Responsive Voters – How European Integration Empowers Eurosceptic Parties

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ABSTRACT

European integration has been progressing even as support for Eurosceptic parties has been rising. Post-functionalist literature focuses on how public attitudes affect the progress of European integration (bottom-up), but the effect of European integration on domestic politics (top-down) is underexplored. Extreme parties (on either left or right) are known to adopt a Eurosceptic agenda in order to realign the main domestic political cleavage. We aim to contribute to this literature by arguing that the timing and type of EU events, matter in voters' priming. Specifically, public support for Eurosceptic agenda, and the vote for extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties increase with integration events that have a potential for high media profile, signal reduced state autonomy, and occur in proximity to national elections. Furthermore, we argue that although mainstream parties may counter the Eurosceptic claims, the net effect is to ratchet-up electoral support for Eurosceptic parties. We support this argument by employing a mixed-method design using both a natural experiment approach (UESD for Spain's 1993 election) and a model-based regression approach (all parties in 1979-2017 and a new event database). Results are robust to the usual confounders, different rates of voter myopia, and the exclusion of opportunistically-timed elections.

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

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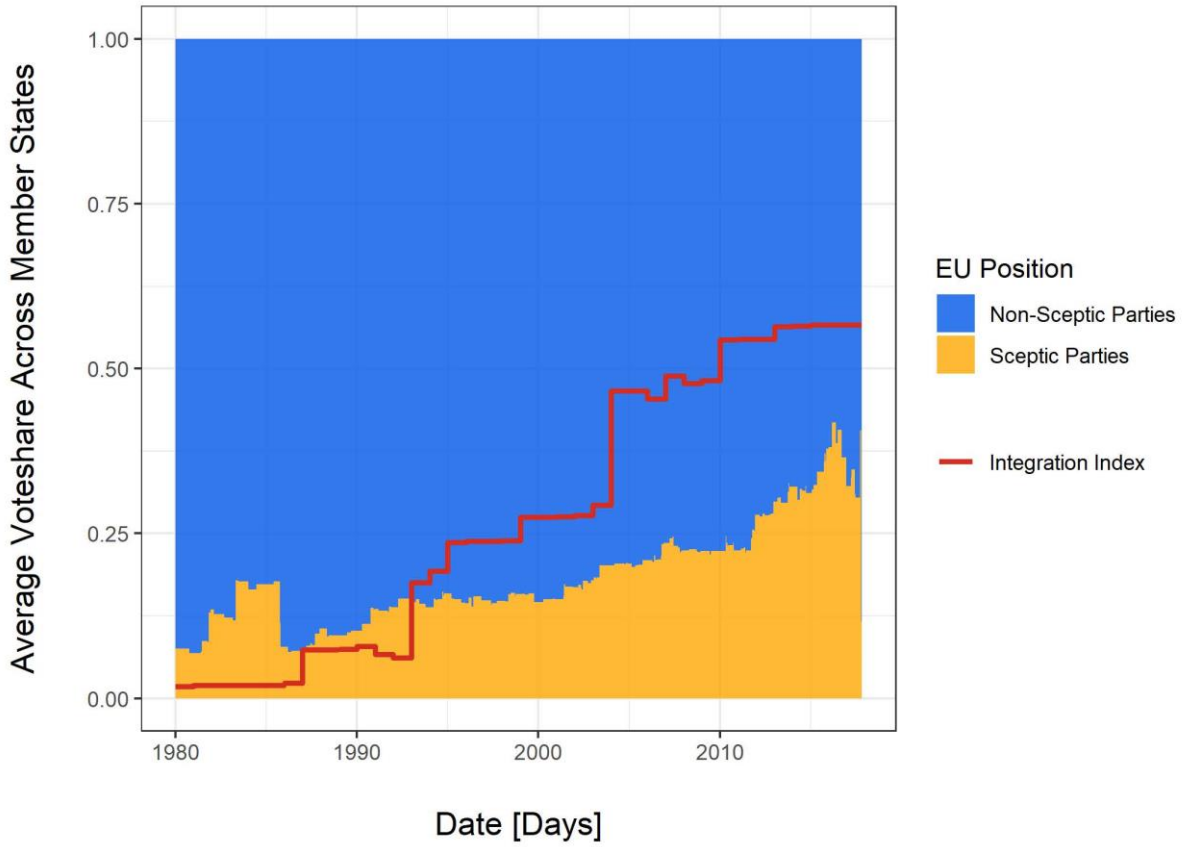
Introduction

European integration has been progressing since the 1950s, intensifying the pooling of authority and sovereignty among the member states of the European Union (EU) and its precursors. In the last 30 years especially, the capacities of the supranational European Commission and the European Parliament (EP) grew, and majoritarian intergovernmental decision-making spread into ever more issue areas (Bickerton *et al*., 2015), intruding on core state powers (Genschel & Jachtenfuchs, 2016).

Figure 1: Rising Euroscepticism shadows greater integration



Notes: Parties' EU agenda is based on Chapel Hill Expert Surveys and the Comparative Manifesto Project, as explained in the fourth section. The Red line represents Leuffen *et al*. (2013) index of integration as agreed in treaties. Simple average in the vertical axis.

However, at least over the last two decades this process has not been accompanied by stable popular support for integration. In fact, as Figure 1 demonstrates, the vote for national

parties with a Eurosceptic agenda – those that resist further European integration or even seek to reverse it – has been steadily growing. One striking example of that dynamic is the overall stagnation in support for integration between the mid 1990's and the early 2000's, when the Eastern Enlargement was designed and agreed upon.

The Neo-functionalist and Liberal-Intergovernmentalist schools have traditionally played down the importance of voters' consent to integration, but the politicization of European integration since the 1990s has challenged this notion. Given that the EU is generally expected to be a democratic organization, these inconsistencies pose two puzzles. The first puzzle, from a bottom-up perspective, is how European integration can progress without domestic popular support. The second, top-down puzzle, is how European integration may negatively affect public perceptions of the EU, and increase voters' support for political parties that oppose integration. The Post-functionalist school has mostly theorized and scrutinized various explanations to the first, bottom-up puzzle. In contrast, we focus on the second, top-down puzzle.

In pursuit of the top-down puzzle, scholars have emphasized the role of political entrepreneurship by extreme parties that attempt to communicate EU events to voters in order to change the dominant issue-alignment in national party systems, and gain electoral support.[1] However, these studies seem to assume that any integration development can automatically serve politically entrepreneurial extreme parties. We aim to contribute to this literature by arguing in the second section that timing and type of events matter in priming voters.

[1] De Vries, 2010; De Vries & Edwards, 2009; Gabel & Scheve, 2007; Hernandez & Kriesi, 2016; Hobolt, 2006; Hobolt & de Vries, 2015; Hobolt & Tilley, 2016; Kriesi, 2007; Kriesi *et al.*, 2006; Meguid, 2005; Nicoli, 2017; Van Kessel *et al.*, 2020.

Specifically, credibility of Eurosceptic parties is enhanced by integration events that have a potential for high media profile, signal reduced state autonomy, and occur in proximity to national elections (Major Integration Events). Regardless of whether such events are good or bad for European integration or the particular member state in any objective sense, they prime the public's attention, and provide extreme parties with opportunities to promote a Eurosceptic agenda. Furthermore, we argue that although mainstream parties may counter the Eurosceptic claims, the net effect is to ratchet-up electoral support for Eurosceptic parties.

In the empirical sections we use a mixed method, combining quasi-experimental and model-based approaches. The third section applies Unexpected Event during Survey Design (UESD). We take advantage of a Eurobarometer survey that happened to take place in the last weeks before the Spanish general election of 1993, and the concurrent Danish referendum over the Maastricht Treaty on European Union (TEU). We find that news of the 'Yes' vote in Denmark (the event) reduced support for European integration in Spain. Counterfactually, we show that outside the context of elections, the same event had no impact on Dutch public support for European integration.

The fourth section employs a model-based method, using data on all parties and national elections in almost all of the EU member states from 1979 to 2017, and a new dataset of Major Integration Events' dates. We show that extreme parties that ran on a Eurosceptic platform were more successful electorally relative to mainstream Europhile parties, increasing their share of the vote by as much as 0.44 percent for every one percent increase in the number of events and in their proximity to elections. While in 1980s this effect mostly helped Eurosceptic parties avoid defeat, since the 2000s it actually erodes mainstream parties' lead. We also find that extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties do especially better in the wake of European Councils and EU enlargements. These findings are robust to controls for actual European integration, fiscal transfers in the EU, globalization, the business cycle, electoral systems, and

different rates of voter myopia, and to the exclusion of opportunistically-timed elections. The fifth section provides conclusions.

How European Integration empowers its opponents

Since the signing of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) in 1992, a "Constraining Dissensus" has been prevailing (Hooghe & Marks, 2009). Good government performance and output legitimacy can no longer compensate for the exclusion of the public from policymaking and the erosion of input legitimacy (Schmidt, 2013). Post-functionalists have mostly studied the effect of domestic politics on actual integration and have highlighted the popular pressures and electoral incentives of governments to pursue (dis)integration. A vast literature studies personal, social and political attributes that may bias individuals in favor or against European integration (De Vries, 2018; Hobolt & De Vries, 2016; Serricchio *et al*., 2013). In response, governments tend to object to legislation that involves greater pooling of authority when the public is more Eurosceptic, or EU issues are more politicized (Hagemann *et al*., 2017; Wratil, 2018; 2019), when ideological extremism is rising (Schneider, 2014) and when referendums are constitutionally mandated (Cheneval & Ferrín, 2018). In government, Eurosceptic parties push for differentiated integration, and even disintegration (Winzen, 2020). Governments fight harder for EU funds and other policy objectives during election years (Schneider 2013; 2019; 2020). At the EU level, governments thus engage in domestic signaling (Schneider & Slantchev, 2018).

These contributions provide bottom-up explanations, but not top-down causal mechanisms. How do policies at the EU level affect domestic popular support for or opposition to the EU within the member states? The main top-down explanation is the Thermostatic

Responsiveness Model, according to which whenever supply of a policy rises to satisfy voters, their demand for further policy measures falls. Applied to the study of European integration, this suggests rejection of further EU treaties and legislation (Soroka & Wlezien, 2010). However, critics argue that such response by voters is unlikely to be automatic, given the non-uniform effect of different acts of legislation on integration (Toshkov, 2011). Following this criticism, more nuanced explanations were advanced. Thermostatic behavior may be more relevant in specific policy sectors, especially in politically-salient issues (De Bruycker, 2019). For example, popular support for integration was found to increase with net EU funds' inflows (Guerra & McLaren, 2016), but fall with migration (Jeannet, 2018; Toshkov & Kortenska, 2015) and the imposition of austerity measures by the Troika (Armingeon & Ceka, 2014).[2]

A more systematic and comprehensive top-down causal mechanism is offered by studies that focus on how parties communicate European integration to the public domestically. They argue that many voters are uninformed and uninterested in EU politics, so cannot shape their attitudes on European integration without some mediation, such as media coverage, or cues from political parties.[3] Party framing strategies are effective in mobilizing voters to change their attitudes towards the EU (Hobolt, 2006; Van Kessel *et al*., 2020), even regardless of voters' level of political awareness (Gabel & Scheve, 2007). On the whole, scholars find that EU issues polarize the vote and drive support for Euroscepticism and the political

[2] However, perception of the strategic environment in which the bailout negotiations took place mitigated the latter (Walter *et al.,* 2018).

[3] De Vries *et al*., 2011; Desmet *et al*., 2012; Hobolt & de Vries, 2016; Pannico, 2020.

extremes.[4] Parties on the left appeal to voters' economic concerns, while parties on the right benefit from voters' concern for national sovereignty and identity (De Vries & Edwards, 2009).

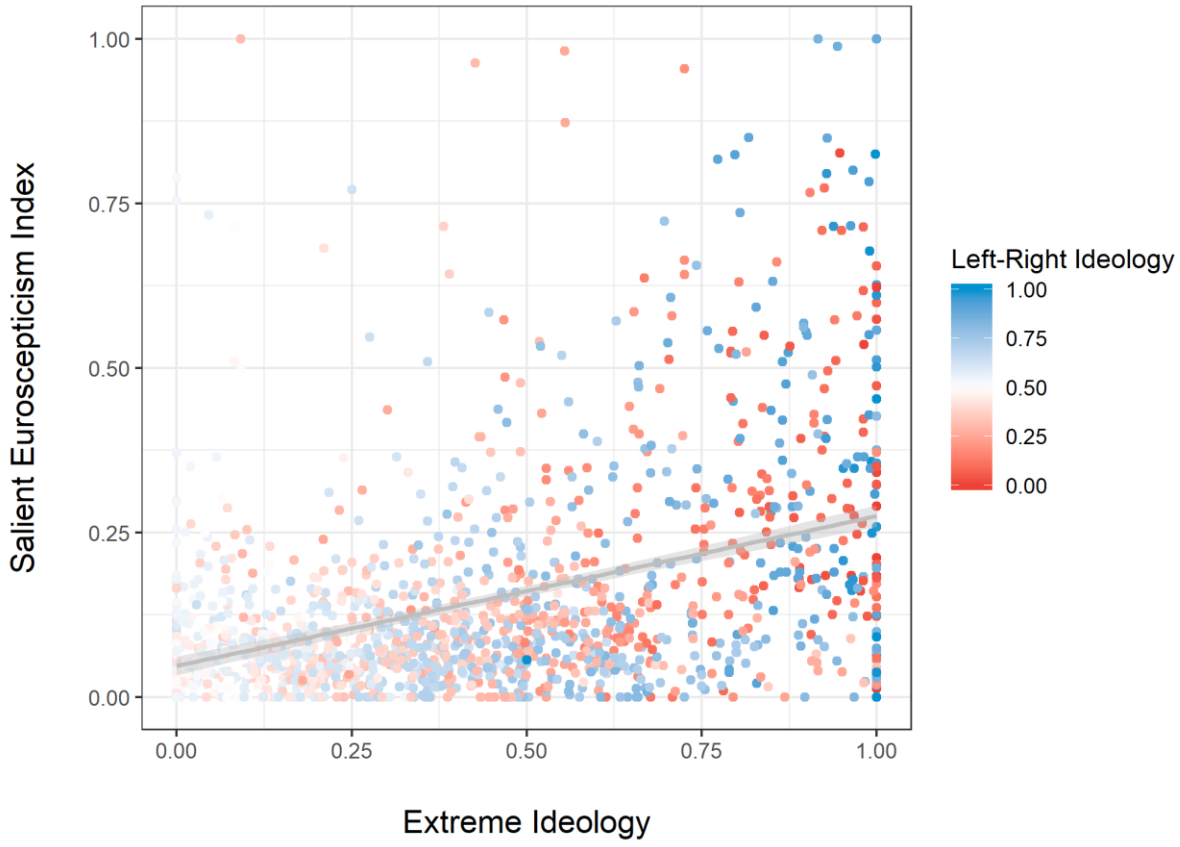
These findings raise two questions. First, if any party can mediate between European integration and voters' attitudes, why does the message of Eurosceptic parties seem to resonate more than the mainstream one? Second, do voters automatically respond to cueing from Eurosceptic parties in response to any development at the EU level, or do some developments matter more than others? In pursuit of these questions, we henceforth focus on electoral support for parties with a Eurosceptic agenda, as our dependent variable, and interpret it as a measure of attitudes towards European integration. We do this because this variable is at the center of the most developed top-down explanations so far, and because electoral support is crucial in democracies for the public's sentiment to feed back into policy.

Regarding the first question, scholars have noted that parties must have political incentives in order to push the EU issue. This is not obvious, because of the limited congruence of EU issues with the prevailing domestic issue-alignment in most member states. Issue-alignments define mainstream party contestation and underpin their political support base. This may be a left-right class divide, but west European party systems have aligned around multiple other dimensions of religion, geography, and/or GAL (Green, Alternative, Liberal) vs. TAN (Traditional, Authoritarian, Nationalism) (Hooghe & Marks, 2018). Central and eastern European member states feature further unique cleavages (Pisciotta, 2016). Mainstream parties – those that can potentially participate in government given the prevailing issue-alignment – have no incentive to politicize new issues (Carmines, 1991). With the exception of the British

[4] De Vries, 2010; Hernandez & Kriesi, 2016; Hobolt & Tilley, 2016; Nicoli, 2017.

Conservative party (Mudde, 2016), they are mostly pro-EU and prefer minimal public attention to European integration.

Figure 2: Extreme parties and Euroscepticism



Notes: Red and blue tones represent left and right parties respectively, based on how left and right are defined in each country. Darker tones represent more extreme left\right positions. Salient Euroscepticism is an index of party agenda, ranging from 0 (low-salience Europhile agenda) to 1 (highly salient Eurosceptic agenda). Linear approximation in grey (see fourth section for more details). See more details in the fourth section.

Rather, change in the existing issue-alignment is in the interest of extreme parties – those with positions aligned at the tails of the domestic distribution of votes according to the dominant issue-alignment, and thus systematically excluded from government. These parties can attempt to change the issue-alignment by adopting a cross-cutting agenda like

Euroscepticism.[5] Extreme parties are also in a better position to pursue such issue entrepreneurship than mainstream parties because they are seldom in government, are not accountable for governmental policies, and thus need not weigh practical policy consequences (Green-Pedersen & Mortensen, 2010). Evidence suggests that disadvantaged parties in European countries are indeed significantly likelier to adopt a Eurosceptic position and enhance its saliency (Carmines, 1991; Carmines & Stimson, 1993; Hobolt & de Vries, 2015). Figure 2 demonstrates this tendency among extreme parties.

Scholars have given less attention to the second question posed above, namely whether any and all developments at the EU level increase voters' support for extreme parties with strategic Eurosceptic agendas (henceforth referred to as extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties). For EU issues to become electorally helpful for such parties, we argue that Major Integration Events must occur, which we define as EU-related events that meet three conditions. First, such events must have the potential to catch the public's attention regardless of direct partisan communication, in order to prime voters, make them more attentive to the anti-integration agenda (Schmidt, 2013), and provide credibility to extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties' message. For this to occur, the EU-related events must be 'big' enough to have a high public profile – to reach the public via multiple media outlets, state institutions, civil society etc., regardless of any political bias. Note that these events are not necessarily on the whole good or bad for European integration or the particular member state in any objective sense. They are important here mostly in priming voters' attention to European integration.

Second, EU-related events are more helpful for extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties if they unquestionably signal a reduction in state autonomy relative to foreign institutions, regardless

[5] Krause, 2020; Kriesi, 2007; Kriesi *et al*., 2006; Meguid, 2005; Pellikaan *et al*., 2007.

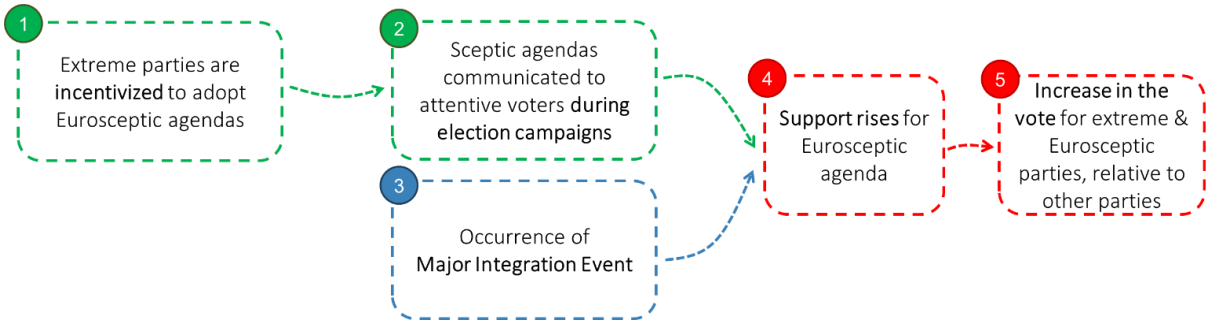
of other costs and benefits. This includes any binding and permanent transfer of authority to supranational or intergovernmental EU institutions (depth of integration), and any expansion of such existing authorities into new issue-areas (breadth or scope of integration) (Hooghe and Marks, 2009); it also includes any increase in the membership of the EU (width of integration), which necessarily dilutes the influence of any existing member state in the EU, not to mention the diminishing autonomy of the new member state. Again, this is not about the objective merit of such integration events. Rather, it is about opportunities for extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties to validate and corroborate their claims that EU integration is detrimental to national autonomy, which intensifies inequality and job insecurity (for the left), or loss of sovereignty and national identity (right) (De Vries & Edwards, 2009).

Third, EU-related events are more effective in supporting extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties when they occur ahead of national elections. This proposition primarily draws on the myopic-voter literature, which finds that voters do not respond to distant events (Welzien, 2015). There are three reasons for this. First, it takes an election campaign to get many voters to pay attention to politics in general; Second, public media outlets tend to dramatize political events ahead of an election. Finally, people have a natural and well-documented "duration neglect" – a cognitive tendency to better remember and care about more recent events (Achen & Bartels, 2016; Kahneman 2000).

Thus, an Integration Event is more 'Major' not only by being better known to the public and more encroaching on state autonomy, but also by occurring closer to election day. Conceivably, Major Integration Events may prime voters to pay more attention to pro-integration agenda too, but as explained above, extreme parties have little incentive to communicate the mainstream pro-integration stance, even if they happen to adopt it, and mainstream parties prefer not to run on a European platform so as not to redefine the main issue-alignment. We take these insights a step further and argue, in response to the first question

posed above, that even when mainstream parties do choose to talk about Europe, they will gain less credibility from Major Integration Events, relative to extremists, since their credibility depends more on their record in office. Because they have an asymmetric effect on mainstream and extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties, we conclude that Major Integration Events ratchet-up the political power of integrations' adversaries (Figure 3). In other words, party-type is a variable that mediates the effect of such events on voters' support for parties. This resolves the top-down puzzle of greater European integration amid rising support for Eurosceptic parties.

Figure 3: The top-down causal mechanism



Hence, we hypothesize that:

H1: *A rise in Major Integration Events (independent variable) raises the electoral gains (dependent variable) of extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties (intervening variable) relative to mainstream and/or Europhile parties.*

The Spanish election and the Danish referendum in 1993

This section takes a natural experiment approach to demonstrate causal connection between a Major Integration Event occurring during a national election that is contested by an extreme-

and-Eurosceptic party, and changing public attitudes to European integration. This is not a full test of H1, but a test of its underlying causal mechanism as demonstrated in Figure 3, short of the last stop. We use a UESD framework, taking advantage of salient integration events occurring, unexpectedly, during the fielding of surveys. If the event was both salient and unexpected, units assigned to be surveyed before it can be thought of as randomly-assigned to a control group, and those assigned to be surveyed after the event can be thought of as randomly-assigned to a treatment group (Muñoz *et al*., 2020).

Specifically, on June 6, 1993, Spain held a general election. 19 days earlier, on May 18, the 'Yes' result of the referendum on the TEU in Denmark was announced (Link 3 in Figure 3). The Danish referendum was highly salient, as it was crucial for the entry into force of the Treaty. Indeed, on May 18, the Danish referendum made the main story on the front page of the most circulated Spanish newspaper.[6] The 'Yes' result could not have been anticipated, as it following on the 'No' result of the 1992 referendum.

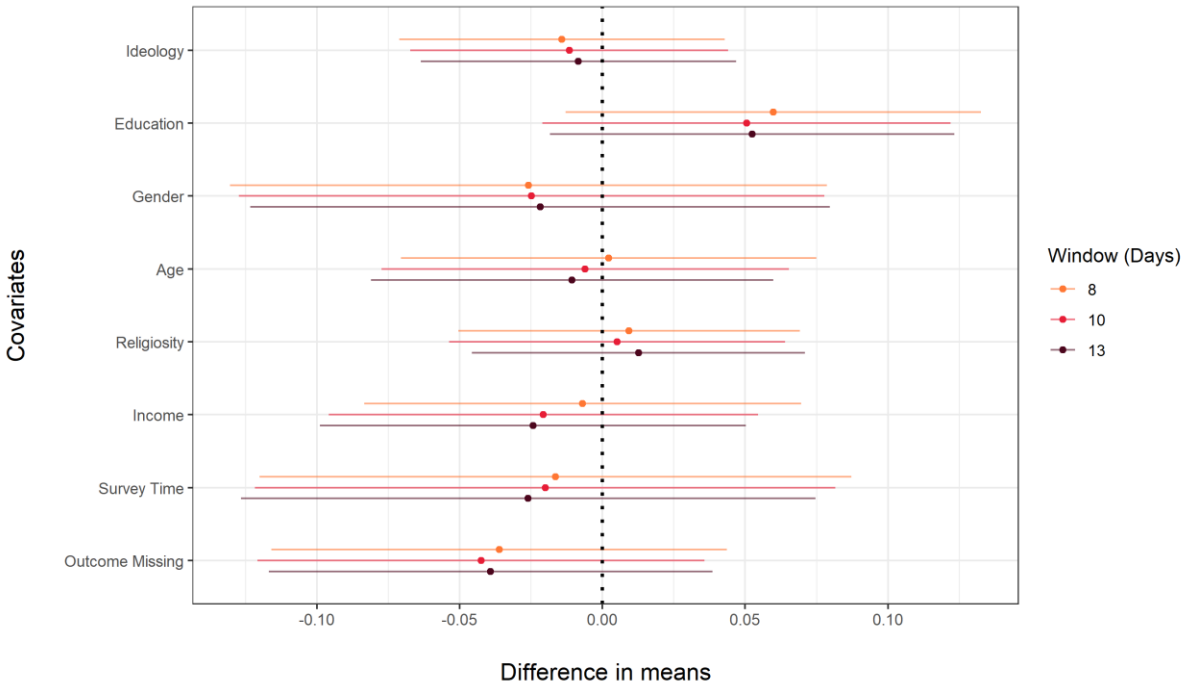
During May 14-31, Standard Eurobarometer survey 39.1 was being fielded in Spain, including the question: "In your opinion, how is the European Community, the European unification advancing nowadays? And which corresponds best to what you would like?" Responses were recorded on a 1-7 scale, 7 being the most pro-EU response. The timing of this event, close to an election, and during a survey window, provides an opportunity to test Links

[6] *El Pais* Web Archive, accessed on January 16, 2020 at: https://elpais.com/archivo/. Data on newspapers circulation: Office of Diplomatic Information, (n.d.). Retrieved January 20, 2020, from https://web.archive.org/web/20130621080435/http:/www2.fiu.edu/~rquin001/factsspain.html

3-4 (Figure 3) of the causal chain embedded in H1. Ideally, we would have tested H1 on a survey that asked respondents about their voting intentions. Nevertheless, the results reported below come close to a test of H1 under the highly likely assumption that attitudes against the EU drive to some extent the vote for anti-EU parties.

We split the respondents to the above question to control and treatment groups, based on their survey date. The outcome (response to the question) is regressed on the treatment dummy, *Event*. We thus estimate the difference in the outcome's means between the treatment and control outcomes. A negative coefficient would be compatible with H1.

Figure 4: Difference in means for covariates



According to EB 39.1 codebook, households were randomly sampled within each region, and respondents were randomly chosen and surveyed in-person within each household. We include region fixed effects to correct for confounders potentially introduced by non-simultaneous surveys. Possibly, respondents with specific characteristics were likelier than others to immediately respond to pollsters, while others were canvassed later, which affected

how they were sorted into the control or treatment group. As a robustness test, we estimate the treatment effect after adjusting for demographics, as well as for survey time of the day (Muñoz *et al*., 2020). These controls include *Ideology* – self-placement on a scale from 1 (left) to 10 (right); *Education* – the age at final year of education; *Gender*, *Age* and *Religiosity* – on a scale of 1 (religious) to 4 (atheist); Income – measured on a 12-notch ordinal scale; and *Survey Time* – 1 for respondents surveyed in business hours, 0 later.

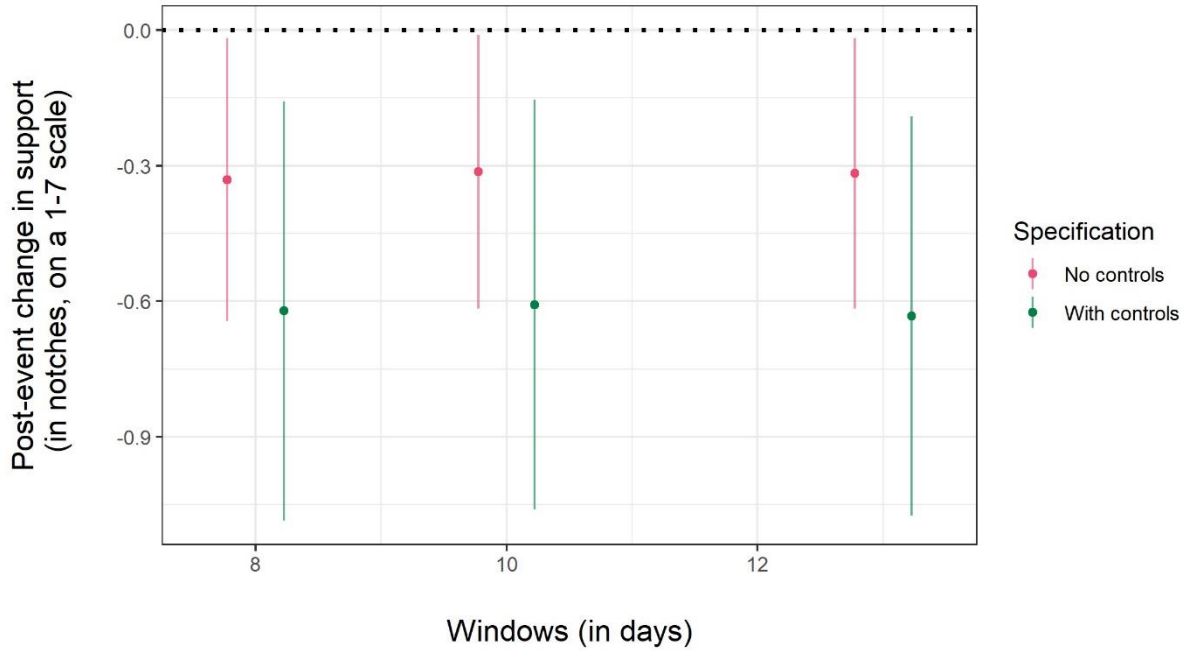
Before running the regressions, we perform balance tests on these confounders, to make sure that they are not significantly associated with the event day. These are t-tests, comparing the means in the control and the treatment groups, at three different windows (13, ten and eight days), all of which include four pre-event days as a control group. The null hypothesis of equal means cannot be rejected for all covariates, at all three time windows, as Figure 4 shows (95 percent confidence margins).

Figure 5 provides a coefficients plot for *Event*, based on results of OLS regressions that are reported in Table A1-1 in Appendix 1.[7] All of these regressions show significant (95%) differences between the control and treatment groups, regardless of controls and window length (Link 4 in Figure 3). The coefficient of *Event* (-0.6) is the number of notches by which the answer falls on average following the news about the referendum's result, which is equivalent to 10 percent of the range of answers. Our finding is a conservative estimate, since at least some respondents may had not heard of the Danish referendum outcome at the time of the survey, and of those, some might have changed their response to the survey in the hypothesized

[7] We use the OLS estimator because we assume that respondents treat the range of possible answers as linear. OLS coefficients are also easy to interpret. In Appendix 1 we demonstrate that H1 is supported even when the linearity assumption is relaxed.

direction, had they heard of the referendum (the Intention-to-Treat effect is necessarily smaller than the Average Treatment Effect).[8]

Figure 5: The effect of the Danish referendum on support for European integration in Spain



Notes: OLS estimates (and 95% confidence intervals) of the effect of the Danish 'Yes' (see Table A1-1 and discussion).

Next, we test whether indeed allocation of individuals to treatment and control groups affects the outcome only through exposure to the event, not by other simultaneous events (the Excludability Assumption). We do this with a placebo test, using a false treatment date for the control group, in order to show that there was no significant trend prior to the real treatment. Specifically, we split the four-day control group into a placebo group, with individuals surveyed in the first two days, and a fictitious treatment group – those surveyed in the next two

[8] Figure 4 (*Outcome Missing*) shows that the two groups are not significantly different in their observed probability to answer the question, ruling out the possibility that post-treatment respondents were more motivated or discouraged to reply (selection bias).

days (before the event). We find that the effect of the fictitious treatment group is statistically insignificant (Table 1), supporting the conclusion that the true effect was indeed driven by the May 18 event.

Table 1: Placebo test in the control group

	(15)
Placebo Treatment	-0.480
	(0.264)
Intercept	5.750 ***
	(0.220)
N	155
R^2	0.019

Notes: OLS estimates of fictitious event on support for EU integration in the control group. See notes to Table A1-1.

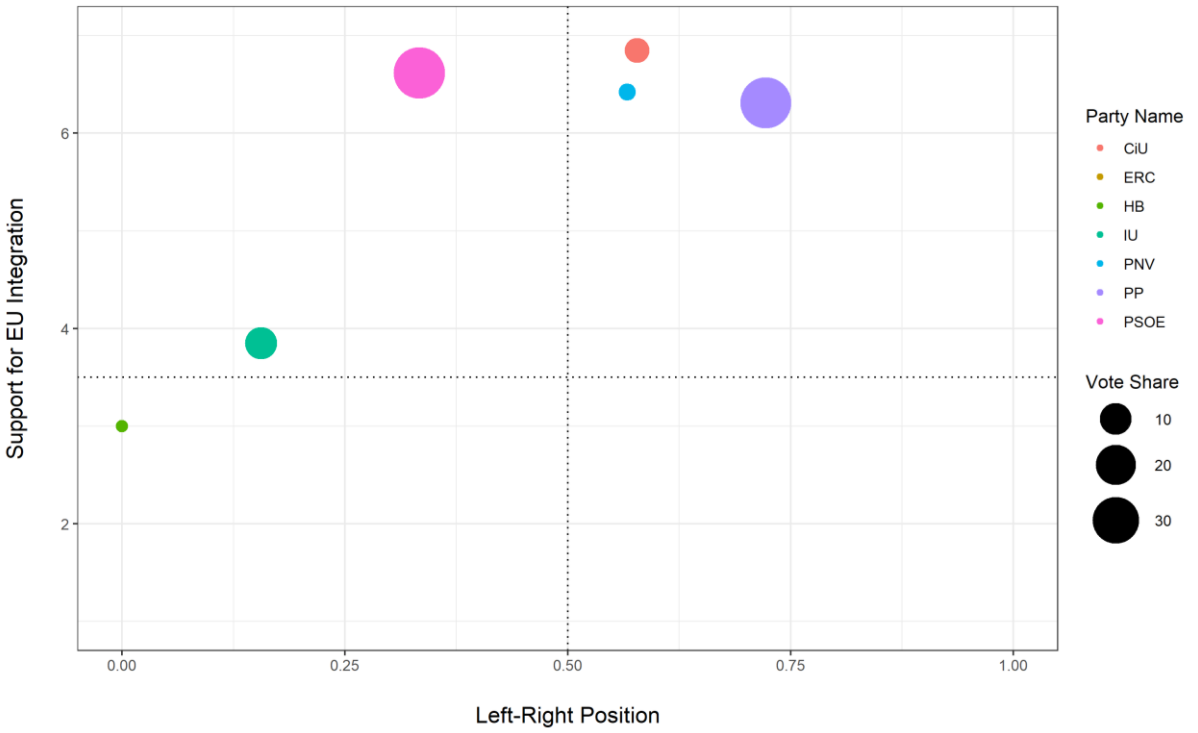
The story behind these numbers is that in the 1993 Spanish general election, the two biggest parties were the PSOE (social-democrats) and the PP (conservative Christian-democrats), both highly Europhile (Ray, 1999). The communist party (PCE), which was part of the IU (United Left) electoral coalition, adopted a Eurosceptic platform, arguing that the TEU erodes social protection (Benedetto & Quaglia, 2007; Ruiz-Jiménez & Egea de-Haro, 2011). As our model would predict, on May 19, 1993, the IU, which by our classification was an extreme party on the left-right divide, led the Eurosceptic reaction to the Danish 'Yes', by arguing for the renegotiation of the entire TEU (Link 2 in Figure 3).[9]

The event put the IU in a better electoral position, connecting integration to Eurosceptic power in the Spanish parliament. Indeed, the IU increased its share of the vote in that election

[9] El Pais Web Archive, accessed in Jan. 16, 2020 in: https://elpais.com/archivo/. Translation by Google Translate.

(Link 5 in Figure 3). This shift from the IU's 1986 pro-integration agenda of supporting membership in the European Community (EC) likely resulted from issue competition with PSOE. The victory of PSOE and the finalization of the democratic transition in 1982, cost the PCE around 50 percent of their share of the vote in the 1977 and 1979 elections. The 1992 TEU debate presented them with an electoral opportunity to take on a "'proxy issue' to mark out 'space' on an overcrowded part of the left-right continuum" (Benedetto & Quaglia, 2007, 492). Figure 6 demonstrates that IU was indeed the sole contesting party in the EU issue space at the 1993 Spanish elections (among parties that passed the electoral threshold).

Figure 6: Left-right ideology and support for European integration among parties contesting the 1993 Spanish elections

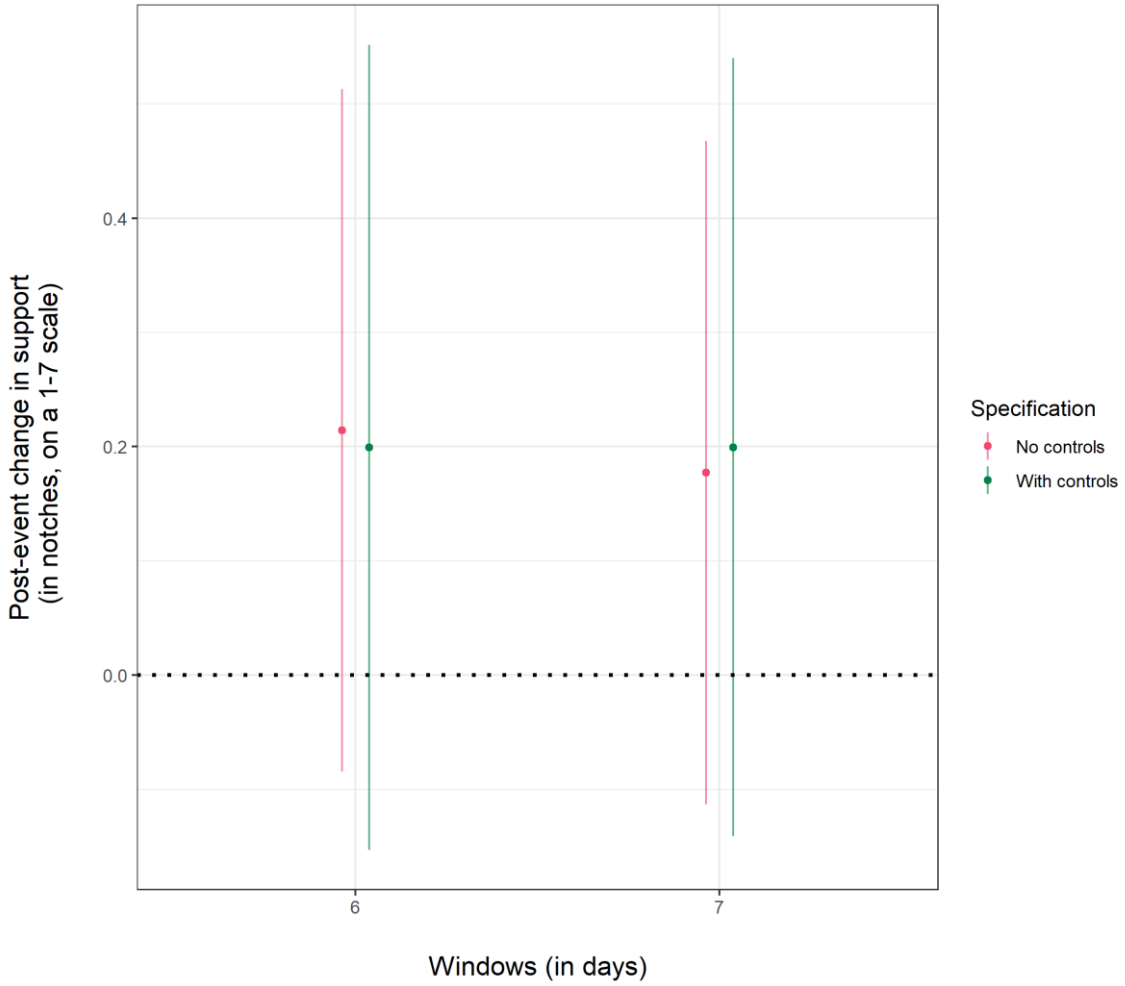


Notes: See next section for description of measures.

As a counterfactual to H1, we next repeat the same test on similar and simultaneous survey data for the Netherlands, and show that under a weak election context (Link 2 in Figure 3), the Danish 'Yes' had no significant effect on attitudes towards the EU. The May 18 Danish referendum occurred 360 days before the Dutch general election. Figure 7 demonstrates the

OLS estimates, following the same UESD procedure as above (See Table A1-3 in Appendix 1). Because it started on May 15, the EB survey period in the Netherlands allows for only three (pre-event) control days. Thus, only two windows were analyzed to avoid an unbalanced number of days in treatment group. The six-day window includes three treatment days, while the seven-day window includes four treatment days.

Figure 7: The effect of the Danish referendum on
Dutch support for European integration (outside election cycle)



The effect of the Danish referendum in the Netherlands was insignificant, although the event was as salient and unexpected as it was in Spain. This null finding holds regardless of window and model specification. As in Spain, all Dutch mainstream-governing parties fully supported the ratification of the TEU from both sides of the aisle (Ray 1999; Harmsen 2004), and direct opposition was led by a small extreme party (the nationalist 'Centre Democrats' party). Our interpretation of these null results is that the public was simply not exposed to Eurosceptic campaigns or not attentive enough to be impacted by EU-related events outside a campaign context. Voters largely maintained their EU attitudes in overall highly Europhile political environments (Link 4).

A model-based Analysis of Eurosceptic Electoral Success

Our panel data of election-party observations is clustered by states, covering 1979-2017 and all EU member states but Malta. The dependent variable – *Gains* – is the electoral success of parties, the percent change in the party's share of the vote to (the lower house of) the legislature from the previous election, based on CHES data (Bakker *et al*., 2015; Polk *et al*., 2017).[10] Only parties that contested at least two consecutive elections are included. A total of 288 parties contesting 186 national elections are accounted for (see descriptive statistics in Table A2-1 in Appendix 2). We run OLS regression, standard errors clustered on the election cycle, with

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

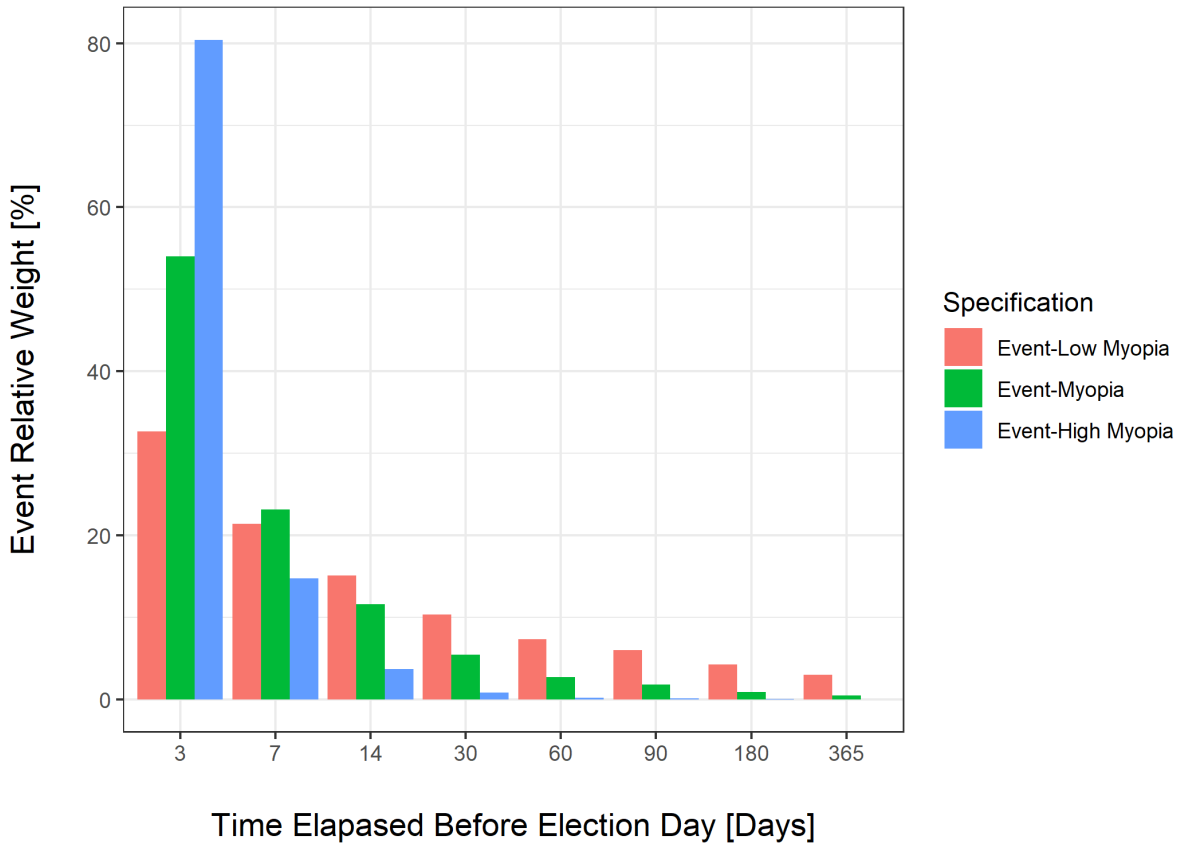
country fixed effects, to control for the electoral system and other structural characteristics affecting outcomes.

Our independent variable – *Event-Myopia* – is a country-election index (each value applying to all parties in the particular election cycle) that codes Major Integration Events. In accordance with the conditions specified above, the occurrence of these events must potentially be well known, and they must unquestionably encroach on national autonomy, regardless of their merit. In order to avoid case-by-case judgmental assessments, we include categories of events that better fulfill the above conditions. These include the signing and entry into force of all EU treaties and all binding international agreements among the member states outside EU law; the signing of all accession agreements, and the actual accession dates; the launch of the single currency and any subsequent accession to it; national referendums regarding the ratification of any of the above – exclusive of the member state in which the referendum took place, to avoid endogeneity of events to domestic politics; and conclusions of European Councils (where all of the above is actually decided) (Table A2-2 in Appendix 2). We exclude events occurring within the terms of treaties and binding agreements, such as EU institutions acting within their mandates (as determined by the CJEU), and the passing of secondary legislation. There are many such events, and while some of them may attract much public attention, sorting the better known and more consequential ones may be judgmental.

Event-Myopia accounts for the cumulative effect of multiple events occurring in the election cycle, weighing up events occurring closer to elections. As a robustness check, we use four variations of *Event-Myopia*, to account for different levels of voter myopia. The first, is the sum of the inverted number of days from each event to the next election, based on the ParlGov election database (Döring & Manow, 2019). *Event-Myopia (2Y)* is similar, but excludes events that occurred more than two years ahead of the election. *Event-LowMyopia (2Y)* applies a lower time-discount factor, by summing the squared root of the inverted number

of days. It thus assumes that voters are less forgetful of past events than implied by the other measures. In contrast, *Event-HighMyopia (2Y)* sums the square of the inverted number of days, which assumes that voters are extremely forgetful of past events. To illustrate this, assume a scenario in which well-known, autonomy-encroaching events occur 365, 180, 90, 60, 30, 14, 7 and 3 days ahead of election day. Figure 8 reports the weights that these events receive (their score divided by the total index value, in percent points) under these alternative measures.

Figure 8: Illustration of event weights under alternative rates of myopia



All of these measures are log-transformed in regression analysis, such that the estimated coefficient is the elasticity of the share of the vote to event myopia: divided by 100 it is the percent change in the share of the vote in repose to a one percent increase in the number of Major Integration Events and their proximity to national elections.

Our categorical party-type intervening variable is operationalized as a set of three dummies – *ExSc*, *ExEu* and *MaSc* – for, respectively, extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties, extreme-and-Europhile parties, and mainstream parties with Eurosceptic agenda (mainstream Europhile parties being the default case). We classify parties as extreme based on CHES party position scores on the left-right spectrum, and complete missing data from Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) standard RILE measure (Volkens *et al.*, 2019).[11] As CHES is not fielded synchronically with domestic elections, we use data from the first survey held after each election, and relate it only to parties running in the most recent pre-survey election. Our ideological extremism score is the absolute difference between the party's position score and the national mid-point of the spectrum. Parties are classified as extreme if they are within the top national quintile of this measure, or if CHES codes them as radical.

Parties are classified as Eurosceptic if they are at the top quartile per the entire dataset of a CHES-based Euroscepticism measure. Missing data are completed with CMP-based Euroscepticism scores, calculated by subtracting the percent of positive EU statements from the percent of negative statements in a party's manifesto, and rescaling the difference.

Figure 9 illustrates the frequency of the resulting four party-types in our data, in percent of national observations, and in percent of votes won on average by parties within each category (see tabulation in Table A2-3 in Appendix 2). A positive coefficient for the interaction of *Event-Myopia* with *ExSc* would demonstrate that Major Integration Events benefit extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties more than mainstream Europhile ones. This would support H1. In addition, negative or insignificant coefficients for the interactions of *Event-Myopia* with *ExEu* and *MaSc* would demonstrate respectively that extreme-and-Europhile parties and mainstream parties

[11] See Bakker *et al*. (2015) for the validity of this method.

with a Eurosceptic agenda do not do better than mainstream Europhile ones. This would mean that they do worse than extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties too, and thus support H1.

We control for *de jure* European integration with the percent change in Leuffen *et al.* (2013) index.[12] This index increases with the depth, breadth/scope and inclusiveness of integration. We operationalize *de facto* integration with *EUTrade* – the percent change in the share of trade turnover with other member states relative to the country's overall foreign trade (IMF DOTS database). We operationalize voters' exposure to immigration with *Asylum* – the percent change in the total number of asylum applications per country population, based on Eurostat's "Population and social conditions" database (Rovny & Polk, 2020). *Fiscal Contribution* is the percent change in the ratio of Operating Budgetary Balance (OBB) to GDP (Schneider, 2013; 2018), using the Commission's guidelines and raw data found in the official 2008 financial report of the EU (from 1979 to 1999) and based on the Commission's official calculations (from 2000 to 2017). *GDPPC* is the percent change in GDP per capita, based on the World Bank and OECD data (Margalit, 2019a; 2019b). *Unemployment* is the percent change in unemployment. *PartySize* is each party's vote share in the previous election cycle – large parties cannot grow as fast, and have more votes to lose than small ones. *Disproportionality* is the Gallagher Index of proportional-representation. *2LargeMainSc* is the weighted mean of the Euroscepticism score of the two largest non-extreme parties, to control for their ability to adopt parts of the extreme parties' agendas (Arzheimer, 2009; Down & Han, 2020; Meijers & Williams, 2020).

[12] Unless specified otherwise, percent change is calculated for all controls over the pre-election calendar year.

Figure 9: Party extremism and EU agenda per member state

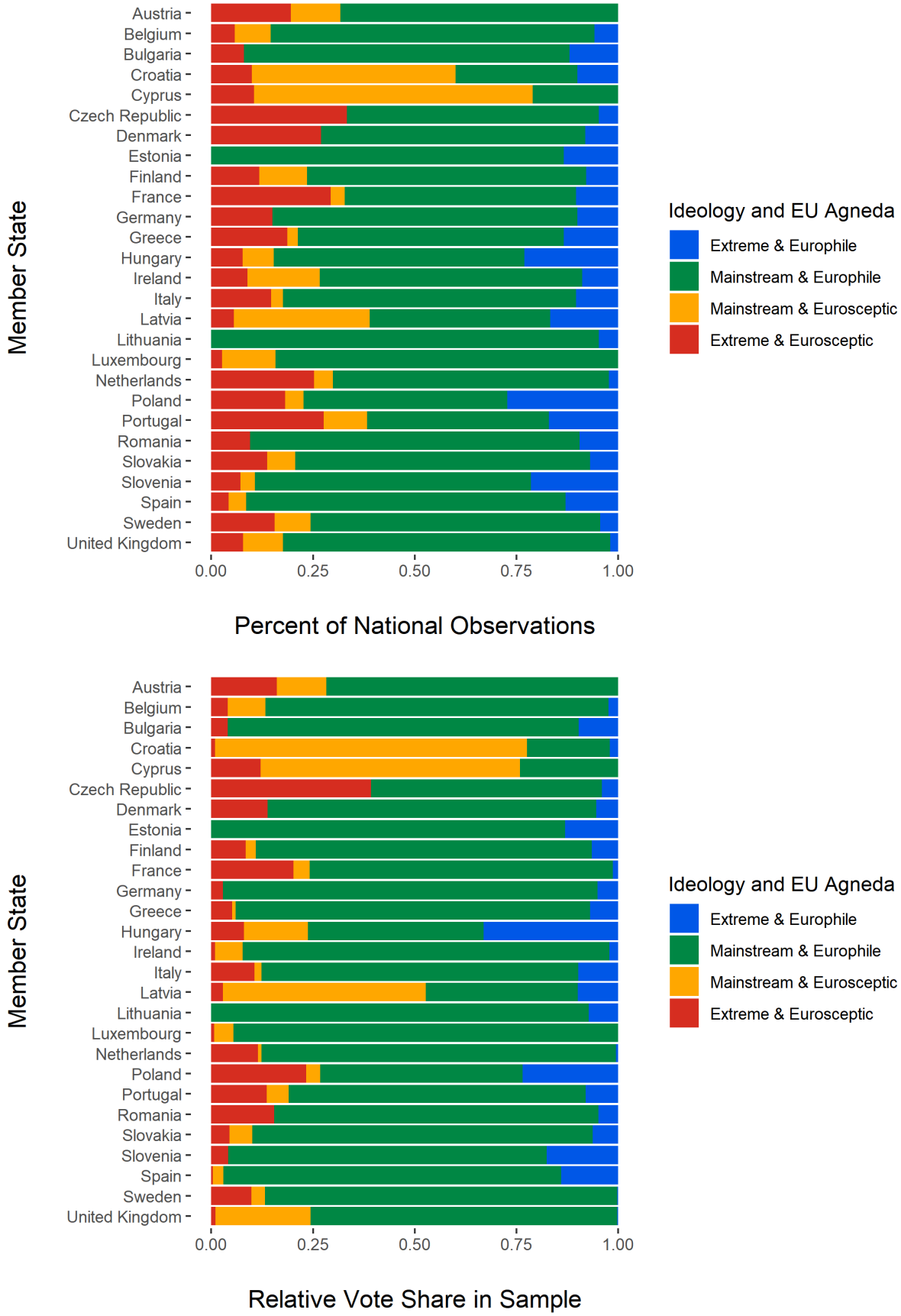


Figure 10: Coefficients plot for *Event-Myopia* and its interactions

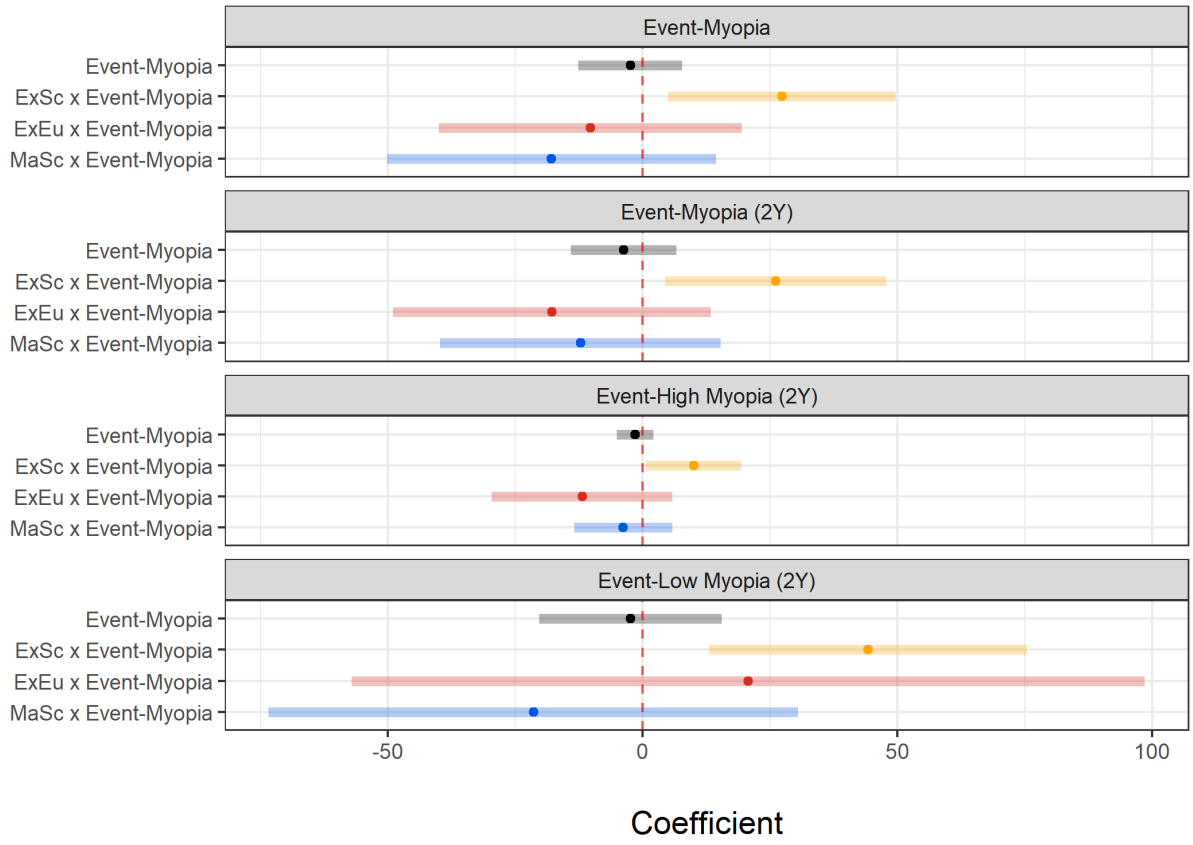


Figure 10 plots the estimated coefficients of the main variables of interest (Table A2-4 in Appendix 2). The coefficient of the interaction term with *ExSc* is positive and statistically significant in all four regressions. The coefficients of the interaction terms with the other party-types are insignificant. This supports H1 and corroborates our argument: EU-related events do not affect extreme parties that fail to adopt a Eurosceptic agenda, and a Eurosceptic agenda is not credible when adopted by a mainstream party.[13] Specifically, a one percent increase in the index of events is associated with an average increase of 0.26-0.27 percent in the support for

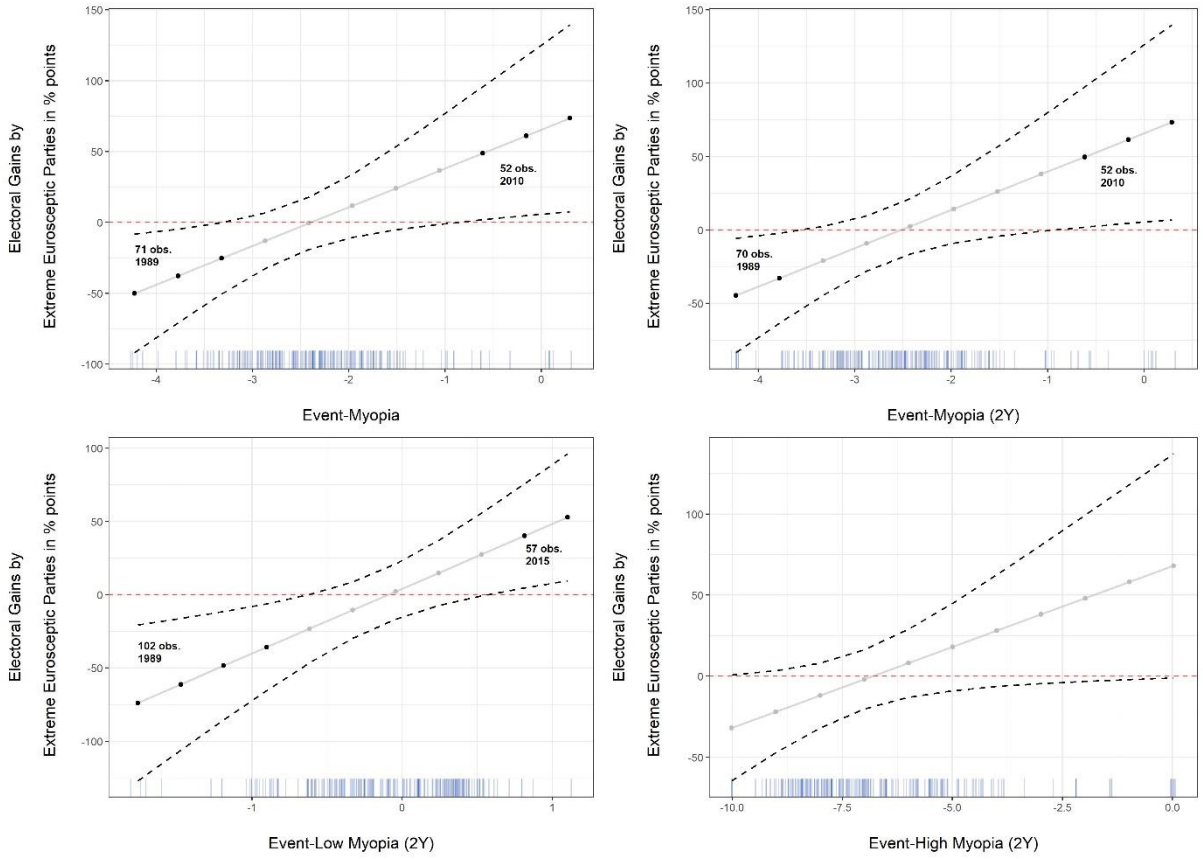
[13] Indeed, tests at the bottom of Table A2-4 show that extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties gain also in absolute terms.

extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties compared with mainstream Europhile parties, 0.44 percent if voters are assumed to be only mildly myopic, but 0.10 percent if they are highly myopic. This interesting finding seems to suggest that support for extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties builds gradually over the electoral cycle, and does not depend on 'last-minute' events. In the sequence of events depicted in Figure 8, under high myopia events in the last week weigh as much as three months of events under low myopia.

Party-type is not our main independent variable, so the direction and significance of the marginal effect of *ExSc* on electoral gains is not a test of our hypothesis. Nevertheless, such an analysis helps to demonstrate how extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties benefit from Major Integration Events. Figure 11 shows that extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties do significantly worse than the mainstream Europhile baseline (by 50 percent or more) when *Event-Myopia* or its variants are low, but significantly better (by as much as 75 percent) when *Event-Myopia* is high.[14] In accordance with Figure 1, doing better than the mainstream Europhile parties is more typical of recent years (the median election year is higher in the range of values of *Event-Myopia* that is associated with a positive and significant effect). For example, in the 2017 Dutch election (ln*Event-Myopia* = -0.73) the nationalist PVV party increased its share by 30 percent. However, the lower-left panel shows that if high voter myopia is assumed, extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties do not gain on the mainstream baseline under any value of *Event-Myopia*, at 95% confidence.

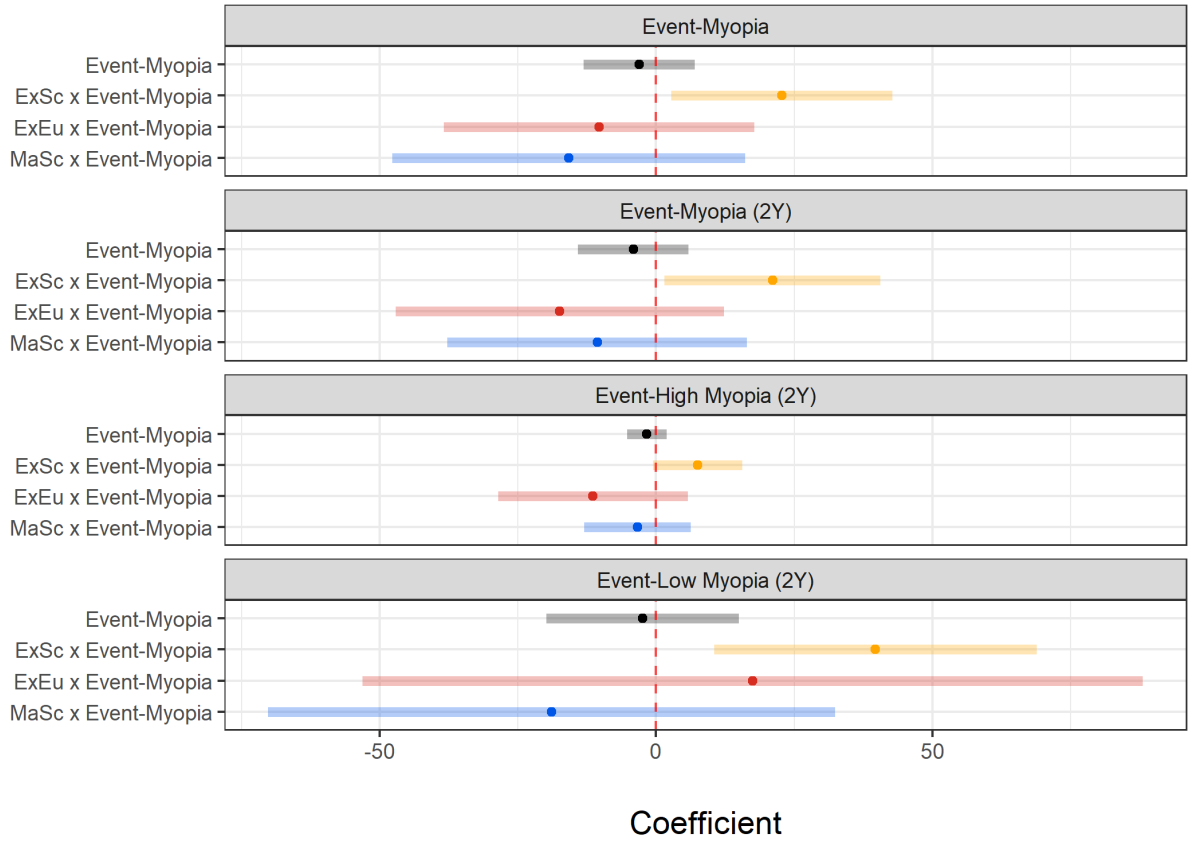
[14] The blue shades represent the distribution of *Event-Myopia*. 95% confidence intervals in dashed lines. Black dots highlight significant marginal effects, number of observations in the ranges of significance indicated, as well as their median election year.

Figure 11: Marginal effects analysis



Our results are robust to the exclusion of any of the categories of events. However, the exclusion of accession events, and European Council events, each slightly lowers the estimates for the coefficient of the interaction of *Event-Myopia* (and its variants) with *ExSc* (Figures 12 and 13, and Tables A2-5 and A2-6 in Appendix 2). This could signal that such events are more electorally helpful for extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties, perhaps because they have a high media profile and/or voters associate them with greater loss of national autonomy than other Major Integration Events.

Figure 12: Coefficients plot for *Event-Myopia* and its interactions – excluding accession events

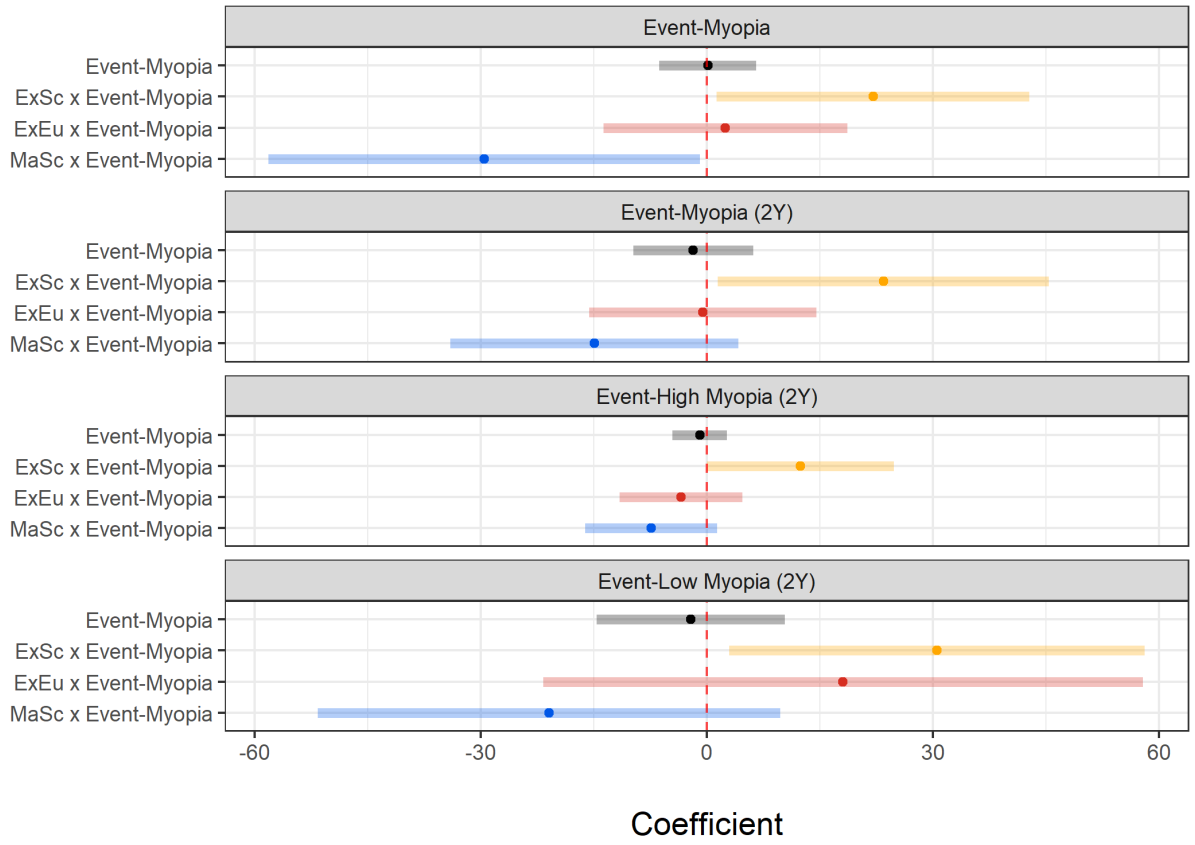


Our results are also robust to the specification of interactive controls (interacting each control variable in turn with the set of party dummies). Table A2-7 in appendix 2 shows that the share of the vote for extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties increases by roughly 5 percent for every one percent increase in GDP per capita.[15] However, other differentiated controls are not statistically significant (not reported). Finally, our results are robust to the exclusion of election cycles that might have been opportunistically timed (Appendix 3), although support for H1 is weaker under the assumption of high voter myopia. Note that any such endogeneity should work in support of our results: If we find that EU events help extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties without controlling for opportunistic manipulation of timing by mainstream parties (extreme

[15] See Charles & Stephens (2013) and Dalton (2019) on such behavior.

parties are not as influential), the effects should only be stronger/larger when we correct for endogeneity, but we find the opposite.

Figure 13: Coefficients plot for *Event-Myopia* and its interactions – excluding European Council events



Conclusions

European integration has been progressing ever since the mid-1950s, without necessarily being accompanied by stable domestic political support. This is a puzzle, given that the EU is expected to be a democratic organization. The Post-functionalist school has theorized how public attitudes to integration affect for the ability of European integration to progress (bottom-up explanations). Equally puzzling though, is the seeming lack of positive popular response to the integration process. Ample literature shows that political parties affect voters' attitudes

towards the EU, but does not connect their mobilization efforts with integration dynamics. The aim of this paper is to explain the causal mechanism that makes EU voters responsive to European integration, as mediated by parties.

We argue that Major Integration Events, which have a potential for high media profile, signal reduced state autonomy and occur close to national elections, provide extreme parties (in term of the prevailing main divide) with an environment that is conducive to enhancing a new cleavage in domestic politics, as voters are more attentive. In other words, EU events prime the public's attention, and provide extreme parties with opportunities to promote a Eurosceptic agenda during elections. The same is not true for mainstream parties, which are defined by the old political cleavages and by their record in office. Hence, Major Integration Events have an asymmetric effect on different party types, ratcheting-up the support for the adversaries of integration. We hypothesize that the more numerous and the closer EU-related political events occur before national elections, the greater are the electoral gains of extreme parties that adopt a Eurosceptic agenda.

We test our hypotheses using a mixed method, drawing on both design-based and model-based approaches. The design-based approach uses the UESD framework, taking advantage of unexpected events during survey fielding. We look at the effect of the Danish 'Yes' to the TEU referendum on Spanish voters' support of integration, just 19 days before general elections. It is shown that this salient integration event had a substantial and significant Eurosceptic attitudinal effect, as captured by a Eurobarometer survey fielded around that time. Since the EU issue space was dominated by the extreme left IU list, which also framed the event as a source for Eurosceptic credibility, the event had substantial ramifications for the success of the Eurosceptic agenda in the Spanish parliament. This design allows us to identify causality in our mechanism of responsiveness. We further demonstrate the importance of the event's timing, by showing counterfactually how, outside an election context, the same event

did not change public opinion in The Netherlands, even though (right-wing) extreme Eurosceptics were present in its political space.

The model-based approach utilizes fixed-effects regression analysis of available data on all parties that contested elections in almost all of the EU member states from 1979 to 2017, and a newly compiled database of Major Integration Events and their dates. We show that extreme parties that ran on a Eurosceptic platform were electorally more successful, increasing their share of the vote by as much as 0.44 percent for every one percent increase in the number of events and in their proximity to elections. We also find that extreme-and-Eurosceptic parties do better than mainstream and Europhile parties when voters respond to events during the pre-election three months than when they focus on the last week, and in the wake of European Councils and EU enlargements. We interpret this as evidence of the innate incapacity of mainstreamists to adopt a credible Eurosceptic platform. This is the case regardless of possible confounders like trends in integration depth, breadth or width, trade integration, OBB net gains, immigration or the business cycle. We also rule out that endogeneity of election timing to EU events may bias our results.

This paper shows how EU integration underpins its own opposition, by creating a salient political issue that crosscuts mainstream cleavages and fuels extreme parties to polarize voters. Thus, it is certainly plausible that Europe, as well as other agendas relating to cross-border openness and cooperation, might transform domestic issue cleavages, to the point where mainstream politics would be completely realigned. As this process is already unfolding, it warrants future research on how mainstream parties can leverage the cross-border openness agenda (and events), to create new and responsive electorates that support globalization at least as ferociously as extreme voters oppose it.

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Appendix 1 – Auxiliary tables for the design-based tests

Table A1-1: The effect of the Danish referendum result on support for European integration in Spain

	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Window length:	8 days	8 days	10 days	10 days	13 days	13 days
Event	-0.331 **	-0.622 ***	-0.314 **	-0.608 ***	-0.317 **	-0.633 ***
	(0.159)	(0.235)	(0.154)	(0.230)	(0.152)	(0.225)
Left\Right		-0.062		-0.025		-0.037
(Ideology)		(0.047)		(0.042)		(0.041)
Education		-0.007		-0.025		-0.015
		(0.033)		(0.030)		(0.028)
Gender		-0.071		0.107		0.152
		(0.188)		(0.172)		(0.164)
Age		0.001		-0.008		0.018
		(0.058)		(0.053)		(0.050)
Religiosity		-0.106		-0.036		-0.075
		(0.110)		(0.101)		(0.094)
Income		0.034		0.029		0.044
		(0.033)		(0.030)		(0.028)
Survey Time		0.171		0.121		0.053
		(0.190)		(0.171)		(0.162)
Intercept	5.685 ***		5.685 ***		5.685 ***	
	(0.140)		(0.140)		(0.140)	
Regional fixed effects	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
N	529	323	662	387	759	443
F test	4.31***		4.12***		4.31***	
R^2	0.006	0.094	0.005	0.073	0.004	0.068

Notes: Results from OLS regressions, on cross-section data, standard errors in parentheses. *** p < 0.01; ** p < 0.05. F-tests are not available for models with regional fixed effects. Dependent variable is the survey response to Eurobarometer 39.1 item, asking: "In your opinion, how is the European Community, the European unification advancing nowadays? And which corresponds best to what you would like?" The pre-event window is the number of survey days included after May 18 1993 (the treatment group). The control group consists throughout of respondents in the first four days (May 14-17) of EB 39.1 survey in Spain.

If the answer scale to EB 39.1 survey is linear, latency may become an issue. After all, it is not plausible that there is some finite floor and ceiling to pro-EU sentiments. For example, of the 443 observations in Regression (14), 19 had the minimum level of 1 and 104 had the maximum

level of 7. Considering that such extreme observations may actually be censored (i.e. that respondents might have opted to answer "0" or "8" if such options exited in the questionnaire), we thus also run a set of tobit regressions, as a robustness cjeck, for all windows with identical specification to that in Table A1-2. H1 is still supported.

Table A1-2: The effect of the Danish referendum result on support for European integration in Spain (correcting for latency)

	(15)	(16)	(17)
Window:	8 Days	10 Days	13 Days
Event	-0.923**	-0.856**	-0.915***
	(0.365)	(0.353)	(0.351)
Left\Right	-0.092	-0.037	-0.052
	(0.066)	(0.060)	(0.056)
Education	-0.024	-0.048	-0.031
	(0.046)	(0.042)	(0.039)
Gender	-0.114	0.143	0.215
	(0.276)	(0.252)	(0.236)
Age	-0.011	-0.004	0.020
	(0.088)	(0.079)	(0.074)
Religiosity	-0.208	-0.077	-0.146
	(0.174)	(0.153)	(0.142)
Income	0.042	0.039	0.043
	(0.046)	(0.042)	(0.039)
Survey Time	0.129	0.079	0.008
	(0.277)	(0.250)	(0.234)
Intercept	7.164***	6.425***	6.369***
	(0.902)	(0.836)	(0.792)
Log(scale)	0.854***	0.845***	0.849***
	(0.054)	(0.049)	(0.046)
Log-likelihood	-580.694	-695.189	-804.128
N	323	387	443

Notes: Results from Tobit regressions (lower limit is 1; upper limit is 7), on cross-section data, standard errors in parentheses. *** $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$. See notes to Table A1-1.

As a further robustness check, we also run a set of ordered probit regressions, in case the linear assumption is wrong, and the respondents treated the 7-point answer scale as ordinal. Again, H1 is supported.

Table A1-3: The effect of the Danish referendum result on support for European integration in Spain (assuming ordinal scale)

	(18)	(19)	(20)
Window:	8 Days	10 Days	13 Days
Event	-0.369**	-0.341**	-0.362**
	(0.157)	(0.153)	(0.151)
Left\Right	-0.0396	-0.0153	-0.0211
	(0.0282)	(0.0259)	(0.0240)
Education	-0.00918	-0.0197	-0.0118
	(0.0197)	(0.0181)	(0.0170)
Gender	-0.0591	0.0565	0.0775
	(0.119)	(0.109)	(0.102)
Age	-0.00739	-0.00362	0.00722
	(0.0376)	(0.0344)	(0.0320)
Religiosity	-0.0849	-0.0308	-0.0618
	(0.0749)	(0.0665)	(0.0614)
Income	0.0180	0.0172	0.0194
	(0.0199)	(0.0184)	(0.0167)
Survey Time	0.0703	0.0500	0.0195
	(0.119)	(0.109)	(0.101)
Log-pseudolikelihood	-544.68	-650.93	-751.96
N	323	387	443

Notes: Results from oprobit regressions, on cross-section data, standard errors in parentheses. *** p < 0.01; ** p < 0.05. See notes to Table A1-1.

Table A1-3: The effect of the Danish referendum result on Dutch support for European integration

	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)
Window length:	6 days	6 days	7 days	7 days
Event	0.214	0.199	0.177	0.199
	(0.152)	(0.179)	(0.148)	(0.173)
Left\Right		-0.065		-0.071
		(0.052)		(0.049)
Education		-0.034		-0.038
		(0.029)		(0.028)
Gender		-0.236		-0.276
		(0.166)		(0.156)
Age		-0.039		-0.031
		(0.061)		(0.057)
Religiosity		0.141		0.152
		(0.122)		(0.118)
Income		0.030		0.031
		(0.026)		(0.024)
Survey Time		-0.029		-0.064
		(0.168)		(0.157)
Intercept	4.545 ***		4.545 ***	
	(0.122)		(0.122)	
Regional fixed effects	No	Yes	No	Yes
N	531	409	591	459
F test	1.986		1.437	
R^2	0.004	0.068	0.002	0.064

See notes for Table A1-1. The survey was representative of Dutch voters.

Appendix 2 – Auxiliary tables for the model-based tests

Table A2-1: Descriptive statistics

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Unit and potential range
Dependent variable:						
Gains	993	11.2	109.5	-100	2543	Percent points (-100→∞)
Independent variable:						
Event-Myopia	993	0.15	0.19	0.015	1.34	Index (positive values)
Event-Myopia (2Y)	993	0.13	0.18	0.015	1.33	Index (positive values)
Event-LowMyopia (2Y)	993	1.06	0.49	0.17	3.01	Index (positive values)
Event-HighMyopia (2Y)	993	0.031	0.15	0.00004	1.02	Index (positive values)
Party-type Dummies:						
ExSc	993	0.139	0.35	0	1	Dummy
ExEu	993	0.087	0.28	0	1	Dummy
MaSc	993	0.065	0.25	0	1	Dummy
Control variables:						
Integration	993	14.3	44. 0	-15.2	219.9	Percent points (-100→∞)
EUTrade	993	0.63	4.18	-13.0	19.7	Percent points (-100→∞)
Fiscal Contribution	993	21.0	178.1	-427.2	1810.4	Percent points (unbounded)
GDPPC	993	1.76	3.50	-13.0	23.9	Percent points (-100→∞)
Unemployment	993	1.19	15.7	-26.8	126.9	Percent points (-100→∞)
Asylum	993	20.4	93.6	-70.7	778.8	Percent points (-100→∞)
PartySize	993	13.8	12.4	0.10	51.3	Percent points (0→100)
Disproportionality	993	6.06	4.77	0.42	25.3	Index (positive values)
2LargeMainSc	993	0.24	0.18	0.025	0.95	Index (0→1)

Note: Based only on observations included in the regressions. The four variants of the dependent variable, and *Integration* are log-transformed for regression analysis.

Table A2-2: EU-related political events

Event Category	Number of Event Dates	Number of Country-Events	Integration Dimension
Signing of treaties and of binding international agreements outside EU law	11	236	Breadth; Depth
Entry into force of the above	8	192	Breadth; Depth
Signing of accession treaties, and accession dates	12	240	Inclusiveness
Launch of the Euro Area and any subsequent accession to it	9	244	Breadth; Inclusiveness
Referendums on ratification of any of the above (exclusive of the relevant country)	44	899	Breadth; Depth; Inclusiveness
European Council conclusions	212	4,026	Breadth; Depth; Inclusiveness
Total	296	5,837	

Note: This table characterizes the events that are included in the calculation of the event indices. It is NOT a table of frequencies in our regression analysis. Number of Country-Events sums the number of countries per each event. This may include non-member states, since the dataset includes the last pre-membership election of new member states. Pre-1979 events are also relevant for the calculation of event indices ahead of a post-1979 election. ‘

Table A2-3: Tabulation of party types

	Extreme	Mainstream	Total
Eurosceptic	ExSc: 158 (138)	MaSc: 87 (65)	245 (203)
Europhile	ExEu: 101 (86)	Baseline: 802 (704)	903 (790)
Total	259 (224)	889 (769)	1,148 (993)

Note: Entries are frequencies of country-election-party observations (included in regression analysis).

Table A2-4: Determinants of relative electoral gains

Event index is:	(1) *Event-Myopia*	(2) *Event-Myopia (2Y)*	(3) *Event-LowMyopia (2Y)*	(4) *Event-HighMyopia (2Y)*
Event index	-2.42	-3.70	-2.35	-1.45
	(5.14)	(5.24)	(9.07)	(1.83)
ExSc	65.4**	65.9**	4.2	67.8*
	(30.2)	(30.6)	(9.7)	(34.9)
ExSc×Event index	27.3**	26.1**	44.3***	10.0**
	(11.3)	(11.0)	(15.8)	(4.7)
ExEu	13.4	-6.0	38.9	-39.5
	(45.8)	(36.0)	(36.9)	(33.2)
ExEu×Event index	-10.3	-17.8	20.7	-11.9
	(15.0)	(15.8)	(39.4)	(9.0)
MaSc	-35.4	-25.0	5.7	-21.1
	(33.6)	(30.4)	(9.0)	(29.3)
MaSc×Event index	-17.9	-12.2	-21.5	-3.8
	(16.3)	(13.9)	(26.3)	(4.9)
Log of Integration	0.09	0.08	0.11	0.07
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.08)
EUTrade	-0.96	-1.00	-0.87	-0.99*
	(0.61)	(0.61)	(0.63)	(0.58)
Fiscal Contribution	-0.004	-0.003	-0.006	-0.003
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
GDPPC	0.71	0.62	0.60	0.64
	(1.14)	(1.10)	(1.09)	(1.15)
Unemployment	-0.01	-0.02	-0.02	-0.03
	(0.22)	(0.21)	(0.21)	(0.22)
Asylum	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.04
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
PartySize	-1.24***	-1.25***	-1.26***	-1.24***
	(0.29)	(0.29)	(0.30)	(0.29)
Disproportionality	-0.24	-0.22	-0.24	-0.23
	(2.31)	(2.28)	(2.30)	(2.30)
2LargeMainSc	-2.81	-1.52	-7.66	-0.33
	(27.6)	(27.5)	(29.1)	(27.2)
Constant	34.7	31.0	41.7	30.2
	(23.5)	(23.3)	(25.5)	(23.4)
Prob > F	10.47***	9.92***	6.67***	8.53***
R^2	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
N	993	993	993	993
Tests for sums of coefficients:				
Event index + *ExSc*×Event index	24.9**	22.4**	42.0***	8.6*

F statistic (*p* value)	4.44 (0.037)	4.01 (0.047)	7.72 (0.006)	3.07 (0.082)
Event index + *ExEu*×Event index	-12.7	-21.5	18.4	-13.4
F statistic (*p* value)	0.86 (0.355)	2.01 (0.159)	0.26 (0.613)	2.18 (0.142)
Event index + *MaSc*×Event index	-20.3	-15.9	-23.9	-5.3
F statistic (*p* value)	1.75 (0.188)	1.53 (0.219)	0.93 (0.336)	1.36 (0.245)

Notes: Results from OLS regressions, with country fixed effects (not reported), run on country-election-party dataset, standard errors clustered on the country-election level in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$. The dependent variable is the increase in the party's share of the vote from the previous election, in percent points, such that a rise in the party's share of the vote from 20 percent to 30 percent is a 50 percent increase.

Table A2-5: Determinants of relative electoral gains, exclusive of accession events

Event index is:	(1) *Event-Myopia*	(2) *Event-Myopia (2Y)*	(3) *Event-LowMyopia (2Y)*	(4) *Event-HighMyopia (2Y)*
Event index	-3.04	-4.13	-2.42	-1.68
	(5.10)	(5.08)	(8.81)	(1.80)
ExSc	55.8**	54.5**	5.5	52.2*
	(26.6)	(26.7)	(9.8)	(29.1)
ExSc×Event index	22.8**	21.1**	39.7***	7.5*
	(10.1)	(9.9)	(14.8)	(4.1)
ExEu	13.1	-5.5	39.2	-36.7
	(43.7)	(34.4)	(37.5)	(31.9)
ExEu×Event index	-10.3	-17.4	17.5	-11.4
	(14.2)	(15.0)	(35.8)	(8.7)
MaSc	-31.7	-22.0	5.0	-18.6
	(34.0)	(30.7)	(8.9)	(29.8)
MaSc×Event index	-15.8	-10.6	-18.9	-3.3
	(16.2)	(13.7)	(26.0)	(4.9)
Log of Integration	0.08	0.07	0.10	0.07
	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
EUTrade	-1.00	-1.03	-0.90	-1.00*
	(0.60)	(0.61)	(0.62)	(0.58)
Fiscal Contribution	-0.004	-0.003	-0.006	-0.002
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
GDPPC	0.66	0.55	0.62	0.56
	(1.13)	(1.09)	(1.08)	(1.14)
Unemployment	-0.15	-0.03	-0.02	-0.04
	(0.22)	(0.21)	(0.21)	(0.22)
Asylum	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.04
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
PartySize	-1.25***	-1.25***	-1.26***	-1.24***
	(0.29)	(0.29)	(0.30)	(0.29)
Disproportionality	-0.22	-0.19	-0.27	-0.22
	(2.30)	(2.27)	(2.29)	(2.29)
2LargeMainSc	-1.61	-0.11	-7.22	1.21
	(27.9)	(27.9)	(29.2)	(27.6)
Constant	33.2	29.9	41.7	28.8
	(23.5)	(23.3)	(25.4)	(23.3)
Prob > F	11.14***	10.23***	7.97***	8.83***
R^2	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
N	993	993	993	993

Notes: See notes to Table A2-4.

Table A2-6: Determinants of relative electoral gains, exclusive of European Council events

Event index is:	(1) *Event-Myopia*	(2) *Event-Myopia (2Y)*	(3) *Event-LowMyopia (2Y)*	(4) *Event-HighMyopia (2Y)*
Event index	0.15	-1.79	-2.11	-0.91
	(3.25)	(4.02)	(6.32)	(1.83)
ExSc	89.0**	98.7**	45.6*	117.8*
	(45.1)	(49.4)	(23.9)	(62.2)
ExSc×Event index	22.1**	23.4**	30.6**	12.4**
	(10.5)	(11.1)	(13.9)	(6.3)
ExEu	47.0	35.4	63.3	6.9
	(54.9)	(46.2)	(59.5)	(29.4)
ExEu×Event index	2.5	-0.52	18.1	-3.4
	(8.2)	(7.62)	(20.1)	(4.1)
MaSc	-107.6**	-57.6	-27.0	-64.0*
	(33.6)	(30.4)	(19.7)	(36.7)
MaSc×Event index	-29.5**	-14.9	-20.9	-7.4
	(16.3)	(9.7)	(15.5)	(4.4)
Log of Integration	0.11	0.09	0.09	0.08
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
EUTrade	-0.90	-0.95	-0.91	-0.96*
	(0.58)	(0.58)	(0.58)	(0.58)
Fiscal Contribution	-0.005	-0.004	-0.006	-0.003
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
GDPPC	0.59	0.57	0.47	0.64
	(1.23)	(1.21)	(1.18)	(1.22)
Unemployment	-0.08	-0.04	-0.06	-0.03
	(0.23)	(0.23)	(0.22)	(0.23)
Asylum	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.04
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
PartySize	-1.22***	-1.22***	-1.24***	-1.21***
	(0.29)	(0.29)	(0.30)	(0.29)
Disproportionality	-0.15	-0.29	-0.22	-0.32
	(2.27)	(2.20)	(2.18)	(2.23)
2LargeMainSc	0.39	0.75	0.55	0.54
	(27.6)	(27.7)	(27.6)	(27.8)
Constant	40.7	33.6	38.4	32.1
	(24.3)	(24.8)	(23.6)	(24.8)
Prob > F	9.57***	17.28***	9.70***	16.64***
R^2	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
N	993	993	993	993

Notes: See notes to Table A2-4.

Table A2-7: Determinants of relative electoral gains, with differentiated control for per capita GDP growth

	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Event index is:	*Event-Myopia*	*Event-Myopia (2Y)*	*Event-LowMyopia (2Y)*	*Event-HighMyopia (2Y)*
Event index	-2.59	-3.86	-2.45	-1.51
	(5.15)	(5.24)	(9.08)	(1.84)
ExSc	65.9**	66.8**	-0.3	69.9*
	(30.7)	(31.1)	(9.3)	(35.4)
ExSc×Event index	29.7**	28.6**	45.5***	11.1**
	(11.9)	(11.6)	(16.5)	(4.9)
ExEu	27.9	7.3	53.2	-25.2
	(56.2)	(43.8)	(50.5)	(32.3)
ExEu× Event index	-9.9	-18.0	24.8	-11.8
	(15.1)	(15.9)	(42.8)	(8.9)
MaSc	-38.5	-28.3	3.5	-26.1
	(34.1)	(30.9)	(8.6)	(30.3)
MaSc× Event index	-18.0	-12.3	-21.3	-4.1
	(16.2)	(13.8)	(25.9)	(4.9)
Log of Integration	0.09	0.08	0.11	0.07
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.08)
EUTrade	-0.95	-0.98	-0.85	-0.97*
	(0.60)	(0.61)	(0.62)	(0.58)
Fiscal Contribution	-0.005	-0.004	-0.007	-0.003
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)
GDPPC	1.09	0.99	1.05	1.02
	(1.40)	(1.35)	(1.35)	(1.41)
ExSc×*GDPPC*	4.98**	5.07**	4.43*	4.99**
	(2.18)	(2.18)	(2.33)	(2.18)
ExEu×*GDPPC*	-6.55	-6.58	-6.76	-6.60
	(7.79)	(7.87)	(7.76)	(7.88)
MaSc×*GDPPC*	0.40	0.40	0.05	0.48
	(1.30)	(1.28)	(1.20)	(1.41)
Unemployment	0.13	0.12	0.10	0.11
	(0.24)	(0.24)	(0.23)	(0.24)
Asylum	0.046*	0.047*	0.040	0.051**
	(0.027)	(0.026)	(0.028)	(0.026)
PartySize	-1.26***	-1.26***	-1.28***	-1.26***
	(0.30)	(0.30)	(0.31)	(0.30)
Disproportionality	0.02	0.05	0.03	0.04
	(2.33)	(2.31)	(2.32)	(2.33)
2LargeMainSc	4.93	6.33	-0.57	7.46
	(27.5)	(27.6)	(28.6)	(27.4)

Constant	31.4	27.7	39.0	26.8
	(22.6)	(22.4)	(24.0)	(22.1)
Prob > F	9.94***	9.18***	15.70***	12.17***
R^2	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.07
N	993	993	993	993

Notes: See notes to Table A2-4.

Appendix 3 – Correcting for Potential Endogeneity of Election Timing in the Model-Based Tests

The following models test whether our findings in Table A2-4 (Appendix 2) are robust to the exclusion of strategically timed election cycles. These cycles may have introduced timing endogeneity to our data, if governments have been latently or overtly manipulating election timing in accordance with EU political events. Note that this was not the official reason to dissolve parliament in almost all cases. We draw on Schneider's (2008) and Kayser's (2006) definition of "opportunistic" elections, which must meet three conditions (see full references at the end of this appendix):

1. Elections held in "premier-timing" states, which "require that the incumbent executive have the *de jure* and *de facto* ability to initiate dissolution and early elections, either directly or through a parliamentary majority" (Kayser 2006, 442).[16]
2. Early elections, defined by Schneider (2008) as elections held a year or earlier prior to the legal date. This is based on Kayser's (2006) assumption that elections within a year from the constitutionally induced term cannot be considered opportunistic.
3. Not induced by a vote of no confidence; coalition splits; or minority governments' failure to maintain opposition support. These are elections that were freely timed by cabinets.

We use Schneider's (2008) data and code additional elections to cover our entire sample. Coding decisions were based on the news coverage of each early election in every

[16] "The non-premier timing category includes countries in which early election are limited to extraordinary circumstances or election dates are set by any actor other than the government" (Kayser 2006, 442).

premier-timing member state. The elections that we decided to drop (on top of another five elections that Schneider dropped) are listed in Table A3-1 below.

Table A3-1: Opportunistic elections

#	Member State	Election Date
1	Denmark	1988-05-10
2	Denmark	2007-11-13
3	Greece	2009-10-04
4	Greece	2015-09-20
5	Ireland	1989-06-15
6	United Kingdom	2005-05-05
7	United Kingdom	2017-06-08

The results of repeating our baseline models in Table A2-4 with the exclusion of these cycles are reported in Table A3-2. We find that the interactions coefficients of the *ExSc* dummy with the *EventIndex* all maintain their expected signs and magnitude. Two of the four remain statistically significant (95%), while the other two just miss the significance threshold (p-values of 0.058 and 0.069).

Table A3-2: Determinants of relative electoral gains
(robustness to opportunistic elections exclusion)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Event index is:	*Event-Myopia*	*Event-Myopia (2Y)*	*Event-LowMyopia (2Y)*	*Event-HighMyopia (2Y)*
Event index	-3.80	-4.81	-4.47	-1.83
	(5.23)	(5.25)	(9.04)	(1.81)
ExSc	55.5**	56.0*	0.3	52.0*
	(28.1)	(28.5)	(9.1)	(30.0)
ExSc×Event index	24.6**	23.4**	49.6***	8.0*
	(11.2)	(10.9)	(17.5)	(4.2)
ExEu	10.7	-7.7	41.4	-41.6
	(46.4)	(37.2)	(39.1)	(34.4)
ExEu×Event index	-12.6	-19.9	24.6	-12.7
	(16.7)	(17.7)	(45.5)	(9.5)
MaSc	-1.7	1.2	0.9	2.6
	(23.5)	(23.1)	(8.4)	(25.0)
MaSc×Event index	-0.9	0.8	3.5	0.6
	(9.5)	(8.7)	(15.8)	(3.4)
Log of Integration	0.07	0.07	0.09	0.06
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
EUTrade	-1.02	-1.03	-0.98	-0.99
	(0.62)	(0.63)	(0.64)	(0.60)
Fiscal Contribution	0.000	0.001	-0.002	0.002
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)
GDPPC	0.26	0.17	0.23	0.16
	(1.08)	(1.05)	(1.03)	(1.10)
Unemployment	-0.09	-0.10	-0.10	-0.11
	(0.21)	(0.21)	(0.20)	(0.21)
Asylum	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.05*
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
PartySize	-1.24***	-1.24***	-1.27***	-1.23***
	(0.31)	(0.31)	(0.32)	(0.31)
Disproportionality	-0.23	-0.20	-0.27	-0.21
	(2.31)	(2.29)	(2.30)	(2.30)
2LargeMainSc	2.45	4.05	-5.34	5.92
	(26.0)	(26.1)	(27.9)	(25.7)
Constant	32.5	29.2	43.3	28.4
	(23.5)	(23.3)	(25.7)	(23.2)
Prob > F	7.09***	7.37***	7.78***	7.95***

R^2	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
N	942	942	942	942

See notes to Table A3-1.

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