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# A New Society in the Making

European Integration and European Social Groups

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Juan Díez Medrano

No. 12 | APRIL 2010



**KFG Working Paper Series**

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Díez Medrano, Juan 2010: A New Society in the Making: European Integration and European Social Groups, KFG Working Paper Series, No. 12, March 2010, Kolleg-Forscherguppe (KFG) „The Transformative Power of Europe“, Freie Universität Berlin.

ISSN 1868-6834 (Print)

ISSN 1868-7601 (Internet)

This publication has been funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

Freie Universität Berlin

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# A NEW SOCIETY IN THE MAKING

## EUROPEAN INTEGRATION AND EUROPEAN SOCIAL GROUPS

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### Abstract

This paper connects with a recent and growing interest in the study of the societal impact of European integration and in the distinction of globalization and European integration effects. The paper uses the Eurobarometer study 67.1 to examine two related issues: 1) the segmentation of national social groups into “national” and “European” segments and 2) the contribution of the European integration process to this segmentation. Through statistical analysis, I argue that there is some segmentation of national social groups and that this segmentation is more advanced at the level of consumer practices than at the level of identification and political attitudes and values. I also contradict prevailing beliefs in showing that although European integration underlies changes in the Europeanization of personal networks in general, its impact may have been greater, or at least as great, on the lower classes than on the middle classes. I propose that the main mediating mechanism for this effect is the cheapening of opportunities for travel in Europe.

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## 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

The literature on European integration of the last fifty years has focused almost exclusively on the creation of a European market and European wide political institutions. Society has figured in this literature only as a factor furthering or slowing down these developments. At most, scholars have paid attention to what European populations thought about the process, always with an eye to whether they approved of the changes, or have attempted to explain why popular consent has become relevant at the current stage of European integration. Recently, however, research on European integration has begun to use concepts and tools borrowed from sociology. This borrowing has created bridges between political science and sociology and motivated sociologists themselves to enter the field of European integration. Some of them have made their own contributions to explaining the emergence and transformation of European market and political institutions, while others have started to explore topics thus far neglected by other disciplines. Thus, the 1990s witnessed the first comprehensive studies of European Union societies (e.g. Crouch 1999; Rodriguez-Pose 2002; Therborn 1995; Le Galès 2002). The main novelty in these authors' studies is that they treat Europe or the European Union (EU) as a whole rather than as a mere juxtaposition of states. What we still need, however, is an exploration of the ways in which the single European market and European Union legislation, policies, and institutions (e.g. Commission, Council, and European Parliament) have impacted on European society as a whole. That would be the real object of a sociology of European integration. Recent work by Beckfield (2005), Berezin (2008), Díez Medrano (2003), Favell (2008), Fligstein (2008), Imig and Tarrow (2001), and Recchi (2006) are motivated by this desire to bring European societies to the center of social scientific inquiry on the European Union. Katzenstein's recent book *A World of Regions* (2005) is also a rare exception in the international relations literature for its concern with the impact of European integration and other regionalization processes on these regions' cultures. The impact of the European Union on European societies is just another illustration of the transformative power of Europe, a power that does not only projects itself beyond the European Union's borders, as a normative and institutional model, but also one that foremost of all transforms the lives and bonds of those living within.

The timing of interest in the societal impact of European integration is not random. The reason why it makes sense now and not in, let's say, the 1960s, is that since 1986 what we now call the European Union has transformed itself from a customs union into a single market with a common currency and institutions that cover a whole range of economic, social, and political policy areas. The new European Union has a tremendous impact on the European citizens' lives. It is thus worth exploring what impact these dramatic institutional transformations have had on Europe's social structures rather than focusing exclusively, as political scientists have done so far, on the impact of European social structures on the institutionalization process of the European Union.

This working paper focuses on two central questions that have been neglected in the recent sociological literature on European integration, which are the extent to which social groups in European states are segmented into European and national subgroups, and the extent to which the European Union plays a

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1 I would like to thank all the participants to the Jour Fixe Colloquia at the KFG "The Transformative Power of Europe", FU Berlin, and Jürgen Gerhards for their comments to an earlier version of this paper. The KFG is funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). Furthermore, this paper has been written thanks to funding provided by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation: I+D Project SEJ2006 01833soci

role in this segmentation. These are difficult questions to answer given the paucity of pan-European data on lifestyles and networks, two essential dimensions of what constitutes a social group. This working paper shows that, based on structural interpersonal ties, the lower and middle classes in Europe are segmented into European and national subgroups. This structural cleavage corresponds to quite distinct consumer styles and thus justifies treating the European and National segments as differentiated social groups. Nevertheless, they do not yet constitute distinct social groups proper: they do not distinguish themselves greatly neither in terms of identification nor in terms of political values. I speculate, on the basis of these results, that traditional social cleavages between cosmopolitan and parochial segments in national societies have recently become sharper, as cosmopolitans - both lower and middle class - have begun to develop friendships with kindred spirits in other European countries in increasing numbers. Greater travel possibilities to other European countries, and the resulting friendships, may in turn be turning "Nationals" into "Europeans", at least at the level of consumer lifestyles. What results from these reinforcing processes is the structural transformation of national "cosmopolitan" groups into European ones. This structural transformation, however, does not yet translate into dramatic changes at the level of identification and political values and behaviour.

This paper also contributes to the sociological study of European integration by suggesting that the European Union is contributing to Europeanize both the lower classes and the middle classes. Also, although the degree of Europeanization of the middle classes is significantly greater than that of the lower classes, I provide some evidence to the effect that middle age lower class segments of the population have been the group that has seized most the new opportunities for travelling in Europe.

## **2. Social Groups and Classes in the Literature on Europe**

Most of what we know about social stratification processes comes from research on Western societies. There is an abundant literature on class stratification and social mobility in West European states (Müller 2004; Wright 1996; Esping-Andersen 1993; Erikson/Goldthorpe 1992; see also Ganzeboom et al. 1991 and Myles/Turegun 1994 for reviews of the literature). The major questions that this literature has addressed since the mid-1950s have been the existence of processes of convergence or divergence between European stratification systems, the increase or decrease in social mobility patterns, the contrasting role of education in the stratification process of different European societies, and the characterization of the 'new middle class'. In the mid-1980s, Esping-Andersen's pioneering work shifted the focus of stratification research from description to the institutional explanation of stratification patterns (Esping-Andersen 1990). Finally, Crouch's *Social Change in Western Societies* (1995) brought together both strands of work to produce a brilliant synthesis of class stratification systems in Europe and their institutional foundation.

The end of the Cold War and the transition to capitalism in Central and Eastern Europe led to a shift of focus in stratification research from the West to the East. Work by Eyal et al. (2002), Róna-Tas (1994), and Domànski (1996) analyzed the transformation of the stratification system in Eastern Europe, with particular attention to transitions from social positions under communism and social positions under capitalism and to winners and losers in the process. Other authors (e.g. Haller 1993) addressed traditional stratification questions, this time including both Western and Eastern European states.

Seen from this working paper's perspective, three features characterize this literature: First, the taken-for-granted validity of the national state as the unit of analysis for the study of stratification in Europe; second, an understanding of class as just a particular location in the stratification system. There is no attempt to discuss the interaction worlds and the lifestyles of the social groups that are discussed, which would draw on Bourdieu's work on France (1984) or on Kocka's and Mitchell's historical overview of the 19th century European bourgeoisies (1993). Finally, the institutional literature, with Beckfield's exception (2005), has yet to investigate the impact of the European Union on the stratification systems of its members and on the development of pan-European social classes.

### **3. A Needed Analytical Distinction: Europeanization and European Class Formation**

One can distinguish between two processes that have followed or than one would expect from the acceleration of European integration in the past twenty years: Europeanization and European Class Formation. Definitions of Europeanization in the literature generally refer to the European Union's impact on domestic politics and national economies. This working paper departs from this definition and proposes an alternative one that bears strong similarities with how the sociological literature defines the process of globalization. Europeanization of national societies can be conceived as the widening of the geographical scope of the national citizens' lives and economic and political activities. The past two decades have witnessed the Europeanization of national societies, as economic barriers were eliminated, as a European space for movement has been created, through deregulation in the transport sector and the elimination of border controls, and as European Union policies aimed at creating European citizens who identify with the European Union, such as Erasmus, have been implemented. Authors in both political science and economics have emphasized that those most affected by these transformations have been the educated middle classes (see Gabel 1998; Fligstein 2008; Favell 2008; Mau 2007), but most of the evidence to this respect comes from cross-sectional analysis of correlations between socioeconomic variables and information on whether people have travelled abroad recently. This paper goes one step further in this analysis by focusing on friendship ties rather than travel with a cross-sectional survey and by comparing trends over time for different socioeconomic groups when examining people's propensity to travel abroad. The data confirm previous assumptions regarding the greater Europeanization of the middle classes and shows at the same time that the lower classes have also seized on the new opportunities for movement in Europe.

This working paper therefore concentrates on the segmentation of national social groups into European and national social groups. In structural terms, I follow a network perspective on the social structure in classifying as European any person who has developed trans-European friendship ties. Therefore, structurally speaking, the Europeans are the group of European citizens who have at least one friendship tie in another European country. In addition to this, I follow on a long tradition of sociologists (e.g. Marx, Weber), in taking economic resources as a key variable that serves to differentiate among people with only national ties and with trans-European ties. In simplified terms, this amounts to analytically distinguish between national lower, middle, and upper classes and between European lower, middle, and upper classes (in the text, because of data limitations, I will mainly examine contrasts between lower class and middle

class segments). My interest, however, is not only in counting bodies in these different social segments, but also in indirectly assessing to what extent these structurally defined groups constitute cohesive groups. Indeed, the European society that would interest Marx and Weber is not the one elegantly examined by authors like Crouch (1999), that is, a European society constructed on the basis of the aggregation of national statistics on occupational or sectoral distributions of the European labor force. It stands a level above this statistical construction and includes a cohesion dimension. In the literature, group cohesion has generally been examined through analyzing lifestyles, consumer habits, identification patterns, and values. As such diverse authors as Parkin (1974) and Bourdieu (1984) have demonstrated, these features are not only actually differentiating ones but also mechanisms through which people in similar material circumstances and striving common goals actively strive to differentiate themselves from others. The first question I ask in this paper is thus simple: To what extent does people's embeddedness in national and in partially European networks distinguish lower and middle class citizens into groups of people with distinct consumer practices, identifications, and values? This question has already been partially addressed with regard to identification and political attitudes in Mau, Mewes, and Zimmermann (2009) and in Mau and Mewes (2010) among others. The focus on consumer practices also advances previous research by Gerhards (2008) in which he investigates the existence of a cultural dominant in Europe, examines its distribution across Europe, and attempts to provide an explanation for cross-national differences. This paper's main contribution is to determine to what extent there is a correspondence between Europe's culturally dominant class and the segmentation of Europe's classes into national and European segments. The second question I ask in this paper is to what extent the European integration process, and more particularly the creation of the single market in the 1990s have contributed to this segmentation.

#### 4. Data

The empirical data basis of this paper is the Eurobarometer 67.1 conducted in 2007 in 28 European countries.<sup>2</sup> I rely on this survey because it includes questions that are useful for the study of European segments in national societies, analyzed along the dimensions outlined above. Although clearly insufficient to draw conclusions about the degree of "groupness" in these social categories, this analysis gives us a rough idea about their size and distinctiveness with respect to national social groups. The key variables in this analysis are measures of social position, transnational ties, identification, lifestyle, and values. I use questions on the respondents' years of formal education, their occupation, and their consumption power to distinguish between "middle class" and "lower class" members. I classify as "middle class" respondents who stopped studying beyond their twentieth birthday, who work (or have worked) as self-employed professionals, business proprietors, employed professionals, and top managers, and who own more than the median number of home appliances from a list provided in the questionnaire (Fixed phone, mobile phone, TV, DVD, Computer, Internet connection, car, and music player). I measure transnational ties through an item that measures whether respondents have friends in other European countries or abroad. Social position, broadly understood as Weber defines it (i.e. in terms of market opportunities), and networks are the main elements of a structural definition of group membership.

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<sup>2</sup> The reported analysis discards Croatia and only focuses on the EU-27, simply because the questionnaire did not include one of the main items used to measure membership in the European middle class.



My indirect measures of groupness refer to identification, consumption, and political values. I measure identification with a scale that differentiates between respondents who identify only as members of their national community and those who claim to also identify as Europeans and through another scale that measures how attached people feel to their country. The former scale asks respondents whether they feel “Only [nationality]”, “More [nationality] than European”, “As European as [nationality]”, “More European than [nationality]”, or “Only European”. All the answers except for the first include a European dimension to identification. Recent research has cast doubt on the validity of this indicator as a measure of European identification. It is not entirely clear, for instance, whether it measures identification with Europe, de-nationalized identification, or simple openness to broader identifications (see Díez Medrano 2010, forthcoming; Roose 2009). The second measure of identification taps on the extent to which individuals have strong emotional ties to their country. The question on which it is based asks respondents to say whether they feel “very attached”, “attached”, “not very attached”, or “not at all attached” to their country.

Next, I examine cultural taste through a number of items that measure the respondents’ cultural practices. Respondents were first asked to indicate how often they have undertaken a series of cultural activities in the past twelve months. These activities are “Seeing a ballet/dance performance/opera”, “Been to the Cinema”, “Been to the Theater”, “Been to a Concert”, “Visited a Public Library”, “Visited Historical Monuments”, “Visited Museums or Galleries”, and “Read a book”. The answer options for each of these activities were “Never”; “1-2 Times”, “3-5 Times”, and “More than 5 Times”. This survey and these items have already been examined by Gerhards (2008) in his analysis of Europe’s culturally dominant class. I analyzed all items separately and then, upon verifying that they loaded highly on a single factor, I created a scale by summing the values for all the items (Cronbach alpha=0.796). This scale measures the extent to which respondents have a taste for “High Culture”. In the analysis I also focus on the respondents’ taste for foreign consumer products. I would expect the European middle class, for instance, to be more open to this type of consumption than are members of the national middle classes. I test this hypothesis with indicators about the respondents’ consumption of foreign TV/Movies, books, newspapers, and cuisine. Again, I analyze them separately and then by means of a scale that adds the answers to each of the questions (Cronbach’s Alpha=0.63).

The Eurobarometer survey that I use for this paper is not rich in political indicators. I am thus restricted to measuring political values through two questions. The first question asked respondents to select three values from a list of nine that they would like to see preserved or reinforced in their society. I focus on whether respondents selected “Respect for the Environment”, “Equality and Solidarity”, and “Tolerance”. The first two items evoke the two most important cleavages in European societies in the past forty years, the “materialist/postmaterialist” and the “class” cleavages. The last item refers to a basic democratic value and also to an emerging cleavage in Europe’s growing multicultural societies between people who tolerate this diversity and people who do not tolerate it. The second question that I use to measure basic political values is a left-right ideological self-placement scale.

## 5. The Structural Basis of Europe's Middle Class

Most authors have correctly pointed out that it is among the middle classes that one finds the largest group of Europeans. Table 1 reports the relationship between the age at which respondents finished their education and having friends in another European country. There is a very clear relationship between the two, which supports the expectation that, just as was the case during the nation-building process in the 19th century when national middle classes formed out of local and regional middle classes, the first social group to emerge on a European scale will be formed by members of the middle class. Whereas 40 per cent of respondents who stopped studying after their twentieth birthday have friends in Europe, only 14 per cent of those who stopped studying before their fifteenth birthday do. Once one transforms these figures accordingly, they tell us that roughly 13 per cent of the Eurobarometer sample can be classified as part of an emerging European middle class, as measured through level of education and trans-European friendship ties, whereas 20 per cent of the sample belongs to the national middle classes. In population terms, after one weights these figures according to country size, the European middle class, measured through level of education and friendship ties abroad, approximately represents 16 per cent of the EU-27 population aged 15 and older, or about 67 million people.

To better illustrate the relationship between socio-economic status and having friends abroad, Table 2 reports the results of a logit model that estimates the relationship between different measures of socio-economic status and ties abroad, controlling for the country where respondents live. The three measures of socioeconomic status are ownership of consumer durables, occupation, and level of education. Table 2 shows that the three socio-economic variables correlate as predicted with having friends abroad. Holding other variables in the model constant, working or having worked in high status/high pay occupations and having stopped studying at or beyond age 20 (University Education) increase the log-odds of having friends abroad (0.40 and 0.59 respectively). Also, the more consumer durables respondents have, the higher the log-odds of having friends abroad (0.22). The low coefficient for Cox-Snell's pseudo-R square (0.12) makes clear, however, that there is much more to the explanation of whether respondents have friends abroad than socio-economic status (and country of residence).<sup>3</sup>

Because of the greater development of transnational friendship ties among the population with higher socio-economic status than among the population with lower socio-economic status, it is worth asking about the relative size of the European segment of the middle class in different countries and relative to the total number of European citizens who are both highly educated and have transnational friendships. Table 3, column 1, presents the relative presence of the structurally defined European middle class, measured through level of education and friendship ties abroad, in each of the countries in the sample. It

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3 Arguably, one could also estimate the size of the European middle class by taking into account whether respondents have contacts with organizations and people in other European countries. The problem with the questionnaire item that measures this, however, is that it does not allow to distinguish between contact with organizations and contact with people and does not specify whether answers refer to interorganizational or to interpersonal contact. Furthermore, the percentage of members of the European middle class increases only marginally, by about two percentage points. More detailed analysis of the Eurobarometer data shows, anyway, that those who have friends in other European countries also tend to be those who have friends in other parts of the world, as well as family members and professional contacts both in Europe and elsewhere in the world. We are thus talking about a social group with all sorts of transnational ties. What allows us to describe this social group as European rather than transnational is that their transnational friendships are more often with Europeans than with non-Europeans. In the overall sample, 17 per cent of the respondents have friends outside Europe whereas 26% have friends in Europe. In fact, only 6 per cent of the respondents in the sample have non-European friends but no European ones.

is in the Nordic and Benelux countries that it has a greater relative weight, whereas it has a relatively small weight in Southern Europe and in some Central and Eastern European countries like Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia (see also Figure 1).

Table 3, column 2, offers a different perspective, for it provides an estimation of the distribution of this European middle class across countries. Because of larger national populations, the European middle class is concentrated in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, which together account for about one half of its members. This is relevant for the study of class culture, for it means that these are the countries most likely to shape the values, worldviews, and lifestyles of the emergent European middle class (see also Figure 2).

## 6. Identification, Lifestyles, Openness, and Political Values

Marx emphasizes the importance of class consciousness and joint political mobilization as distinctive traits of a social class. Meanwhile, Weber, Parkin, and Bourdieu attach importance to the strategies that social groups follow to demarcate themselves and restrict access to their ranks through distinctive lifestyles. I now address in preliminary fashion these different issues.

In the literature on European integration, the study of identity, and more particularly, of identification, has gained in importance in recent years. Scholars have been primarily interested in examining the impact of people's identification as Europeans on attitudes toward European integration (Hooghe et al. 2003). Most recently, however, other scholars have attempted to explain why some individuals identify as Europeans and others do not do so (Fligstein 2008; Risse 2010). Finally, my most recent research has focused on the meaning that people attach to their answers to questions of identity (Díez Medrano 2010).<sup>4</sup> Table 4 confirms previous findings in the literature, showing that there is a positive association between socio-economic

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4 This is not the right vehicle to systematically address the problems of measuring and interpreting European identification. I would simply suggest that while there are good theoretical arguments to posit a unidirectional causal relationship between identification with Europe and support for European integration, this does not necessarily imply that this relationship is captured in observed correlations between respondents' answers to questions on identification and their answers to questions of support for European integration. My qualitative work with ordinary citizens in Germany, Spain, and the United Kingdom suggests, for instance, that when respondents say that they identify with Europe or as Europeans, they often mean that they support European integration. At the same time, it is not entirely clear that when people say that they identify as European they mean the same as when they say that they identify as members of their national community. In fact, my qualitative work showed that people are not emotionally invested in the European identity. Very often, what some people mean when they say that they identify as European is that they recognize the category European as one that applies to them -that is as citizens of a country in a European geographical space or as citizens of a European Union member state (see also Duchesne forthcoming). On other occasions, self-identification as European is another way of saying that one does not feel national, as among people who adhere to a subnational identity in a multinational state or as among people who, after many travels, do not feel comfortable anymore in their country of origin. Roose's recent research shows that when one asks a similar question in North America or Latin America referred to identification with these geographical areas one obtains similar percentages to those one obtains when asking the question about Europe and the surprising stability of levels of identification with Europe over time suggest that the items researchers are using in their research measure something else, like, for instance, openness (Roose 2009). This, in effect, would bring us back to Inglehart's original interpretation (1977), which stressed the link between answers to this question and people's capacity for identification with abstract entities.

status and identification as European. In addition, one also sees that wealthier and more educated people express a weaker attachment to their country, whereas, controlling for education and the number of owned durables, respondents in high status/high pay occupations are more attached to their country. My focus, however, is on the association between having friends abroad and identification. The first line in Table 4 shows that respondents with friends abroad tend to identify more often as European and to express a lesser attachment to their country than do respondents without friends abroad. Clearly, both socioeconomic status and transnational ties matter when accounting for answers to the identification questions.<sup>5</sup>

I now move to examine the cultural practices of different groups of respondents, to see whether people with transnational ties display a distinctive lifestyle compared to those without transnational ties. First, Table 5 provides statistical estimates of the relationship between having transnational ties and consuming a diverse set of cultural goods that are commonly associated with “high culture”. The estimated models control both for the respondents’ socio-economic status and for their country of residence. All models show that, net of socio-economic effects and country of residence, respondents with transnational ties consume “high culture” to a greater extent than those without transnational ties do. The association is particularly strong for not so prevalent activities like attending a ballet/dance/opera performance, visiting historical monuments, or visiting museums/galleries. Meanwhile, one also sees that respondents with higher socio-economic status are generally more frequent consumers of “High culture” than are respondents with lower socio-economic status. This, of course, is what one would expect, both because of their greater economic and cultural capital and because, as Bourdieu demonstrates, the definition of what constitutes “high culture” is strongly determined by the main consumers of those cultural goods, that is, by those with higher socio-economic status.

The results above show that the European segments of national social groups display a different taste for high culture consumption. We would expect, however, to find greater contrasts in lifestyle and taste, when focusing on a particular type of consumption, the consumption of foreign products. A taste for that which is “foreign” may motivate people to travel abroad and contribute to people develop transnational friendship ties. At the same time transnational ties may expose people to foreign goods and promote a liking of these foreign goods. Because of this expectation, I examine next the association between transnational friendship ties and four instances of foreign goods consumption: foreign TV/Movies, foreign cuisine, foreign newspapers, and foreign books. Table 6 shows that, controlling for socioeconomic status and country of residence, respondents with friends abroad more frequently like foreign cultural goods than do respondents without friends abroad. This is particularly true with respect to foreign newspapers and foreign books (log-odds equal to 1.42 and 1.27 respectively). At the same time, Table 6 shows that the higher the respondents’ socio-economic status the greater their liking for foreign cultural goods.

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5 Further analysis not reported here, reveals that whether respondents abandon an exclusive national identification in favor of a complex one, in which a European element is also present, is not related exclusively to having European friendship ties. Any transnational tie, European or not, is associated with the same effect. Thus, among those with no European friendship ties, those with other transnational ties have added a European dimension to their identity more frequently than have those with no transnational ties. Also, the effect of transnational friendships is as strong among this group of respondents without European friendships as it is among respondents who have European friendships but have no Extra-European ones. It is thus the transnational dimension of one’s friendship networks and not its European one that is associated with identification as European.

The third step in this quest to approximate the extent to which people with transnational friendship ties constitute distinct groups with respect to people without similar socioeconomic ties but no transnational ties is to examine the association between transnational ties and political values. As described above, I focus on three distinctive values: equality/solidarity, environmental protection, and tolerance. Furthermore, I examine the association between transnational ties and self-placement on a left-right scale. The statistical results displayed in Table 7 quite clearly show that individuals with transnational ties are also more egalitarian, sensitive to the protection of the environment, tolerant, and left-leaning, even after controlling for socio-economic status variables. On the other hand, neither socio-economic variables nor transnational ties contribute much to the explanation of why respondents prioritize the values examined here over other values when asked to choose the three most important ones from a list offered to them. They do not go very far either into explaining self-placement on a left-right ideology scale. The pseudo-R square in the estimated models never reaches 10 per cent.

The statistical models described above unambiguously show that individuals with transnational ties identify more as Europeans, are less attached to their country, consume high culture and foreign goods, and are more egalitarian, pro-environment, tolerant, and left-leaning than are individuals without such ties. One would like to know in more precise terms, however, whether these associations mean that national lower and middle classes are neatly split into European and national segments. One way of assessing this is to see to what extent knowledge about a person's identification, lifestyle, or political views allows us to predict whether the person has transnational ties or not, beyond from what we would learn from simply knowing his or her socio-economic status. This is what I do in Table 8. The models displayed in this table use transnational ties as the dependent variable and include socio-economic variables and country of residence as the main predictors. In addition to this, columns 2 to 4 include the identification, lifestyle, and political values variables successively. As the reader can see, the models' predictive power is rather moderately low, with Cox-Snell's pseudo R-square never reaching 20 per cent. The results confirm previous findings in the literature, showing that individuals with more education, with more consumer power, and in high status/high pay occupations have transnational ties more frequently than do other respondents. In addition to this, the examination of Cox-Snell's pseudo-R square for models 2 to 4 shows that above and beyond socio-economic status, lifestyle is what best distinguishes people with transnational ties from those without transnational ties (pseudo R-square equals 0.15 and 0.18 in columns 2 and 3 respectively). Finally, the comparison of columns 2 and 3 with column 1, shows that our prediction power improves by 25 and 50 per cent respectively when, in addition to a person's socioeconomic status and country of residence, we know something about their taste for high culture and their taste for foreign goods consumption. This can be interpreted as an indication that the degree of segmentation of the lower and middle classes into a European and national segments, based on different consumption patterns is not negligible. The national lower and middle classes are still relatively homogeneous in terms of identification and political views, but are already segmented with regards to lifestyle. The theoretical implications of this finding will be discussed at the end of this paper.

## 7. European Integration and Social Segmentation

The second question this paper addresses is the extent to which the European integration process has something to do with the segmentation of the lower and middle classes into a European and national sub-groups. Again, the answer to this question can only be tentative and provisional, due to the lack of systematically collected longitudinal data. I use as my primary sources of information, Eurobarometer survey data collected in 1985 and 2007. The 2007 Eurobarometer survey allows me to examine cohort differences in the prevalence of transnational friendship ties. Meanwhile, the comparison between 1985 and 2007 survey data allows me to examine comparatively the prevalence of travel abroad among people belonging to different age cohorts and with different levels of educational attainment. In this comparison travel abroad serves as a proxy variable for whether individuals have transnational friendship ties. The correlation between travel abroad and transnational friendship ties in the 2007 Eurobarometer survey was of 0.33, with 52 per cent of respondents who have travelled abroad at least three times in the past three years having friends abroad compared to 18 per cent of those who have travelled abroad less often or not at all.

Table 9 presents several logit models on the prevalence of transnational friendship ties across cohorts, controlling for socio-economic status and residence in former Communist countries. Columns 1 to 3 show that among individuals under 34 the prevalence of transnational friendships is greater than among those 34 or older. This is true both in former Communist countries as in the rest of the countries. Furthermore, a comparison between columns 4 and 5, which display estimates for separate models for former Communist countries and the rest of the EU, shows that the cohort contrasts are greater in the former than in the latter.

It is also relevant to ask whether cohort contrasts are comparable among groups of individuals of different socio-economic status. Table 10 answers this question. Each pair of columns contrasts cohort effects obtained for extreme values for each of the socio-economic indicators I have used throughout the paper (education, occupation, consumer power), controlling for residence in former Communist countries. All contrasts show quite clearly that the cohort effect is greater among members of the lower classes than among members of the middle classes. In other words, the contrast in the prevalence of transnational friendships among younger cohorts and among older ones is greater among the lower classes than among the middle classes. This contrast is represented in graph form in Figure 3. There, we see that the greatest gap between groups with different levels of education in the prevalence of transnational friendships takes place at older age groups. Meanwhile, contrasts between these two groups in the age groups 15-24 and 25-34 are relatively small.

I interpret the results above in light of empirical evidence on changes in travel prevalence by cohort between 1985 and 2007. I focus only on the ten states that were in the European Union at both points in time. The most distinctive result in Table 11 shows that, with few exceptions, between 1985 and 2007 travel abroad has increased for all cohorts. This conclusion can be drawn both by looking at comparisons across time controlling for age cohort and by comparing the data longitudinally, as in the lower segment of Table 11. The table shows, for instance that 23.3 per cent of the survivors of the 1961-1970 birth cohort travelled abroad at least three times in the three years preceding 1985, compared to 31.4 per cent of the

survivors of this same cohort when they reached 37-46 in 2007. The bottom part of Table 11 shows that the cohort where a greater increase in travel prevalence has taken place in these 22 years is the cohort of those who were 25-39 in 1985 and 47-61 in 2007.

Table 12 allows us to see whether the changes observed above have affected in similar ways all social groups. The table compares the prevalence of travel abroad for different age cohorts, controlling for level of education. The data show quite clearly that the prevalence of travel abroad has increased for all groups, but that, at the same time, increases have been especially pronounced among middle-aged members of the group with less education. This contrast can be visualized best in graph form, as in Figure 4, which displays the percent change in the prevalence of travelling abroad for different age-cohorts with different levels of education. As one can see in the figure, the gap between those with no university education and those with university education widens considerably with age and becomes greatest between ages 45 and 64. These findings, which show only tiny contrasts between groups with different level of education at young ages suggest that a focus on programs like Erasmus has distracted scholars from the huge impact that the creation of the single market and the elimination of barriers to movement, including the liberalization of transport and communications, have had on the cost of travelling, thus allowing thousands of mature citizens with low socio-economic status to visit other countries. This finding, combined with current data on prevalence of travel by cohort and level of education leads to a plausible interpretation of contrasts in the prevalence of transnational friendships by cohort and level of education observed in Table 10. Indeed, Figure 5 shows that despite the significant rise in the prevalence of travelling abroad among middle-aged citizens with less than university education, the greatest gap between university and non-university educated respondents from the first ten members of the European Union is still found in 2007 for middle-aged cohorts. This remains true even when one considers all current 27 members (see Figure 6 in the Appendix). It is thus plausible to interpret the data on transnational friendships by cohort and education as reflecting the fact that, traditionally, middle-aged citizens with low socio-economic status have travelled less often and thus developed or been able to maintain fewer such friendships than have middle-aged citizens with higher socio-economic status.

## 8. Conclusion

Europe's transformative power has been examined mainly as Europeanization, in the political sense of how the EU member states' polities transform because of the political and legal institutionalization of the European Union, and as model for political and institutional transformations in countries beyond the European Union. We know little, however, about the transformations the European Union has induced in its member states' societies. The previous pages are an exercise that allows us to analyze societal changes in Europe using a different perspective from the one that has prevailed in the recent sociology of European integration. Rather than simply focus on statistical associations between variables, I have examined and offered an explanation of transformations in Europe's social structure. This approach brings us closer to the type of sociology that characterizes historical and sociological analyses of the transformation from the local to the national in the 18th and 19th centuries. The European Union is indeed interesting per se, but also because it is a living illustration of the reciprocal dynamics between political and societal developments. We can learn about national-building processes by looking at what is happening at the



level of the European Union just as we can learn about the European Union by borrowing from research on national-building processes. Systematic information on current social transformations in Europe will also help us to discover similarities and differences with national-building processes.

The findings from this exercise are that Europe's lower and middle classes are partially segmented into national and European subgroups. The European segment of the middle class is bigger by far than the European segment of the lower class. Furthermore, its national weight is greatest in the Scandinavian and the Low Countries, although as a whole it is concentrated in Germany, France, and the United Kingdom. Further analysis of the European segments of the lower and middle classes has revealed that they are more cosmopolitan and more high-culture oriented lifestyle than their national counterparts. The sketchy information we have on its political views, which shows this new class to be more tolerant, suggests, however, that the political segmentation of the European segments of the lower and middle classes into national and European social groups is not very advanced yet. From theoretical and historical perspectives, the findings are a confirmation of Bourdieu's emphasis on the primacy of practices over consciousness in class structuration. The European segments of the lower and middle classes are emerging as subgroups displaying distinct consumption patterns but no clearly distinct identity or political consciousness. Historically, this reminds us of Dencker's study of the transformation of German national identity in the late 19th century, with body practices expressed through gymnastics articulating the emerging collective-authoritarian conception of this identity before its actual expression in conscious discourse (Dencker 2001).

Finally, the paper has examined the question of the impact that the transformation of the European Union of the past twenty years into a free space for the movement of persons have had on Europe's social structure. The results I obtain suggest that seen from the perspective of short-term mobility and the promotion of transnational ties that contribute to the emergence of European segments of the lower and middle classes, this impact has been greater among the lower than among the middle classes. Too much emphasis on EU programs that promote the mobility of university students across Europe has detracted the researchers' attention to the far more significant impact of the cheapening of travel opportunities, which benefit disproportionately those with fewer economic resources. Since permanent trans-European mobility has remained low until the 2004 and 2007 enlargements to Central and Eastern Europe, it is the millions of short-term visits to other countries which have in all likelihood contributed most to the segmentation of lower and middle classes into European and national subgroups. In this sense, the European Union, through the creation of the single market in the 1990s may have contributed more to the emergence of a European segment of the lower class than to the corresponding emergence of a European segment of the middle class, even though it has undoubtedly contributed to both, as changes in travel prevalence over the last 22 years examined above show.



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## Appendix

*Table 1: Level of Education and European Friendship Ties*

	% with European Friendship Ties
Stopped Studying before age 15	14.3 (6460)
Still Studying, Stopped Studying between Ages 16 and 19	23.4 (10869)
Still Studying, Stopped Studying after Age 20	39.8(8990)

( ): Number of Cases (Using sample weights to control for different country sizes)

N=26319

Source: Eurobarometer 67.1 (2007)

*Table 2: Socio-economic Status and Having Friends Abroad, Controlling for Country of Residence  
(Logit Models and Coefficients)*

	Friends Abroad
Ownership of Consumer Durables	0.22* (0.01)
High Status/Pay Occupation	0.40* (0.04)
University Educated	0.59* (0.03)
Intercept	1.08* (0.09)
Cox-Snell pseudo R-Square	0.12
N	25568

Table 3: Estimate of the Proportion of the Population &gt; 15 in the European Middle Class,

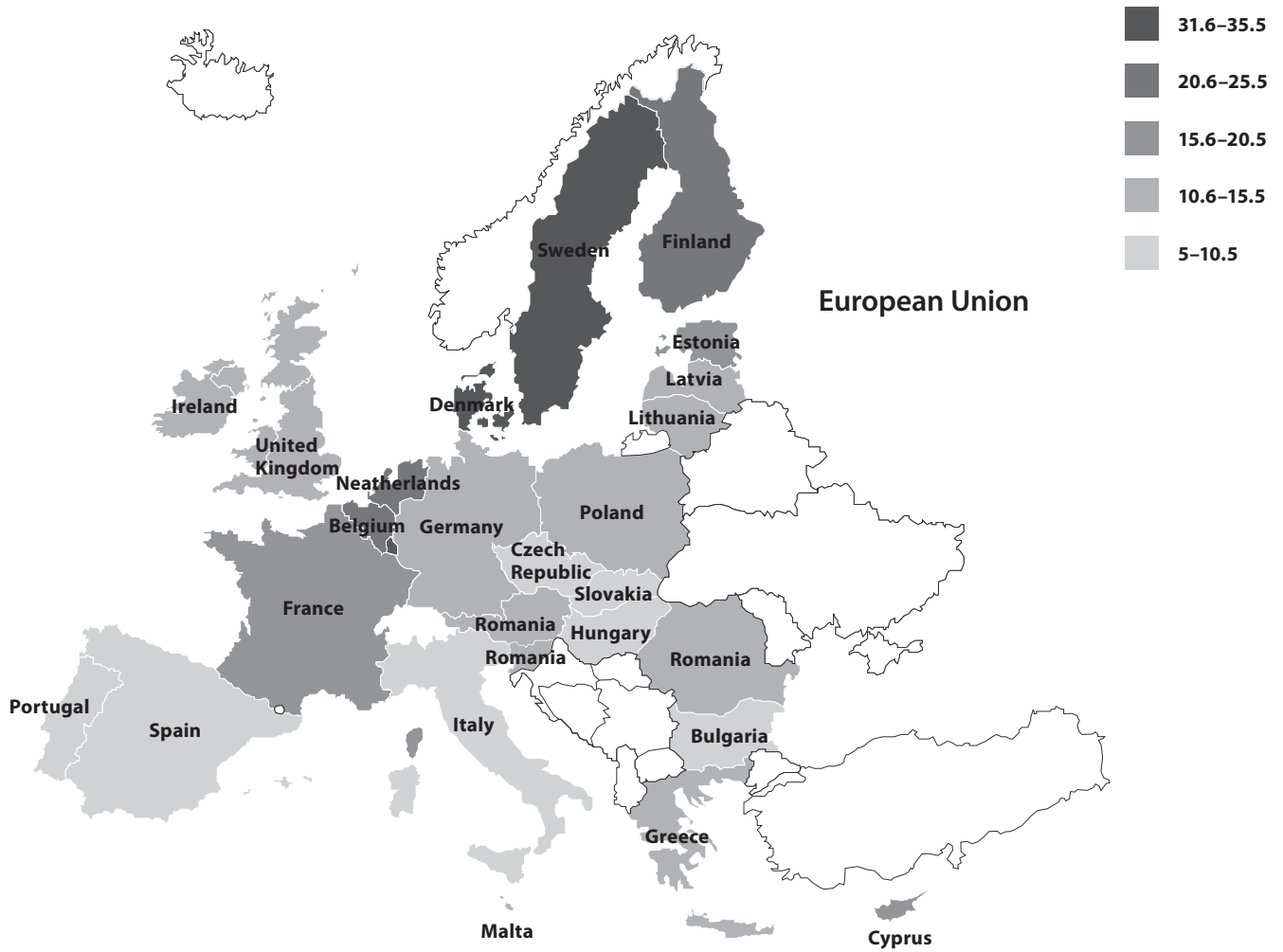
	within and across Countries (1) % of Population >15 in European Middle Class, within Country	% of Population >15 in European Middle Class, Across Countries
Belgium	21.8	5.4
Denmark	33.5	6.6
Germany	13.7	16.4
Greece	12.2	1.1
Spain	9.1	4.2
Finland	20.1	2.4
France	16.4	20.0
Ireland	13.2	0.3
Italy	5.7	1.5
Luxembourg	31.4	0.8
Netherlands	21.8	8.9
Austria	11.6	0.9
Portugal	5.8	0.3
Sweden	36.3	10.6
Cyprus	17.0	0.1
Czech Republic	8.2	0.4
Estonia	17.3	0.4
Hungary	7.3	0.6
Latvia	10.5	0.1
Lithuania	13.2	0.3
Malta	11.2	0.1
Poland	11.3	3.6
Slovak Republic	9.3	0.4
Slovenia	13.5	0.3
Bulgaria	5.9	0.1
Romania	13.2	1.3
United Kingdom	13.8	12.9
Total	15.8	100%

(1) Dimensions defining Middle Class: Finished Education above Age 20; European Friendship Ties.

N=26319

Source: Eurobarometer 67.1 (2007)

Figure 1: Percentage of Population 15+ in the European Middle Class per Country



Note: European Middle Class is defined as finishing education at age 20 or more and having European friendship ties.

Scale:

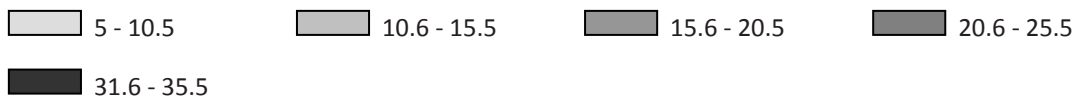


Figure 2: Distribution of European Middle Class across EU Countries



Note: European Middle Class is defined as finishing education at age 20 or more and having European friendship ties.

Scale:



Table 4: Friendships Abroad and Identifications, Controlling for Socio-Economic Status and Country of Residence (Logit and Ordered-Logit Models and Coefficients)

	European Identification Dimension	Attachment to Country (1-4) (1=Very Attached)
Friends Abroad	0.65* (0.03)	-0.18* (0.03)
Ownership of Durables	0.18* (0.01)	-0.05* (0.01)
High Status/Pay Occupations	0.12* (0.05)	0.11* (0.04)
University Educated	0.55* (0.33)	-0.12* (0.03)
Intercept	0.04* (0.09)	
Intercept 1 Lowest Category		-0.19* (0.08)
Intercept 2 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lowest Category		-2.52* (0.08)
Intercept 3 3 <sup>rd</sup> Lowest Category		-4.46* (0.10)
Cox-Snell Pseudo R-Square	0.12	0.07
N	25122	25523

Source: Eurobarometer 67.1 (2007)

Table 5: The Association between Socio-Economic Status and Friendships Abroad on High Culture Consumption, Controlling for Country of Residence (Ordered-Logit Models and Estimates)

	Ballet/ Dance/ Opera (1=Never)	Cinema	Theatre	Concert	Public Library	Historical Monuments	Museums/ Galleries	Read a book
Friends Abroad	0.60* (0.04)	0.51* (0.03)	0.48* (0.04)	0.52* (0.03)	0.39* (0.03)	0.72* (0.03)	0.68* (0.03)	0.54* (0.03)
Ownership of Durables	0.18* (0.01)	0.37* (0.01)	0.24* (0.01)	0.24* (0.01)	0.17* (0.01)	0.22* (0.01)	0.22* (0.01)	0.14* (0.01)
High Status/ Pay Occupations	0.36* (0.05)	-0.15* (0.04)	0.47* (0.04)	0.25* (0.04)	-0.19* (0.04)	0.36* (0.04)	0.48* (0.04)	0.30* (0.04)
University Educated	0.63* (0.04)	0.69* (0.03)	0.70* (0.03)	0.64* (0.03)	0.82* (0.03)	0.63* (0.03)	0.81* (0.03)	0.84* (0.03)
Intercept Lowest Category	2.22* (0.14)	2.25* (0.10)	1.23* (0.10)	0.84* (0.09)	1.30* (0.10)	-0.02 (0.08)	-0.48* (0.09)	-1.09* (0.08)
Intercept 2nd Lowest Category	3.83* (0.14)	3.36* (0.10)	2.81* (0.10)	2.45* (0.09)	1.98* (0.10)	1.50* (0.08)	2.08* (0.09)	-0.12 (0.08)
Intercept 2nd Highest Category	4.83* (0.15)	4.30* (0.10)	3.97* (0.11)	3.60* (0.10)	2.49* (0.10)	2.50* (0.08)	3.12* (0.10)	0.55* (0.08)
Cox-Snell pseudo R- Square	0.08	0.23	0.16	0.17	0.17	0.20	0.19	0.18
N	25425	25459	25453	25428	25378	25440	25416	25386

Source: Eurobarometer 67.1 (2007)

*Table 6: Friendships Abroad and Foreign Consumption, Controlling for Socio-Economic Status and Country of Residence (Logit and Logit-Ordered Models and Coefficients)*

	Foreign TV/Movies	Foreign Cuisine	Foreign Newspapers	Foreign Books
Friends Abroad	0.98* (0.04)	1.03* (0.03)	1.42* (0.05)	1.27* (0.05)
Ownership of Durables	0.15* (0.10)	0.25* (0.01)	0.13* (0.01)	0.07* (0.02)
High Status/Pay Occupations	-0.05 (0.05)	-0.04 (0.05)	0.49* (0.06)	0.32* (0.06)
University Educated	0.41* (0.03)	0.43* (0.03)	0.84* (0.05)	1.04* (0.05)
Intercept	-1.20 (0.11)	-1.947* (0.11)	-1.83* (0.10)	-1.79* (0.18)
Cox-Snell Pseudo R-Square	0.27	0.27	0.17	0.13
N	25568	25568	25568	25568

Note: The country coefficients are omitted from the table.

Source: Eurobarometer 67.1 (2007)

*Table 7: Political Priorities and Self-placement on a Left-Right Ideology Scale, Controlling for Socio-Economic Status and Country of Residence (Logit and Ordered-Logit Models and Coefficients)*

	Foreign TV/Movies	Foreign Cuisine	Foreign Newspapers	Foreign Books
Friends Abroad	0.98* (0.04)	1.03* (0.03)	1.42* (0.05)	1.27* (0.05)
Ownership of Durables	0.15* (0.10)	0.25* (0.01)	0.13* (0.01)	0.07* (0.02)
High Status/Pay Occupations	-0.05 (0.05)	-0.04 (0.05)	0.49* (0.06)	0.32* (0.06)
University Educated	0.41* (0.03)	0.43* (0.03)	0.84* (0.05)	1.04* (0.05)
Intercept	-1.20 (0.11)	-1.947* (0.11)	-1.83* (0.10)	-1.79* (0.18)
Cox-Snell Pseudo R-Square	0.27	0.27	0.17	0.13
N	25568	25568	25568	25568

Note: The country coefficients are omitted from the table.

Source: Eurobarometer 67.1 (2007)



Table 8: The Contribution of Cultural Goods Consumption, Foreign Taste, Identification, and Political attitudes to the Prediction of Whether Individuals have Friends Abroad, Controlling for Country of Residence (Logit Models and Coefficients)

	Education		Occupation		Ownership of Durables	
	Has Friends Abroad (Less than University Educated)	Has Friends Abroad (University Educated)	Has Friends Abroad (Non High Status/Pay Occupations)	Has Friends Abroad (High Status/Pay Occupations)	Has Friends Abroad (Less than Median Value for Ownership of Durables)	Has Friends Abroad (More than Median Value for Ownership of Durables)
15-24	0.97* (0.06)	0.32* (0.08)	1.03* (0.05)	0.07 (0.26)	1.00* (0.08)	3E-03 (0.07)
25-34	0.80* (0.06)	0.35* (0.08)	0.90* (0.05)	0.47* (0.13)	0.93* (0.07)	1E-03 (0.07)
35-44	0.54* (0.06)	0.17* (0.08)	0.62* (0.05)	0.16 (0.12)	0.39* (0.08)	-0.18* (0.06)
45-54	0.51* (0.06)	0.26* (0.08)	0.58* (0.05)	0.24* (0.12)	0.34* (0.08)	-0.16* (0.07)
55-64	0.44* (0.06)	0.17* (0.08)	0.46* (0.05)	0.10 (0.12)	0.34* (0.07)	-0.12 (0.07)
Former Communist Country of Residence	-0.43* (0.04)	-0.62* (0.05)	-0.54* (0.03)	-0.57* (0.08)	-0.29* (0.05)	-0.19* (0.04)
Intercept	-1.78* (0.05)	-0.72* (0.07)	-1.72* (0.04)	-0.50* (0.10)	-1.84* (0.05)	-0.19* (0.04)
Cox-Snell Pseudo R-Square	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.003
N	17575	7993	23393	2682	11968	14107

Source: Eurobarometer 67.1 (2007)

Table 9: Age-Cohort and Friendships Abroad, Controlling by Socio-Economic Variables and Geopolitical Location (Logit Models and Coefficients)

	Has Friends Abroad	Has Friends Abroad	Has Friends Abroad	Has Friends Abroad (West)	Has Friends Abroad (Former Communist)
15-24	0.82* (0.05)	0.31* (0.05)	0.37* (0.05)	0.32* (0.07)	0.51* (0.09)
25-34	0.79* (0.05)	0.23* (0.05)	0.27* (0.05)	0.13* (0.06)	0.54* (0.09)
35-44	0.57* (0.05)	-0.05 (0.05)	-0.02 (0.05)	-0.08 (0.06)	0.12 (0.09)
45-54	0.51* (0.04)	-3.0E-3 (0.05)	0.03 (0.05)	0.00 (0.06)	0.13 (0.09)
55-64	0.39* (0.04)	0.08 (0.05)	0.10* (0.05)	0.06 (0.06)	0.21* (0.09)
High Status/Pay Occupations		0.44* (0.04)	0.46* (0.04)	0.49* (0.06)	0.45* (0.07)
Ownership of Durables		0.24* (0.01)	0.22* (0.01)	0.22* (0.01)	0.22* (0.01)
University Educated		0.58* (0.03)	0.59* (0.03)	0.69* (0.04)	0.40* (0.05)
Former Communist Country of Residence			-0.17* (0.03)		
Intercept	-1.20* (0.03)	-1.38* (0.07)	-1.40* (0.07)	-1.06* (0.09)	-1.66* (0.10)
Cox-Snell Pseudo R-Square	0.02	0.10	0.10	0.09	0.08

Source: Eurobarometer 67.1 (2007)

N=25568

N1 (West)= 15759

N2 (Former Communists)= 9809

Table 10: Friendships Abroad, by Age Cohort, Controlling by Former Communist Country of Residence.

*Interactions with Socio-Economic Indicators (Logit Models and Coefficients)*

	Has Friends Abroad	Has Friends Abroad	Has Friends Abroad	Has Friends Abroad (West)	Has Friends Abroad (Former Communist)
15-24	0.82* (0.05)	0.31* (0.05)	0.37* (0.05)	0.32* (0.07)	0.51* (0.09)
25-34	0.79* (0.05)	0.23* (0.05)	0.27* (0.05)	0.13* (0.06)	0.54* (0.09)
35-44	0.57* (0.05)	-0.05 (0.05)	-0.02 (0.05)	-0.08 (0.06)	0.12 (0.09)
45-54	0.51* (0.04)	-3.0E-3 (0.05)	0.03 (0.05)	0.00 (0.06)	0.13 (0.09)
55-64	0.39* (0.04)	0.08 (0.05)	0.10* (0.05)	0.06 (0.06)	0.21* (0.09)
High Status/Pay Occupations		0.44* (0.04)	0.46* (0.04)	0.49* (0.06)	0.45* (0.07)
Ownership of Durables		0.24* (0.01)	0.22* (0.01)	0.22* (0.01)	0.22* (0.01)
University Educated		0.58* (0.03)	0.59* (0.03)	0.69* (0.04)	0.40* (0.05)
Former Communist Country of Residence			-0.17* (0.03)		
Intercept	-1.20* (0.03)	-1.38* (0.07)	-1.40* (0.07)	-1.06* (0.09)	-1.66* (0.10)
Cox-Snell Pseudo R-Square	0.02	0.10	0.10	0.09	0.08

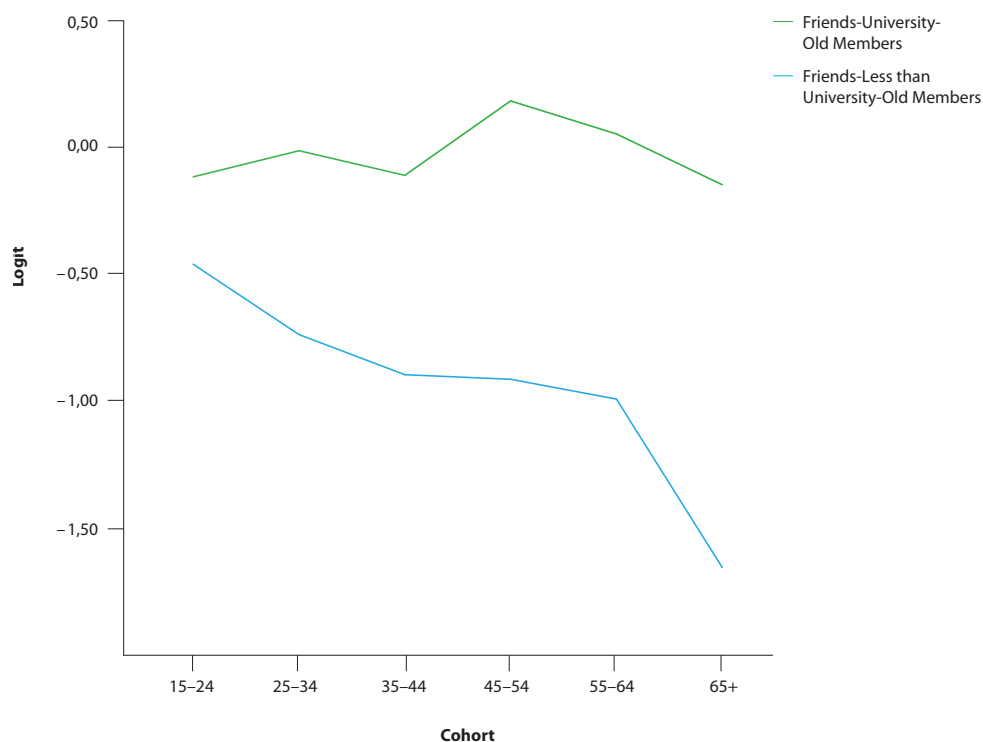
Source: Eurobarometer 67.1 (2007)

N=25568

N1 (West)= 15759

N2 (Former Communists)= 9809

Figure 3: Logit of Having Transnational Friends, by Cohort and Level of Education  
(Old Member States, 2007)



Source: Eurobarometer 67.1

Table 11: Change in the Propensity to Travel Abroad, Organized by Period and by Cohort  
(European Union-Ten Member States) (%)

Cohort	1985	2007	Difference
15-19	22.7	36.0	13.3
20-24	23.9	26.4	2.5
25-34	21.9	32.2	10.3
35-44	21.5	31.0	9.5
45-54	19.0	38.3	19.3
55-64	17.7	36.7	19.0
65+	9.7	23.2	13.5
Total	19.2 (9876)	31.4 (9507)	12.2

	1985	2007	Difference
Cohort	15-24	37-46	
%	23.3%	31.4%	+8.1
Cohort	25-39	47-61	
%	21.2%	37.7%	+16.5
Cohort	40-54	62-76	
%	19.2%	28.6%	+9.4

Notes: The data refer to the European Union's first ten member states and the percentages of people who have travelled at least three times in the past three years. The question asked in 1985 was not identical to the one in 2007, however. In 1985, respondents said how many times they had travelled TO EUROPE

in the past three years and the answers were coded in categories representing more than one choice (i.e. None, One, Two to Three, Four to Five, More than Five). To estimate the percentage travelling at least three times, I divided by two the percentage for the Two to Three category. This, of course, slightly overestimates the percentage of respondents who travelled just three times. Also, the 2007 asks about travel ABROAD rather than about travel to Europe as in 1985, which leads to some overestimation of the difference or contrast between 1985 and 2007. One cannot know to what degree under- and over-estimation of the 1985 percentages compensate each other. The comparison are meant, however, to provide a rough idea of what has happened during these 22 years..

Data weighed by country size.

Source: Eurobarometer 23 and 67.1 (2007)

*Table 12: Change in the Prevalence of Travel Abroad, Organized by Period, by Cohort, and by Level of Education (Data on the First Ten Members of the European Union) (%)*

	Less than University Education			University Education		
	1985	2007	%Change	1985	2007	%Change
20-24	18.9	19.0	0.5	32.4	33.9	4.6
25-34	17.2	23.3	35.5	34.0	45.0	32.3
35-44	18.3	25.2	37.7	35.3	41.8	18.4
45-54	16.2	30.5	88.3	39.7	55.2	39.0
55-64	16.0	30.5	90.6	40.0	59.8	49.5
65+	9.1	19.9	118.68	23.6	45.8	94.1
N						

Note: Data weighed by Country Size

Source: Eurobarometers 23 (1985) and 67.1 (2007)

Figure 4: % Change in Prevalence of Travelling Abroad, by Cohort and Level of Education (EU10, 1985-2007)

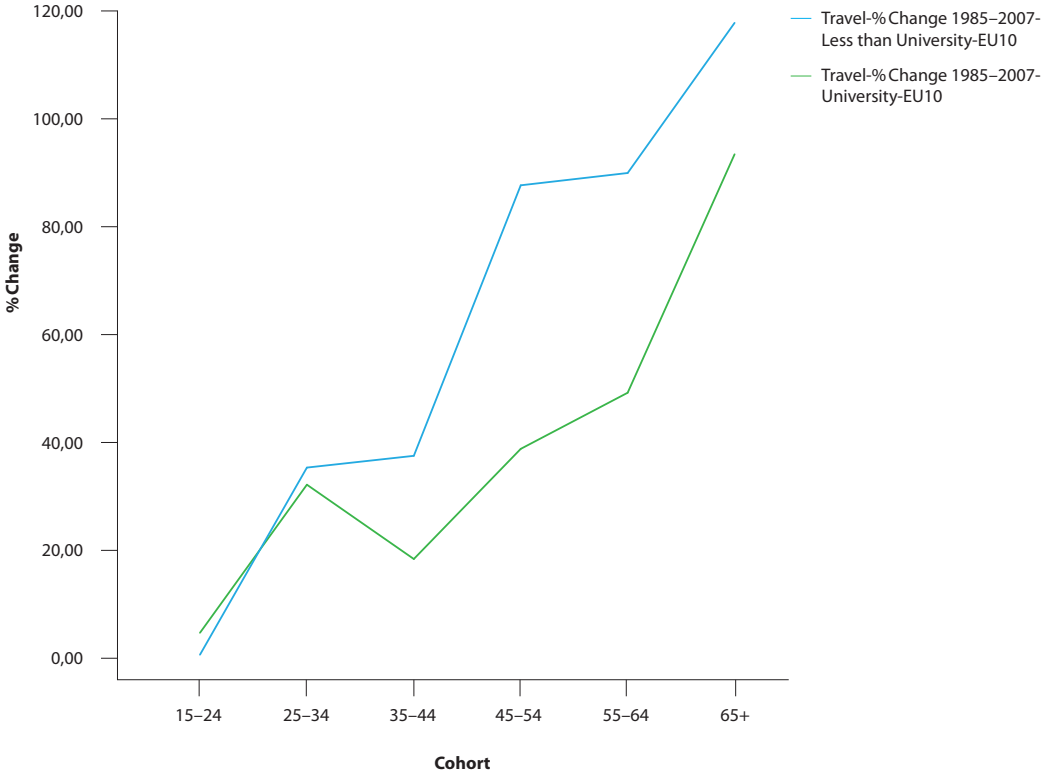


Figure 5: Logit of Travelling Abroad, by Cohort and Level of Education (EU10, 2007)

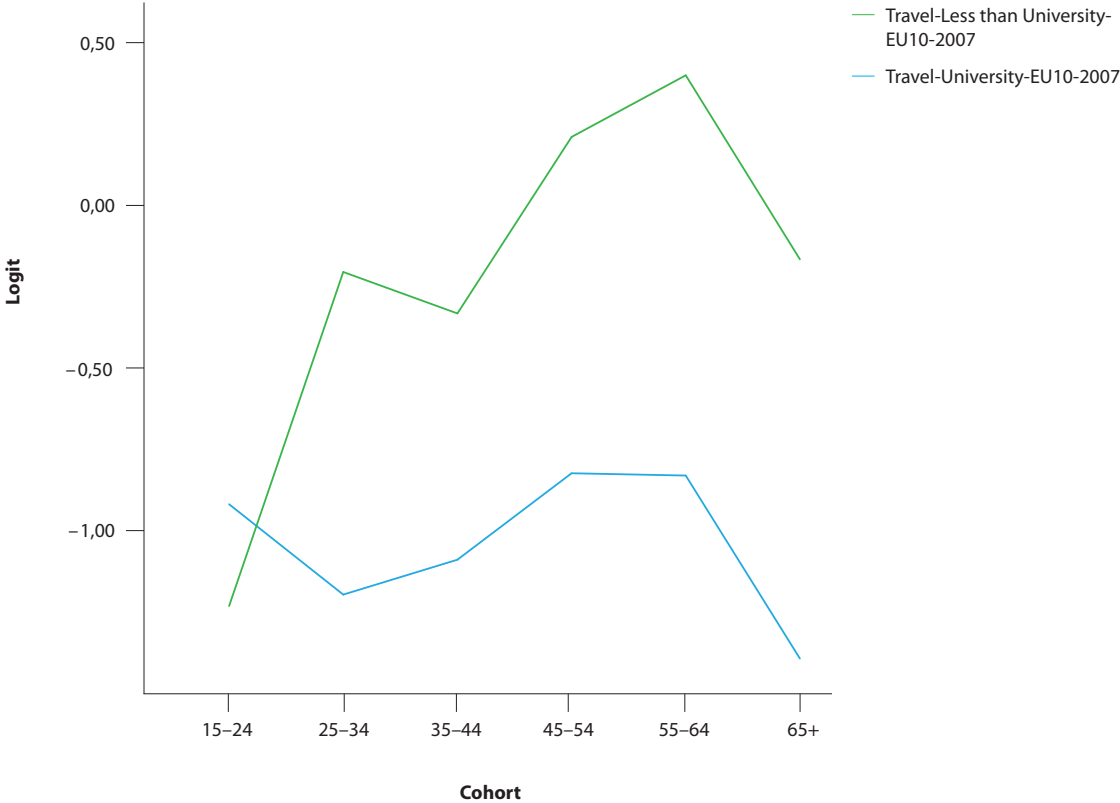
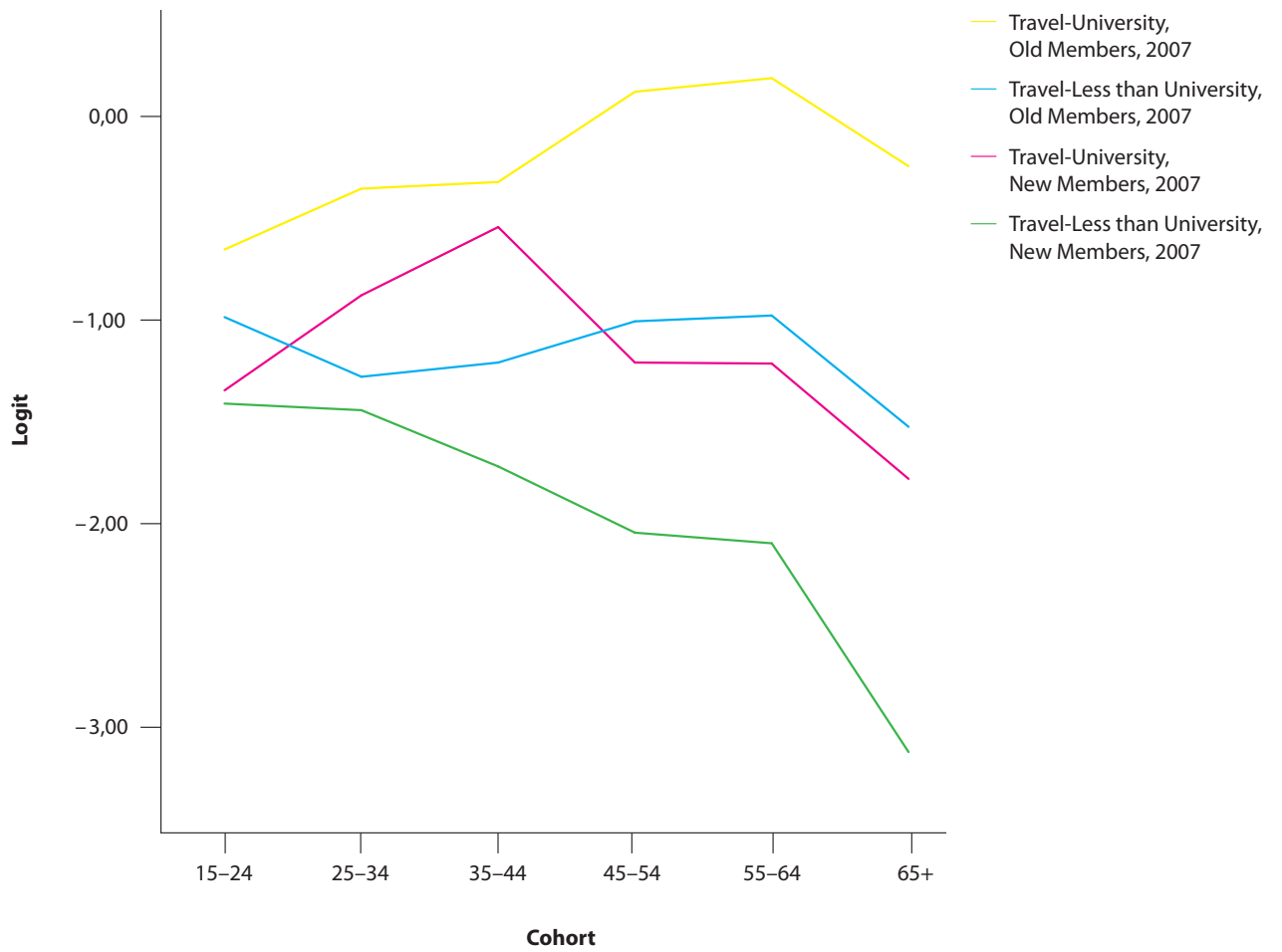


Figure 6: Logit of Travel Abroad, by Cohort, Level of Education, and Recent Member Status (2007, EU-27)



### **The Kolleg-Forschergruppe - Encouraging Academic Exchange and Intensive Research**

The Kolleg-Forschergruppe (KFG) is a new funding programme launched by the German Research Foundation in 2008. It is a centrepiece of the KFG to provide a scientifically stimulating environment in which innovative research topics can be dealt with by discourse and debate within a small group of senior and junior researchers.

The Kolleg-Forschergruppe „The Transformative Power of Europe“ brings together research on European affairs in the Berlin-Brandenburg region and institutionalizes the cooperation with other universities and research institutions. It examines the role of the EU as promoter and recipient of ideas, analyzing the mechanisms and effects of internal and external diffusion processes in three research areas:

- Identity and the Public Sphere
- Compliance, Conditionality and Beyond
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