iveta Radičová explained this by saying that "the more responsible, poor countries should not be raising for less responsible, richer ones", and that the burden was borne by taxpayers and not by creditors (Goliaš and Jurzyca, 2013) thus referring to the split between financial elites or privileged Europeans and ordinary taxpayers from poorer member states, a feature of populist discourse. At the same time, parliament approved the contribution to the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) but refused to approve its expansion in 2011, once again making Slovakia the only Eurozone country against it. This time, Radičová supported the proposal and tied a confidence vote to it. However, MPs from the coalition liberal Freedom and Solidarity party (*Sloboda a Solidarita*—SaS) voted against, using similar arguments as Radičová did in 2010, which resulted in the government falling. Later on, Fico's SSD provided the necessary votes to support the EFSF extension. In the election campaign, the SNS built on the Eurozone crisis, and proposed to leave the EU (Pirro and van Kessel, 2017: 415). Nevertheless, the election was won by SSD, which supported a deepening of the Eurozone, including transferring additional sovereignty to the EU (Euractiv, 2013: 2). The Eurozone issue, which resulted in a split between right-wing parties (Pirro, 2015: 88), lowered their election result: the SaS only got half the seats from 2010, and the SNS fell short of the parliamentary threshold.

Of the non-Eurozone EU member states of CEE, **Hungary** was affected the most by the global financial crisis and the Eurozone crisis. It faced substantial capital flight just after the crisis and required immediate foreign assistance. The 2010 election brought FIDESZ (*Fidesz Magyar Polgári Szövetség*—Civic Alliance) led by Viktor Orbán to power and populist radical right JOBBIK (*Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom*—Movement for a Better Hungary) into the opposition. In the foreign policy strategy published in 2011, the FIDESZ government stated its ambition to enter the Eurozone when ready, and committed to active support for further development of European integration, while stressing the need for seeking support in parliament and social acceptability as a sort of populist element. Starting from 2012, JOBBIK engaged in fierce anti-EU rhetoric. As noted by Pirro (2015: 84) and Pirro and van Kessel (2017: 412), it did not

focus specifically on monetary policy but was broad and oriented towards EU interference in Hungarian internal affairs (e.g. on economic policy, change of constitution), using the crisis as a pretext. The Orbán government, which was facing growing tensions with Brussels over reforms in Hungary and was adopting a Eurosceptic discourse, also voiced some mild reservations towards entering the Eurozone, such as the need to first reach adequate convergence (90% of the Eurozone GDP) (Orbán, 2013 in Euractiv, 2013: 4–5). Moreover, the government was also sceptical towards turning competences over to the EU level, referring to the issue of linking accountability with democratically elected authorities (ibid.). As of 2013, JOBBIK softened its position on Hungarian EU membership, and no longer blamed the EU specifically for the Eurozone crisis, instead blaming globalisation, international trade and the Orbán government (Pirro and van Kessel, 2017: 412).

The **Czech Republic** experienced political instability in the time of the Eurozone crisis while its economy was relatively stable. Already before the crisis, political parties were divided on joining the Eurozone, which is required under the Lisbon Treaty, and the crisis "only exacerbated these tensions" (Havlik and Havlik, 2018: 17–18). The government coalition of 2010–2012 was reserved towards deeper integration, and the Czech Republic was one of only two countries that did not sign the Fiscal Compact in 2012, an agreement outside the Community framework that itself started differentiated integration. However, parties mostly avoided discussions concerning the adoption of the euro in the pre-election period (Havlik and Havlik, 2018: 27). ANO (Yes), a movement launched by tycoon Andrej Babiš, who won the subsequent election, did not have a clear position on this issue (Euractiv, 2013: 2).

Poland was affected the least by the crisis and even managed to position itself as one of the new powers in the EU in the period. Its liberal government supported adopting the euro, and was worried about the practice of exclusive Eurozone summits, trying to get a say by being granted 'pre-in' status. Moreover, as a new heavyweight, the Polish government supported a more decisive intergovernmental approach, and offered support by the East to Germany in the new North-South split. This was famously highlighted by Polish Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski in his 2011 speech in Berlin, where he said:

"I fear German power less than I am beginning to fear German inactivity" (Handl and Paterson, 2013).

Table 2.4: The source (pretext) and impact of populist parties' Eurosceptic positions in Central and Eastern European EU member states (economic crisis)

	Domestic impact of the crisis (1–5)*	Populist framing	Dimension of populism	Functional pretext / source of Euroscepticism	Domestic impact of the populist framing
Slovenia	5	Yes	External	Economic, political, ideological	Limited: Isolation
Slovakia	3	Yes	Internal	Political, ideological	Temporary/limited: Collaboration/ Ignoring
Hungary	4	Yes	External	Economic, political	Limited: Co-opting
Czech Republic	3	Yes	External	Ideological	None: Ignoring
Poland	2	No	/	/	/

*5—strong impact … 1—no impact

Table 2.4. provides a summary of the results, showing the relevance of the crisis for the CEE state in question, whether a populist political party reacted to it (populist framing) and which predominant interest (pretext) was used, as well as the overall reaction to the populist parties.

To summarise, in Slovenia, the economic crisis gave rise to the radical left, which used populist and Eurosceptic framing of the Eurozone and got into parliament in 2014 but was effectively isolated by the mainstream parties supporting EU-devised reforms. In Slovakia, the question of support to Eurozone solidarity mechanisms brought down two subsequent coalitions. At first, right-wing parties opposing the EU's policies were able to take over the government, but became divided on the issue afterwards and finally lost the election against SSD, which supported Eurozone policies for strategic reasons. In Hungary, the strong effects of the crisis were largely used as a pretext for growing state interference (in the economy), creating tensions with the EU. FIDESZ strengthened Euroscepticism in this period, to which JOBBIK reacted by shifting its populist rhetoric to target globalisation and the government. In the Czech Republic, the Eurozone crisis did not add much to the already existing Euroscepticism, and was largely avoided as a topic by political actors. In Poland, the Eurozone crisis was not used in populist framing.

The migration crisis

Slovenia was one of the countries that were most affected by the migration crisis in 2015. Despite being rather a transit than a target country, the closure of the Hungarian border severely increased the pressure on Slovenia's border with Croatia, as the migration flow re-routed. From the beginning of the crisis in October 2015 until its end with the closure of the so-called Balkan route in March 2016, Slovenia had to register nearly half a million migrants (Vlada Republike Slovenije, 2016). At first Hungary's decision to close the border and build a fence was heavily criticised in Slovenia by both the general public and the pro-EU centre-left government of Miro Cerar SMC (*Stranka modernega centra*—Modern Centre Party). However, shortly thereafter, the government followed suit and started setting up technical barriers on the border with Croatia. The government coalition (the SMC together with Social Democrats and the Democratic Pensioners' Party) did not oppose EU relocation quotas and the decision of Germany and Austria to suspend the Dublin regulation. However, the chaotic handling of the crisis (especially the transit of migrants from Croatia to Austria) and securitisation of the migration wave strongly influenced public opinion to oppose immigration (Malešič, 2016: 960).

Stressing migration as a top security issue that the government was unable to solve was an opportunistic strategy utilised most of all by the opposition SDS (*Slovenska demokratska stranka*—Slovenian Democratic Party) and NSi (*Nova Slovenija*—New Slovenia) in order to gain more popular support. Despite being pro-European, the opposition raised concerns over the consequences of the EU's temporary relocation scheme, and even proposed to hold a referendum on limiting settlement capacities. Its anti-immigration and anti-Muslim rhetoric, demanding a more restrictive policy for migrants, which was more in line with the approach of the other four CEE states—the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia—can be considered as a broad introverted type of populism that was predominantly directed against the government and not the EU. The anti-migrant discourse within the SDS became more radical after 2016 and was one of the main issues in the campaign ahead of the 2018 general election. The SDS won most seats (25) but fell short of a majority and was unable to form a coalition (with the NSi and the SNS). The only party reaping political benefit predominantly from the migration crisis in the

2018 election was the populist and Eurosceptic SNS, which returned to parliament for the first time since 2011. In its campaign, it mainly ran on an extreme anti-migrant, anti-Islam and anti-EU platform. The only real critic of the government's and the EU's approach to the migration crisis since 2015 was the third opposition party, the ZL, which called for more solidarity, open borders and respect for the dignity and human rights of all people regardless of their status. It openly opposed the adoption of government-sponsored controversial amendments to the Foreigners Act, which would further undermine refugee protection. However, during and after the crisis, the ZL was politically side-lined and isolated with its views. Nevertheless, the ZL's migration policy can be considered as one of the contributing factors for its relative success in the 2018 general election, when it not only succeeded to reach the threshold for a second term in parliament, but actually increased the number of seats by 50% (from 6 in 2014 to 9 in 2018). On the other hand, the leading coalition party SMC of the previous term suffered the biggest loss in the 2018 elections—mainly unrelated to the way it handled the migration crisis but mostly due to domestic political issues: coalition disagreements, the government's inability to reform the healthcare system and "failure to address the problem of accountability and effectiveness in the management of state assets" (Freedom House, 2017).

Although the migration crisis brought almost no migrants/refugees to the **Czech Republic**, both mainstream and populist parties used anti-migrant language significantly in order to appeal to the public (GLOBSEC, 2016). Prior to the 2017 election, the loudest critics were Czech President Miloš Zeman and the leader of the ANO party, Andrej Babiš, at that time Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. Zeman's attitude towards the EU echoed the populist-minded approaches of other Visegrad states by being anti-Muslim, opposing refugee quotas and EU imposed limitations to national sovereignty (Euractiv, 2018). Similarly, Babiš used xenophobic statements and stressed the economic burdens of unregulated mass migration (Smoleňová, 2017). With respect to the EU, he adopted a pragmatic cherry-picking approach, offering people all the benefits of EU membership with none of the downsides, i.e. opposing the quota system but stressing the importance of EU money (Frum, 2017). The Czech political system was traditionally dominated by mainstream pro-EU parties of the moderate left and centre (Social Democrats—SD, Civic Democratic Party—ODS, Christian Democrats—KDU).

Accordingly, their reaction to the migration crisis has been more moderate, albeit still restrictive and conservative—i.e. emphasising security, the protection of borders and strongly rejecting the EU's relocation quota scheme. Contrary to these and more openly than ANO, far-right populist parties Dawn of Direct Democracy (*Úsvit přímé demokracie*—UDP) and Liberty and Direct Democracy (*Svoboda a přímá demokracie*—SPD) expressed Islamophobic and anti-migration sentiments with nationalist and fascist tendencies, focusing heavily on an anti-EU narrative (GLOBSEC, 2016).

The 2017 election confirmed the rise of the anti-establishment and populist-right parties. The mainstream centre and left parties lost to the populist right—the SD dropped from being the largest parliamentary party to number six by number of seats in parliament, whereas ANO won 29.6% of the vote and SPD finished fourth, taking almost 11% of the vote (Euractiv, 2017a). As the new Prime Minister, Babiš maintained and even took a harsher line on migration; he stated that the Czech Republic will not accept any refugees under the EU relocation system despite a legal case and possible sanctions by the European Commission, and that "the Eastern EU members' position must be taken into account when reforming the bloc's asylum system" (ibid.).

Although **Slovakia** has been relatively untouched by the migration wave (Dubeci, 2016), all political parties (even the libertarian SaS) have been fiercely opposing the EU's migration policy since the eruption of the crisis in 2015. Accordingly, despite being pro-European, the SSD-led government vehemently rejected the mandatory quotas and even filed a lawsuit (supported by Hungary and the Czech Republic) against the EU. As Prime Minister, Fico explained: "European Commission's proposal contradicts the European Council's principle on sovereign action" (Juhász, Molnár and Zgut, 2017: 38). Such a "double-edged strategy" (Juhász, Molnár and Zgut, 2017: 26) of swinging between compliance with and outright opposition to EU rules, can be explained by the fact that through most of 2015 and in early 2016 the Slovak approach to the migration crisis was dominated by the preparations for the March 2016 general election, and a negative attitude of the Slovak public towards quotas and migrants (Szomolanyi and Gal, 2016: 71). The election campaign was therefore full of xenophobic rhetoric (e.g. "Islam has no place in Slovakia"), trying to please the Slovak public, and focused almost entirely on raising more support for the ruling SSD party,

i.e. guaranteeing a possible third term for Fico (Kral, 2016). Imitating the populist-nationalist and anti-migrant rhetoric of radical parties was the only viable strategy to gain more or remain in power. According to Smoleňová (2017), numerous media appearances were meant to sensationalise the problem, frame it as a security issue, and attempt "to divert public attention from many corruption scandals of SMER party officials".

Immediately after the 2016 election, the harsh political rhetoric was toned down. One of the reasons was the Slovak Presidency of the EU Council, during which the Slovak government (SSD, Most-Hid and SNS) tried to maintain a more constructive attitude at the EU level regarding the refugee quota issue (Juhász, Molnár and Zgut, 2017: 26). It proposed a "flexible/effective solidarity" scheme allowing member states to choose their approach to solidarity, and even admitted several refugees within the relocation scheme in order to avoid an infringement procedure as was the case against other Visegrád countries. On the other hand, the political gains of the populist (anti-refugee) election campaign of the mainstream parties were considered questionable. The SSD did not fare well in the election, and mainly profited from the divisions between the opposition parties of the centre and centre-right—the SSD still won the election, but lost more than 16 percentage points compared to the previous term. A look at the results reveals that the populist-nationalist political campaign ultimately strengthened the Slovak radical parties and anti-immigration hardliners to the detriment of the traditional mainstream parties. This was the case for the nationalist SNS, populist far-right Our People's Party (*Naše Slovensko*—L'SNS) and populist party We Are Family (*Sme rodina*). While the SNS entered the government, and later on abandoned its Islamophobic and anti-migrant populist discourse, the L'SNS and We Are Family continued to embrace such a language. Faced with isolation from other parliamentary parties, they focused on creating an even stronger anti-establishment profile and appealing to the voters with the promise of fighting corruption and social injustice. These new radical populist parties replaced two pro-reform democratic parties (the Christian Democratic Movement—KDH, and the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union—SDKU), which failed to cross the threshold and remain outside parliament. As former opposition parties, the KDH and the SDKU joined forces in the post-election phase against the anti-quota agenda, but opposed Fico's legal action against the EU on

the grounds that it might damage Slovakia's reputation as a loyal EU member state (Szomolanyi and Gal, 2016: 70).

Hungary was strongly affected by the migration crisis in 2015, especially in terms of asylum applications. Although the ruling party FIDESZ of Viktor Orbán has been on the defensive since 2014, mostly due to corruption scandals and government failures, it used the migration crisis as a political pretext to regain political control and eliminate all other issues but migration from public discourse (Euractiv, 2017b). By launching an anti-refugee and anti-migrant communication campaign early in 2015, it managed to substantially increase its support and limit stage room for other political parties, even the far-right JOBBIK. During the crisis, the government was therefore faced with no viable political opposition or criticism. Using radical rhetoric, FIDESZ pursued the same strategy domestically and internationally—in Hungary presenting itself "as the protector of the Hungarian nation" and at the EU level as the "defender of European nations" against immigrants and the Brussels elite (Juhász, Hunyadi and Zgut, 2015: 6–7). Hungary was the first to build a fence in order to keep migrants out, and Orbán has been fiercely opposing the EU's relocation scheme from the very beginning. In order to legitimise (above all internationally) this stance, the government held a referendum in October 2016 against relocation quotas—although invalid for failing to reach the turnout threshold, 98% of the votes cast were against refugee quotas (Karolewski and Benedikter, 2018: 48).

The government's approach to the crisis was motivated by both internal political goals of increasing its power, as well as the ideology of Orbánism, i.e. preferring an authoritarian state and order over liberal democracy and freedom. At the level of foreign policy, the strategy was to continuously reject cooperation within the EU and to portray EU institutions as the main enemy (together with George Soros and Soros-funded NGOs) (Juhász, Molnár and Zgut, 2017: 20). In the 2018 parliamentary election, this approach paid off—FIDESZ won more than 49% of the votes (an increase of 4.4 percentage points from 2014) and got an absolute majority in parliament. The opposition on the left and also the far right was forced into an unpopular, reactive role, causing stagnation or even loss of popular support. All parties on the left opposed and condemned the government's anti-refugee and anti-migration policy, pointing to its strategy of securitisation, inciting fear and hatred (Juhász, Molnár

and Zgut, 2015: 27). JOBBIK, the far-right populist party has been the only opposition party with a similar position to FIDESZ. With little space to radicalise the government's approach to the crisis, the party focused more on portraying refugees/migrants as terrorists, disease transmitters and economic immigrants who are culturally incompatible with Christian Europe. JOBBIK also spoke in favour of closing the borders, deploying the army and re-establishing border patrols. Due to the already very radical and similar approach applied by the government, JOBBIK was unable to capitalise on the crisis in the 2018 election and was faced with stagnation in support.

Among the five CEE states, **Poland** was the least affected by the migration crisis. This, however, does not mean that the crisis was not used by populist parties as a political and ideological pretext. Before the crisis peaked in late 2015, Poland experienced a conservative revolution after the October 2015 parliamentary election, where the nationalist, right-wing Law and Justice Party (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*—PiS) overtook the pro-European Civic Platform (PO) and formed a one-party government. PO Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz's acceptance of the EU relocation quota scheme in September 2015 and the party's perceived servitude to the EU elite were among of the main causes for the PO to lose the election, and allowed PiS to capitalise alone on the growing popular discontent about the increasing influx of migrants across Europe (Bachman, 2016: 8). In 2016, PiS withdrew Poland's support for the quota scheme, and started to use fiercer anti-immigration, anti-refugee and anti-EU rhetoric (Karolewski and Benedikter, 2018: 49). It used the crisis as a pretext to link many of the popular concerns regarding the EU, such as the failures of the free market and protection of national sovereignty, as well as the former government's inability to cope with the crisis and the possible "harms" (social and cultural) that migrants might bring to one of the most homogenous countries in Europe. The government also supported Slovakia's law suit against the EU, and has still not accepted any immigrants under the relocation scheme. Furthermore, Polish European Affairs Minister Konrad Szymański dismissed the possibility of European Commission's infringement procedure against Poland as "European populism" (Barigazzi, 2017). This has recently also moved the attitude of opposition parties (the PO and the Polish People's Party) more in the direction of opposing the "EU mandated top-down allocation of refugees" and not being able to control who they accept (Cienski, 2017). The anti-refugee discourse

also strengthened other right-wing parties such as Kukiz'15, who also made it to parliament in 2015, winning almost 9% of the votes.

Table 2.5: The source (pretext) and impact of populist parties' Eurosceptic positions in Central and Eastern European EU member states (migration crisis):

	Domestic impact of the crisis (1–5)*	Populist framing	Dimension of populism	Functional pretext / source of Euroscepticism	Domestic impact of the populist framing
Slovenia	4	Yes	Internal	Political	Limited: Ignoring
Slovakia	2	Yes	External	Political	Moderate: Co-opting
Hungary	5	Yes	External, internal	Ideological, economic, political	Limited: Co-opting
Czech Republic	2	Yes	External, internal	Political, economic	Strong: Co-opting?
Poland	2	Yes	Internal, external	Political, ideological	Strong: Isolation

*5—strong impact … 1—no impact

Conclusion

In conclusion to this chapter, we offer a summary of the empirical findings and their direct implications for the research questions underlying this study. If we compare the relevance of the two EU crises for the group of CEE EU member states, we see that the Eurozone crisis had high domestic relevance for Slovenia and Hungary, but a slightly to significantly lower impact in other three states. Accordingly, populist responses to the crisis can be observed in all states except Poland. In Slovenia and Hungary, where the crisis had a strong influence, the dimension of populism was external (criticism against the EU elite). At the same time, these two states exhibit many different areas of interests (prevalence of economic and political interests) in comparison to states where the crisis did not have such a strong impact. As for the domestic impact of populist framing in the Eurozone crisis, we can conclude that no populist party significantly improved its power position due to an efficient use of a variety of active and passive responses by other political parties.

When it comes to the migration crisis, the same two states as in Eurozone crisis stand out as strongly affected (Hungary and Slovenia).

The crisis had a significant impact in Slovenia and Hungary, while its relevance was lower in Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Poland. Populist framing, however, was present in all states (in contrast to the case of the Eurozone crisis). In all of the Visegrád Four, the external dimension of populist Euroscepticism was present, while the internal dimension prevailed only in Slovenia. In all states, however, populist parties used the political field of interest as a source of Euroscepticism. With regard to the domestic impact of populist parties in the context of other parties' response strategies, no common pattern was established. Nevertheless, a detailed classification of populist parties in opposition and government allows a conclusion that opposition parties were more successful in applying Eurosceptic populist framing compared to parties in power (e. g. Slovakia). In this regard, Hungary is an exception to a certain extent.

The above comparison of the responses to the two crises shows two things that are particularly relevant from the perspective of theory on populism. Firstly, the migration crisis turned out to be a much handier frame for populists than the Eurozone crisis since it was used regardless of its actual effects and it proved to be effective for the political actors that used it as a reference point for Eurosceptic populism, as their results improved. And secondly, its use was especially fruitful for opposition contenders to parties in the government. Both of these findings are in line with the conception of populism as a particular political ideology or discourse that does not really address real problems and offer alternative policy solutions, but rather channels popular discontent by using oversimplifying and misleading frames of reference.

On a more general note, our empirical analysis exposes limitations to the usefulness of Pirro and Taggart's (2018) typology of (mainstream) parties' responses (active and passive strategies) to populist parties. This is due to fact that the observed CEE states already had governing populist parties and more populist parties co-existing in the domestic political arena at the time of studying the effects of the EU crises on their Eurosceptic positioning.

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II:
PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

Chapter 3: Survey on attitudes towards the EU, (national) EU politics and policies, and the political norms and values in five Central European EU member states

Marko Lovec

Introduction and survey methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of a special survey on populism and EU-related attitudes in CEE, and to reflect upon them from a comparative perspective.

The survey was conducted in five CEE states—Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia (the so-called small Central European member states)—as part of a project co-funded by the Europe for Citizens Programme of the EU. In contrast to Chapters 1 and 2, the research involved Austria[1] and not Poland, which is a mid-sized country.

The rationale of the survey was to go beyond the standard Eurobarometer poll and design questions specifically relevant for the region. The questions were formulated jointly by a team of researchers from academic institutions and think tanks located in the countries included in the survey (the Austrian Society for European Politics, the University of Ljubljana, the Central European University, EUROPEUM and GLOBSEC). The participating institutes provided the translations and analysis of the responses, while the surveys were conducted by national surveying agencies. The deviations introduced in the translations to allow a better grasp of the context-specific meanings are indicated in the text below.

1 Austria became an EU member ten years before the "big bang" enlargement. At the time, its development level was above the EU average. It was a consolidated democracy. Austria is a small country just as rest of CEE. It shares with the rest of CEE the geographical region and much of modern history, since these countries were part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Moreover, with regard to populism and Euroscepticism, Austria had a status of a "troublemaker" in the EU long before the rest of the region.

The questionnaire involved standard questions on demographic data, which are not included in the comparative analysis, and three groups of issue-specific questions: (a) on attitudes towards the EU in general, (b) on attitudes towards EU policies, and (c) on political profiles.

The first group of questions—on the general attitudes towards the EU—asked about the attitude towards EU membership (Q1), about the presentation of the EU in national political discussion (Q2), reflecting a possible representation bias and the attitude towards the political and media discourse in general, and about the way the country is treated by EU institutions (Q3), which was expected to be revealing with respect to the perception of the top-down approach. These questions on the general positions were relevant for the input and output side of the political equation, which were addressed specifically by the second and third group of questions.

The second group of questions targeted the attitudes towards the implications (output) of the EU (Q4, Q6) and national EU policies (Q5, Q7) in different policy areas—starting with more general issues (doing business, economic welfare, political power and national security in Q4 and Q5) and then moving on to more normative issues (cooperation/solidarity, democracy and fundamental rights, security, refugees and asylum in Q6 and Q7). Some of the normative issues such as asylum and democracy and fundamental rights were chosen in the context of the European migrant and refugee crisis and the emergence of illiberal trends in Eastern Europe.

The third group of questions, addressing the input side of the equation, was based on political profiles: whether national elites are using the EU as a scapegoat (Q8), which is important as a bottom-up perspective on the EU, followed by the perceived gap between citizens and the elites (Q9), which is a standard indicator of populist framing, and questions on the importance of various norms and values indicating the position on the scale between liberal democratic views vs a more authoritarian political profile (Q10).

The surveys were conducted in November and December 2017. The number of respondents ranged from about 500 to about 1000, with a corresponding standard deviation +/− 3.1–4.3 per cent.

Table 3.1: Survey questionnaire

	Attitudes towards the EU (cross-put)	EU / national policies (output)	Political profile (input)
Mid-level	Q1: Membership		Q9: Gap citizens vs elites Q10: Norms and values
Top-down	Q3: Treatment by the EU	Role of the EU in policy areas in Q4 and normative issues in Q6	
Bottom-up	Q2: Representation	Role of the governments in policy areas in Q5 and normative issues in Q7	Q8: EU as a scapegoat

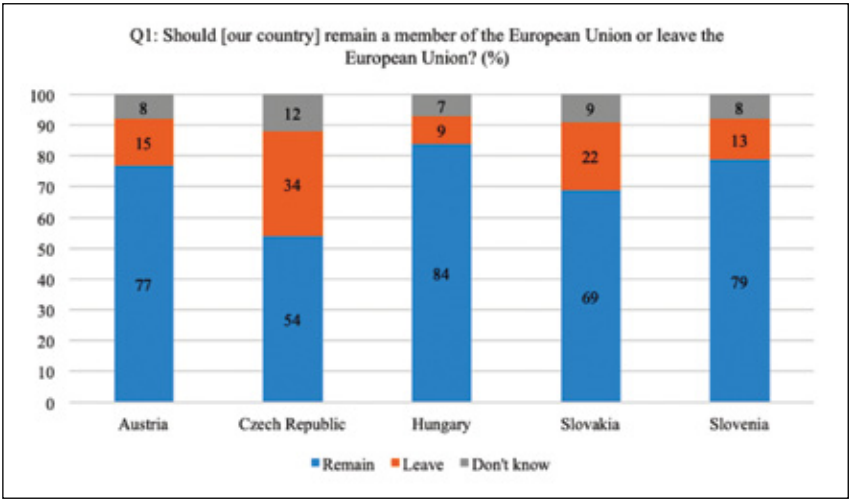
Table 3.2: Number of respondents and standard deviation

Country	Number of respondents	Standard deviation (%)
Austria	~500	+/– 4.3
Czech Republic		
Hungary		
Slovakia	~1000	+/– 3.1
Slovenia	~600	+/– 4.0

Survey results

Attitudes towards the EU

Figure 3.1: EU membership



As presented in Figure 3.1, a majority of respondents in all countries would choose to remain members of the EU. The share was the highest in Hungary (84%), followed by Slovenia (79%), Austria (77%), Slovakia (69%) and the Czech Republic (54%).

The high share in Hungary can be explained by the tensions between the government of Viktor Orbán and Brussels, in which both the pro- and the anti-government side have sought to mobilise their supporters by trying to show that their position was a European one. Thus, the Orbán government has argued that it was in fact protecting the EU (from the migrants, Soros, etc.), and the opponents portrayed the Orbán government as an enemy to the (liberal) norms and values represented by the EU.

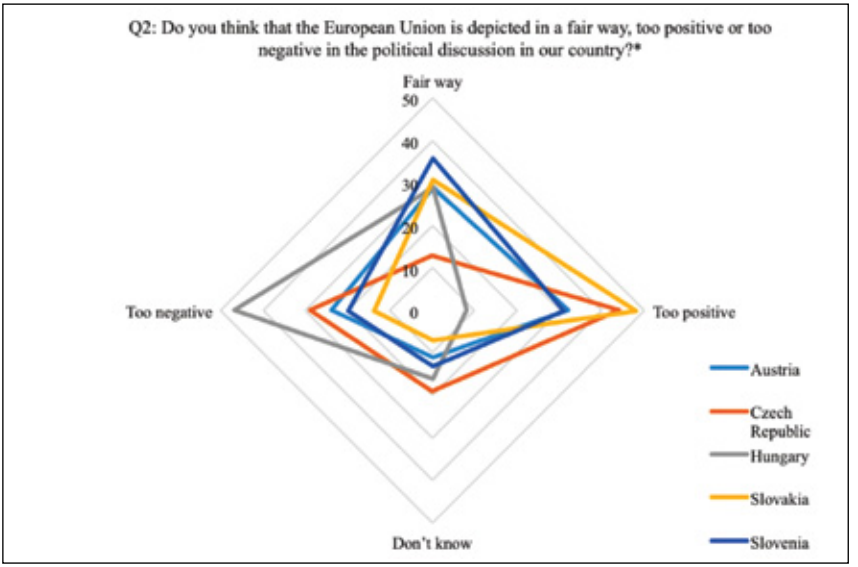
For the case of the Czech Republic, the high level of negative attitudes towards the EU in the past years was already identified in Chapter 2. A relatively negative attitude could be an expression of an overall disappointment with the political elites supporting Brussels at home and/or those in Brussels, and not really a matter of a "Czexit" (Czech exit from the EU), since this has not really been voiced as a possible political alternative in the mainstream debate.

As demonstrated in Figure 3.2, the most common response to the question on the way the EU is represented in political discourse in Slovenia was that the EU was depicted in a fair way (38% of the respondents), followed by those who said it was represented in a too positive way (around 30%). In Austria, the results were similar, with the share of those seeing the representation as fair and too positive at about 30%. We could say Slovenians and Austrians in general saw the representation of EU as fair.

In Slovakia and the Czech Republic, the perception of a too positive representation prevailed (almost 50% in Slovakia and 45% in the Czech republic), followed by the perception of a fair presentation in Slovakia (a bit more than 30%) and of a too negative presentation in the Czech Republic (20%), demonstrating relatively negative to fair perceptions in the case of Slovakia and negative to polarised views in the case of the Czech Republic.

In Hungary, the perception of a too negative representation prevailed (almost 50%), followed by the perception of a fair representation (30%), demonstrating a reaction to negative attitudes in the dominant political and media discourse.

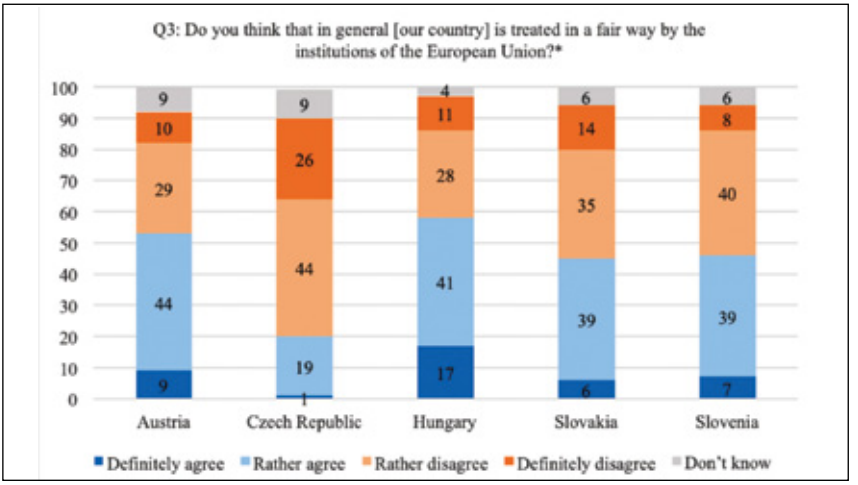
Figure 3.2: Representation of the EU



*Hungarian survey: "In your opinion, is the picture drawn about the EU in the Hungarian political discourse correct, too positive or too negative?"

*Czech survey: "objectively" instead of "in a fair way"

Figure 3.3: Treatment by EU institutions



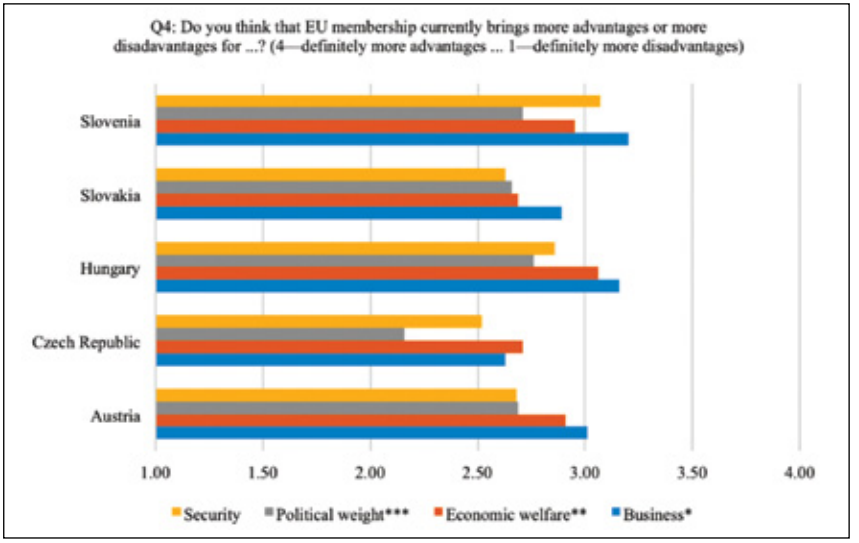
*Hungarian survey: "Do you agree with the following statement: The European Union treats Hungary in a respectful manner."

In Hungary and Austria, most of the respondents (58 and 53%) believe that their country receives fair treatment by EU institutions (Figure 3.3). In Slovakia and Slovenia, most respondents believed the opposite (49 and 48%), while in the Czech Republic there was quite a strong perception of not being treated fairly by EU institutions (this position was shared by 70% of the respondents).

The positive perception of treatment by EU institutions in the cases of Austria and Hungary correlate with the positive attitudes towards the representation of the EU in the political discussions and towards EU membership. The negative perception in the Czech Republic correlates with the negative attitude towards EU membership and the perception of a too positive representation in the political discussion in the country, suggesting a too Europeanist and internationalist position of the Czech political elite from perspective of the voters.

EU policy areas

Figure 3.4: EU policy areas



*Hungarian survey: "Business environment"

**Hungarian survey: "Economic well-being"

*** Czech survey: "Importance"

Figure 3.4 and Table 3.3 show that on average respondents saw rather more advantages of EU membership (average grades between 2.5 and 3.5) in all of the policy areas, except for Czechs, who saw rather more disadvantages in the area of political weight ("political importance"). The most advantages of EU membership were perceived in the area of business, followed by economic welfare, security and political weight. Respondents in Austria and Slovakia saw more advantages in the area of political weight compared to security.

Table 3.3: EU policy areas

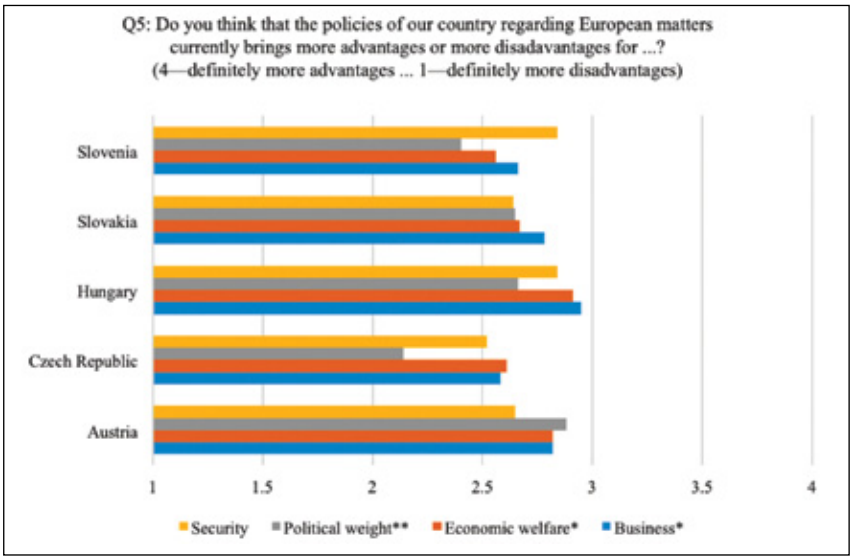
%	Austria				Czech Republic				Hungary			
	Business	Economic welfare	Political weight	Security	Business	Economic welfare	Political weight	Security	Business	Economic welfare	Political weight	Security
++	22	17	11	12	13	18	6	15	28	26	16	21
+	55	58	38	45	43	42	23	36	56	52	42	46
-	13	16	28	29	23	23	39	24	9	14	23	20
--	4	5	4	6	12	11	21	18	2	3	7	7
?	7	4	7	7	9	7	12	7	5	5	12	6
Average	3.01	2.91	2.69	2.68	2.63	2.71	2.16	2.52	3.16	3.06	2.76	2.86

%	Slovakia				Slovenia			
	Business	Economic welfare	Political weight	Security	Business	Economic welfare	Political weight	Security
++	20	14	11	13	38	29	19	35
+	50	46	48	44	41	39	38	36
-	20	27	27	26	9	16	21	11
--	5	8	8	11	5	9	12	9
?	5	6	6	6	7	7	11	10
Average	2.89	2.69	2.66	2.63	3.20	2.95	2.71	3.07

++ Definitely more advantages; + Rather more advantages; - Rather more disadvantages; -- Definitely more disadvantages; ? Don't know

In the Czech case, relatively negative attitudes towards EU membership, representation of the EU and treatment by EU institutions are primarily related to the perception of the political weight this country has as a result of its EU membership as opposed to the other policy areas.

Figure 3.5: EU policy areas—national policies



*Hungarian survey: "In your opinion, are Hungary's EU-related policies and decisions rather an advantage or disadvantage for … our country as a business environment / for the economic well-being of our country?"

**Czech survey: "importance"

With regard to the national approaches to these same policy areas (Figure 3.5, Table 3.4), respondents saw rather more advantages in all of the areas mentioned (an average grade between 2.5 and 3.5), with the exception of Slovenia and the Czech Republic, where respondents saw rather more disadvantages of government policies for political weight, thus demonstrating a relatively critical attitude towards the national political elites.

Table 3.4: EU policy areas—national policies

%	Austria				Czech Republic				Hungary			
	Business	Economic welfare	Political weight	Security	Business	Economic welfare	Political weight	Security	Business	Economic welfare	Political weight	Security
++	12	13	23	12	9	10	3	10	16	16	12	16
+	48	50	42	41	42	43	21	42	53	56	42	51
-	26	28	27	27	30	29	47	26	18	18	28	21
--	1	1	4	8	8	8	15	14	1	3	7	5
?	14	8	14	11	10	9	14	9	12	8	12	8
Average	2.82	2.82	2.88	2.65	2.58	2.61	2.14	2.52	2.95	2.91	2.66	2.84

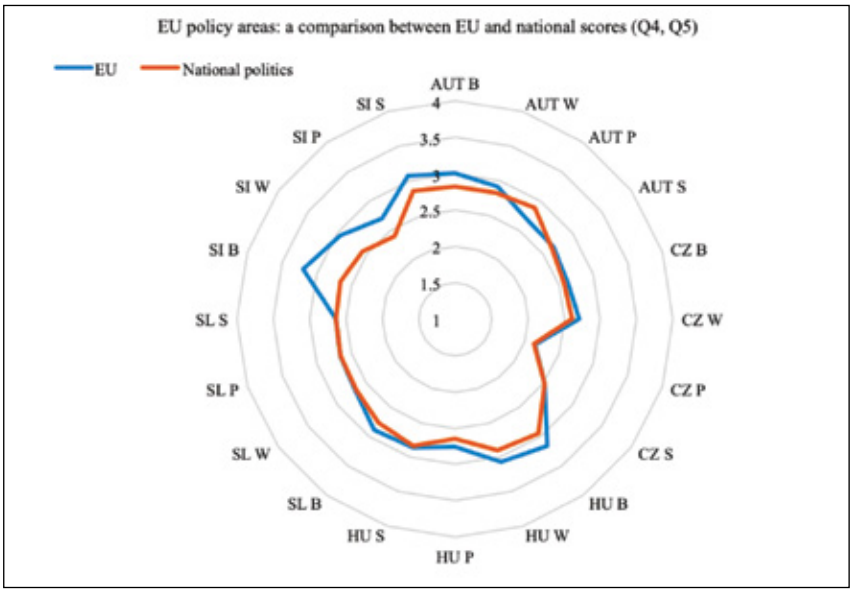
%	Slovakia				Slovenia			
	Business	Economic welfare	Political weight	Security	Business	Economic welfare	Political weight	Security
++	15	13	12	13	14	12	8	22
+	51	46	45	44	41	40	34	38
-	22	28	29	27	25	24	27	16
--	7	8	8	10	10	14	16	10
?	6	6	6	6	10	10	15	15
Average	2.78	2.67	2.65	2.64	2.66	2.56	2.40	2.84

++ Definitely more advantages; + Rather more advantages; - Rather more disadvantages; -- Definitely more disadvantages; ? Don't know

Slovenians saw the most advantages of government policies in the area of security, Slovaks and Hungarians in the area of business, Czechs in the area of economic welfare and Austrians for the country's political weight. Respondents in Austria and Slovakia saw the least advantages of government policy in the area of security.

Standing out particularly, are a relatively positive perception of the role of national policies in the area of security in Slovenia, and a relatively negative perception of the role of national policies in the area of political weight in the Czech Republic. As already mentioned, respondents in Slovenia and the Czech Republic perceived government policies in the area of political weight as bringing rather more disadvantages.

Figure 3.6: EU policy areas—EU and national scores

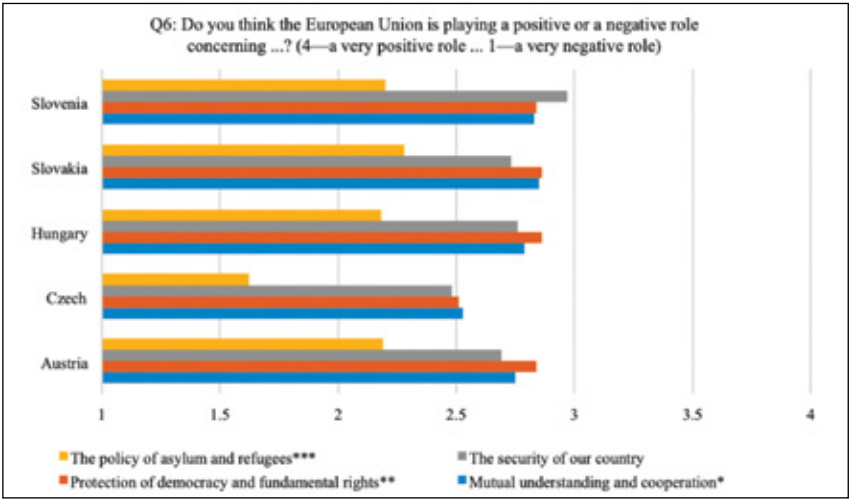


AUT—Austria; CZ—Czech Republic; HU—Hungary; SL—Slovakia; SI—Slovenia
B—Business; W—Welfare; P—Political weight; S—Security

A comparison between national government and EU scores (Figure 3.6) shows that in Austria, the EU got higher scores for business and welfare and national government for political weight. In the Czech Republic, the EU got slightly higher scores in all policy areas except for political weight, where the score is equally low. In Hungary, the EU got higher scores for business, welfare and political weight. In Slovakia, the EU got higher scores for business, and in Slovenia, it got much higher scores in all categories, with the smallest difference between the scores for national and EU policies in the area of security.

The comparison demonstrates that, while the EU generally has a slight advantage over national policies, the area of security and, to some extent, the area of political weight are where the relative advantage is on the side of the national policies. Given that the EU is expected to increase the political power of small member states, this is surprising and could be explained by the recent EU crises, which have substantially affected some of the smaller EU members.

Figure 3.7: Normative issues—EU role



*Hungarian survey: "Cooperation between member states"
**Hungarian survey: "Defence of democracy and basic human rights"
***Hungarian survey: "Refugee crisis and the refugees' situation"

As demonstrated in Figure 3.7 and Table 3.5, on average, respondents believe that the EU played a rather positive role in all of the normative issues, except for the asylum and refugee policy, where its role was considered as rather negative, which was also the case for the area of security in the Czech Republic. This means the Czechs had a negative perception of the EU's role for their national security in the context of the normative issues (as opposed to a rather positive perception of the role of EU membership for security).

Table 3.5: Normative issues—EU role

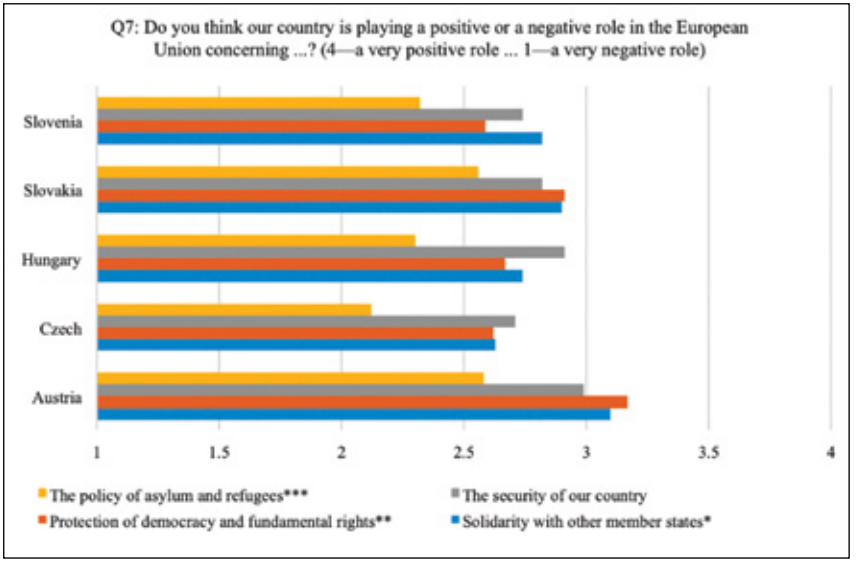
%	Austria				Czech Republic				Hungary			
	Coop.	Demo. & HR	Security	Asylum	Coop.	Demo. & HR	Security	Asylum	Coop.	Demo. & HR	Security	Asylum
++	10	15	9	5	7	9	12	2	11	16	11	6
+	52	48	50	24	44	40	36	9	56	47	55	23
-	25	25	27	44	32	30	28	35	23	20	22	41
--	4	2	5	17	9	12	16	49	4	4	6	19
?	9	11	9	10	8	8	7	6	7	14	5	11
Average	2.75	2.84	2.69	2.19	2.53	2.51	2.48	1.62	2.79	2.86	2.76	2.18

%	Slovakia				Slovenia			
	Coop.	Demo. & HR	Security	Asylum	Coop.	Demo. & HR	Security	Asylum
++	12	15	13	7	13	15	22	4
+	60	58	52	32	56	51	46	28
-	18	18	21	35	23	22	15	36
--	4	5	9	20	3	4	5	19
?	5	5	5	6	6	8	12	14
Average	2.85	2.86	2.73	2.28	2.83	2.84	2.97	2.20

++ A very positive role; + A rather positive role; - A rather negative role; -- A very negative role; ? Don't know

In Slovenia, the highest grade was given for security, in Slovakia, Hungary and Austria for protection of democracy and fundamental rights, and in the Czech Republic for mutual understanding and cooperation.

Figure 3.8: Normative issues—national role



*Hungarian survey: "Cooperation between member states"

**Hungarian survey: "Defence of democracy and basic human rights"

***Hungarian survey: "Refugee crisis and the refugees' situation"

With regard to the role of their national governments (Figure 3.8 and Table 3.6), respondents saw their role as relatively positive, with the exception of the area of asylum and refugee policy in the cases of Slovenia, Hungary and the Czech Republic. Relatively high scores in Austria stand out, which can be attributed to the fact that Austria is not on the "receiving end" in most of these areas.

Table 3.6: Normative issues—national role

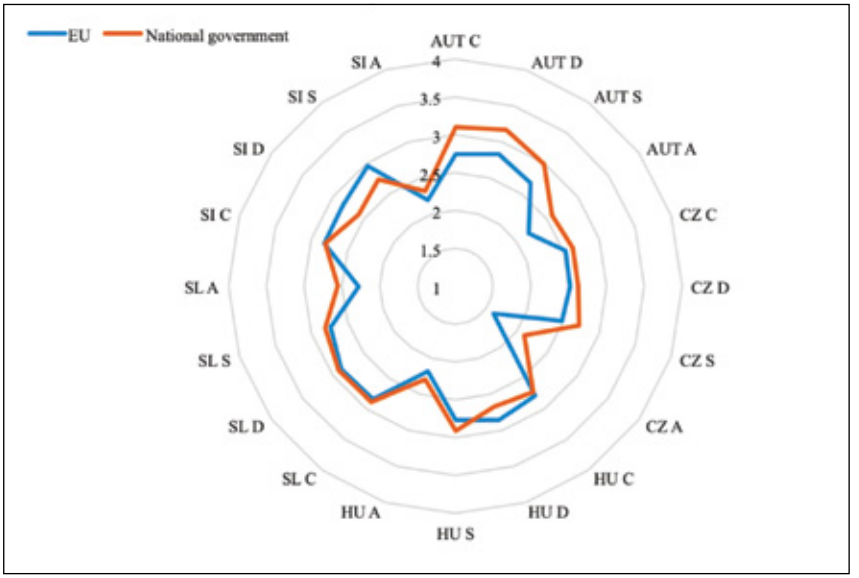
%	Austria				Czech Republic				Hungary			
	Coop.	Demo. & HR	Security	Asylum	Coop.	Demo. & HR	Security	Asylum	Coop.	Demo. & HR	Security	Asylum
++	22	28	18	10	5	7	11	5	10	10	16	11
+	64	60	55	37	53	49	52	25	55	51	56	23
-	10	9	17	32	26	27	19	35	22	20	18	35
--	1	1	1	7	6	7	9	24	6	10	3	19
?	3	3	9	14	9	10	8	10	8	9	7	11
Average	3.10	3.17	2.99	2.58	2.63	2.62	2.71	2.12	2.74	2.67	2.91	2.30

%	Slovakia				Slovenia			
	Coop.	Demo. & HR	Security	Asylum	Coop.	Demo. & HR	Security	Asylum
++	12	14	13	10	12	7	12	5
+	64	61	57	44	59	49	50	34
-	15	17	18	30	19	24	19	32
--	3	3	6	11	5	10	8	16
?	5	5	6	6	6	10	11	13
Average	2.90	2.91	2.82	2.56	2.82	2.59	2.74	2.32

++ A very positive role; + A rather positive role; - A rather negative role; -- A very negative role; ? Don't know

National governments got the highest scores in the area of cooperation and mutual understanding in Slovenia, Hungary and the Czech Republic, and for democracy and fundamental rights in Slovakia and Austria.

Figure 3.9: Normative issues—EU and national scores



AUT—Austria; CZ—Czech Republic; HU—Hungary; SL—Slovakia; SI—Slovenia

C—Cooperation and mutual understanding; D—Democracy and fundamental rights; S—Security; A—Asylum and refugees

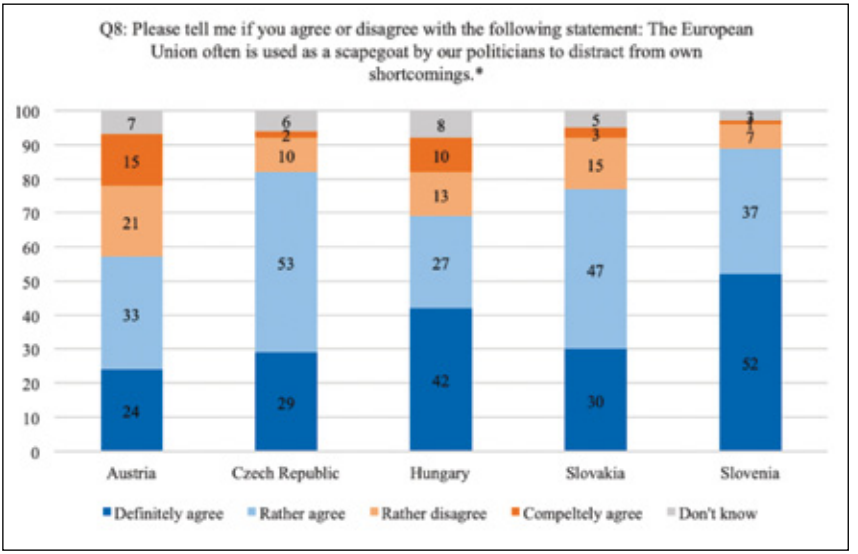
A comparison between EU and national government scores in normative issues presented in Figure 3.9 shows that the government scores are all higher in Austria. In the Czech Republic, they are higher especially for asylum and refugee policy, followed by security, and less so for cooperation and mutual understanding, as well as democracy and fundamental rights. In Hungary, government scores are higher for security and asylum and refugee policy, and lower for democracy and fundamental rights. In Slovakia, government scores are higher for all normative issues, with the biggest gap in the case of asylum and refugee policy. In Slovenia, the EU's role is considered more positive in all areas but asylum and refugee policy.

Normative issues turned out to be sensitive when it comes to EU policies. The asylum and refugee policy is where the role of national governments is considered to be much more positive. Only in Slovenia and to some extent Hungary is the EU seen as playing a more positive role. In Hungary, it was considered to play a more positive

role for democracy and fundamental rights, where the country has been backsliding due to the government's policies. As demonstrated above, Slovenia and Hungary are also countries with a more pro–EU membership attitude. In the Czech Republic, the negative view of the asylum and refuge policy correlates with the general negative attitude of Czechs towards the EU.

Political profiles

Figure 3.10: The EU as a scapegoat

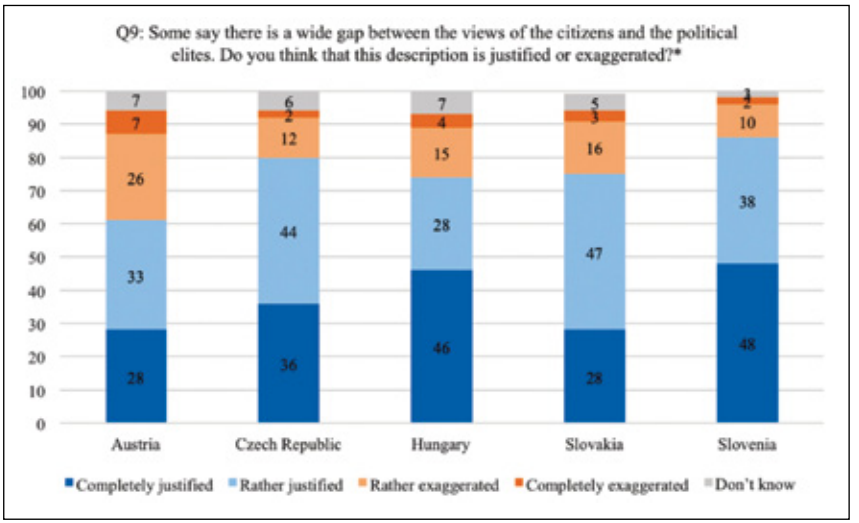


*Hungarian survey: "to cover their mistakes"

As Figure 3.10 shows, a relatively high share of the respondents believe that their politicians use the EU as a scapegoat to distract people from their own shortcomings. The share was highest in Slovenia (89%), followed by the Czech Republic (82%), Slovakia (77%), Hungary (69%) and Austria (57%).

The relatively high share in Slovenia correlates with the relatively critical attitude towards domestic political elites. In Austria, where the level is the lowest, respondents have a relatively positive attitude towards the role of their government.

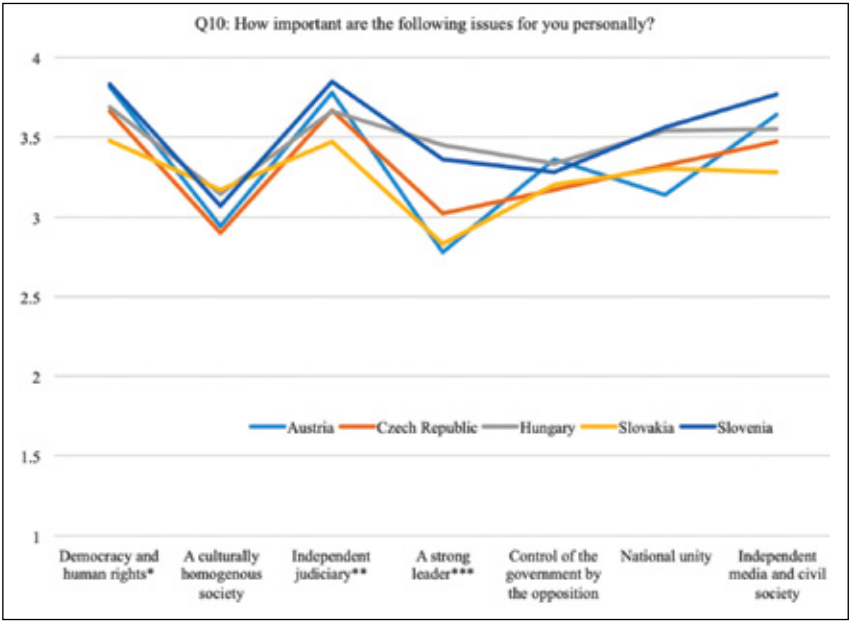
Figure 3.11: The gap between citizens and elites



*Hungarian survey: "Do you agree with the following statement: There is a huge gap between the views/attitudes of citizens and political elites." (totally agree / rather agree / rather disagree / totally disagree)

The perception of a gap between the citizens and the elites (Figure 3.11) was strongest in Slovenia (86%), followed by the Czech Republic (80%), Slovakia (75%), Hungary (74%) and Austria (61%). The results are in line with those of the scapegoat issue, which highlights the role of the general critical attitude towards national elites and the quality of domestic political institutions as an input variable. Both the Slovenian and the Czech respondents were relatively critical towards government policies. This implies that when citizens think about political elites what they mostly have in mind are the national political elites.

Figure 3.12: Norms and values



*Hungarian survey: "Basic human rights"

**Hungarian survey: "Judicial independence"

***Hungarian survey: "A strong political leader"; Austrian survey: "A strong leader in politics"

As demonstrated in Figure 3.12 and Table 3.7, respondents find democracy and fundamental rights and independent judiciary very important values in all countries but Slovakia, where they are seen as rather important. Independent media and civil society were important in all countries but the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Other values—ranked in the following order: national unity, control of the government by the opposition, a strong leader and a culturally homogenous society—were considered rather important in all member states. This is a rather liberal democratic order of values, apart from the lower importance attributed to the role of the opposition—especially in the new member states, such as Slovakia and Czech Republic, which is a result of a less developed political culture—and a comparably strong role of national unity in Slovenia and Hungary, which is probably a result of the feeling of smallness and distinctiveness often attributed to the self-perception in these two countries.

Table 3.7: Norms and values

%		Democracy and human rights	A culturally homogenous society	Independent judiciary	A strong leader	Control of the government by the opposition	National unity	Independent media and civil society
Austria	++	83	36	82	32	46	42	66
	+	16	32	15	26	41	33	29
	-	1	20	2	23	7	16	3
	--	0	11	1	15	2	6	0
	?	0	2	1	4	5	4	2
	Average	3.82	2.94	3.78	2.78	3.36	3.14	3.64
Czech Republic	++	66	20	69	27	34	43	56
	+	26	45	22	44	44	40	30
	-	3	21	3	19	14	9	9
	--	0	4	1	3	2	2	1
	?	4	10	5	6	7	6	4
	Average	3.66	2.90	3.67	3.02	3.17	3.32	3.47
Hungary	++	70	33	68	53	45	57	59
	+	24	42	24	35	34	29	26
	-	3	14	3	6	9	5	6
	--	0	3	1	2	3	1	1
	?	4	9	4	5	9	7	8
	Average	3.69	3.14	3.66	3.45	3.33	3.54	3.55
Slovakia	++	55	34	55	25	36	41	44
	+	38	51	35	42	46	46	42
	-	5	11	7	22	13	8	10
	--	1	3	1	10	2	2	3
	?	1	1	1	2	3	3	2
	Average	3.48	3.17	3.47	2.83	3.20	3.30	3.28
Slovenia	++	83	35	85	50	43	62	77
	+	15	42	9	35	37	28	16
	-	1	14	1	9	11	4	3
	--	0	7	1	3	3	2	0
	?	1	3	4	3	6	4	4
	Average	3.83	3.07	3.85	3.36	3.28	3.56	3.77

++ Very important; + Rather important; - Rather unimportant; -- Not important at all; ? Don't know

Democracy and fundamental rights were most important in Austria and Slovenia, and least important in Slovakia. A culturally homogenous society was most important in Slovakia, and least for Czechs. Judiciary independence was most important in Slovenia, and least important in Slovakia. A strong leader was seen as important

the most in Hungary, and the least in Austria. Opposition checking the government was most important in Austria, and least important for Czechs. National unity was most important in Slovenia, and least important in Austria. Independent media was seen as important the most in Slovenia, and the least in Slovakia. This correlates with the quality of domestic institutions as an input variable (see Chapter 1), but also points to some specific issues, such as the relative importance of opposition in Hungary, where the Orbán government accumulated substantial power with respect to the relatively weak opposition, and of national unity and having a strong leader in the small Slovenia.

Conclusion

The analysis of questions on the general attitudes has demonstrated that a majority of the respondents in all countries prefer to stay members of the EU, with the support strongest in Hungary and weakest in the Czech Republic. Representation of the EU in political discussion was mostly seen as fair in Slovenia and Austria, as too positive in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and as too negative in Hungary. Treatment of their country by EU institutions was seen as fair in Austria and Hungary, as unfair in Slovakia and Slovenia, and as very unfair in the Czech Republic. As evident from the case of Hungary on the one hand and the Czech Republic on the other, there is a correlation between the attitudes towards membership, political representation and treatment by EU institutions, either in terms of a reaction to (arguably) anti-European politics (Hungary), or too "internationalist" policies (Czech Republic).

The analysis of the responses to questions on policy issues shows that the respondents saw rather more advantages from the EU in all policy areas, except for the Czechs in the area of their country's political weight. The EU was considered most beneficial for business and economic welfare, and least beneficial for security and political weight. The respondents also considered national EU policies in those areas as rather beneficial, except for the Slovenians and the Czechs in the area of political weight (which is in line with their negative views on how they are being treated by the EU). A comparison between EU and government scores demonstrates that the EU performed better in the areas of business and economy, and worse in the areas of security and political weight (e.g. in Austria and the Czech

Republic). The relatively negative attitudes of Czechs concerning questions on policy issues related to output legitimacy correlate with their attitudes towards the EU in general.

According to the analysis of more normative issues, the role of the EU in asylum and refugee policy was perceived as rather negative in all countries, as opposed to its rather positive role for democracy and fundamental rights, cooperation and mutual understanding, and security. In addition, the Czechs also saw the role of the EU as rather negative in the area of security. In comparison, government policies were seen as rather negative with respect to asylum and refugees in Slovenia, Hungary and the Czech Republic. In general, government scores were higher, especially in Austria and Slovakia (on almost all issues), and in the Czech Republic and Hungary (on asylum and security policy). Compared to the usual policy issues, normative issues, particularly asylum and refugee policy, proved much more sensitive and much more prone to nationalistic framing as an output variable.

The analysis of political profiles as an input variable demonstrates a very strong belief of the EU being used as a scapegoat, and of a gap between citizens and the elites (strongest in Slovenia and weakest in Austria, corresponding to the attitudes towards the national elites). The rankings of norms and values generally followed a liberal democratic pattern. The political profiles of individual countries corresponded with their institutional quality (e.g. more developed institutions in the case of Austria). Moreover, Austrians also demonstrated a relatively more positive attitude towards their national EU policies, especially on normative issues.

To sum up, indicators of input and output variables demonstrate a consistent pattern of importance for (perceived) policy outcomes on the one hand and political profiles on the other, when it comes to attitudes towards the EU. Moreover, they also show coherence between input and output variables—e.g. links between a critical attitude towards the government and perceived scapegoating of the EU where overall liberal democratic norms and values are strong enough, as in the case of Slovenia. Secondly, the results show that criticism towards the EU (and a positive stance towards the national government) is particularly strong when it comes to more abstract normative and political issues, which is where national governments can derive their legitimacy from.

Chapter 4: Survey on attitudes towards the EU, (national) EU politics and policies, and general norms and values—the role of sociodemographic and political markers in the case of Slovenia

Živa Broder, Marko Lovec

Country-specific elements in the questionnaire

The purpose of this chapter is to present detailed results of a survey on populism and attitudes towards the EU in Slovenia, and to analyse the correlations between different variables in order to better understand the drivers of populism and EU-related attitudes in a specific national context and beyond.

The specific questions of the survey and their rationale are explained in Chapter 3, which presents the results of the survey in a comparison of different CEE countries. This chapter aims to explain more thoroughly the Slovenian case, and includes a differentiation of results by the demographic variables. The following demographic variables were used in all national surveys: gender, age, education, employment, political party preferences, statistical region and area of residence. In individual surveys, some adjustments were made to accommodate the categories to the national context. For details on the Slovenian questionnaire, see the Appendix to this chapter. In addition, the Slovenian survey involved two further demographic variables: household income and media consumption. The reason these two variables were added is that they can—in combination with other variables such as education, employment and area of residence—enable to better determine the role of output legitimacy (household income) and input legitimacy (media consumption).

One of the most country-specific demographic variables used in the survey is political party preferences. The selection of political parties was based on a list of parties included in standard opinion polls at the time when the survey was designed. The following parties were included:

- The Modern Centre Party (*Stranka modernega centra*—SMC) a party with a socially progressive liberal ideology, established before the 2014 elections, and led by law professor Miro Cerar. The party won a relative majority in the 2014 election, and became the leading party in a new centre-left coalition, with Cerar serving as Prime Minister. However, the party failed to meet the high expectations of the public on "new politics", and its support soon started to decline. On the EU level, the party joined the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE). It has a strong pro-European orientation.
- Social democrats (*Socialni demokrati*—SD) have been present on the Slovenian political stage since the country became independent. Following the 2014 elections, the SD became a coalition partner. At the time of the survey, the SD was the most popular party in Slovenia, which was in part due to the fact that the party's popular former president Borut Pahor just got re-elected President of the Republic. On the EU level, the SD is a member of the Socialists and Democrats (S&D) group, and it is pro-EU oriented despite supporting sufficient flexibility of national governments where appropriate.
- The Democratic Pensioners' Party (*Demokratična stranka upokojencev Slovenije*—DeSUS), led by the then Foreign Minister Karel Erjavec, is a niche party struggling for social rights of pensioners, which is a big issue in Slovenia due to a rapidly ageing population and economic pressures on the pension, health and social security systems. The party has been punching above its weight by providing the necessary votes to a number of government coalitions, including the one formed in 2014. The party has a nationalist-socialist stance on a number of economic issues, such as the pension system, healthcare and state ownership, but it is in principle pro-European.
- The Slovenian Democratic Party (*Slovenska demokratska stranka*—SDS) is a party with a conservative-liberal ideology. Apart from two stints as the helm of the government in 2004–2008 and 2012–2013, it has been the biggest opposition party since Slovenia declared independence. It has been led for the last twenty years by Janez Janša, a highly divisive political figure. In the recent years, the party has moved further towards the right, with some of its members occasionally adopting populist and chauvinist rhetoric, e.g. on the immigration issue. The SDS was the first

or second most popular party when the survey was conducted. The party has aligned with Hungary's FIDESZ party of Viktor Orbán, and sympathises with Donald Trump and the Republicans in the United States. It is a member of the European People's Party (EPP).

- New Slovenia (*Nova Slovenija*—NSi) is a liberal Christian democratic party, which has been in the shadows of the SDS until recent years when it tried to take a more independent stance. It failed to enter parliament in 2008 but returned in 2011. At the time of the survey, it was the only party that managed to re-enter parliament after a term outside. It is a pro-European party and a member of the EPP.
- The Left (*Levica*), previously the United Left (*Združena levica*—ZL), was established during the economic and financial crisis, which affected Slovenia substantially. Sharing many similarities with Podemos of Spain and Syriza of Greece, it is a diverse coalition of a new generation of forward-looking leftists, unwilling to accept the TINA (There Is No Alternative) politics of the Eurozone and NATO, and fighting for progressive changes in the society. It entered parliament in 2014 as an opposition party. It is a soft Eurosceptic party, especially when it comes to Eurozone governance, and foreign and defence policy (i.e. in the framework of NATO).
- The Alliance of Alenka Bratušek (*Zavezništvo Alenke Bratušek*—ZaAB) is a social liberal party established by former Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek (2013–2014). In 2012, The Corruption Prevention Commission established a risk of corruption with Janez Janša, who was prime minister at the time, which led to the collapse of his government. Since the same risk was also established with Zoran Janković, the head of the biggest opposition party Positive Slovenia, Alenka Bratušek, as a senior member of his party, stepped in to become a sort of interim prime minister until the 2014 elections when, following a split with Janković, she managed to pass the parliamentary threshold with her own party.
- Positive Slovenia (*Pozitivna Slovenija*—PS) is a party led by Ljubljana Mayor Zoran Janković. It was established before the 2011 election, in which it won a relative majority but was then unable to form a government. It was a centre-left party with some elements of populism, particularly on economic issues and a nostalgic interpretation of the quality of life under the Communist rule in former Yugoslavia.

- The Slovenian People's Party (*Slovenska ljudska stranka*—SLS) is one of the oldest parties in Slovenia, representing mostly the rural population and a conservative ideology. Its popularity has been in decline since the 2000s. It failed to pass the parliamentary threshold in the 2014 election, and has been a non-parliamentary force since. It is a member of the European People's Party (EPP).
- The Movement for Children and Families (*Gibanje za otroke in družine*—GOD) emerged during the term of the centre-left coalition of the SMC, SD and DeSUS (2014–2018). It grew out of a movement in support of Janez Janša during his imprisonment in 2014 (Janša was incarcerated for corruption but the verdict was later on repealed by the Constitutional Court) and from the opposition to the planned changes to family legislation, which was sponsored by the Catholic Church and conservative circles. The party's ideology is ultra-conservative Catholic. Many consider it a satellite party to the SDS.
- The Slovenian National Party (*Slovenska nacionalna stranka*—SNS), led by Zmago Jelinčič Plemeniti, is an outright populist party using nationalist and chauvinist rhetoric. It was a parliamentary party until the 2008 elections.

Table 4.1: Political parties included in the survey

	Radical-left	Centre-left	Centre	Centre-right	Radical-right / nationalist
Coalition		SD, DeSUS	SMC		
Opposition	Levica	ZaAB		NSi, SDS	
Non-parliamentary		PS		SLS	GOD, SNS

Unlike the surveys in other participating countries, which were done by phone, the online method was used in Slovenia. The reason was that it was easier to get a proper sample this way. The survey was conducted between 22 November and 14 December 2017 on a sample of 591 respondents. Details on the sample are available in the Appendix.

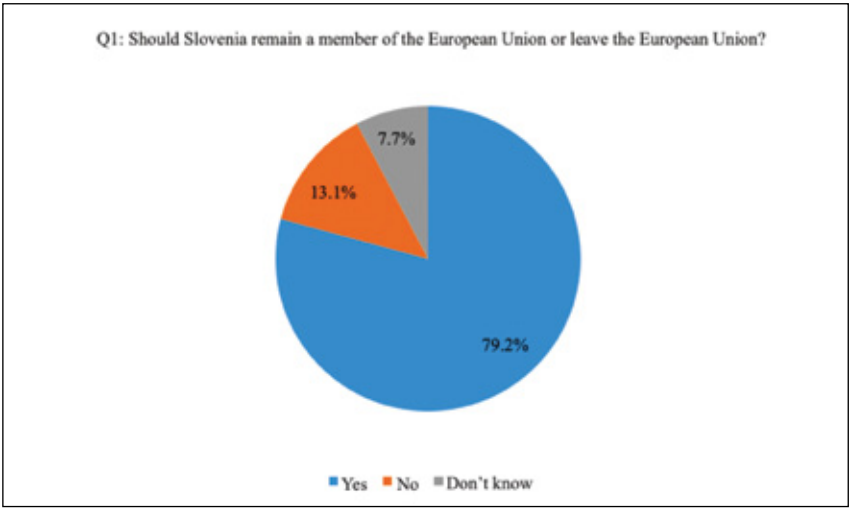
Along with demographic variables, Q1 on the attitude towards Slovenia's EU membership was regressed in the analysis on other variables to see how membership preference as a key indicator of attitude towards the EU relates to other specific questions.

The analysis is based on descriptive statistics, chi-square and ANOVA for averages. Some caution is needed with regard to the values of support for some of the political parties due to a small number of respondents who support them.

Results

General attitudes

Figure 4.1: Attitude towards Slovenia's EU membership



As shown in Figure 4.1, almost 80% of the respondents said that Slovenia should remain a member against 13% who said that it should leave the EU, demonstrating a relatively strong support for EU membership in Slovenia.

Table 4.2: EU membership—correlation

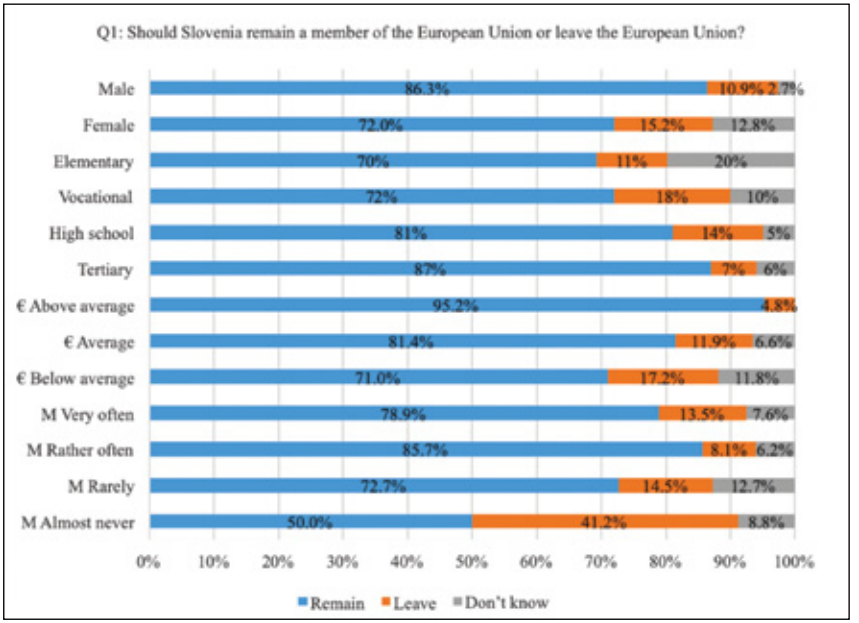
	Remain	Gender	Age	Education	Empl.	Income	Media	Party*	Place
Chi-square	/	0.000	0.011	0.000	0.009	0.004	0.000	0.000	0.042

*Caution is required due to relatively small numbers.

Grey colour: significant variation (<0.005)

The chi-square test (Table 4.2) demonstrates statistically significant variation in responses with regard to the values of the following demographic variables: gender, education level, income situation, media consumption and political party preferences*. Interestingly, gender plays a role while age, employment and place of residence do not (although variation is close to significant in the case of age and employment).

Figure 4.2: Attitude towards Slovenian's EU membership with respect to general demographics



€—household income; M—media consumption

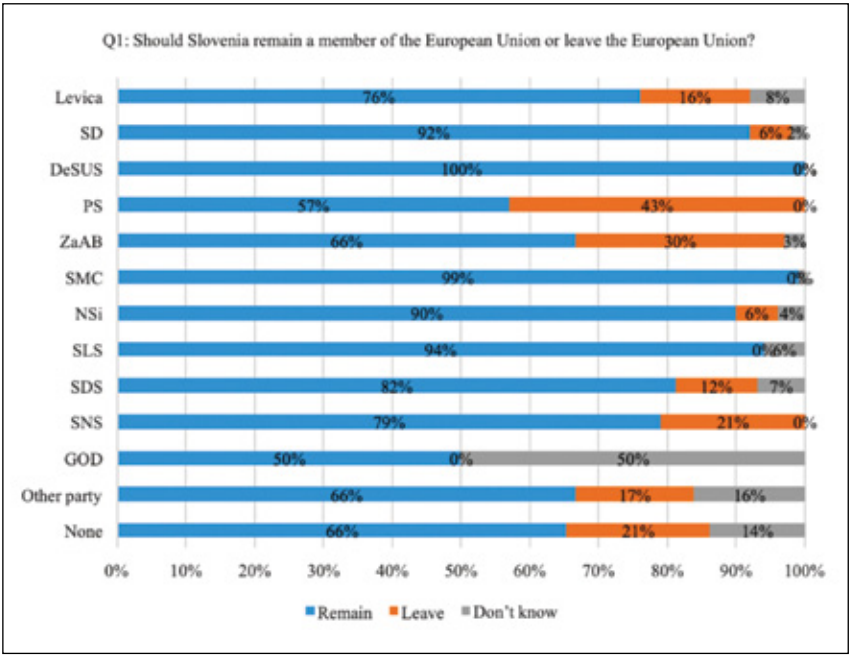
Support for remaining an EU member (Figure 4.2) was stronger among male respondents as compared to female ones (86.3% vs 72%). Compared with other variables, the gap is too large to be attributed to a different demographic composition of the female sample, which means that gender does play a role.

Less surprising is a correlation with the education level: support for EU membership rises with the education level (from 70% among those with only primary education to 87% among those with tertiary

education). A relatively high share of those who would opt to leave (18%) in the group of those with vocational education implies negative effects of EU membership for the vocational group. Moreover, with rising education levels, the share of those that did not know the answer declines. Those with higher education levels are expected to have gained more from EU membership and to be better aware of the opportunities, meaning that education plays role both on the input and the output side of the support equation.

Support for membership rises with the income level (from 71% among those with a below-average income to over 95% among those with an above-average income). The share of those that did not know the answer also declines with higher income. This shows stronger support among the winners in internationalisation, and points to a role of output and input legitimacy (the latter due to lower levels of 'information poverty' among those with higher income levels).

Figure 4.3: Attitude towards Slovenia's EU membership with respect to party preferences



Finally, more time spent on following the media positively affects support for EU membership—rising from 50% in the group of almost never to 86% among those who consume media rather often, with the exception of those who consume media very often, where support declines to 79%. Thus, the media as a source of input legitimacy play a positive role up to a certain point. Another possible explanation is a specific demographic structure of those who spend a lot of time on consuming news.

Support for membership (Figure 4.3) was highest among those who relate the most to coalition parties (DeSUS: 100%; SMC: 99%; SD: 92%), as well as liberal conservative parties (SLS: 94%; NSi: 90%), while it is weakest among social liberal parties with populist elements (PS: 57%; ZaAB: 66%) and radical left and right-wing parties (GOD: 50%; the Left: 76%). Strong support among voters of coalition parties can be explained with their relatively pro-European attitudes and weak general support for these parties (only the most faithful supporters still find these parties as closest to their views). The NSi and SLS—both members of the European People's Party—have pro-European programmes and both have representatives in the European Parliament. The relatively low support among those who relate the most to the PS and ZaAB could be due to a fact that centrist and centre-left voters, disappointed with government policies or with their position, fall for the rhetoric of these two parties, promising more decisive actions and benefits for all.

To summarise, support for EU membership prevails across all demographic categories. Media consumption plays the most important role, followed by income, education and gender. Political party preference also plays a very important role, suggesting that in general input legitimacy or framing is more important than the output side.

As Figure 4.4 shows, a bit more than a third of Slovenians believe that the EU is represented appropriately, followed by a bit less than a third who believe that it is represented too positively and one fifth who believe that it is represented too negatively.

Figure 4.4: Representation of the EU in Slovenia

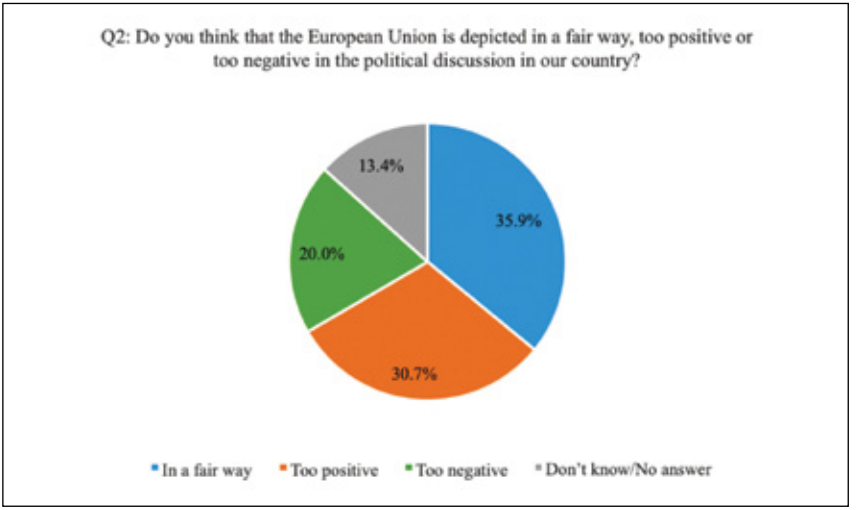


Table 4.3: Representation of the EU in Slovenia—correlation

	Remain	Gender	Age	Education	Empl.	Income	Media	Party*	Place
Chi-square	0.000	0.001	0.223	0.059	0.048	0.325	0.000	0.000	0.907

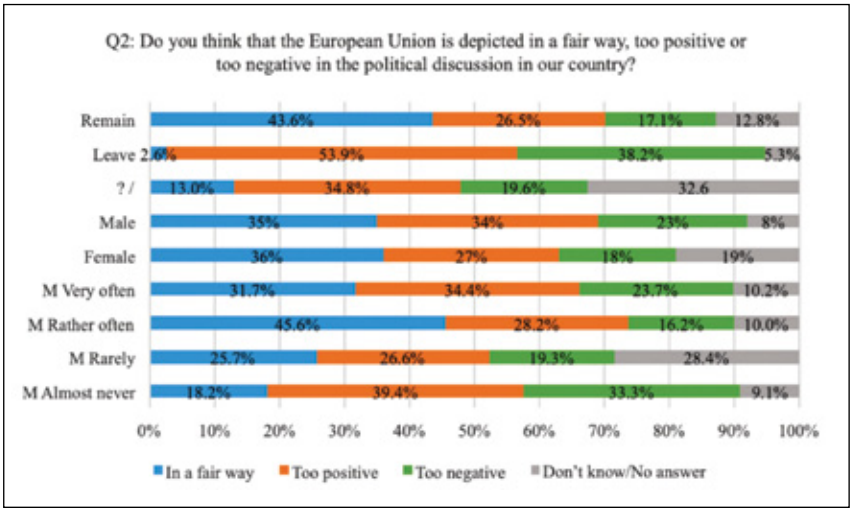
*Caution is required due to relatively small numbers.

Grey colour: significant variation (<0.005)

Views on the presentation of the EU in the political discussion in Slovenia (Table 4.3) vary significantly according to respondents' position on membership, gender, media consumption and party preferences*. While the role of gender is surprising, media consumption and party preferences are typical indicators of input legitimacy.

Those who support Slovenia's EU membership (Figure 4.5) mostly perceive the depiction of the EU in Slovenia as fair (43.6%), while those who would opt to leave the EU for the most part either see it as too positive (54%) or too negative (38%), which indicates that the perception of a biased political discussion results in aversion to EU membership.

Figure 4.5: Representation of the EU in Slovenia with respect to general demographics



M—Media consumption; ? / Don't know/No answer

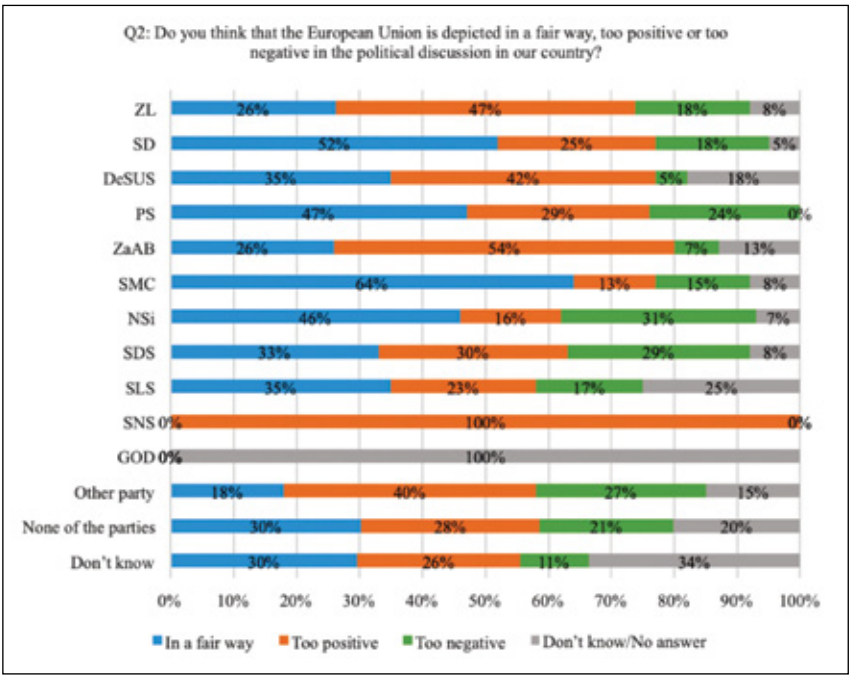
The difference between male and female respondents is mostly in the lower share of those who are undecided and the higher share of polarised views (i.e. those who see the representation of the EU as too positive or too negative) among men.

As expected, the perception of fairness in representation rises with the amount of time spent following the media (from 18.2% in the case of those who almost never follow the media to 45.6% with those who follow the media rather often), but again only up to a certain point, since among those who follow the media very often the perception of a fair presentation declines again to about 32%. In part, this can be attributed to a higher share of those who perceive the presentation as too negative, and in part this might also be a result of greater sensitivity to the accurateness of particular information as a result of being better informed in general.

The presentation of the EU in political discussions (Figure 4.6) is perceived as fair most often among supporters of the SMC (64%) and the SD (52%), which were the main coalition parties. The perception of a too positive depiction is strongest among those who relate the most to the non-parliamentary nationalist and populist SNS (100%),

followed by the ZaAB (54%) and the Left (47%). The ZaAB is critical towards the effectiveness and impact of the government on different social groups, while the Left is critical towards EU governance, especially in the area of the Economic and Monetary Union. The perception of too negative reporting is strongest among supporters of the NSi (31%) and the SDS (29%), which were the most important opposition parties. They represent liberal conservative ideology, and argue in favour of structural reforms in different state systems following the model of Western European member states and in line with what is generally proposed by the European Commission.

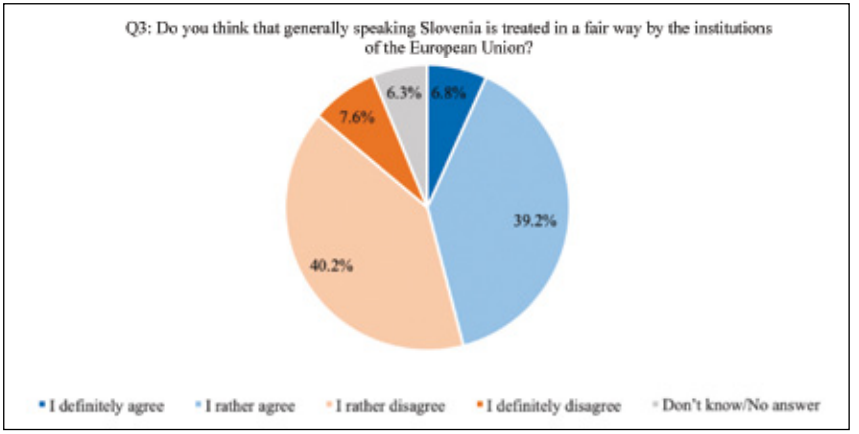
Figure 4.6: Representation of the EU in Slovenia with respect to party preferences



To summarise, political party preferences and media consumption are the most important demographic variables when it comes to the perception of how the EU is depicted, which in turn also affect the attitude towards EU membership. This shows that the level of

information and political framing impact the perception of political institutions regardless of other factors.

Figure 4.7: Attitude towards the treatment of Slovenia by EU institutions



The views on how Slovenia is treated by EU institutions (Figure 4.7) are rather balanced, with roughly equal shares of those who perceive the treatment as fair (46%) and as unfair (47.8%). Nevertheless, considering the relatively strong support for EU membership, the share of those who see it as unfair is rather high.

Table 4.4: Treatment of Slovenia by EU institutions—correlation

	Remain	Gender	Age	Education	Empl.	Income	Media	Party*	Place
Chi-square	0.000	0.087	0.495	0.403	0.066	0.023	0.055	0.000	0.509
ANOVA	0.000	0.135	0.768	0.038	0.060	0.084	0.124	0.001	0.240

*Caution is required due to relatively small numbers.

Grey colour: significant variation (<0.005)

The perception of how Slovenia is treated by EU institutions correlates with the attitude towards EU membership and with party preferences* (Table 4.4). Interestingly other variables do not play such an important role, meaning that the views are shared across different demographic structures and are basically only influenced by party ideology.

Figure 4.8: Treatment of Slovenia by EU institutions with respect to demographics

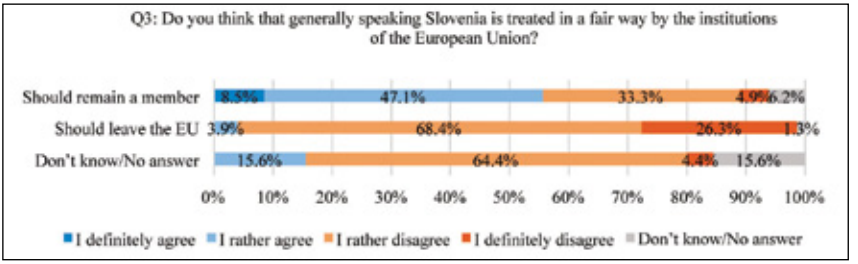
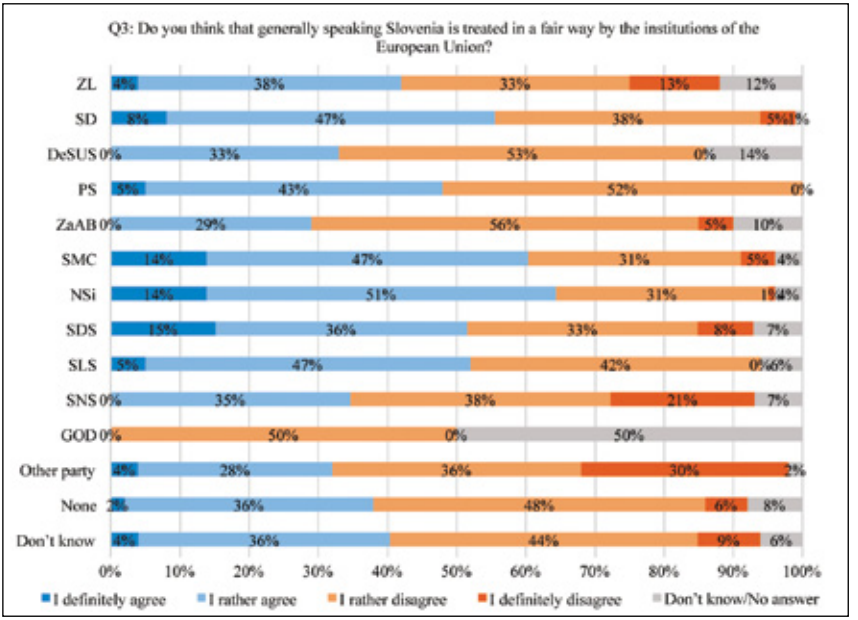


Figure 4.8 demonstrates that, as expected, the perception of fair treatment is much more common among those who support Slovenia's EU membership compared to those in favour of leaving the bloc (55.6% vs 4%). Interestingly, the share of those who are critical towards the way Slovenia is being treated is relatively high among those who were undecided whether Slovenia should remain a member or leave the EU (68.8%).

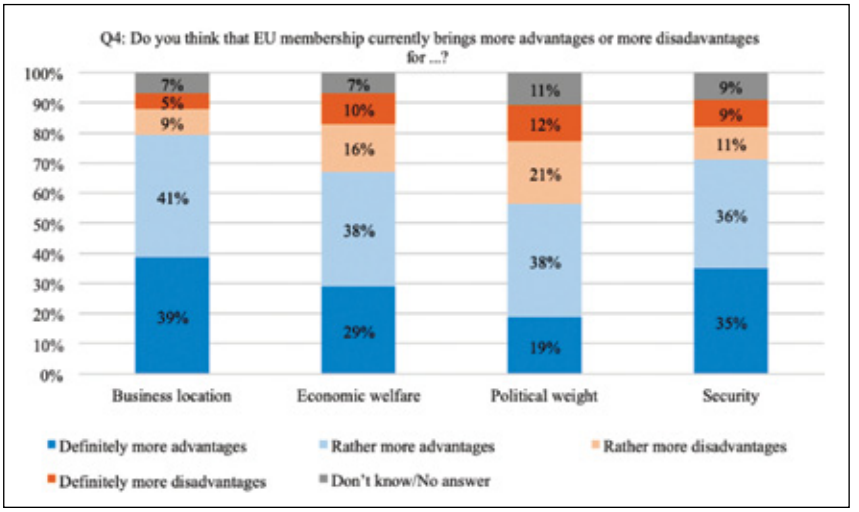
Figure 4.9: Treatment of Slovenia by EU institutions with respect to party preferences



The perception of being treated fairly by EU institutions is strongest among supporters of the NSi (65%), SMC (61%) and SD (55%), which are all pro-European and rather centrist parties. It is lowest among supporters of the GOD, an ultra-conservative party, and the ZaAB (29%), a social liberal party that, despite generally sharing the programme and ideology with government coalition parties, is critical of the government's effectiveness and policies and which occasionally uses soft populist rhetoric to attract disappointed centrist voters. Perception of unfair treatment is also widespread among supporters of other radical left and right-wing parties.

EU politics and policies

Figure 4.10: Impact of EU membership on Slovenia in selected policy areas



As demonstrated in Figure 4.10, Slovenians see rather more advantages of EU membership in all of the given policy areas. They see the most advantages for Slovenia as a business location (80%), followed by security (71%), economic welfare (67%) and political weight (57%). This shows that the EU is mostly perceived as a liberal internationalist project and a guarantee for security.

Table 4.5: Impact of EU membership in selected policy areas—correlation

		Remain	Gender	Age	Educ.	Empl.	Income	Media	Party*	Place
Business location	**Chi-square**	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.021	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.206
	ANOVA	0.000	0.039	0.008	0.007	0.840	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.015
Econ. welfare	**Chi-square**	0.000	0.005	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.019
	ANOVA	0.000	0.033	0.041	0.000	0.252	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.151
Political weight	**Chi-square**	0.000	0.003	0.004	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.006	0.000	0.285
	ANOVA	0.000	0.569	0.428	0.076	0.003	0.004	0.008	0.000	0.325
Security	**Chi-square**	0.000	0.010	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.110
	ANOVA	0.000	0.613	0.011	0.191	0.006	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.548

*Caution is required due to relatively small numbers.

Grey colour: significant variation (<0.005)

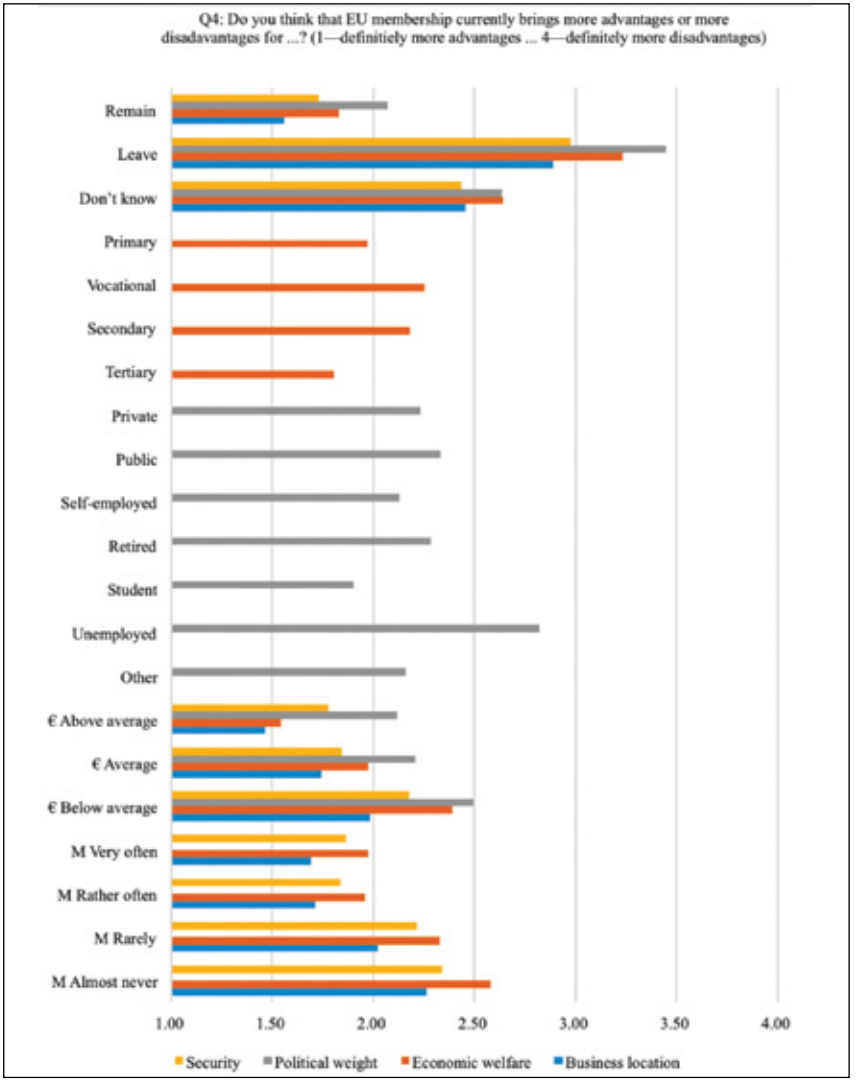
As Table 4.5 shows, the position on EU membership correlates with the attitude towards its impact in all of the given areas (chi-square and ANOVA). Gender correlates with positions on the EU's impact for Slovenia as a business location and for its political weight (chi-square). Education level correlates with the attitude towards the role of the EU in all policy areas (chi square, ANOVA for political weight). Employment correlates with the view on the impact of EU membership for political weight and security. Income level correlates also correlates with the perception of the EU's impact in all categories (chi-square and ANOVA), and media consumption with all categories but political weight (chi-square and ANOVA). Political party preferences* also correlate with all categories (chi-square and ANOVA).

The significant role of respondents' position on membership is expected, since it is based on the perceived impact of EU membership in different areas. Interestingly, income as an output variable is an important factor in the perception of all categories of EU policy making, while education is somewhat more important when it comes to acknowledging the EU's role for economic welfare, which can be explained with the (perception of) opportunities available to those who are better educated (within the EU). The importance of media consumption points to the role of information available, and the importance of party preferences to political framing. Business and political weight seem to be the aspects that explain diverging views of the female population.

Differences between the correlations according to the shares and average grades are due to a different distribution of values, including

the role of those who did not know the answer. Thus, correlations based on average values were taken as a reference for a more detailed analysis.

Figure 4.11: Impact of EU membership in selected policy areas with respect to demographics

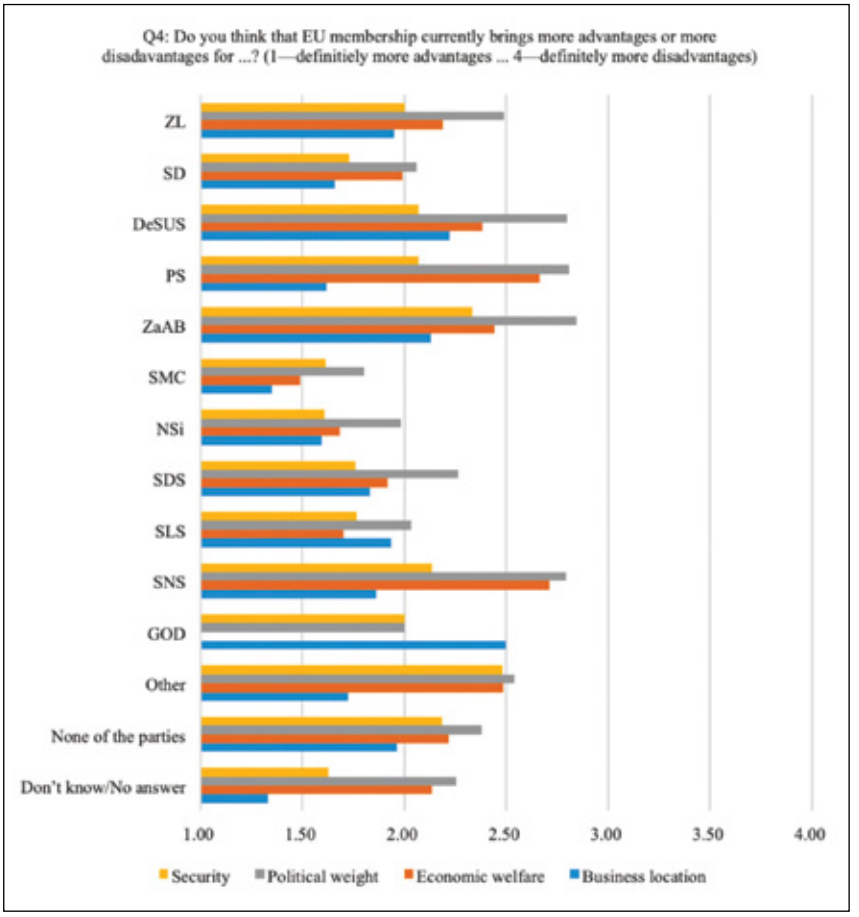


€—household income; M—media consumption

As expected, those who support Slovenia's membership in the EU see more advantages of membership in all of the given areas, while those who would opt to leave the EU see rather more disadvantages (Figure 4.11). Those who have completed primary or tertiary education see somewhat more advantages compared to those with vocational and secondary education, which can be explained by different economic effects of EU membership on these categories. Students see the most and the unemployed the least advantages of EU membership for Slovenia's political weight (the unemployed believe the EU brings rather more disadvantages for the country's political weight). Household income is important for the attitude towards EU membership in all areas, and especially in the area of business and economy (in the area of business, those with an above-average income see definitely more advantages of EU membership). Those who follow the media more see more advantages of EU membership in different areas except for political weight. Those who follow the media the least see rather more disadvantages of EU membership in the area of economic welfare.

As demonstrated in Figure 4.12, those who identify as closest to the SMC and NSi see the most advantages of EU membership (in the case of the SMC definitely more advantages in the areas of business and economic welfare), which is in line with the liberal and pro-European orientation of these two parties. The SMC and NSi are followed by the SLS, SD and SDS, which are more sceptical in the areas of business (SLS), welfare (SD, SDS) and political weight (SDS, SD). Again, this can be explained by the centre-left orientation of the SD and the fact that the SDS and SLS represent specific groups, such as small businesses, farmers, suburban and rural areas. Those who relate the most to the PS, DeSUS, ZaAB and SNS see the least advantages (rather more disadvantages for political weight and economic welfare in the case of the PS and SNS, and for political weight in the case of the ZaAB and DeSUS). These parties represent the disappointed centrist voters (PS, ZaAB), pensioners (DeSUS) and nationalists (SNS), which explains their attitude.

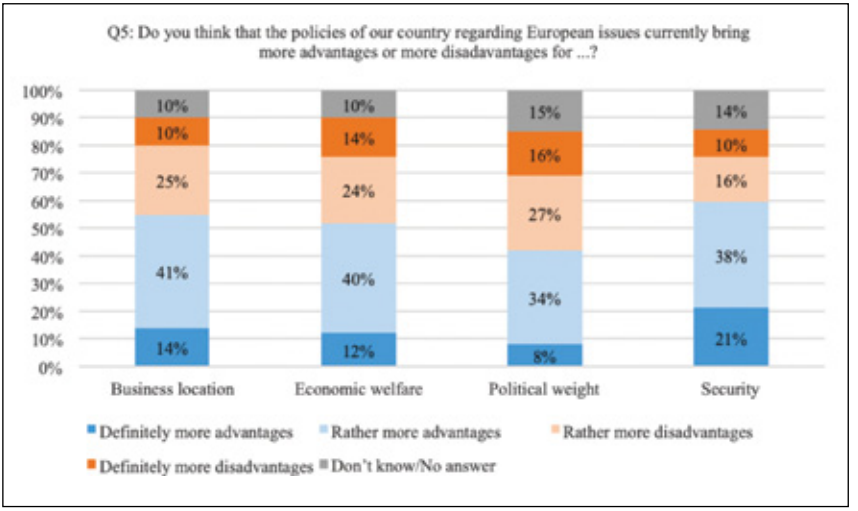
Figure 4.12: Impact of EU membership in selected policy areas with respect to party preferences



To summarise, the socioeconomic categories indicating the role of the political output variable are the most important for explaining the attitudes towards the impact of EU membership in different policy areas. Those who see rather more disadvantages are the unemployed and those with below-average income. This can also be linked to different education backgrounds. Media consumption in terms of access and information poverty also plays role. Negative attitudes are most often expressed in criticism of the impact of EU

membership on Slovenia's political weight. This is also the way political parties most often frame the downsides of membership, followed by the effects on economic welfare.

Figure 4.13: Impact of Slovenian EU policies in selected policy areas



As shown in Figure 4.13, the respondents see more advantages of Slovenian EU policies in all areas but political weight, where they see slightly more disadvantages (43 vs 42%). The respondents see the most advantages for security (59%), followed by Slovenia as a business location (55%) and economic welfare (52%). Overall lower grades received by Slovenian policies demonstrate a critical stance towards the government and/or national political elites.

Table 4.6 indicates there are statistically significant differences in attitudes towards government policies with regard to the position on EU membership (chi-square and ANOVA) and gender (chi-square) for all policy areas, and age for all but political weight (chi-square and ANOVA). Education level correlates with views on the impact on political weight and security (chi-square and ANOVA). Employment status has statistically significant differences for the view on the impact on Slovenia as a business location, economic welfare and security (chi-square and ANOVA). The income of respondents is statistically significant for the variables of business location, economic

welfare (chi-square and ANOVA) and political weight (ANOVA), and there are also significant differences for all categories based on media consumption and party preferences* (chi-square and ANOVA).

Table 4.6: Impact of Slovenian EU policies in selected policy areas—correlation

		Remain	Gender	Age	Educ.	Empl.	Income	Media	Party*	Place
Business location	Chi-square	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.013	0.000	0.004	0.001	0.000	0.033
	ANOVA	0.000	0.082	0.000	0.142	0.002	0.004	0.000	0.002	0.132
Economic welfare	Chi-square	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.009	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.042
	ANOVA	0.000	0.007	0.000	0.112	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.291
Political weight	Chi-square	0.000	0.001	0.216	0.000	0.038	0.006	0.000	0.000	0.356
	ANOVA	0.000	0.943	0.187	0.002	0.125	0.004	0.001	0.000	0.266
Security	Chi-square	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.003	0.031	0.000	0.000	0.010
	ANOVA	0.000	0.829	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.006	0.000	0.000	0.182

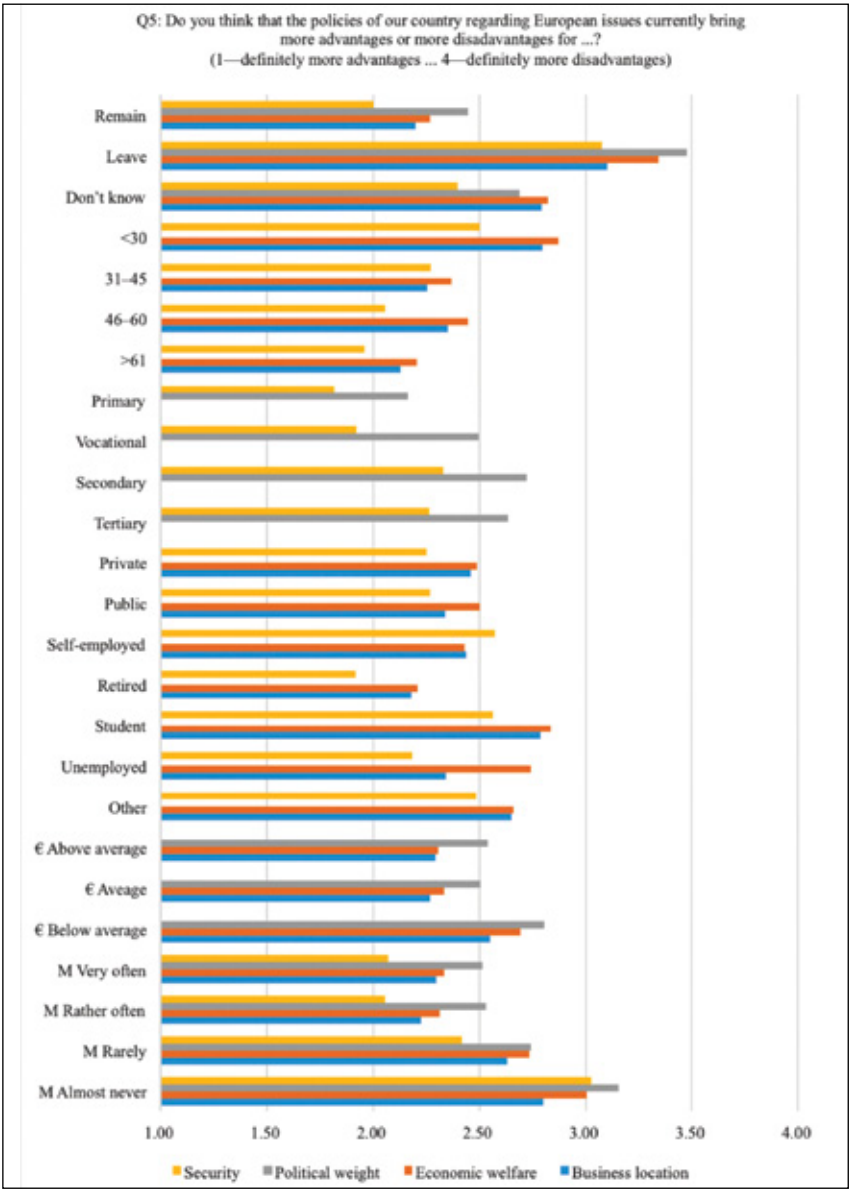
*Caution is required due to relatively small numbers.

Grey colour: significant variation (<0.005)

This shows that apart from the place of residence all other demographic categories are important for the attitude towards the impact of Slovenian EU policies. Interestingly, education is not so much of a factor for the attitude towards the implications of Slovenian EU policies for Slovenia as a business location and economic welfare of Slovenians, meaning that respondents of different education levels are equally positive or critical towards it.

As Figure 4.14 shows, supporters of EU membership see rather more advantages of national EU policies in the given areas, while those who would prefer a 'Sloexit' see rather more disadvantages, which shows that government EU policies are more or less equated with the role of the EU. Younger respondents see fewer advantages of government policies (those under 30 see rather more disadvantages in the areas of business and economic welfare), which can be linked with (a perception of) an intergenerational conflict and dissatisfaction of the younger generation due to the rigidness of state systems and the (perceived) privileges of the older generations. Those with higher education levels also gave lower grades to government policies in the areas of security and political weight (in the area of political weight those with secondary and tertiary education see government policies as bringing rather more disadvantages). On average, students gave

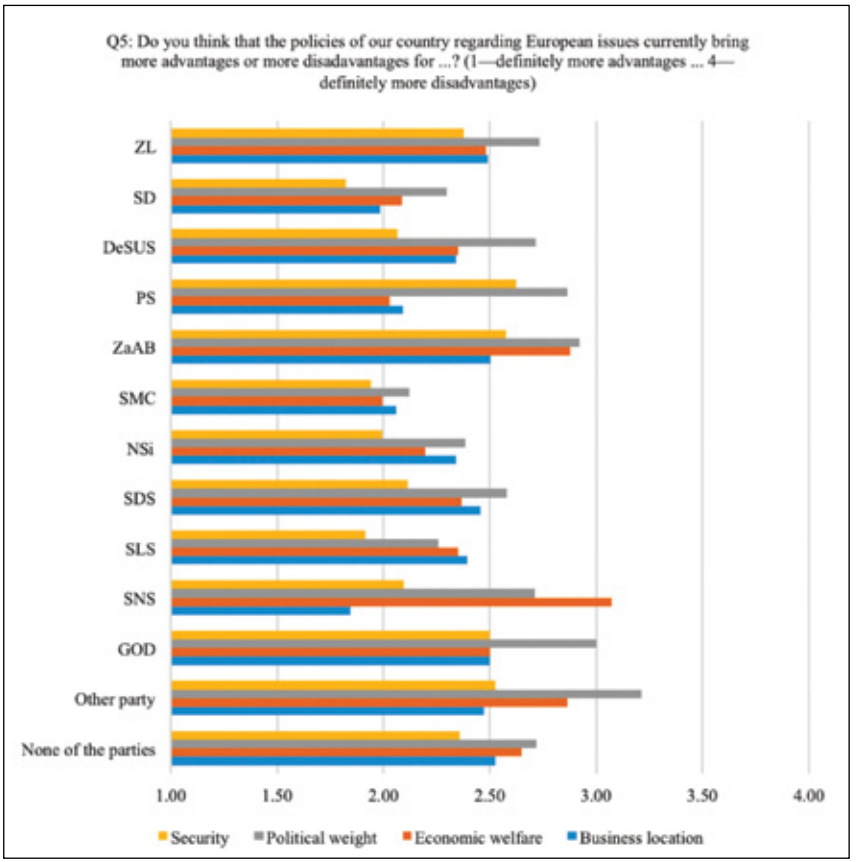
Figure 4.14: Impact of Slovenian EU policies in selected policy areas with respect to demographics



€—household income; M—media consumption

relatively low grades and pensioners relatively high grades, which is in line with the age roles explained above (for students, government policies in the areas of business, economic welfare and security result in rather more disadvantages). The unemployed also considered government policies in the area of economic welfare as bringing rather more disadvantages. Those with a below-average income consider government policies in all areas but security to bring rather more disadvantages. More media consumption results in higher grades; for those who never or rarely read, watch or listen to the news, government EU policies bring rather more disadvantages.

Figure 4.15: Impact of Slovenian EU policies in selected policy areas with respect to party preferences



With regard to the political preferences (Figure 4.15), the best grades for the government's EU policies came from those who relate the most to the leading coalition party SMC, followed by supporters of its coalition partner SD, the liberal conservative and pro-European opposition NSi and the non-parliamentary conservative and pro-European SLS. The most critical were, apart from supporters of parties not included in the research, supporters of the ZaAB, SNS and PS, who saw rather more disadvantages of the government's EU policies in the areas of political weight (ZaAB, SNS, PS), economic welfare (ZaAB, SNS) and security (PS, ZaAB). The ZaAB and PS are centrist parties targeting disappointed votes, while the SNS is a nationalist party. The rhetoric of these parties is characterised by different levels of populism. Rather more disadvantages in the area of political weight were also seen by supporters of the Left, DeSUS, SDS and GOD—these are diverse parties, form the radical left to a left coalition partner and a centre-right opposition party to an ultra-conservative one, characterised by different degrees of radicalism and populism.

Some of the findings with regard to the impact of the government's EU policies, such as the role of socioeconomic categories, are similar to those related to the impact of EU membership. What is different is the criticism of the government's policies in the economic area by the younger generation, which is in line with intergenerational tensions, as well as relatively strong criticism of policies in the area of political weight and, to some extent, security by a diverse range of categories, from the well-educated to those with lower incomes and supporters of a wide range of parties criticising government policies, which shows that political power and securitisation have become a catalyst for the disappointed and a common point of an otherwise divided electorate.

As a demonstrated in Figure 4.16, Slovenians consider the EU to play a positive role for mutual understanding and cooperation among member states (69%), the security of Slovenia (68%) and protection of democracy and human rights (66%). They consider the EU to play a negative role in the case of asylum policy and protection of refugees (55%). This shows a positive attitude towards the role of the EU in normative issues in all areas but the migration issue. The negative assessment of the EU's role is the result of a perceived lack of unity in the EU and collateral damage faced by small member states such as Slovenia. However, public opinion in Slovenia on how this

issue should be addressed is polarised as well, meaning that the group of respondents who share a negative opinion is made of supporters and opponents of the open doors policy.

Figure 4.16: Role of the EU in normative issues

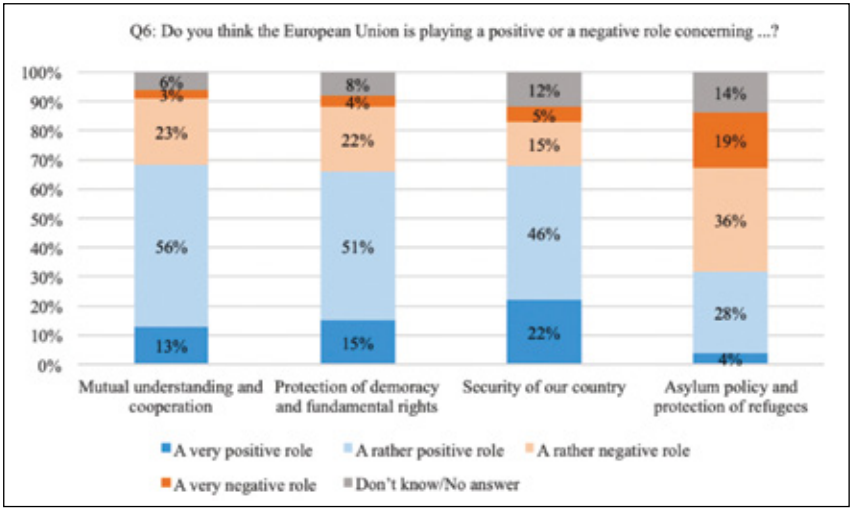


Table 4.7: Role of the EU in normative issues—correlation

		Remain	Gender	Age	Educ.	Empl.	Income	Media	Party*	Place
Coop.	Chi-square	0.000	0.005	0.000	0.169	0.000	0.152	0.001	0.005	0.006
	ANOVA	0.000	0.014	0.002	0.173	0.000	0.014	0.006	0.109	0.171
Protection of democracy	Chi-square	0.000	0.001	0.207	0.019	0.002	0.162	0.000	0.005	0.344
	ANOVA	0.000	0.323	0.628	0.401	0.007	0.338	0.027	0.001	0.306
Security	Chi-square	0.000	0.000	0.038	0.024	0.086	0.080	0.005	0.000	0.762
	ANOVA	0.000	0.389	0.250	0.009	0.294	0.023	0.010	0.000	0.412
Asylum	Chi-square	0.000	0.048	0.489	0.000	0.305	0.540	0.015	0.000	0.057
	ANOVA	0.000	0.897	0.837	0.347	0.543	0.154	0.008	0.001	0.070

*Caution is required due to relatively small numbers.

Grey colour: significant variation (<0.005)

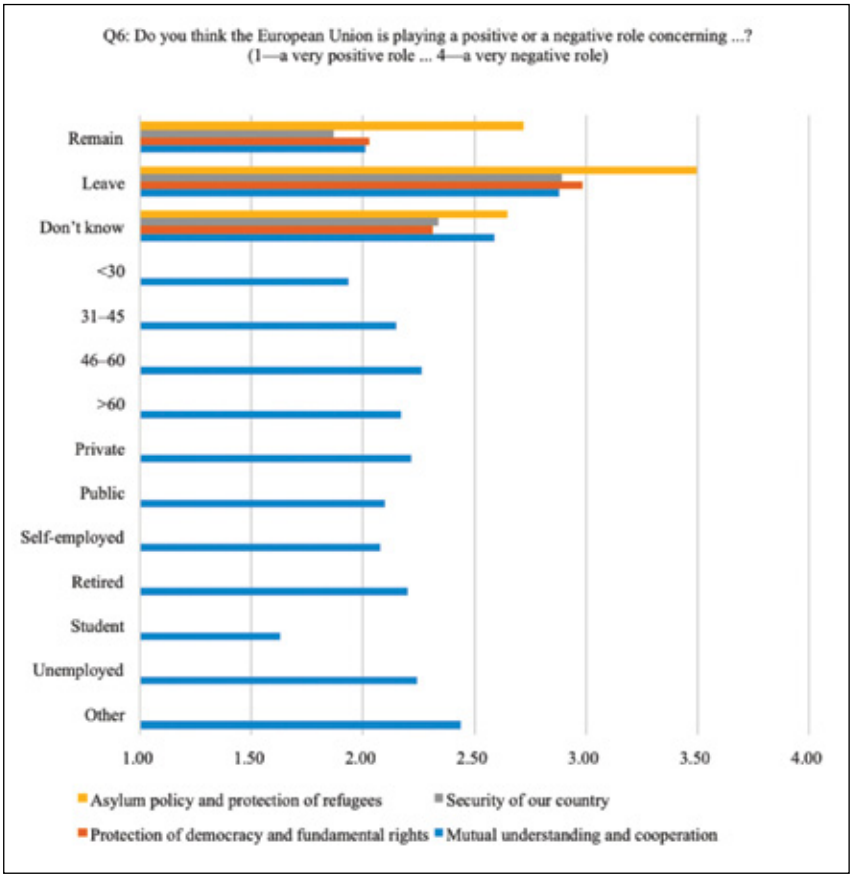
As demonstrated in Table 4.7, attitudes towards the role of the EU vary significantly in all observed areas depending on respondents' position on EU membership (chi-square and ANOVA). Gender seems to play a role for the views regarding protection of democracy and human rights, and the security of Slovenia (chi-square). Education level is only reflected in the views on asylum and refugee policy (chi-square). Employment counts when it comes to cooperation and mutual understanding between member states (chi-square and ANOVA), and protection of democracy and fundamental rights (chi-square). Media consumption is reflected in views on the EU's role for mutual understanding and cooperation, and protection of democracy and fundamental rights (chi-square). And party preferences* determine how respondents see the EU's role in protection of democracy and fundamental rights (ANOVA), the security of Slovenia, and asylum and refugee policy (chi-square and ANOVA).

The correlation between attitudes towards the EU's role in normative issues and EU membership was expected. Protection of democracy and human rights, and security seem to be gender-sensitive issues. Party preferences play an important role for heavily politicised issues—protection of democracy and human rights, security, and asylum and refugee policy. Media consumption is also relatively important, especially for the attitude towards issues that get less media coverage, such as mutual understanding and cooperation, and protection of democracy and human rights. Compared to general policy issues, positions on normative issues do not vary as much with regard to the demographic background of respondents.

Those in support of EU membership see the role of the EU as rather positive in all of the given areas except for asylum and refugee policy, where they see it as rather negative (Figure 4.17). This shows deep controversies caused by the migrant and refugee crisis even among the supporters of EU membership. In contrast, those who would vote to leave the EU see the bloc's role as rather negative in all of the observed areas.

Other demographic categories do not seem that important: respondents under 30 and students see the role of the EU somewhat more positively, which shows that they can identify more with European values and norms as defended by the EU.

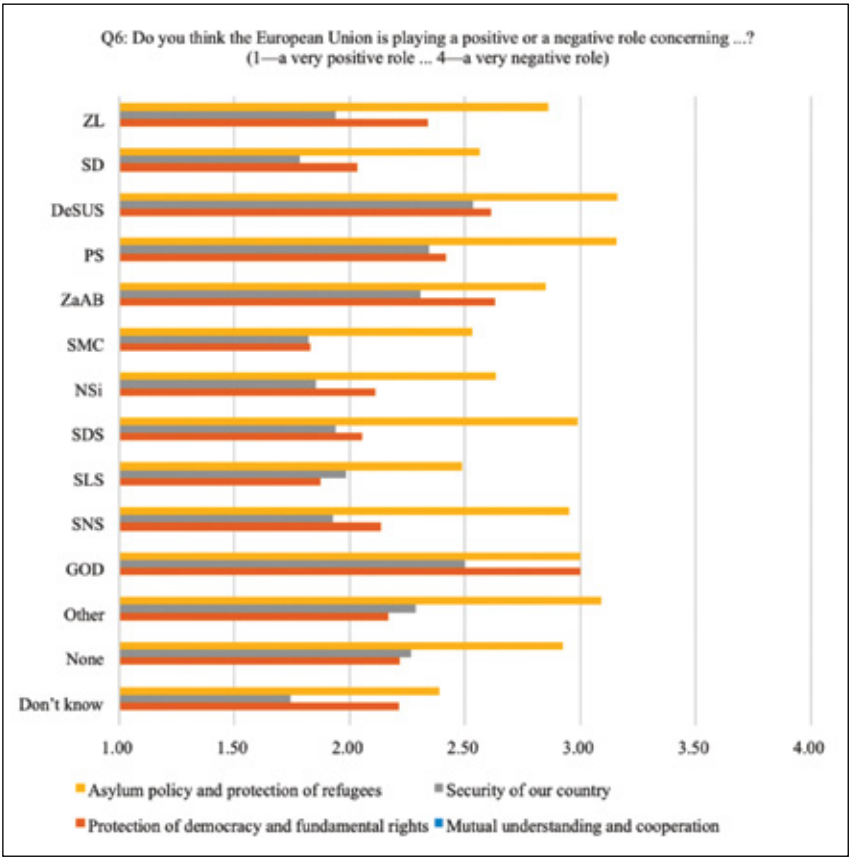
Figure 4.17: Role of the EU in normative issues with respect to demographics



As Figure 4.18 demonstrates, supporters of the SMC, SD, NSi and SLS see the role of the EU in politicised normative issues as more positive than negative (for all but supporters of the SLS, the EU played a rather negative role on asylum and refugee policy). The listed parties are coalition members (SMC, SD), liberal (SMC, NSi) and pro-European (all of them). On the other hand, supporters of the DeSUS, whch represents pensioners, the PS and ZaAB, which represent dissatisfied centrist votes, and the ultra-conservative GOD see the role of the EU more negatively. Negative views on its asylum

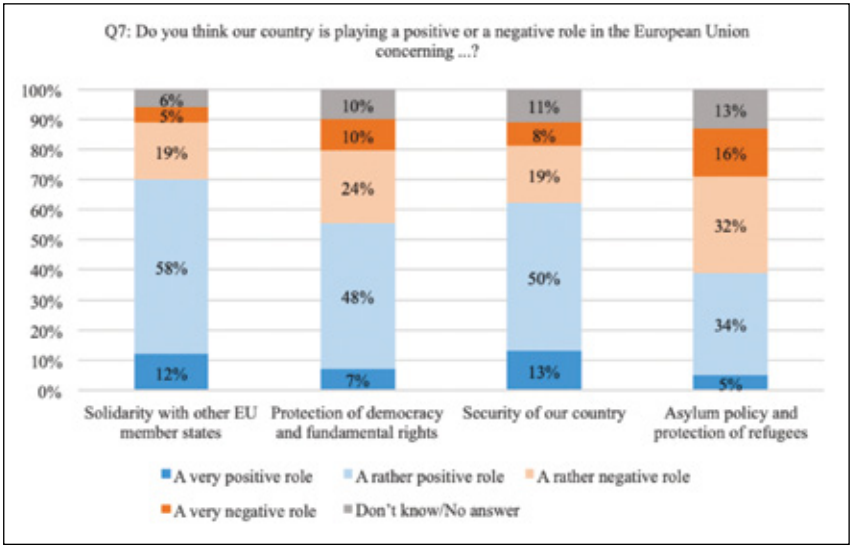
and refugee policy are particularly strong with the DeSUS and PS, the opposition SDS, which has been building on anti-immigrant rhetoric and moving more towards the right, the nationalist SNS, the GOD and, interestingly, also among supporters of the Left (most likely for different reasons, i.e. it criticised the inhumane response to the migration crisis), confirming the observation of polarised views and a narrow space for EU supporters in this area.

Figure 4.18: Role of the EU in normative issues with respect to party preferences



To summarise, when it comes to normative issues, respondents are more Eurosceptical across the different demographic categories, with students seeing the EU more positively. Asylum and refugee policy is particularly controversial and marked by polarised views.

Figure 4.19: Role of Slovenian EU policies on normative issues



As can be seen from Figure 4.19, respondents consider the role of Slovenian policies to be positive when it comes to mutual understanding and solidarity among member states (70%), the security of Slovenia (63%) and protection of democracy and fundamental rights (55%), and as negative when it comes to asylum policy and protection of refugees (48%).

Interestingly, the perception of the role of Slovenian policies is quite positive when it comes to mutual understanding and solidarity, which means that the respondents believe that Slovenia contributes substantially to the EU. Compared to the role of the EU, the role of national policies in the area of protection of democracy and fundamental rights and security is considered less positive. While the respondents are critical towards the government's asylum and refugee policy, the criticism is still weaker compared to the perceived role of the EU in this area, which can be attributed to the divisions in the EU on this issue.

Table 4.8: Role of Slovenian EU policies on normative issues

		Remain	Gender	Age	Educ.	Empl.	Income	Media	Party*	Place
Coop.	**Chi-square**	0.000	0.947	0.195	0.629	0.084	0.021	0.000	0.000	0.006
	ANOVA	0.000	0.474	0.510	0.508	0.152	0.026	0.003	0.000	0.000
Protection of democracy	**Chi-square**	0.000	0.039	0.014	0.330	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.185
	ANOVA	0.000	0.803	0.054	0.480	0.007	0.000	0.047	0.000	0.275
Security	**Chi-square**	0.000	0.028	0.191	0.012	0.053	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.047
	ANOVA	0.000	0.768	0.458	0.140	0.237	0.000	0.164	0.000	0.523
Asylum	**Chi-square**	0.000	0.033	0.360	0.000	0.026	0.003	0.009	0.000	0.006
	ANOVA	0.000	0.570	0.363	0.525	0.016	0.644	0.041	0.000	0.277

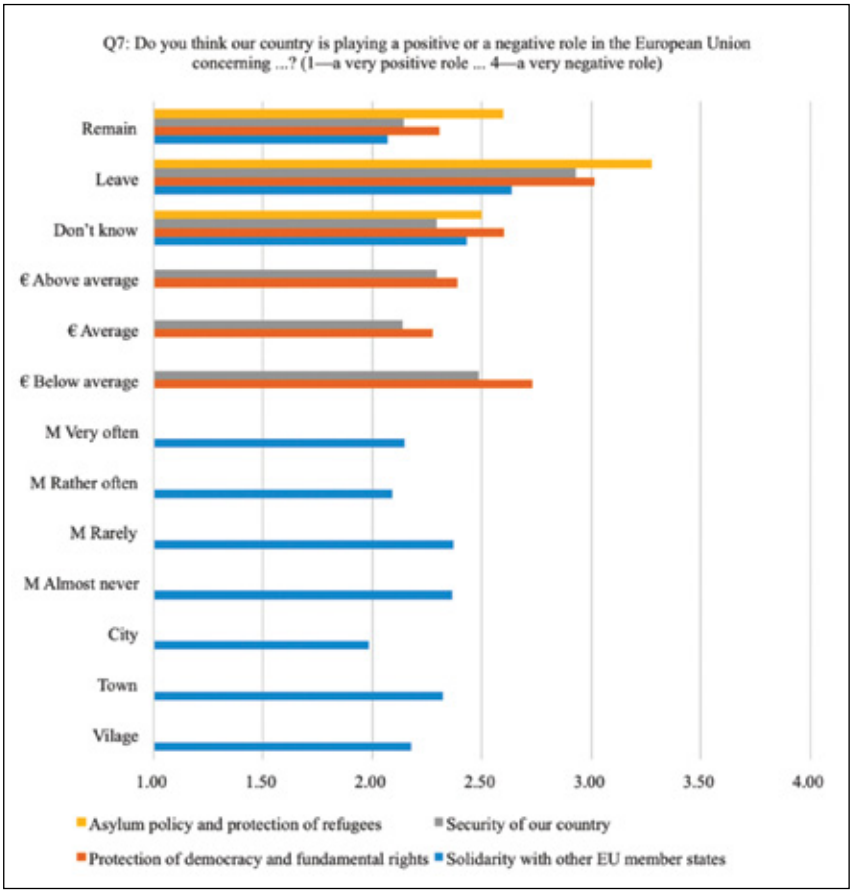
*Caution is required due to relatively small numbers.

Grey colour: significant variation (<0.005)

As demonstrated in Table 4.8, attitudes towards government policies on selected EU normative issues correlate with the position on EU membership (chi-square and ANOVA for all issues), education level in the case of asylum policy (chi-square), employment when it comes to protection of democracy (chi-square), household income for democracy and fundamental rights, security (chi-square and ANOVA for both) and asylum policy and refugees (chi-square), media consumption for mutual understanding and solidarity (chi-square and ANOVA) and protection of democracy and fundamental rights (chi-square), party preferences* for all issues (chi-square and ANVOVA), and place of residence for solidarity (ANOVA).

The important role of respondents' position on EU membership for their attitude towards government EU policies demonstrates strong links between national EU policies and EU policies. Compared to the attitudes towards EU policies on normative issues, household income plays a more important role, particularly in the more politicised issues (protection of democracy and fundamental rights, security and asylum policy), which means that different income groups are more sensitive to national EU policies than to EU policies in general.

Figure 4.20: Role of Slovenian EU policies on normative issues with respect to demographics



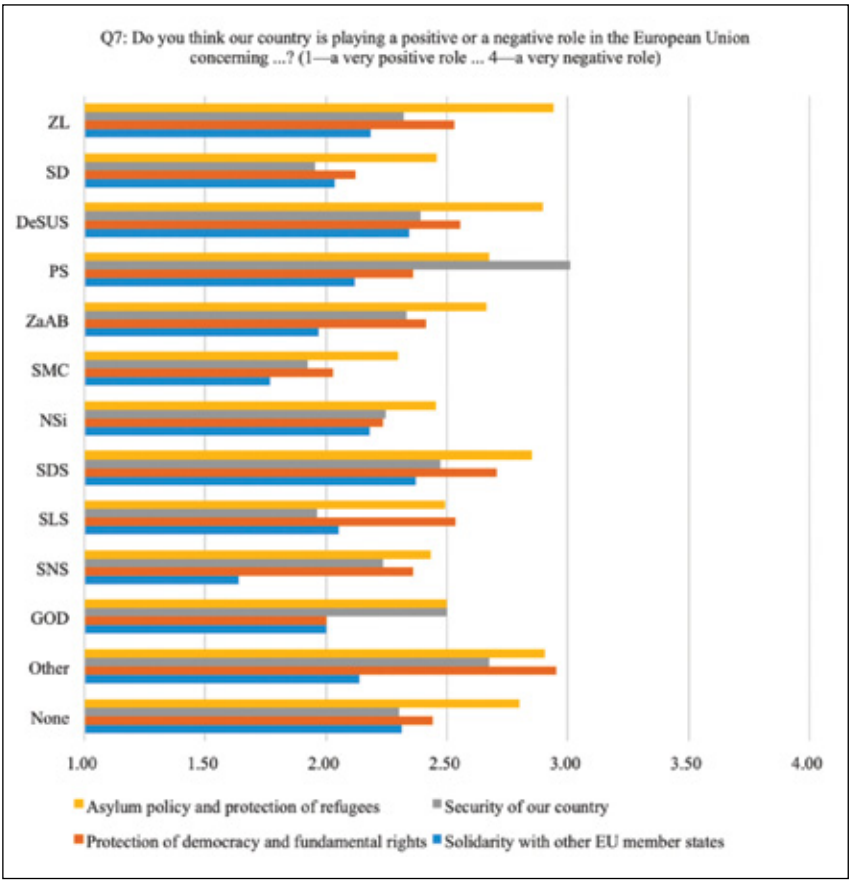
€—household income; M—media consumption

Those who support Slovenia's EU membership see national policies on normative issues rather positively (average grade in the range 1.5–2.5), except for the asylum and refugee policy, while those against EU membership see their effect as rather negative (average grade in the range 2.5–3.5).

Those with below-average incomes see national EU policies in the area of protection of democracy and human rights as well as security more negatively—the average is rather negative for protection of

democracy and human rights. Since there is no direct link between national policies in these areas and income, this shows that the income situation (as an output variable) as such impacts the general attitudes towards normative issues.

Figure 4.21: Role of Slovenian EU policies on normative issues with respect to party preferences



Those who spend more time watching, reading or listening to the news have more positive views on national EU policies in the area of mutual understanding and solidarity, which might be due to information and the content of the media (i.e. media framing) or general

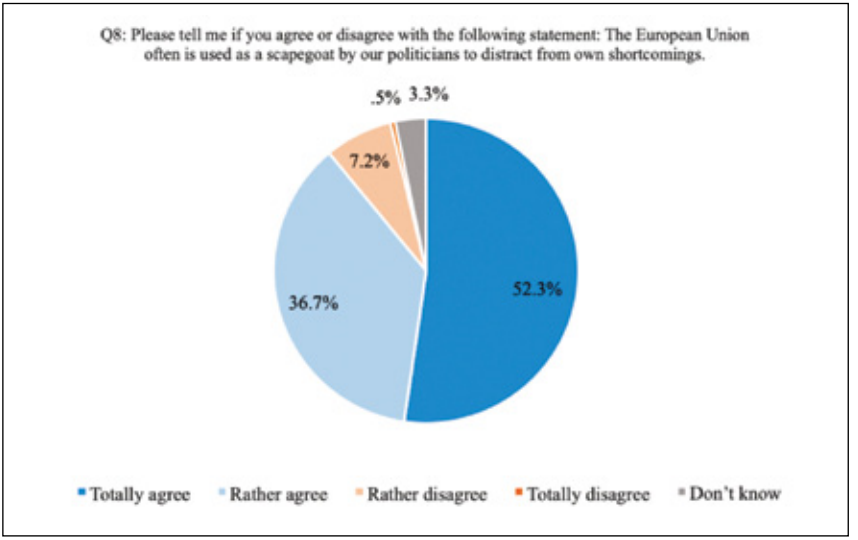
socioeconomic deprivation (information poverty). The respondents who live in bigger cities also have more positive views on national policies in the area of mutual understanding and solidarity, which might be linked to those living in urban areas relating more to such policies.

As demonstrated in Figure 4.21, supporters of the SMC, SD, NSi and SLS see government policies on normative EU issues as rather positive. These parties are coalition members (SMC, SD), liberal parties (SMC, NSi) and pro-EU (all of them). On the other hand, supporters of the DeSUS, SDS, PS and the Left are the most critical: supporters of the Left, DeSUS and SDS have negative views on government policies on asylum and refugees, and protection of democracy and human rights; supporters of the PS see government policies on asylum and refugees and security as negative, and supporters of the SLS see government policies on protection of democracy and human rights as negative. The DeSUS is a niche coalition party, the SDS is a conservative opposition party, the PS is centrist non-parliamentary party, and the Left is a radical leftist party. The results show negative attitudes left and right of the political centre, especially on asylum and refugee policy and security, which indicates the importance of polarised views and politicisation of these issues.

To sum up, the results show that the respondents are less critical towards government policies when it comes to normative issues, particularly on asylum and refugee policy, which shows that even though polarisation is strong with regard to these issues it is not as strong as the perceived division on the EU level. Another interesting finding is that respondents' income level plays a role for the attitudes on security and asylum despite having no direct link between these issues and the economic welfare situation.

Attitudes towards general norms and values

Figure 4.22: The EU as a scapegoat



As seen in Figure 4.22, an alarmingly high majority of the respondents (89%) believes that the EU is used as a scapegoat by national politicians to distract from their own shortcomings. However, this result may not be as much a sign of the scope of the problem of scapegoating the EU (which of course does exist) but rather of the general distrust of the political class.

Table 4.9: The EU as a scapegoat

	Remain	Gender	Age	Education	Empl.	Income	Media	Party*	Place
Chi-square	0.014	0.053	0.062	0.000	0.043	0.003	0.138	0.031	0.031
ANOVA	0.001	0.715	0.021	0.000	0.031	0.000	0.005	0.001	0.004

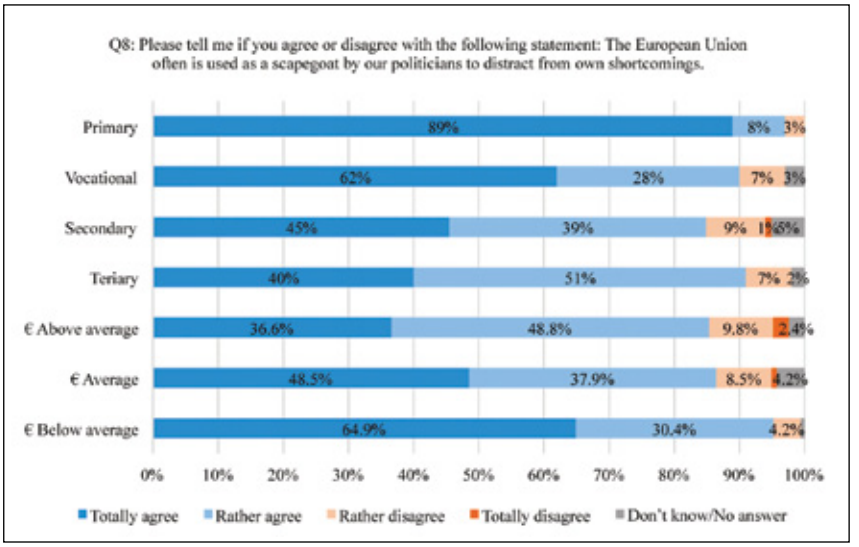
*Caution is required due to relatively small numbers.

Grey colour: significant variation (<0.005)

The position on the scapegoat issue (Table 4.9) correlates with the position on EU membership (ANOVA), education level and household income (chi-square and ANOVA), party preferences* and place

of residence (ANOVA). Education level and income play the most important role; while education is important from the perspective of input and output legitimacy (better socioeconomic position of those with higher education levels), economic welfare is mostly important from the perspective of output legitimacy.

Figure 4.23: The EU as a scapegoat with respect to demographics

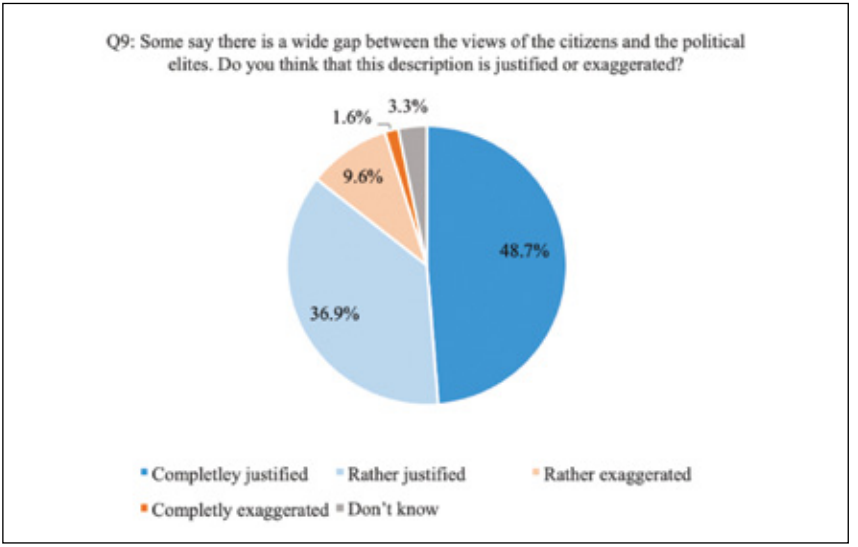


€—household income

As demonstrated in Figure 4.23, those with lower education levels are more likely to totally agree that the EU is being used as a scapegoat by national political elites (89% of those with primary education agree completely, compared to 40% of those with tertiary education). Similarly, those with lower household income are more likely to totally agree with the view (64.9% for those with below-average income against 36.6% of those with above-average income). Education level is nevertheless a more important factor than household income.

To sum up, the rather dramatic views about the domestic elites using the EU as a scapegoat correlate negatively with household income and especially education level, indicating the importance of intellectual capital and socioeconomic background.

Figure 4.24: The gap between citizens and elites



As demonstrated in Figure 4.24, a large majority of the respondents (85.6%) see the view of a gap between the ordinary citizens and the elites as justified. The popularity of this view, a key driver of populism, is worrisome. It is related to low trust in a number of state institutions in Slovenia, which stands out in different comparisons and which researchers find difficult to explain apart from pointing at the usual transition problems.

Table 4.10: The gap between citizens and elites—correlations

	Remain	Gender	Age	Education	Empl.	Income	Media	Party*	Place
Chi-square	0.000	0.027	0.002	0.260	0.365	0.334	0.000	0.000	0.366
ANOVA	0.000	0.569	0.151	0.641	0.121	0.456	0.145	0.002	0.053

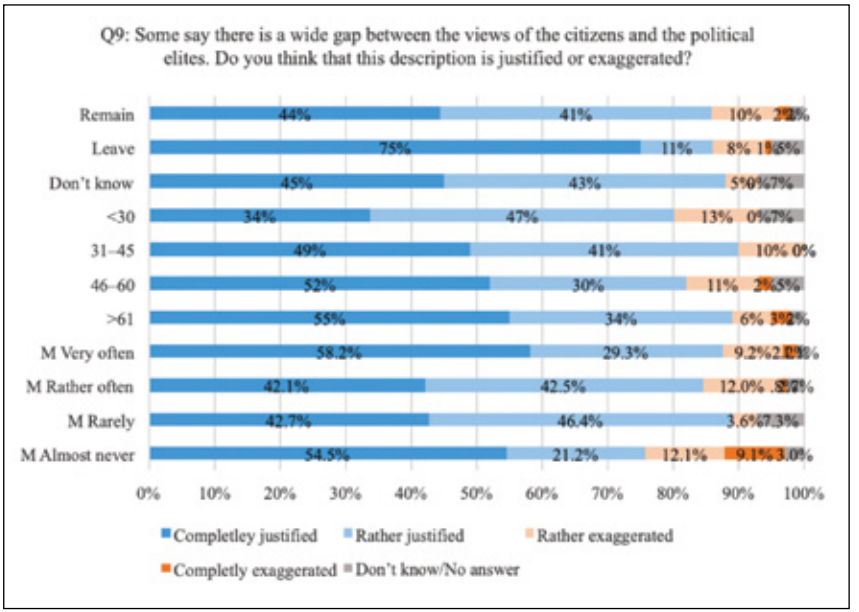
*Caution is required due to relatively small numbers.

Grey colour: significant variation (<0.005)

The position on the gap between the citizens and the elites (Table 4.10) correlates significantly with the position on membership (chi-square and ANOVA), age (chi-square), media consumption (chi-square) and party preferences* (chi-square and ANOVA).

The correlation with the position on EU membership is interesting, and shows that the national political elites share their public image with the EU elites. The role of the media implies the importance of information and input legitimacy in general.

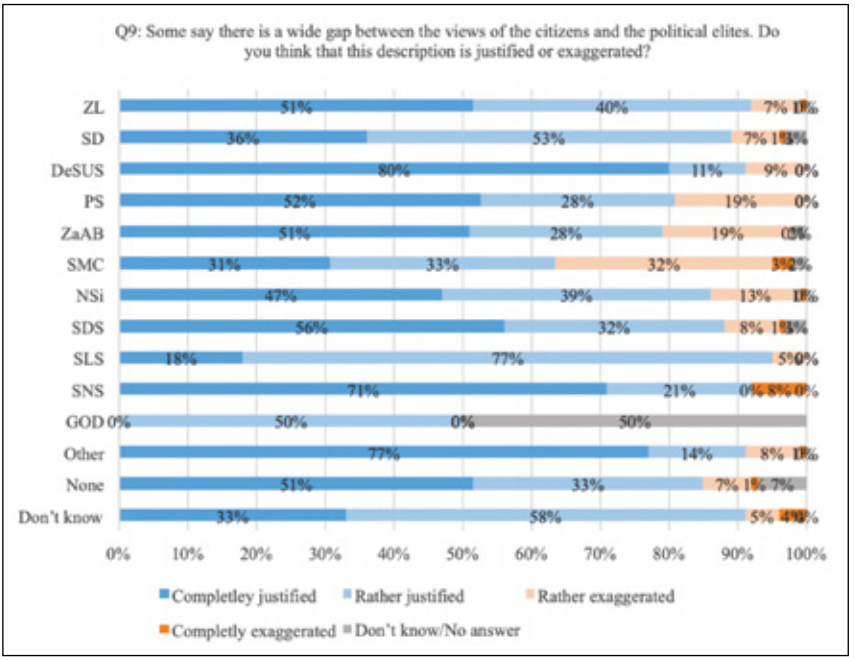
Figure 4.25: The gap between citizens and elites with respect to demographics



M—media consumption

As shown in Figure 4.25, those who support Slovenia's EU membership are less likely to see it as completely justified to speak of a wide gap between the ordinary citizens and the elites compared to those who think the Slovenia should leave the EU (75% vs 44%). Moreover, those under 30 are the least likely to see this view as completely justified. Interestingly, media consumption positively correlates with more moderate views on the existence of such a gap although the relation is not that clear, especially considering the share of those who see this view as totally justified.

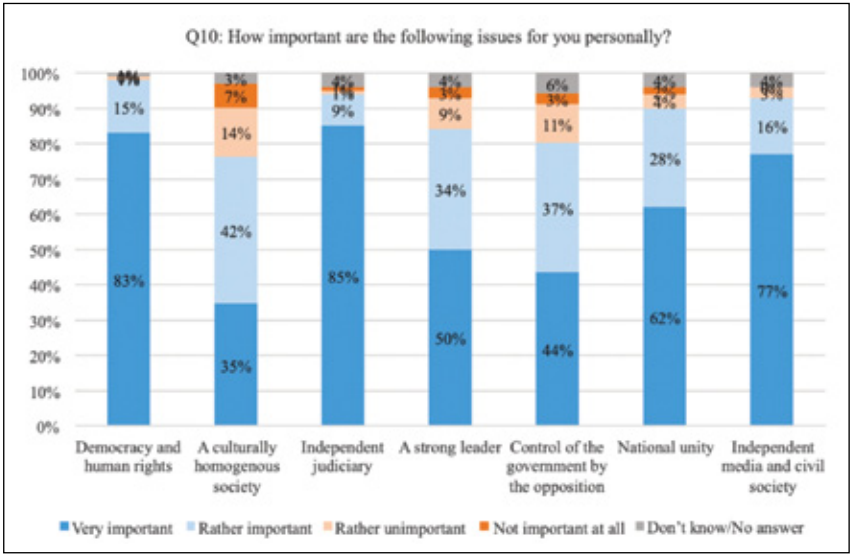
Figure 4.26: The gap between citizens and elites with respect to party preferences



The perception of a gap between citizens and the elites (Figure 4.26) is weakest among supporters of the leading coalition party, the progressive liberal SMC (completely justified: 31%, rather justified: 33%). The share of those who see the view as totally justified is also relatively low among supporters of the conservative and rurally focused SLS (18%) and the centre-left coalition member SD (36%). Both of the parties are pro-EU. On the other side of the spectrum, 80% of supporters of junior coalition partner DeSUS, which represents pensioners, see the view as completely justified, followed by 56% of supporters of the conservative opposition SDS.

To summarise, the perception of a gap between citizens and the elites, which is generally very strong, does not seem to differentiate between the national and Brussels-based elites. Those under 30 have slightly more moderate views. The perception of a gap is, expectedly, somewhat weaker among supporters of centrist, government and pro-EU parties.

Figure 4.27: Importance of norms and values



As demonstrated in Figure 4.27, the respondents find democracy and human rights most important (98%), followed by independent judiciary (94%), independent media and civil society (93%), national unity (90%), having a strong leader (84%), control of the government by the opposition (81%) and a culturally homogenous society (77%).

The hierarchy of values shows a rather liberal democratic profile of the respondents, with a specific characteristic of attaching a relatively important role to judicial independence and a relatively weak role to the control of the government by the opposition. The former can be attributed to the strong politicisation of the role of the judiciary in the recent years, e.g. during the imprisonment of the head of the opposition, Janez Janša (see introduction to this chapter), and the latter to the specific role of Janša's SDS as the biggest opposition party, which was considered destructive by a large share of the electorate.

The absolute shares of those who find individual norms and values important show a slightly more conservative picture: for as many as 62% of the respondents, national unity is very important; for 50% of the respondents, having a strong leader is very important; and for 77% of the respondents, a culturally homogenous society is more

important than not. While Slovenia's small size means that unity has traditionally been given special importance in the national political culture, a combined view of finding it important to have a strong leader and national homogeneity indicates the presence of authoritarianism and chauvinism, which are destructive for open societies protecting individual rights as a basis of democratic decision-making.

Table 4.11: Importance of norms and values

		Remain	Gender	Age	Educ.	Empl.	Income	Media	Party*	Place
Democracy	**Chi-square**	0.000	0.001	0.037	0.156	0.002	0.670	0.000	0.000	0.014
	ANOVA	0.363	0.001	0.264	0.330	0.222	0.627	0.015	0.000	0.671
Culturally homogenous society	**Chi-square**	0.343	0.016	0.005	0.000	0.001	0.016	0.020	0.000	0.218
	ANOVA	0.558	0.131	0.000	0.001	0.025	0.034	0.957	0.023	0.059
Independent judiciary	**Chi-square**	0.000	0.029	0.000	0.004	0.083	0.257	0.000	0.000	0.021
	ANOVA	0.221	0.186	0.667	0.000	0.195	0.852	0.132	0.067	0.116
Strong leader	**Chi-square**	0.000	0.060	0.005	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.035	0.000	0.000
	ANOVA	0.000	0.017	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.147	0.000	0.000
Opposition controll	**Chi-square**	0.076	0.000	0.006	0.039	0.272	0.168	0.000	0.000	0.055
	ANOVA	0.490	0.059	0.014	0.081	0.441	0.471	0.218	0.000	0.547
National unity	**Chi-square**	0.001	0.124	0.046	0.002	0.133	0.001	0.069	0.000	0.049
	ANOVA	0.111	0.996	0.009	0.016	0.244	0.099	0.228	0.007	0.056
Independent civil society	**Chi-square**	0.060	0.000	0.062	0.013	0.239	0.042	0.100	0.006	0.043
	ANOVA									

*****Caution is required due to relatively small numbers.

Grey colour: significant variation (<0.005)

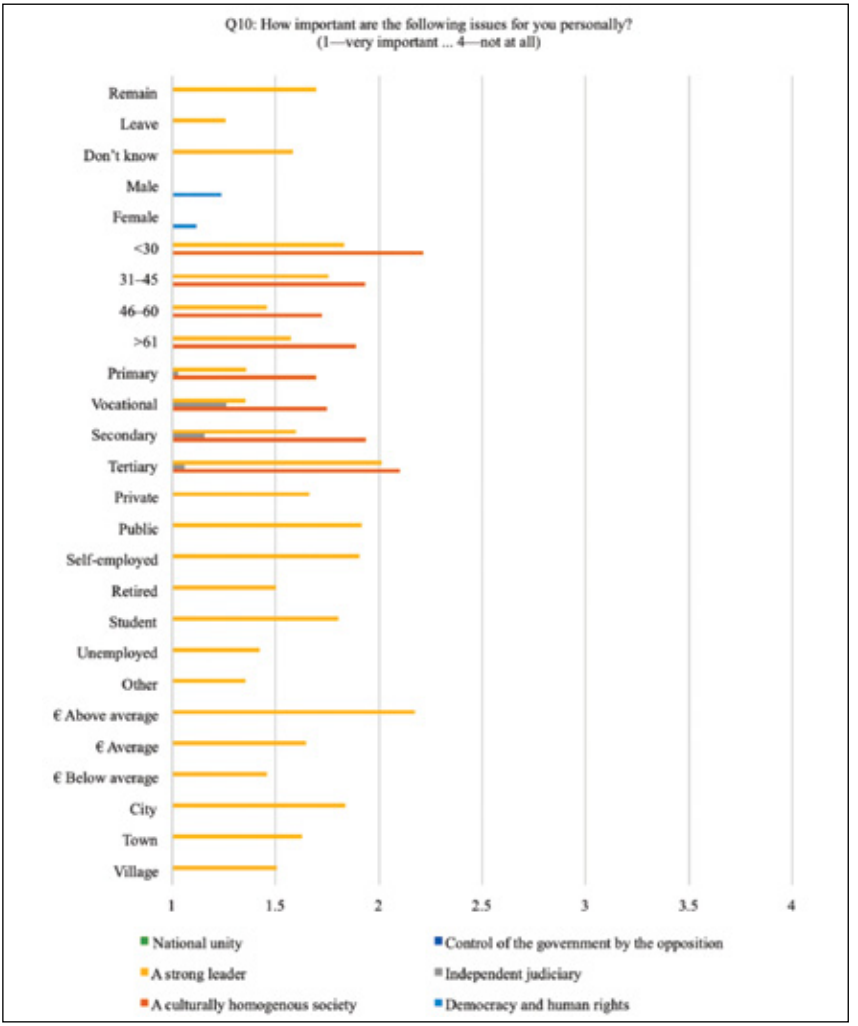
Based on Table 4.11, the following correlations in the distribution of values can be established: the position on EU membership with democracy, independent judiciary (chi-square), having a strong leader (chi-square and ANOVA) and national unity (chi-square); gender with democracy (chi-square and ANOVA), opposition control and civil society (chi-square); age with cultural homogeneity (ANOVA), independent judiciary (chi-square) and having a strong leader (ANOVA); education with cultural homogeneity, independent judiciary, having a strong leader (chi-square and ANOVA) and national unity (chi-square); employment status with cultural homogeneity (chi-square), having a strong leader (chi-square and ANOVA); income with having a strong leader (chi-square and ANOVA) and national unity (chi-square); media consumption with democracy, independent judiciary and opposition control (chi-square); party preferences***** with democracy (chi-square and ANOVA), cultural homogeneity, independent

judiciary (chi-square), having a strong leader, opposition control (chi-square and ANOVA) and national unity (chi-square); and place of residence with having a strong leader (chi-square and ANOVA).

The correlation between the positions on EU membership and on the importance of having a strong leader and, to a lesser extent, of democracy, an independent judiciary and national unity demonstrates that the view on membership is affected by the perceived importance of strong centralised governance. The perception of the importance of democracy and human rights is the most gender-sensitive, while age is important when it comes to how much importance people attribute to having a strong leader and a culturally homogenous society. The importance of having a strong leader also varies according to employment status and income level, as well as the place of residence, which are all elements that influence a person's socioeconomic position and access to resources, demonstrating the importance of output legitimacy. On the other hand, media consumption has more impact on the perception of the importance of democracy, cultural homogeneity and opposition control of the government—elements that are not as self-evident.

As demonstrated in Figure 4.28, those who support EU membership find having a strong leader less but still rather important, which shows that EU membership is linked to ineffective bureaucratised and/or overly democratic decision-making. Female respondents find democracy and human rights somewhat more important than men, meaning that they are more sensitive to issues in this area, which might also explain the gender difference in positions on some of the other questions. Younger respondents find having a culturally homogenous society and a strong leader less important; the importance of these two elements declines again with those over 61. This shows that young people and, to some extent, the oldest generation, are relatively more non-authoritarian and open. A culturally homogenous society and a strong leader are also less important to those with higher education levels, which can be attributed to the higher level of information and knowledge, as well as a better socioeconomic position. Those with higher education levels also consider independent judiciary to be more important. For the unemployed, a strong leader is the most important, while it is least important for those working in the public sector and the self-employed. This shows that an underprivileged economic position leads to an inclination towards authoritarianism, while those working within public systems understand the

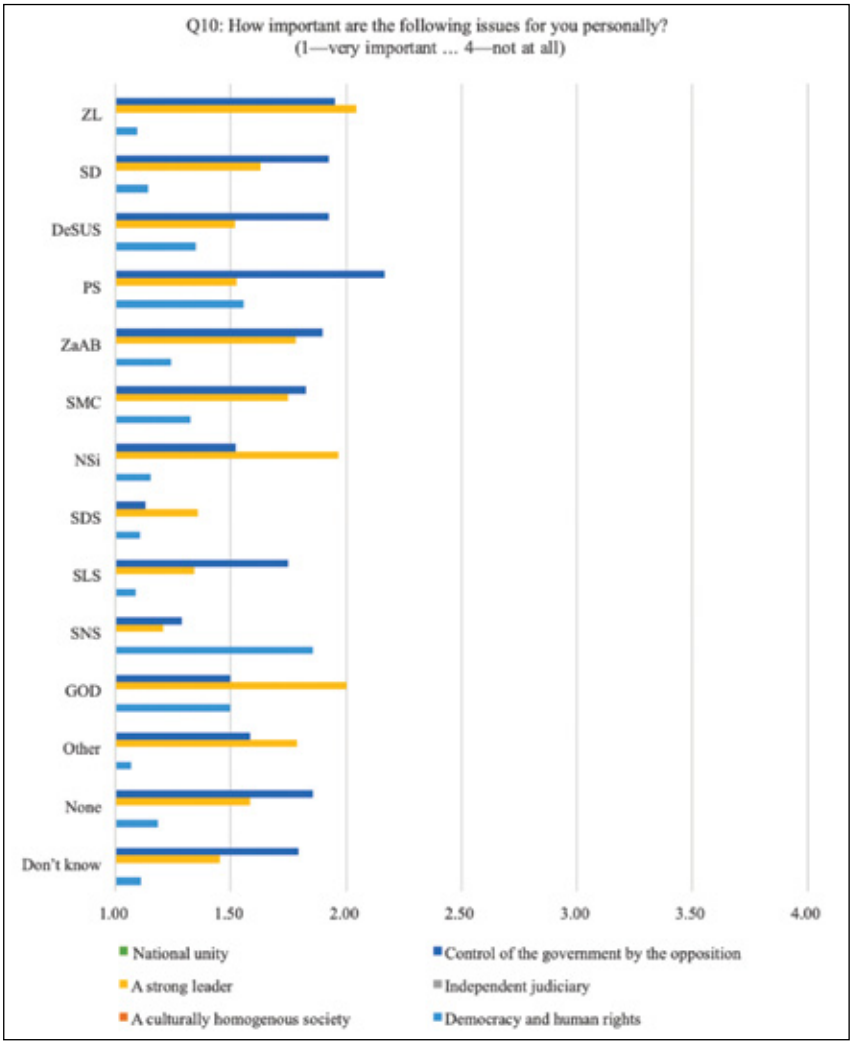
Figure 4.28: Importance of norms and values with respect to demographics



€—household income

importance of democracy more. Those with lower education levels and those living in less densely populated areas also consider having strong leader more important, which can be explained by a weaker socioeconomic position and access to opportunities.

Figure 4.29: Importance of norms and values with respect to party preferences



As evident from Figure 4.29, democracy and human rights are relatively more important for supporters of the biggest opposition party, the conservative SDS, and for supporters of the radical Left, followed by a range of centre-left and centre-right coalition and opposition parties. However, supporters of these two parties most

likely interpret these values each from their own specific perspective of social progressivism in the case of the Left and as an opposition party with its own perspective on neutrality of state institutions in the case of SDS. Democracy and human rights are considered least important by the followers of the nationalist SNS, followed by supporters of the centrist alternative Positive Slovenia and the ultra-conservative GOD.

Similarly, control of the government by the opposition is most important to supporters of the biggest opposition party SDS, followed by the nationalist non-parliamentary SNS and the opposition liberal Catholic NSi. Control of the government by the opposition is least important to supporters of the PS, followed by a number of centrist and coalition parties. The relative indifference of supporters of the non-parliamentary PS in this area can be attributed to the populist attitude towards the importance of having political opposition in general.

Having a strong leader is most important to supporters of the nationalist SNS, followed by supporters of the rural conservative SLS and of the conservative SDS, which is characterised by the important role of its leader Janez Janša. On the other hand, it is least important to the Left, which focuses on social progressivism and fosters a general negative attitude towards authorities, but also to the NSi, a moderate pro-EU liberal Catholic party.

To summarise, Slovenians share liberal democratic values and norms, apart from some local specifics. Nevertheless, authoritarian and chauvinist elements are also given relatively high importance, especially among the less educated, those with lower incomes and those living in rural areas. The respondents who support strong authority are more likely to be opposed to membership in the EU, which they probably considered to be ineffective. Party preferences play a very important role: for example, strong leaders are more important to nationalist and conservative parties.

Conclusion

The analysis of the opinion poll on populism and EU-related attitudes in Slovenia demonstrated that all demographic categories support EU membership. The level of support correlates with media consumption and identification with centrist pro-EU parties (in contrast to radical left and right-wing parties), which shows the

importance of input legitimacy, i.e. the framing of EU membership. The situation is more or less the same with the perceived fairness of representation of the EU, which is expected given the importance of input legitimacy. The view on how Slovenia is treated by EU institutions is balanced, with supporters of centrist pro-EU parties seeing the role of the EU more positively. This result is expected since centrist pro-EU parties derive their legitimacy from the EU and take advantage of internationalisation to increase their political power.

The attitudes towards individual policy areas show a slightly different picture where socioeconomic background (i.e. lower age, higher education level and income, and living in an urban area are typically related to higher opportunities resulting from EU integration) is the most important factor explaining the attitudes, which demonstrates the importance of output legitimacy. Interestingly, critical views are not necessarily expressed in terms of implications for economic welfare but rather as criticism of the impact on the political weight of the country, meaning that the elites are blamed for their inability to protect national interests. In line with this observation, respondents were more critical towards the government's EU policies—particularly the younger generation was more critical, especially regarding the impact on economic welfare and business, where various interest groups blocking reforms have contributed to a sort of 'gerontocratic' intergenerational gap.

The situation changes when it comes to normative issues, where more Euroscepticism can be seen across different categories. This is especially relevant with regard to asylum and refugee policy. The government scores better than the EU in this area, and although views are strongly polarised, the polarisation is probably not as strong as the perception of disunity on the EU level, which is one of the reasons for the more positive (although still rather negative) grade for the national government, with its securitisation approach as the second possible reason, since it also received comparably high grades in the area of security. Once again, economic backgrounds play an important role for the attitudes, in spite of no direct links between, for example, asylum policy and the socioeconomic status.

Respondents expressed quite dramatic views on the use of the EU as a scapegoat by the domestic elites. These views were affected by education level, which combines the role of input and output legitimacy. Another dramatic outcome was the widespread belief in a gap between citizens and the elites, where those who oppose EU

membership were more inclined to see this gap as a problem, which shows that they link this to the EU-level game. Once again, centrist and younger respondents expressed more progressive views. In the background of a rather liberal democratic profile of the average respondent is an alarming potential for authoritarianism and chauvinism expressed in particular by those who are sceptical towards membership, those closer to right-wing parties, or those with an underprivileged socioeconomic background.

To conclude, while populism and anti-EU attitudes among parts of the electorate in Slovenia can be explained in standard terms of a rather specific role of input and output legitimacy, e.g. information deprivation and preference for radical parties on the one hand and underprivileged socioeconomic backgrounds on the other, there are also some more concerning broader trends, such as gender-related and intergenerational tensions, high general distrust in political elites, and populist and Eurosceptic attitudes emerging among disappointed supporters of centrist parties, which could, along with the traditionally high polarisation and emerging authoritarian styles in some of the parties, lead to populism becoming a more dominant force in line with the rest of CEE.

Appendix: Questionnaire in the Slovenian language and the demographic composition of the sample

Raziskava o odnosu do EU v Sloveniji; 22. nov. – 14. dec. 2017; N = 591; spletni panel.

SUMARNIK:

Q1 Za začetek splošno vprašanje:
Ali naj Slovenija ostane članica Evropske unije ali naj jo zapusti?

1 –	Naša država bi morala ostati članica Evropske unije.	79,3
2 –	Naša država bi morala zapustiti Evropsko unijo.	12,8
3 –	Ne vem.	7,9

Q2 Ali mislite, da je Evropska unija v političnih razpravah v naši državi predstavljena na ustrezen, preveč pozitiven ali preveč negativen način?

1 –	Ustrezen način	36,0
2 –	Preveč pozitiven	30,6
3 –	Preveč negativen	20,0
4 –	Ne vem	13,4

Q3 Ali se strinjate s tem ali ne, da institucije Evropske unije našo državo na splošno obravnavajo na pravičen način?

1 –	Povsem se strinjam.	6,8
2 –	Strinjam se.	39,2
3 –	Ne strinjam se.	40,1
4 –	Sploh se ne strinjam.	7,7
5 –	Ne vem.	6,3

Q4 Ali mislite, da članstvo v EU trenutno prinaša več prednosti ali več slabosti za …?

		Zagotovo več prednosti 1	Nekoliko več prednosti 2	Nekoliko več slabosti 3	Veliko več slabosti 4	Ne vem	Povp.
a.	… našo državo kot poslovno lokacijo	38,3	41,0	9,1	4,8	6,8	1,79
b.	… gospodarsko blaginjo v državi	28,8	38,7	16,0	9,4	7,0	2,07
c.	… politično težo države	18,8	37,9	20,8	11,7	10,8	2,29
d.	… varnost države	34,6	35,9	10,8	9,1	9,6	1,94

Q5 Ali mislite, da politika naše države do evropskih zadev trenutno prinaša več prednosti ali več slabosti za …?

		Zagotovo več prednosti 1	Nekoliko več prednosti 2	Nekoliko več slabosti 3	Veliko več slabosti 4	Ne vem	Povp.
a.	… našo državo kot poslovno lokacijo	13,7	40,8	24,8	10,2	10,4	2,35
b.	… gospodarsko blaginjo v državi	12,2	40,0	23,8	13,7	10,4	2,43
c.	… politično težo države	8,3	34,3	26,5	16,2	14,6	2,59
d.	… varnost države	21,6	38,2	16,1	9,7	14,5	2,16

Q6 Ali mislite, da Evropska unija igra pozitivno ali negativno vlogo na naslednjih področjih:

		Zelo pozitivno vlogo 1	Bolj pozitivno vlogo 2	Bolj negativno vlogo 3	Zelo negativno vlogo 4	Ne vem	Povp.
a.	Glede vzajemnega razumevanja in sodelovanja med državami članicami EU?	12,7	56,2	22,5	2,5	6,1	2,16
b.	Glede zaščite demokracije in temeljnih pravic?	15,0	51,3	22,0	3,9	7,9	2,16
c.	Glede varnosti naše države?	22,1	46,1	14,9	5,0	11,9	2,03
d.	Glede politike do azila in beguncev?	3,7	28,1	35,6	18,9	13,7	2,81

Q7 Ali mislite, da naša država igra pozitivno ali negativno vlogo v Evropski uniji na naslednjih področjih:

		Zelo pozitivno vlogo 1	Bolj pozitivno vlogo 2	Bolj negativno vlogo 3	Zelo negativno vlogo 4	Ne vem	Povp.
a.	Glede solidarnosti z drugimi državami članicami?	12,3	58,6	18,9	4,5	5,6	2,17
b.	Glede zaščite demokracije in temeljnih pravic?	7,4	48,5	24,0	10,1	10,0	2,41
c.	Glede varnosti naše države?	12,4	50,4	18,8	7,9	10,5	2,25
d.	Glede politike do azila in beguncev?	5,1	34,1	31,8	15,6	13,4	2,67

Q8 Prosimo, povejte, ali se strinjate ali ne strinjate z naslednjo izjavo: »Evropsko unijo naši politiki pogosto uporabljajo kot izgovor, da preusmerijo pozornost od lastnih pomanjkljivosti.«

1 –	Da, povsem se strinjam.	52,4
2 –	Da, strinjam se.	36,5
3 –	Ne, ne strinjam se.	7,4
4 –	Ne, sploh se ne strinjam.	0,6
5 –	Ne vem.	3,1

Q9 Nekateri pravijo, da obstaja velik prepad med pogledi državljanov in političnih elit. Ali mislite, da je tak pogled upravičen ali da je pretiran?

1 –	Je povsem upravičen.	48,3
2 –	Je še kar upravičen.	37,5
3 –	Je prej pretiran.	9,7
4 –	Je povsem pretiran.	1,5
5 –	Ne vem.	3,1

Q10 Prosimo, povejte, kako pomembne so za vas osebno naslednje stvari:

		Zelo pomembno 1	Še kar pomembno 2	Prej ne-pomembno 3	Sploh ni pomembno 4	Ne vem	Povp.
a.	Demokracija in človekove pravice	82,9	14,5	1,1	0,4	1,2	1,18
b.	Kulturno homogena družba (mislimo na versko, etnično, kulturno enotnost)	34,8	41,6	13,8	6,5	3,3	1,92
c.	Neodvisno sodstvo	85,0	8,5	1,3	0,8	4,3	1,14
d.	Močan voditelj	50,0	34,6	9,1	2,7	3,4	1,63
e.	Nadzor nad vlado s strani opozicije	43,4	37,1	11,0	2,9	5,5	1,72
f.	Nacionalna enotnost	61,8	28,0	4,1	1,8	4,3	1,43
g.	Neodvisni mediji in civilna družba	77,0	15,8	2,9	0,4	4,0	1,24

DEMOGRAFIJA/DEMOGRAPHICS

Q11 Spol (Gender):

1 –	Moški (male)	50,3
2 –	Ženski (female)	49,7

Q12 Katerega leta ste rojeni – starost? (Age)

1 –	do 30 let (<30)	18,0
2 –	od 31 do 45 let (31–45)	25,0
3 –	od 46 do 60 let (46–60)	28,0
4 –	61 let in več (>61)	29,0

Q13 Kakšna je vaša dosežena stopnja izobrazbe? (Level of educational attainment)

1 –	Osnovna šola (Primary)	9,6
2 –	Zaključena poklicna, strokovna izobrazba (Vocational)	27,1
3 –	Zaključena srednja izobrazba (Secodnary school)	35,4
4 –	Zaključena višja, visoka izobrazba ali več (Higher education, Unviersity)	27,9

Q14 Še vprašanje o zaposlenosti. Ali ste trenutno …? (Employment status)

1 –	Zaposleni v gospodarstvu (Private sector)	21,6
2 –	Zaposleni v negospodarstvu (Public sector)	17,4
3 –	Samozaposleni (Self-emplyoed)	4,3
4 –	Kmetovalec (Farmer)	0,7
5 –	Gospodinja (Housework)	2,2
6 –	Upokojenec (Retired)	38,8
7 –	Študent, dijak (Student)	6,1
8 –	Brezposeln (Unemployed)	8,3
9 –	Drugo (Other)	0,6

Samo za zaposlene v gospodarstvu in negospodarstvu, N = 230

Q15 Ali vas skrbi, da bi lahko izgubili svoje delovno mesto?

1 –	Da, zelo me skrbi.	8,6
2 –	Da, do neke mere me skrbi.	38,7
3 –	Ne, to me ne skrbi.	51,3
4 –	Ne vem.	1,5

Q16 Če izhajate iz razmer v Sloveniji, kako bi na splošno ocenili materialno stanje v vašem gospodinjstvu? (Household income)

1 –	Nadpovprečno (Above average)	7,2
2 –	Povprečno (Average)	64,2
3 –	Podpovprečno (Below average)	28,6

Q17 Kako pogosto gledate, berete ali poslušate novice s politično in drugo aktualno tematiko? (Media consumption)

1 –	Zelo pogosto (Very often)	31,5
2 –	Še kar pogosto (Rather often)	44,1
3 –	Bolj poredko (Rarely)	18,7
4 –	Skoraj nikoli (Almost never)	5,7

Q18 Povejte prosimo, katera od političnih strank vam je najbližja oz. vam je vsaj nekoliko bližja kot ostale? (Party identification)

1 –	DeSUS – Demokratična stranka upokojencev Slovenije	2,7
2 –	GOD – Gibanje za otroke in družine	0,5
3 –	NSi – Nova Slovenija – Krščanski demokrati	6,7
4 –	PS – Pozitivna Slovenija	1,6
5 –	SD – Socialni demokrati	15,5
6 –	SDS – Slovenska demokratska stranka	14,0
7 –	SLS – Slovenska ljudska stranka	2,3
8 –	SMC – Stranka modernega centra	6,7
9 –	SNS – Slovenska nacionalna stranka	1,7
10 –	ZaAB – Zavezništvo Alenke Bratušek	3,4

11 –	ZL – Združena levica	9,4
12 –	Druga stranka	5,1
13 –	Nobena stranka	24,7
14 –	Ne vem	5,7

Druga stranka, N=30: (Other party)

1 –	Bolj desno	2,9
2 –	Dobra država	16,6
3 –	Levica	1,2
4 –	Libertarna stranka	1,2
5 –	Lista Marjana Šarca	35,7
6 –	Prstan	1,2
7 –	Socialistična partija Slovenije	5,4
8 –	Stranka Donalda J. Trumpa	9,2
9 –	Verjamem	1,2
10 –	Zedinjena Slovenija	0,4
11 –	Zeleni	19,3
12 –	Zveza za Primorsko	1,5

Q19 Ali prebivate: (Where do you live?)

1 –	Na podeželju (Countryside)	42,8
2 –	V manjšem kraju ali mestu (Small town)	30,1
3 –	V večjem mestu (Large town/city)	27,1

Q20 Za konec nam povejte še, v kateri regiji prebivate: (Region)

1 –	Pomurska	8,0
2 –	Podravska	11,6
3 –	Koroška	2,1
4 –	Savinjska	12,1
5 –	Zasavska	3,0
6 –	Spodnjeposavska	4,5
7 –	Jugovzhodna Slovenija	5,3
8 –	Notranjsko-kraška	3,4
9 –	Osrednjeslovenska	23,2
10 –	Gorenjska	15,3
11 –	Goriška	6,7
12 –	Obalno-kraška	4,7

Conclusion

As proposed in the introduction, the rise of populism in the Central European new member states of the European Union is a result of a deep legitimacy crisis of national political actors and institutions in the context of external shocks and more systemic problems of global and European governance. The intention of this research was to focus on CEE where the rise of populism has been expressed strongly due to the fact that the political vacuum in these countries that emerged after the fall of communism was filled by liberal international and EU order and institutions. The research was based on existing literature and data, as well as original research and analysis conducted for the purposes of this project.

Chapter one tested the role of institutions as an input variable, which take most of the blame for the rise of populism in the dominant discourse, vs the role of economic change as an output variable, by building on the existing literature and available data. It demonstrated that although institutions are an important factor—especially where their quality levels are lower, e.g. in Poland and Hungary, which are also known as "illiberal democracies"—economic changes, particularly external shocks and crises but also a growing convergence gap and inequality, were a much more important factor behind the rise of populism and the changing attitudes towards the EU. This finding shows the weakness of political actors in CEE facing economic pressures in the global and EU context and their inability to respond that consequently leads them to resort to populism. Moreover, the research demonstrated a gap between the public perception of the importance of institutions as opposed to their actual role and the role of economic change, indicating that institutional quality has become a sort of replacement for the real political conflict. Ironically, a sort

of consensus on flawed and corrupt domestic institutions in CEE as the source of the problem of EU and national elites alike turned out to support the rise of populists in CEE. Moreover, one could even argue that the discourse on institutional quality as a minimum common denominator of EU and CEE elites sets the conditions for the emergence of more authoritarian forms of populism, which will be able to sustain the pressures from (neo)liberal forms of economic governance.

The study of populist and Eurosceptic framing of issues by political actors in Central European new member states in response to the two major crises the EU underwent in the recent years, during which new members of CEE saw a dramatic rise in populism and particularly its Eurosceptic version, demonstrated that, even though the actual impact of the crises for individual countries was important for the rise of populist and Eurosceptic strategies (as demonstrated by the cases of Hungary and Slovenia), the actual effect was more or less irrelevant from a broader perspective of an effective use of Eurosceptic and populist framing, since the most effective use of Eurosceptic populism was seen in the migrant and refugee crisis and in the countries that were least affected—Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Moreover, the study showed that attempts of Eurosceptic populist framing were much less present during the Eurozone crisis, and even when they were exercised (e.g. in Slovakia) they failed to improve the position of the political actors using them. This proves that in the absence of alternative policy solutions populists largely built on false issues as a way of channelling popular discontent with the political class, which probably also explains why opposition populists were particularly successful in building on this. Moreover, the failure to politicise Eurozone issues is a sign of dependence on the EU and the sensitivity of real issues such as economic governance (as opposed to the migration issue).

An analysis of a special country-based survey conducted in five Central European new member states in Chapter 3 was aimed at comparing the results of the survey to find the differences and connections between the values of different variables concerning the general attitudes towards the EU, policy-related attitudes as indicators of output legitimacy and political profiles as indicators of input legitimacy. It turned out that business and economic welfare are the areas where support for the EU is strongest. By contrast, criticism towards the role of the EU was strongest in the areas of migration

and security, especially when it comes to normative framing and highly politicised issues such as the migrant and refugee crisis, where national governments enjoyed comparably high levels of trust due to a perceived failure of EU policy. The analysis also confirmed some of the authoritarian and illiberal trends in Central European countries in terms of the political profiles of average voters. Critical views on issues with limited practical importance for most of the respondents (such as migration) as an output variable demonstrated the ability of national elites to gain legitimacy through these issues. Along with linking critical views to an authoritarian profile of respondents, this suggests that identity issues related to the migration-security nexus act as a replacement for existing political and economic problems, which goes in line with the results of other parts of the research.

Chapter four featured a case study of Slovenia as the most pro-EU among the Central European new member states and thus a test case for the role of external factors that was prepared in order to specify the role of demographic markers of input and output legitimacy, such as the level of information and socioeconomic position, for EU-related attitudes, attitudes towards different policy areas and political profiles. As far as the general attitudes towards the EU are concerned, the analysis established a link to support for centrist pro-EU parties and the level of information available as input variables, thus demonstrating the importance of political and media depiction. When it comes to individual policy areas, the analysis showed that more pro-EU–oriented positions were found with the winners of Europeanisation, such as those with higher educational attainment and those who are better off economically. Interestingly, the younger generation saw the EU as a guarantee for more opportunities as it supports a more open and competitive environment. Conversely, more sceptical positions were linked with certain underprivileged socioeconomic categories. In more general terms, criticism was expressed especially in terms of the implications of membership for Slovenia's political power. Normative issues turned out to be the ones with a high degree of polarised views. At the same time, issues such as migration and security were also the ones where the government was able to do comparatively well by building on the (perceived) failures of EU policy in the context of the migrant and refugee crisis and on the effect of securitisation of the issue. Once again, the position of the underprivileged socioeconomic categories, which were in fact not affected by the migration crisis, suggests that the migration

crisis fed identity politics as a substitute for real political issues, which was used by political actors to regain legitimacy. Thus, the thorough analysis of the Slovenian case confirmed the findings of the comparative research.

To conclude, the "my country first" approach and variable integration as current trends in global and EU governance, assuming a return of sovereignism against the role of globalist institutions and order, as well as a less unifying role of Community institutions and greater subsidiarity, are supposed to strengthen the link between the centres of power and democratic control, increasing the accountability of the elites, which should thus be able to respond better to the pressures from their electorates. On the other hand, growing nationalism is also likely to bring more political instability into global governance and push smaller countries into a search for regional political patronages. A multispeed Europe will weaken the sense of unity and shared objectives, meaning that national elites will not be able to count as much on the support from the EU (be it in financial, political or identity terms) to facilitate progressive reforms and that increasing their weight through a common EU approach will require more bargaining and grater input from their side. It is not clear how this could improve the position of small transition countries of CEE. More importantly, the questions of asymmetrical interdependence and exposure to shocks will not be resolved but likely become even more expressed, leading to further crises in an increasingly unstable and nationalistic political context, pushing transition countries in more authoritarian forms of governance.

Index