



CONTEXTUAL POLICY READING OF PUBLIC OPINION DATA AND RECENT TRENDS IN ATTITUDES TOWARDS EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

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Abstract

In cooperation with Leiden University, we developed a framework for the contextual policy reading of public opinion data and recent trends in attitudes towards European integration. Our paper presents a logically integrated series of empirical micro-studies resolving problems in an inductive manner. Using mainly Eurobarometer data and heuristics of the classification tree analysis, we argue that:

a) Pro/contra EU enlargement attitudes are a construct of diverse, multifaceted relationships. It is mainly a projection of an extremely complex set of other values and specific premises upon the EU's future, which, as a system, establish the structure of what seems to be an 'attitude towards the EU and its enlargement';

b) Citizens' attitudes are clearly polarized in most countries and there is a steady, increasing trend for negative attitudes to prevail;

c) The structural causes for these polarizations are, most significantly, nationally specific and go down to 13 levels of factor influences. The strongest among these factors are based on the most pragmatic aspects of social life, depending on the respective country's membership status and domestic policy-making. These factors exert influence in different proportions — in line with the diversity of multiple national and regional contexts. The polarization is a result of varying sets of factors, which themselves vary in every single case in strength and significance.

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Contents

1.	Introduction	6
2.	Reasons for Methodological Self-Awareness	8
2.1	<i>The Biased Usage of the Eurobarometer Data and the Socially Important Information Comprised in It</i>	8
2.2	<i>What We Do and Why We Do It – the Political Significance of the Attitudes towards the EU and towards its Enlargement</i>	12
3.	Structural Specifics of the Influence of Factors, Determining the Variance in the Support for EU Enlargement	15
3.1	<i>The Varying Consistency of Attitudes towards the EU and the Enlargement, and their Sociopolitical Embeddedness</i>	15
3.2	<i>Preliminary Work and Empirically Imposed Limits of the Analysis</i>	19
3.3	<i>Why Should the Classification Tree Analysis Be Used?</i>	21
3.4	<i>Empirical Findings</i>	23
4.	Final Methodological Qualifications	34
4.1	<i>Are the Structural Specifics of the Factor Influences which Determine the Variance in the Support of the EU Enlargement and for the Support towards the EU Commensurable?</i>	34
4.2	<i>Does ‘Time’ Matter?</i>	38
5.	Conclusion	39
6.	References	42
	Annex	46

1. Introduction

Journalists and politicians, among many in the public sphere, usually limit the usage of public opinion poll data to interpretation of fragmentary percentage points (Althaus 2003: Chapter 8; Walton 2007: Chapter 7). Therefore, the mass conviction that understanding the phenomenon of public opinion, along with the results of its studies, does not require anything but common sense, is not a surprise despite abundant academic literature on the very same subject matter.¹

The present paper is a logically integrated series of empirical micro-studies resolving particular research problems in an inductive manner. It aims to prove that the genuine research approach to the phenomenon of public opinion in general, and of public opinion concerning the enlargement of the EU in particular, begins far beyond common sense knowledge and even beyond the traditional academic approach of classical positivism. It is a matter of complex and powerful methodological reflexivity and apparatus guiding the researcher in the intricacies and the dynamics of mass attitudes. Yet, the paper preserves its concerns about the substantive trends in mass attitudes towards the EU's future enlargement and their policy relevance.

In this sense, the primary but not sole objective of this working paper is to prove the heuristics of the classification tree analysis – a relatively new analytical instrument, which remains rarely applied in the studies of public opinion (Breiman et al. 1984). The proof of this methodological challenge will stem from the instructive research findings presented here, which show that:

- European public opinion towards the EU and towards its enlargement cannot be taken for granted at all, because the attitudes of European citizens on these matters do not necessarily *always* possess the defining properties of a 'public opinion' in its strict sense.²
- The attitudes of European citizens towards the EU and its enlargement are much more *nationally differentiated* than typologically identical or similar, which raises the question of whether 'European public opinion' on these questions is (or is not) epiphenomenal (Harteveld et al. 2013; Beaudonnet/Di Mauro 2012).
- The transition from one case to another can be placed on a continuum from prevalent public approval to explicitly prevalent disapproval. Between these two extremes however, *stand disproportionately large and structurally diversified groups of European citizens*.

1 Arnold et al. (2012); Beaudonnet/Di Mauro (2012); Aydın/Cenker (2012); Boomgaarden et al. (2011); Beckmann et al. (2013); Cautrès (2012); Harteveld et al. (2013); Holmberg (2013); Hutchison/Johnson (2011); Muñoz et al. (2011); Rohrschneider/Whitefield (2006); Stoeckel (2012); cf. Kortenska/Toshkov (2013) for an extended overview of academic publications.

2 When the majority does not express a specific attitude, or the share of the neutral responses to a particular question is relatively equal to the share of the polarized responses altogether, there is actually no public opinion. Public opinion proper, in its quality as an impact on political decision making, requires a clearly defined position of the majority on a social issue, albeit polarized. Mind the precise wording in high quality academic literature which clearly differentiates attitudes from public opinion towards the EU (Beckmann et al. 2013; Harteveld et al. 2013). For an indiscriminative usage of public opinion as synonymous to mass attitudes, cf. for example, Boomgaarden et al. 2011; Stoeckel 2012).

- Behind the formal ‘uniformity’ of similar percentage points, i.e. in the structure of these value attitudes, there are clusters of *too diverse, nationally specific factors* (for example, the attitudes toward the UN, the usage of internet, the prioritizing of the European Energy Initiative, etc.). Moreover, in sharp contrast to assumptions in classical social science studies, they are *temporary in influence and vary in weight (and combinations) over time*. This reduces the search for universally valid economic, political, religious and other factors defining attitudes towards the EU (which is the dominant literary tradition in the field) to absurdity).³
- In the instances of registered, structural, formal similarities between attitudes towards the EU and its enlargement in different societies, the empirically registered similarities in the types of attitudes (and the power of the respective factor clusters) between *too dissimilar countries*, stretch far beyond clichés utilized by ‘common sense’. The latter usually applies ‘ready-made’, ‘natural groups’ like ‘Scandinavian societies’ as opposed to ‘Balkan societies’,⁴ ‘Post-communist societies’, ‘East European’ countries, or ‘Catholic’ against ‘Protestant’ (or ‘East Orthodox’) societies, or ‘Old member states’ versus ‘New member states’. These block clichés are too frequently employed as ‘explanatory factors’ in the interpretation of the value attitudes of the Europeans and of current political processes. *The real effects of these structural and value complexes of factors reach far beyond these formal delimitations* (Arnold et al. 2012; Beaudonnet/Di Mauro 2012).

In other words, we claim that, when speaking of public opinion about the EU’s enlargement, one should bear in mind three major qualifications:

- It is a public opinion only to the extent that it – as a truly socio-psychic phenomenon (Boomgaarden et al. 2011; Stoeckel 2012) – *intensively oscillates over time*. At the same time public opinion is about very different attitudes varying broadly from predominant approval through lack of opinion (indifference) to strongly expressed disapproval (cf. Kortenska/Toshkov 2013).
- It is not ‘European’ *because the strongest determining factor is the national specificity* which means that these attitudes – at any single point in time – are significantly different by the *structure of opinions expressed* and by *the specific structure of their formative factors of influence*.

3 See, for instance, the literature review by Arnold et al. (2012); Kortenska/Toshkov (2013); Muñoz et al. (2011); Tanasoiu/Colonescu (2008); Toshkov (2011).

4 Anyone knowledgeable about the dynamics of public opinion towards the EU on the Balkan peninsula is familiar with the fact that all these countries represent substantially different cases (GALLUP Balkan Monitor 2010; Manchin 2011: 165), as do the post-communist countries. “The levels of trust measured by the OeNB Euro Survey differ substantially across CESEE countries. Among the EU Member States of the sample, the lowest average trust levels (just below 30 percent) over the observation period are found for Hungary and the Czech Republic. Higher levels are registered for Poland and Romania. In Bulgaria, almost half of the respondents answered that they completely or somewhat trust the EU. Among the respondents in candidate and potential candidate countries, Albanians by far have the highest level of trust in the EU, followed by respondents in FYROM and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Low levels of trust in the EU can be found for Croatia and Serbia” (Beckmann et al. 2013: 77; for similar findings, cf. Harteveld et al. 2013).

- It does not concern the EU directly because: a) the ‘attitude towards the EU itself’ is to a large extent epiphenomenal, being *more a projection* of a very complex set of other (various) attitudes (very similar findings are reported recently by Harteveld et al. 2013); and b) the structures of the formative factors of ‘attitudes towards the EU’ and ‘towards the EU’s enlargement(s)’ are – at any single point in time throughout Europe – substantially different (cf. Beaudonnet/Di Mauro 2012). (Whether the EU possesses anything denotable as an ‘itself’ at all is an altogether different matter (Arnold et al. 2012; Beckmann et al. 2013; Harteveld et al. 2013; Muñoz et al. 2011). Our research findings, at this stage, are by no means a comprehensive analytical observation and *should rather be considered illustrative for the potentials of the applied research method*.

2. Reasons for Methodological Self-Awareness

2.1 The Biased Usage of the Eurobarometer Data and the Socially Important Information Comprised in It

European citizens along with social scientists all over the globe owe huge gratitude to the Directorate-General for Communication of the European Commission for maintaining the Eurobarometer (EB) survey. Its high quality data, being an invaluable source of vast, diversified information, provide for tracking long-term trends and conducting national case studies.

Notably, however, the Directorate-General explicitly distances itself from the interpretation of the data, which remains the sole responsibility of the authors of the reports. It is not hard for the specialists to notice the reasoning of this delimitation. The interpretation of the data is, moderately speaking, frequently biased, if not manipulative.⁵ The most frequent partial ‘misinterpretations’ of the data (which *constantly* bias the interpretation *in favor* of the EU image and are, therefore, hardly unintentional) are mainly the following two:

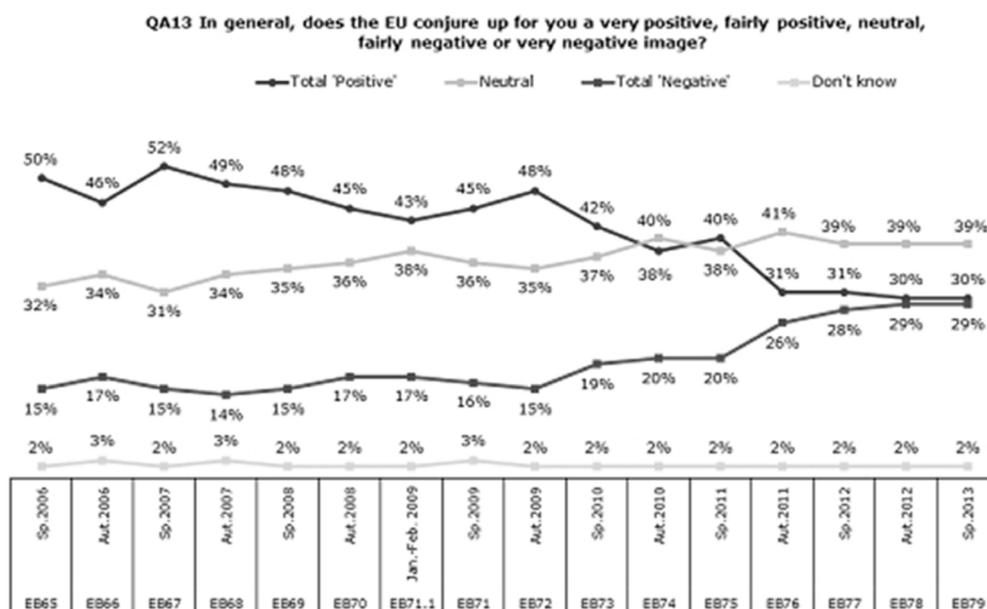
- Overexposure of a comparison only with the previous edition of the survey when the new data confronts the long-term trend in the attitudes toward the EU in general.
- Interpretation in the ‘positive sense’ of differences in percentage points which completely fall within the margin of error (while the scale error itself is conscientiously made public in an annex to the report).

5 See for example the publications of the Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies. Professor Sören Holmberg points out that “[i]n Sweden, as in most other Member States, drop in public support for the EU has been observed. In the 2012 survey from the SOM Institute [at the University of Gothenburg], only 42 percent of the respondents declare that they are in favor of Sweden’s EU membership. This is a fall by four percentage points as compared to 2011. Compared to 2010, the drop is even more pronounced” (Holmberg 2013). However, Sweden is among the few countries that remain truly positive and optimistic about the EU.

Since this argument is rather sharp we provide particular illustrative examples. Let us take only the most obvious instances from the interpretation of the last Standard Eurobarometer 79 (the fieldwork was carried out in May 2013 and the results were published in June the same year):

“2. The image of the European Union: trend. The image of the EU is stable. A majority of Europeans have a neutral image of the EU (39%), and the proportion of respondents for whom it conjures up a positive image continues to be just higher than the proportion for whom it is negative (30% positive, unchanged; 29% negative, unchanged)” (European Commission 2013: 10).

Figure 1: Trends in the image of the EU



Source: European Commission (2013: 10).

In contrast to the EB authors' argument, what has proven to be really stable is not 'the image of the EU' but the tendency of *sustained decrease in the approval of the Union after 2006* (with a slight disjointed shift in 2009). Within six years the negative attitudes have doubled (from 15 to 29 percent), while the positive attitudes lost 20 percentage points representing 40 percent of its initial state. The general picture of the registered public attitudes allows us to conclude that since the end of 2010, there is actually no public opinion towards the EU, i.e. an opinion articulating a position on a disputed public issue. This is important because, in the beginning of the studied period, there was a saliently positive public opinion towards the EU.⁶ Second, the authors of the cited publication claim that the positive attitudes prevail, but it can hardly be argued that in 2012 *any opinion prevails* because: a) the differences between the values of

6 In other words, unlike the common interpretation which does not distinguish between attitudes and public opinion, there is no persistent public opinion towards the EU that would just vary in degree. On the contrary, the variations in numerically expressed shares not only mark the dynamics of the approval and disapproval, but signify a qualitative transformation of the opinion itself. In this particular case, the proportions of the shares prove the absence of public opinion in its quality of public standing.

the two opposing quantities fall within the margin of error; and b) the largest share of the citizens – about 40 percent – declare neutral attitudes. If the authors of the report had used error bar diagrams instead of curve diagrams, with exact values of the corresponding shares, the resulting visualized trend logic would have been different and much clearer (i.e. the chosen graphical representation of the data misleads the reader as it does not represent the range of the error for each and every value, since it would wipe out the reported positive differences altogether with a large part of registered dynamics).

What we consider the biggest problem in the analysis of the data cited is yet a different one. It is the lack of any examination of the structural relationships and, hence, the fragmentary interpretation of the separate values for each of the qualitative varieties of the indicator behind the nominal scale used in the poll (as if they possess sense on their own, therefore creating an artificial reality of the ‘European opinion towards the EU’).

Limiting the ‘public opinion towards the EU’ to a separate value of an indicator arbitrarily extracted from the whole data-set creates an illusion of ‘uniformity’ of the expressed diverse attitudes by the public. Within the realm of this methodologically unjustifiable procedure, it seems that all Europeans have a common opinion which only varies in value (on a specific indicator/question).

The previous example is just a form of the more general aptitude to a biased interpretation of the data. Here is another revealing example for the same sustained approach:

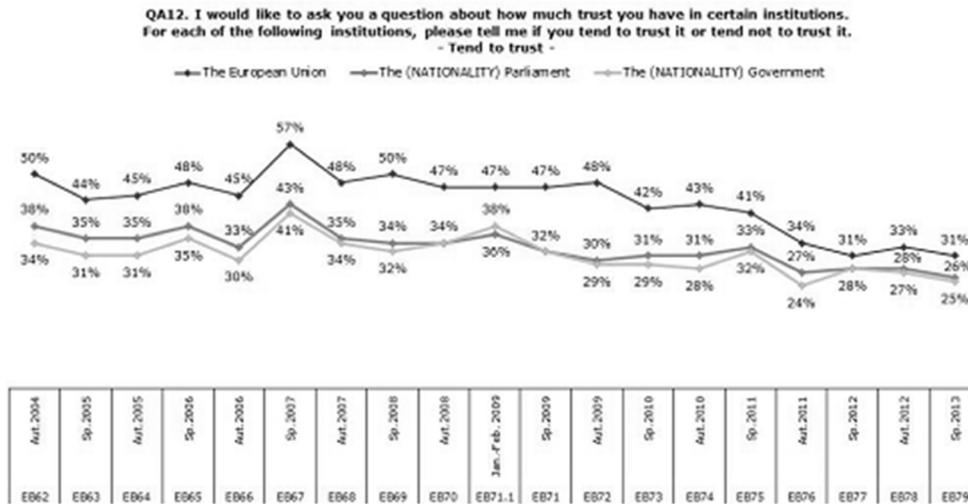
„1. Trust in national governments and parliaments and in the European Union: trend. Trust levels in political institutions continue to decrease, though there is still more trust in the European Union than in national institutions. After a 2-point decrease, trust in the European Union has fallen back to the spring 2012 level (EB77)⁷. It is still higher than the levels recorded for national governments (25%, -2) and parliaments (26 %, -2), which are also facing a slight decrease” (European Commission 2013: 9).⁸

This interpretation, from the very same report, however, results from the aforementioned inclination towards creating a formal uniformity/commensurability between qualitatively heterogeneous social facts. What is more curious, the cited fragment is a generalization of the ‘common political sense’ of the data, which is visualized on the following chart.

7 Referring to European Commission (2012b).

8 There is no meaningful or methodological reason to represent on a common plot the approval of so diverse phenomena such as the EU, the national governments of parliaments, except for the directly deliberate political suggestion that the EU used to be and still is, ‘more popular relative to national political institutions’.

Figure 2: Trends in the trust towards the EU, the national government, and the national parliament



Source: European Commission (2013: 9).

We can clearly notice the faulty inclination to prioritizing the ‘last moment’ at the expense of the long-term trend, which obviously shows a decline in the approval of the EU.⁹

There is an obvious aptitude for imbedding a positive meaning to percentage point differences, which remain in the boundaries of the confidence interval as reported in the annex (33-31 or 27-25).¹⁰ More importantly, the approval of the EU is detached as something self-sufficient which develops ‘accidentally’ in parallel to the approval of the national political institutions (government and parliament).¹¹ At the same time the resemblance of the three curves in time is so obvious that it requires a further test for association between these tendencies (since some previous research work has been focused mainly on the same connection, but at a single point of time). We will tackle this question in further detail in the following section.

9 The resemblance of the shares of the expressed attitudes towards the EU in the two charts – Figure 1 and Figure 2 – is especially important. Nevertheless, while the two graphs represent a time series for the provisional ‘approval of the EU’ registered with questions of completely different word-order, they actually illustrate a common process: despite the drastic differences in the wording of the questions, both graphs represent the general decline in the support of the EU from 50/50 percent in 2006 to 30/31 percent in the end of 2012.

10 Given the size of the national samples, which is about 1000 respondents (except for Germany – 1554 and the UK – 1305) in the May 2013 survey (European Commission 2013), the stochastic error for the 30 percent share is ±2.8 and for 50 percent share, ±3.1 respectively, using the 95 percent confidence interval.

11 The covariance of public attitudes towards national democratic institutions and EU institutions has been studied by Arnold et al. (2012) and Muñoz et al. (2011).

2.2 What We Do and Why We Do It – the Political Significance of the Attitudes towards the EU and towards its Enlargement

Using the last available data reported by Eurobarometer 79 we could test for association between the confidence/trust in the EU and the confidence/trust in the national parliaments and governments for the period of eight years, following the general theories for the subordination of the European political process to the national one (Reif/Schmitt 1980; Schmitt 2005) and keeping in mind the complexity of the empirical findings about the relationship between trust in national political institutions and in the EU's ones (Beckmann et al. 2013, Muñoz et al. 2011).¹² In hypothetical terms, we could assume that attitudes towards the EU, the national governments and parliaments are not three different social facts, but, in essence, three different instances of a single political attitude.¹³ The first step in this respect is to estimate the correlation coefficient between the three variables *for the period under examination*.

Table 1: Correlations between the percentages of trust in the EU, in the national parliament and in the national government

		EU	National Parliament	National Government
EU	Pearson Correlation	1	0.873**	0.827**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000
	N	19	19	19
National Parliament	Pearson Correlation	0.873**	1	0.926**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000
	N	19	19	19
National Government	Pearson Correlation	0.827**	0.926**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	
	N	19	19	19

Source: Authors.

12 "The EU consists of several supranational institutions, i.e. the European Parliament, the European Commission, the European Council, the Council of the European Union, the European Court of Justice, the Court of Auditors and the European Central Bank (ECB). *It is unclear whether there are differences in the way respondents view specific institutions. In addition, respondents most likely do not actually think of all these institutions when they answer the question about trust in the EU; on the contrary, they may also associate the EU with the euro or other institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF). All these factors would, in turn, influence their level of trust in the EU*" (Beckmann et al. 2013: 80, italics added).

13 Aydin/Cenker (2012); Hudson (2006); Hutchison/Johnson (2011); McLaren (2007); Mishler (2001); Rohrschneider/Whitefield (2006).

The table shows that there is a very strong correlation. It is so strong that it could suggest association between just three instances of ‘one and the same thing’.¹⁴

In order to find at least a general solution to this problem, we have constructed a regression model with the confidence in the EU as the dependent variable and the confidence in the national parliaments and governments as the independent variables.¹⁵ As long as the regression model is built upon time series, we introduce ‘the time’ as an additional factor in our model which provides concrete practical advantages: 1) simplifying the calculation procedures; and 2) providing the opportunity to account for all other factors that we do not control for (Velichkova 1981: 302).

The regression analysis shows that there is a very strong correlation between confidence in the national parliaments and confidence in the national governments, although in this case it is pointless, in a purely methodical aspect,¹⁶ to treat the confidence in the two national institutions as separate factors (while being conceptually different, thus providing grounds for a serious debate on the modes of their interaction).¹⁷

14 The methodological accuracy requires a rather lengthy explanation: what is ‘hidden’ in the table is the fact that we estimate correlation coefficients between time series and this causes some trouble. Unfortunately, unlike statisticians, most researchers apply correlation analysis on time series without any consideration. However, “correlation between such series could prove deceptively strong if the trends in these series are identical by chance” (Velichkova 1981: 289; citing Yule and Kendall 1950). In such cases we need to get rid of the so-called autocorrelation, i.e. the influence of the former state of the researched phenomenon on its present state. There are lots of ways for doing so, but the most elegant and easy way is to introduce time in the model, which we do in the following step. Introducing time in the model is based on the Frisch–Waugh theorem, which states that the correlation of the residuals around trend lines is equal to the establishment of a multi-factor regression model for the expression of the dependence between the absolute values of the Y and X series with the additional factor of time t (Velichkova 1981: 301-302). This approach offers yet another technological advantage given that we conduct the analysis with SPSS.

15 Without contesting the validity of the alternative hypotheses in any way, we offer examples of the possible political meaning of this analytical move. The attitude towards the EU, not just in Bulgaria, for the majority of the citizens seems like a question of foreign policy, itself being a prerogative of the national political institutions and in this sense is part of ‘their play’. Therefore, the decline in their public support results in decline in the support for ‘their play’. Or, alternatively, the EU is perceived as a matter of politics in general, and the declining concern in politics in all of its instances is transmitted upon the EU. For example, Arnold et al. claim that “individuals across Europe evaluate the institutions of the European Union through a single attitude dimension of political trust rather than through separate evaluations” (Arnold et al. 2012: 1). For a variety of alternative hypotheses and their recent empirical test, cf. Muñoz et al. (2011).

16 In the first place, there is a multicollinearity problem. “The occurrence of strong linear relationship between the factors in the regression model means that the estimated regression coefficients do not reflect the genuine influence of the factors. They carry considerable error, which makes them largely unreliable” (Manov 2002: 79, own translation). In our case, there is considerable multicollinearity as measured by the so called tolerance coefficient, which in essence is an indetermination coefficient and shows what share of the variance in a given factor is independent relative to other factors. In our case, the three tolerance coefficients are below 0.3 which is rather low. The conventional strategy in this case is to exclude factors from the model until we get satisfactory tolerance coefficients. The exclusion of factors, however, should be a consciously guided process. This is the reason why we exclude the trust in the national parliament from the model. Its tolerance coefficient amounts to 0.051 which means that 94.9 percent of the variance in this variable is determined by the other two factors. This makes the factor redundant. With its exclusion from the model, the tolerance coefficients of the confidence in the national governments and time exceed 0.6, which is sufficient enough to keep them in the model.

17 It is worthless to go into details with the somewhat controversial assumption that the confidence in the government is ‘representative’ for the confidence of the national political institutions, (being too nationally and historically specific). All we mean is that this methodological procedure makes sense in our specific analysis of

The additional calculations show that the confidence in the national governments has a strong impact on the confidence in the EU. Nearly half of the variance in the trust in the EU (49.7 percent) is explained by the variance in the trust in the national governments. Together with ‘time’, the two factors explain up to 78.5 percent of the variance in the dependent variable. In brief, we have found another empirical proof of the already known phenomenon *that the confidence in the EU is not an independent social reality and that larger part of its specifics are not derivatives of the EU specifics themselves* (such an illusion is possible if we register this confidence through a separate question and consider the resulting data as self-containing). Extreme caution is necessary in the interpretation of our result.

The problem is that if we shift the paces of the confidence in the EU and in the national governments in the regression model, we get practically the same results: 49.7 percent of the variance of the confidence in the national governments is explained by the variance of the confidence in the EU. Together with time the R^2 is 68.4 percent.¹⁸ These results are meaningful, as well, and we can find a logical explanation for the interdependence of the factors and their dependence on others, which will be considered later in this paper.¹⁹ It should be noted that although meaningfully similar, these two results are far from being identical in non-statistical terms. Therefore, the direction of the correlation is conceptually important, especially when looking for causal relationships.

At least, it is necessary to go into details in explaining the direct political significance of the result we have obtained, contrasting this to the naive interpretation of the EU polls’ data. Once again we stress *that our findings overlap with the major conclusion of Hartevelde et al. (2013), which is that attitudes towards the EU are not directly influenced by the EU itself*. This instantly sets forward the problem of identifying the factors (and the mechanisms, afterwards) *constructing that particular social reality that appears to be ‘public opinion towards the EU’* in as far as it is manifested as an ‘attitude towards the EU’ and is registered by the polls ‘as such’.²⁰

For the time being, it is important that this last finding raises the question of whether we have the reason to expect that confidence in the EU is solely an outcome of confidence in the national governments (or vice versa), or whether they are both consequences of a *third factor* which has forced their parallel shift in time.

This is an important question because in methodological terms it places us in the same situation as regarding the relationship between the confidence in the EU and the enlargement, which is our research interest.

the public opinion polls data.

18 The lower strength of the connection between the two factors together could be perfectly explained by the fact that the trust in national governments is less determined by time relative to the trust in the EU. In other words, the decrease of the support is more significant in the confidence towards the EU than towards the national governments, as depicted by the graph.

19 The conceptual mapping of the established relationships, i.e. the conceptualization of their political meaning, is a subject of a completely different kind of analysis.

20 It is necessary to highlight that our assertion by no means supports the argument of Pierre Bourdieu. His radical thesis that “public opinion does not exist” (Bourdieu 1979), which is valued today for its important conceptual and methodological concerns, although quite successfully contested, has nothing to do with our proposition that what appears as registered attitude (of approval or disapproval) towards the EU is in its essence a construct of other factors influencing the perceptions/attitudes of European citizens.

We cannot analyze the public opinion towards the enlargement of the EU prior to clarifying what public opinion is in general terms, and what the limitations are for its existence and understanding in our case. It is similarly impossible to study the attitudes towards the EU enlargement(s)²¹ before acquiring initial ideas (substantially different from ‘common sense’), at least, about the attitudes towards the ‘Union itself’. The already established high degree of epiphenomenalism of the attitude towards the EU urgently raises the concern regarding the probable, but still problematic relationship between the two social constructs: ‘attitudes towards the EU’ and ‘attitudes towards its enlargements’ (a pure formal rationalistic approach would assume that the latter is derivative of the former).

3. Structural Specifics of the Influence of Factors, Determining the Variance in the Support for EU Enlargement

3.1 The Varying Consistency of Attitudes towards the EU and the Enlargement, and their Sociopolitical Embeddedness

The reader must have noticed that we strictly stick to the expression ‘attitudes towards the EU and towards its enlargement’. The cognitive puzzle is this: Are the EU and the enlargement of the EU phenomena dissimilar enough in order to expect that the attitudes towards them are different, thus allowing their differentiated investigation? Or, on the contrary, are they so diverse that they have only a few things in common with regards to some of their aspects or elements?

What we argue for the time being is that the answers of these two contradicting questions should not be treated as self-evident or a matter of logical inferences.

On the one hand, it makes sense to speak about the EU ‘as it is’ and, separately, to speak about its troublesome enlargement(s). But on the other hand, it is an altogether different matter to speak about the EU at present or the EU-seen-through-the-options-of-future-enlargement or, shortly, the EU seen as a *project in progress* – about the ‘EU system’ or ‘the EU project’ as Beaudonnet/Di Mauro (2012) put it. Yet, at the beginning of the 21st century, what makes the EU important is Europe’s precarious prospect of becoming a vibrant player in the harsh global competition because of its potential to integrate more than half a billion of European citizens in an open market of continental scope²² within which they participate with the specific European understanding of quality of life.²³ Yes, the EU could be considered as a separate subject-matter and the EU enlargement could be considered as yet another one (with many intricacies of its own). But the complex interdependence of these two subjects is quite a *specific social reality* that is worth understanding (Börzel 2011).

21 More details on the issue of the heterogeneity of the so-called ‘waves of EU enlargement’ and its considerable impact over the assessments of their results as well as on the perspectives of future enlargement(s) are offered by Kortenska/Toshkov (2013).

22 At present, the EU-28 comprises about 70 percent of the European population but only about 45 percent of the continent’s territory.

23 Ágh (2008); Alessina/Giavazzi (2006); Börzel/Risse (2012); Cameron (2004); Hix (2008); Leonard (2005); Piris (2011); Schimmelfennig (2003).

No matter how self-evident it seems for the common sense, reproduced in positivistic approaches, our first job is to explicitly prove that the attitudes towards the EU and towards the enlargement are correlated. Again, we calculate the Pearson correlation coefficient for these two variables to be followed by a regression analysis accounting for time as an explanatory factor (because we have to keep in mind that *we correlate time series*). The Pearson correlation coefficient between the shares of approval of the EU and its future enlargement(s) is 0.93. The corresponding coefficient of determination is 0.86. These coefficients are calculated on the basis of 15 points in time from May 2006 to November 2012. The data is acquired from the Standard Eurobarometer issued biannually. The extremely high coefficient value suggests that we have registered a very strong correlation between the two variables and, probably, *their mutual dependence on other determining factors, which have to be examined yet*. In a more general prospect, the benefit of the empirical evidence provided so far is that it is reasonable to look for key determinants for the attitudes toward the EU supposing that they somehow determine the attitudes towards the enlargement of the Union, as well. Not always and certainly indirectly, they do have a (varying) impact, which can be proved here by the offered method for analysis. In this respect it is worth highlighting yet another substantial correlation, inevitably broadening the scope of our research. What do we know about the influences on the attitudes towards EU's enlargement(s)? Usually researchers set up in advance logical deductive models according to which a single factor would appear as hypothetically influential and then an empirical test falsifies/verifies the initial assumption. An inductive approach is no less legitimate.

Since the standard Eurobarometer allows for comparisons in time by using sustainable wording of some questions *we could identify the empirically registered factors that have the most significant impact in formation of the attitudes towards the EU and its enlargement for the whole seven-year period from 2006 to 2012* – within the narrow framework of these indicators.

In order to complete this task, we have chosen six literally identical Eurobarometer questions:

- EU membership – good/bad. Here we take the shares of the “good thing” answers.²⁴
- EU membership – country benefit.²⁵ Here we take the shares of the “benefited” answers.
- Present direction of developments with two options – country and European Union. For these two questions we take the shares of the “right direction” answers.²⁶

24 The question asked is: “Generally speaking, do you think that (our country)’s membership of the EU would be...? – A good thing; A bad thing; Neither”.

25 The question asked is: “Taking everything into account, would you say that (our country) has, on balance, benefited or not from being a member of the European Union? – Benefited; Not benefited”.

26 The question asked is: “At the present time, would you say that, in general, things are going in the right direction or in the wrong direction, in: a) Our Country; b) The European Union? Things are going in the right direction; Things are going in the wrong direction; Neither the one nor the other”.

- Trust in institutions.²⁷ Since the number of institutions covered by the question varies from three to 16 throughout the time span, we have chosen six which appear most of the time: the system of justice, political parties, national government, national parliament, the EU and the UN. For these questions, we take the “tend to trust” answers.
- Overall EU image – positive/negative.²⁸ For this question, we take the sum of the “very positive” and “fairly positive” answers.
- The EU’s personal meaning to the respondent.²⁹ This is a question with 16 optional answers of substantive variety of meanings that are the same in all editions of the Eurobarometer. Here, we take the shares of ‘yes’-answers for each option.

Together with the percentage of the support for the future enlargement of the EU and the time factor we get a total of 29 variables. Now we construct a regression model with the support for future enlargement as the dependent variable, and all the others as factors. Since the factors now are 28, we use a stepwise regression. This approach allows us to find the best combination of independent variables (Manov 2002: 60). The stepwise regression reduced the model to a single factor, namely the percentage of people *who think that their country is going into the right direction*. The coefficient of determination for the model is extremely high: 99.9 percent of the variance in the support for future enlargement is explained with the variance in the factor.

These findings are so sensible that they may appear as the common place of common sense. But pay attention – just three crucial details make these findings extraordinary important:

- Surprisingly, to ‘common sense’, the *attitude towards EU’s enlargement(s)* does not depend on attitudes *towards the EU directly since the latter do not depend on the EU itself* (see the discussion above). On the contrary, somewhat personal/national concerns matter most in this regard.³⁰
- Hypothetically, the convictions that both domestic affairs and the EU are in good shape (are doing well) are just ones of the many possible ‘most logical’ factors, influencing the attitudes towards the EU and its enlargement(s) among the ones mentioned above and figuring among the plentitude of other

27 The question asked is: “I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it. – Tend to trust; tend to trust not”.

28 The question asked is: “In general, does the EU conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image? (one answer only) – Very positive; Fairly positive; Neutral; Fairly negative; Very negative”.

29 The question asked is: “What does the EU mean to you personally? (Multiple answers possible): Peace; Economic prosperity; Democracy; Social protection; Freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the EU; Cultural diversity; Stronger say in the world; Euro; Unemployment; Bureaucracy; Waste of money; Loss of our cultural identity; More crime; Not enough control at external borders”.

30 Again we would ask the reader to check Hartevelde et al. (2013) for an alternative proof of the same finding. Particularly important is the conclusion: “The notion that citizens care passionately about *who* governs them is secondary to the *way in which* they are governed” (Hartevelde et al. 2013: 20, italics original).

determinant factors. The domestic fortune has proven to be the strongest determinant among all (available). That is to say: *it is really crucial* without being the only one that matters.

The most influential factor is *in the scope of action of political actors* – at the domestic and European level. The politicians should keep their course of action in line with people’s interests: sustainable development of the society. Besides, in this particular case the costs of stable public support for the EU’s enlargement are, in a sense, next to nothing since it ‘naturally’ derives from successful domestic politics and *is not a separate political task*.³¹

Remember that these are our findings in the study of a seven-year trend between 2006 and 2013. This is not just a ‘fleeting moment’ observation but an enduring trend.

The rest of the paper may be regarded as a prolonged caveat to this major finding: *the room for practical political responsibility for the fortunes of the EU’s enlargement(s) is really huge but not unlimited*. Many country-specific determinants define the scope of possible interventions on the attitudes towards the enlargement. This is exactly where our main study begins.

We have ended up with the following key scheme of the framework of our analysis. The attitudes towards the EU enlargement(s) depend on factors which could be allocated at four conditionally delimited levels:

- *Perceptions of the membership in the EU* (the potential benefits and disadvantages in all possible aspects: geopolitical, economic, cultural, mundane, etc.) and the corresponding possibility to alter the attitudes by shifting/prioritizing the meaning of this membership.
- Political factors influencing *the attitudes towards the enlargement, which are not a direct product/manifestation of EU membership (namely, rights and policies), but are in the scope of possible action of the politicians*.
- Values, which are only indirectly affected by politicians on national and European level, but *have a substantial impact on the attitudes towards the EU and its enlargement*.
- *Structural stratifying determinants far beyond the scope of direct political influence* (if the attitudes towards the enlargement depend strongly on the sex or age structure of the Europeans, for instance, these factors could hardly be a subject of direct political interference).

These four types of factors are not only substantively different, they are, first of all, important *as fields for (im-)possible political intervention*. For that very reason – *the delimitation of the perimeter of the possible political action in favor of the enlargement* – identifying the set of factors with high impact on the attitudes, as well as the hierarchy among these, is an extremely important research task. In sum, the interest in

³¹ The key precondition of this statement (that the EU has to be beneficial to citizens’ interests) should not be taken neither as self-evident nor as granted.

researching the factors of determination (which we demonstrate as methodologically possible) is aimed at *identifying the opportunity for an alteration of the public opinion towards EU enlargement*. This is a very delicate question in the light of the clearly defined trend of decline in the support/trust for the EU in the majority of member states, the new member states of 2004 and 2007 included (Beckmann et al. 2013) and the corresponding increase of unpopularity of the enlargement in the last few years.³²

3.2 Preliminary Work and Empirically Imposed Limits of the Analysis

Initially, we thought that our study could benefit from the additional analysis of the value factors influencing the attitudes towards EU enlargement, having open access to the data base of the fourth wave of the European Values Study (EVS) with its sample of 66,000 respondents from 44 European countries (both EU-candidate states and would-be candidate states like Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and the like) and more than 700 indicators concerning a broad spectrum of value orientations. Finally, we decided to skip the chapter for two basic reasons: Firstly, there were several severe methodological constraints to the analytical procedure the explication of which happened to be indispensable but too lengthy (i.e. limited commensurability of the EVS and the Eurobarometer in terms of timing, wording of the questions in the questionnaire and coherence of the empirical findings, etc.). Secondly, we achieved a somewhat ‘negative result’ of the classification tree analysis of the influence over EU-enlargement attitudes at that point in time (2008), namely, a proof of a very weak influence of values (per se) overwhelmed by practical aspects of everyday life.³³ Yet, it is necessary to mention two empirical results:

- The results we got out of the analysis lead to a prudent conclusion: concerning confidence in the national institutions, the data from the three surveys (two EB surveys and the EVS) are strikingly similar as if being a result of a single study. However, regarding supranational institutions, they are not so. Nevertheless, there exists relative temporal coincidence of the fieldwork of the three.

There are no natural ‘blocks’ of countries – West Balkans; Post-communist; East-Orthodox etc.. The ranking of the states is presented on the following graph (Figure 3) .

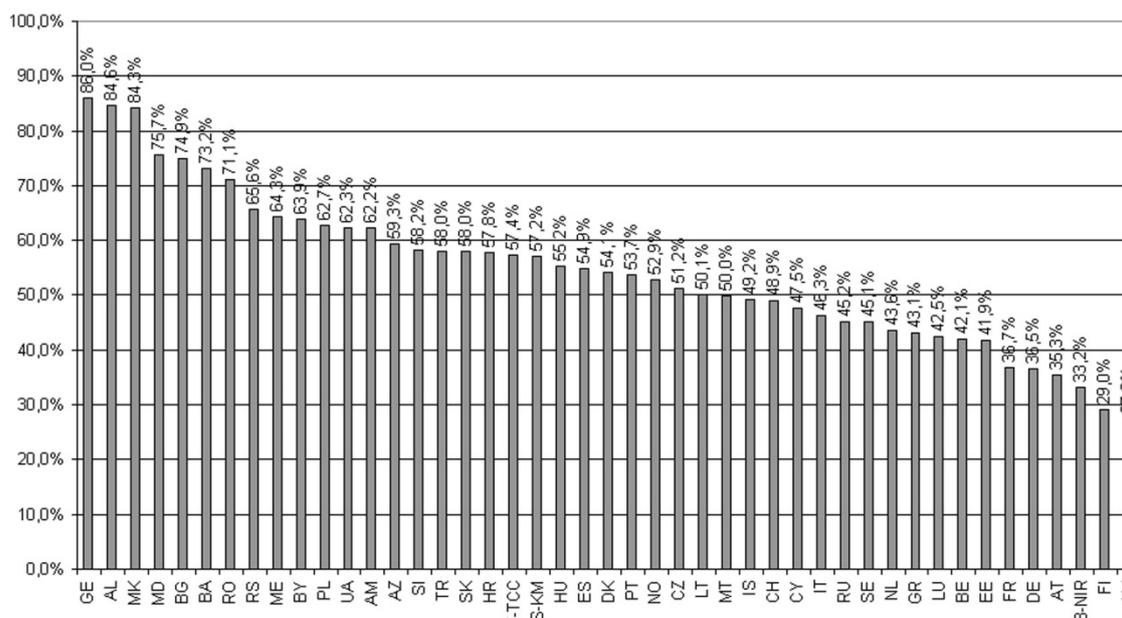
32 Compare with observations in Kortenska/Toshkov (2013). An additional caveat is due – the paper has been written from the point of view of EU-enthusiasts who are in favor of future enlargement(s). We certainly agree with Beckmann “[...] it is of crucial importance to European policy-making that the citizens of Europe have sufficient trust in EU institutions. A lack of trust may have negative repercussions for European integration as a whole. For the (potential) candidate countries trust in the EU is essential given their strong economic links with EU Member States, their EU integration perspective and the important role of the euro in the region. Therefore, their political and economic future cannot be seen separately from EU policies” (Beckmann et al. 2013: 77).

It is only from this vantage point that the entire study has been made possible from. We understand that we are not in any right to claim universality of our viewpoint and value commitment. Yet, most probably our findings will do no harm to our opponents – they are most welcome to make use of them to the best of their interests.

33 These findings are in line with other researchers’ results obtained from different empirical sources (Beaudonnet/Di Mauro 2012).

The graph shows that there are three ‘leaders’ in the rank list: Georgia, Albania and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). The four countries at ‘the bottom’ are Ireland, the UK, Latvia and Finland. Turkey is in the upper half with about 60 percent supporters, while Bulgaria is fifth with 75 percent respectively. There are no self-obvious ‘commonalities’ – neither at the top nor at the bottom.

Figure 3: Percentage of citizens in favor of the enlargement of the EU by country in EVS



Source: Authors.

The second and third level factors are summarized in the following table.

Table 2: Second- and third-level factors by countries

Country	Second-level Factor	Third-level Factors
Georgia	EU fears: loss of power	Kind of job father/mother
Albania	Do you justify: suicide	Kind of job spouse/partner Immigrants living in your country: feels like a stranger
FYROM	Region where interview was conducted	Size of town where interview was conducted Kind of job father/mother
Ireland	Kind of job father/mother	EU fears: loss of jobs Kind of job spouse/partner
UK	Immigrants living in your country: there are too many	Kind of job spouse/partner
Latvia	Kind of job father/mother	Kind of job spouse/partner EU fears: own country pays

Country	Second-level Factor	Third-level Factors
Finland	EU fears: own country pays	Kind of job spouse/partner Immigrants living in your country: there are too many Kind of job father/mother How important in your life: friends and acquaintances
Turkey	Political view: left-right	Do not like as neighbors: people of different race Kind of job spouse/partner
Bulgaria	Kind of job spouse/partner	Kind of job father/mother

Source: Authors.

At this stage, we can only identify the surprisingly constant appearance of two factors: ‘Kind of job spouse/partner’ and ‘Kind of job father/mother’, that is the social standing of the closest relatives. Given the empirically registered fact that all these factors occur separately or simultaneously in such different countries, this problem probably needs further investigation, but this is not essential for the moment. However, there is a glaring deficit in these findings. At the first two levels of determination there are no value factors (in the classical meaning of the term). In other words, the main set of values, irrelatively of their specific character, has not significantly influenced the attitudes towards the enlargement in 2008. Their real, but patchy, influence has been exerted on a much lower level of significance in everyday life.

3.3 Why Should the Classification Tree Analysis Be Used?

In a sense, this is a powerful and inductive method of analysis. The classification tree analysis may be viewed in the larger context of Data Mining studies. The essence of the latter is that researchers assume nothing in advance but the dependent variable and all possible/available factors. Then, the respective software selects the best method and arranges the factors according to their importance. The data mining process chooses both the method and the ranking of factors. In our case, the data could be processed by logistic regression, discrimination analysis, classification trees, and so on, and the entire data base would have checked with each of these methods. In our case, we have preselected the type of classification tree and the software tasked with the job of arranging the factors of influence (Haralampiev 2012).

The classification trees are used for splitting the sample into subsamples according to a given independent variable called factor (Breiman et al. 1984). The factors are ordered according to their strength of importance. The initial sample is split by the most important one. Each of the resulting subsamples is split relative to the second factor and so on. Moreover, the *next order factors can be different for each separate subsample*. This provides exclusive flexibility and allows for subtracting specific subsamples with very specific characteristics. In our case, this is very important because it could turn out that despite this there are

countries with a common percentage of support for the enlargement at the first level of the tree. *Even at the second level, the influencing factors could be different.* This means that behind the ostensible similarity at the first level, significant differences could appear at the second or the third (and so on) levels of the tree, i.e. these country cases are actually different.

The classification tree automatically excludes the factors which do not matter and incorporates only those of statistically significant importance. In our case, this is very practical when tackling a data base of a sample between 16,000 and 66,000 respondents and *more than 700 various indicators*. The selection of influencing factors and their arrangement is done automatically. The researchers are left only with the task of explaining the meaning of the findings.

First, the factors are ordered according to *their empirically registered and computed importance* – but this finding does not prove anything about the ‘universality’ of the respective finding, i.e. ‘the most important factor’ means: only within the empirical test carried out – for the moment and only for the number of factors included in the data base. The sample is then split by the factor which has been, again we emphasize, *empirically established* to be the next most important one within the set of available indicators, etc.

As a result of the former, a ‘single’ factor *appears irregularly* in different nodes at various levels. This is analytically useful when we have hundreds of hypothetically influential factors with *varying influence at any single moment across Europe*. (But, we have to admit, this radically contradicts the basic assumptions of classical social science which insists on the persistence of factors’ influence beyond the variance of particular situations.)

Finally, and most importantly, if in two separate categories of factors, the distributions of the outcome are the same,³⁴ these categories are merged.³⁵

This provides the opportunity for outlining the actual *differences between the patterns* of combining categories of the factor. This is very important for our argument against the classical understanding of influencing factors because, if we find out that several European countries are grouped in one ‘common’ subsample, this would seem as if there are no statistically significant differences between them (regarding the support for the enlargement). Conversely, if it turns out that each county forms a separate subsample, the distribution of the support for the enlargement in each and every country would be significantly different relative to the rest of the countries in terms of the structure of the attitudes expressed. In other words, *behind the formal, numerically expressed, resemblance in attitudes towards the EU and towards its enlargement (on which the standard mapping of European public opinion is based) there are substantively different structures of attitudes of sub-groups of European citizens.*

34 That is, if the differences are within the margins of error.

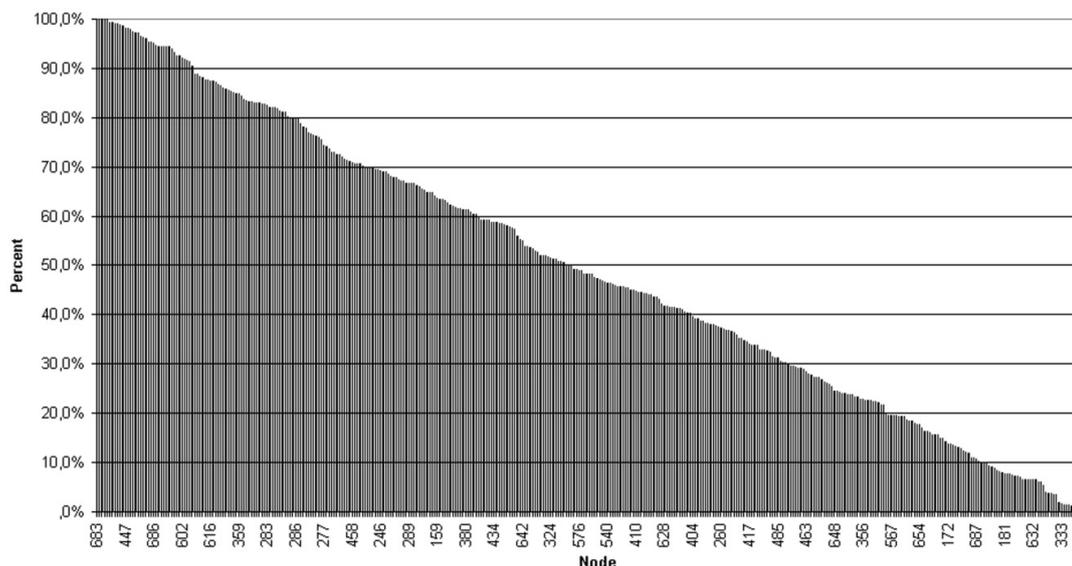
35 Merging of the categories of the factor is made in different ways according to the type of variable. If the factor is a nominal variable then its categories can be merged with each other. If the factor is an ordinal variable then only neighboring categories are merged. If the factor is a scale variable then, firstly, intervals are made (it is desirable for the intervals to include as much as possible and to be as narrow as possible) and after that only neighbor intervals are merged.

The demonstration of the heuristics of the classification tree approach will follow in this order: first, by using the latest available Eurobarometer data from the end of 2012, we will check the ranking of the factors for support for enlargement of the EU, as well as the latent structural strata/subsamples (on a national and supranational level). Then we will compare the resulting classification trees for several cases of some special interest: a) the first three countries with the strongest support for the enlargement in 2012 according to the first three levels of influencing variables; b) the last three countries according to the first three special cases like Poland (for its highly expressed pro-enlargement stance); c) Turkey, a very peculiar candidate state; and, finally, Bulgaria as a typical last round member state.

3.4 Empirical Findings

Let us offer the reminder that we analyzed about 700 variables that could have importance and for which Eurobarometer 78.1 provides data (European Commission 2012b). The classification tree presented in the Annex demonstrates the relationship between the attitude towards the enlargement of the EU and its determining factors based on the Eurobarometer 78.1 data from November 2012. The tree has a depth of 8 levels and comprises 701 nodes³⁶ out of which 389 are terminal ones.³⁷ This means that the analysis outlines 389 specific subsets. Their distribution, relative to the attitudes towards the enlargement of the EU, is significantly different from the other subsets. The shares of the support vary from zero percent to 100 percent and are depicted in the following chart.

Figure 4: Percentage of citizens in favor of the enlargement of EU by nodes of influencing factors in EB 78.1



Source: Authors.

³⁶ In terms of the classification trees, a node is every subsample resulting from the split of the initial sample according to its influencing factors.

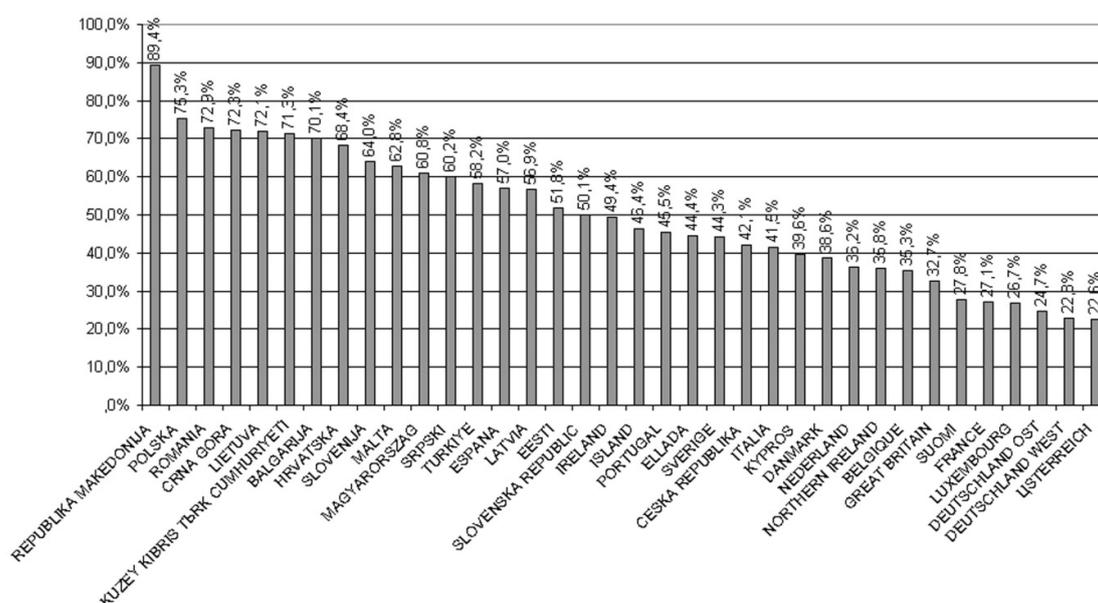
³⁷ The terminal node is a subsample which is not further split into other subsets.

These 389 nodes are a result of the division of the sample according to 153 factors. The factors are listed in Table A1 in the Annex. Obviously, the large number of nodes and the large number of significant factors makes the exhaustive description of the classification tree impossible for the purposes of this paper. Therefore, we limit the analysis only to some of the most important conclusions stemming from the analytical frame.

Firstly, and most importantly, *the leading factor is the country of residence of the respondents*.³⁸ Moreover, each country is a separate node. This means that the distribution of the people relative to their attitude towards the enlargement of the EU is statistically different for every single country.

The following graph represents the ranking of the countries based on the shares of the supporters of enlargement.

Figure 5: Percentage of citizens in favor of the enlargement of EU by countries in EB 78.1



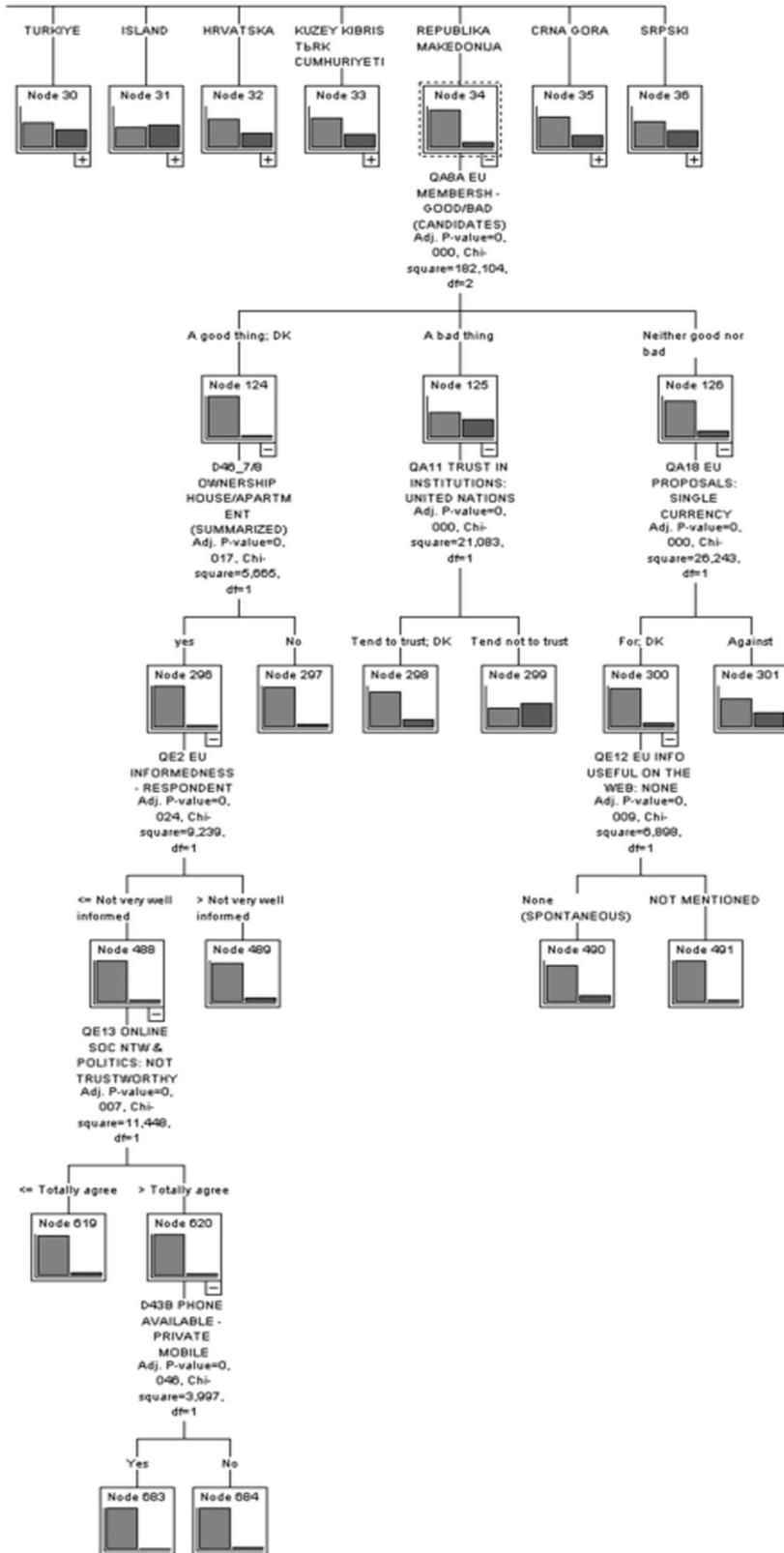
Source: Authors.

The figure shows that FYROM is the indisputable 'leader' followed by Poland³⁹ and Romania. The countries at the bottom line are Germany and Austria.

38 Nothing frightening so far: "While diffuse and specific supports are distinct regardless of national context, it is not the case for other dimensions or more fine-grained distinction, such as: trust in the regime and institutional trust, identity, static and dynamic support, fears regarding integration and the politicization of Europe" (Beaudonnet/Di Mauro 2012: 22). The more factors we use in our analytical model, the sharper the national individuality should be. Yet, this finding makes meaningless any attempt to extrapolate from whatever national specificities empirically have been found out of a national case study as representative to pro/contra EU behavior/value patterns of the Europeans (Cautrès 2012).

39 The presence of Poland and Lithuania in the first row of this 'rank list' is not surprising and has been discussed in the literature multiple times in the light of the search for a sanitary cordon against Russia (Mendelski 2010).

Figure 6: Classification tree fragment for FYRM of data from EB 78.1



Source: Authors.

Although almost 90 percent of the respondents in FYROM support the enlargement of the EU, they are not a homogeneous group at all. The second dividing factor splitting the country's subsample is the question of whether EU membership is the appreciation whether it is good or bad for the home-country. Those who think the membership is good are, of course, almost unanimous supporters of enlargement. *It is curious that about 60 percent of the respondents who find EU membership bad for FYROM are in favor of enlargement.* As a whole, all the nodes in the Macedonian subsample are predominantly in support of the enlargement with just one exception. About 55 percent of the respondents who find that membership is bad for FYROM and do not trust international institutions (like the UN) are against the enlargement of the Union.

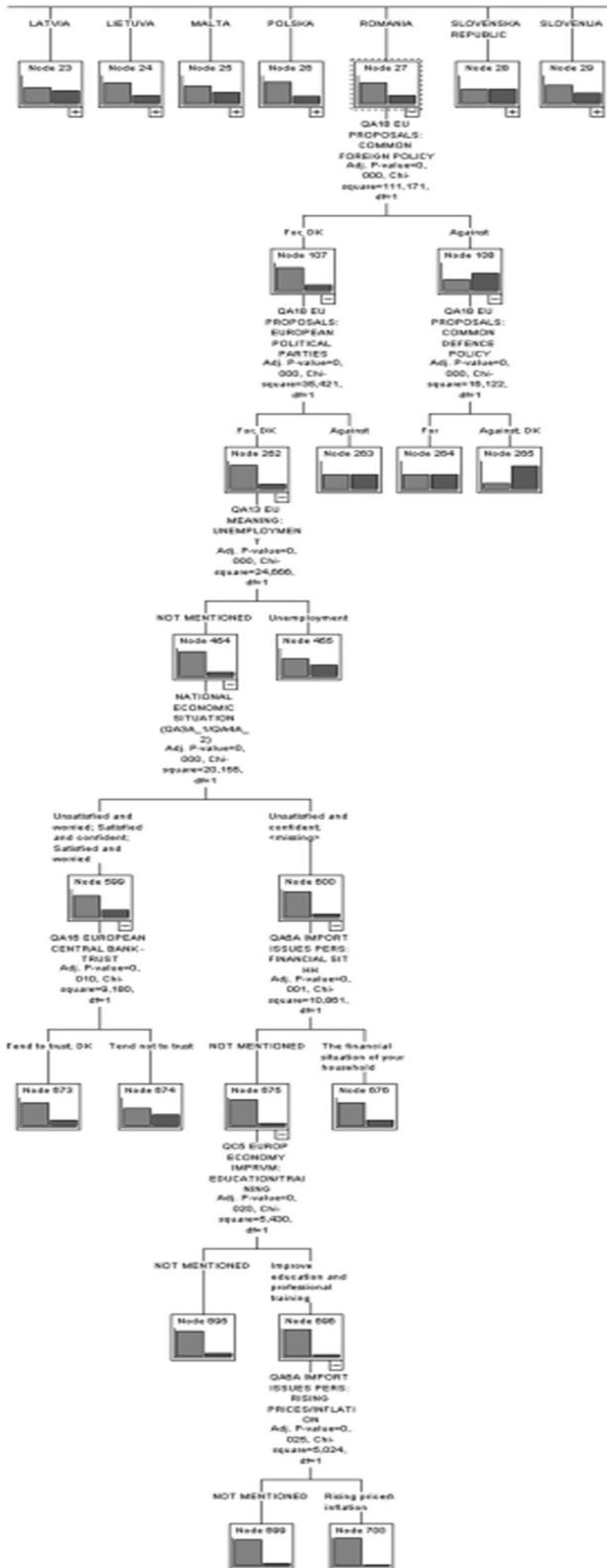
The 'second in the rank list' is Poland – the only member state that *also has almost all its nodes predominantly in favor of the enlargement.* Nevertheless, there is an important exception: in a subsample 60 percent of the Polish respondents, those who are *not satisfied with the level of democracy in the EU and who find the information on civil rights insufficient*, are against the enlargement. There are considerable differences between Poland and the FYROM at the lower levels of the tree.⁴⁰

The Romanian case shows a substantially different picture. The subsample is polarized already on the second factor. Those who are in favor of the common foreign policy of the EU are in favor of the enlargement as well. The opponents of the common foreign policy oppose the enlargement, too. Although there are predominantly nodes with high shares of support for the enlargement, there is one node with a very high share of opponents and, as well as this, two nodes split evenly. About 80 percent of the Romanians who are against both common foreign policy and common defense policy are opponents of the enlargement. The nodes with equal shares of supporters and opponents are: 1) the respondents who support common foreign policy, but oppose the common European political parties; and 2) the respondents who support the common defense policy, but who are against the common foreign policy.

At the 'bottom' of the 'ranking of the support for future enlargement' is Austria. The second factor, next to nationality, in this subsample is the dis/agreement with the statement that the country interests are respected in the EU. The higher the disagreement with this statement, the higher the opposition to the enlargement (about two thirds of those who completely agree with the statement are, explicitly, in favor of the enlargement). As a whole, *the Austrian subset is dominated by nodes predominantly against the enlargement.* However, there are three nodes which are predominantly in favor. The first one was already described. The remaining two are: 1) the concordance with the statement that the country's interests are respected, who feel closer to other EU citizens and who think that the *European Energy Initiative* is a priority; and 2) the concordance with the statement that the country's interests are respected, who feel closer to other EU citizens and who are *well informed about the assessment of their country* in the EU.

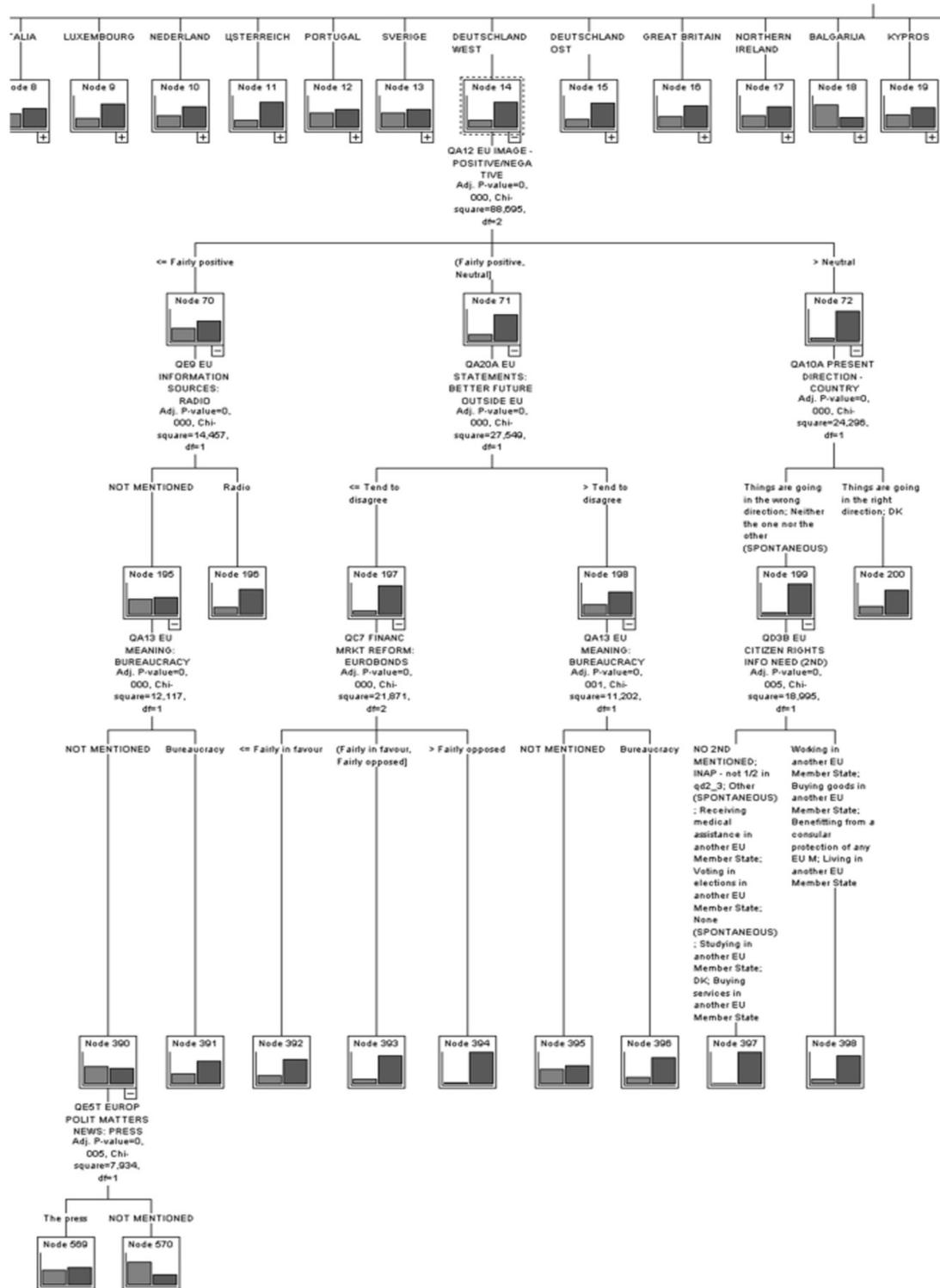
40 For instance, in Poland the second most important factor is the satisfaction with democracy, while in FYROM it is the net effect of membership for the country. The factors are different at the third level, as well, and so on.

Figure 8: Classification tree fragment for Romania of data from EB 78.1



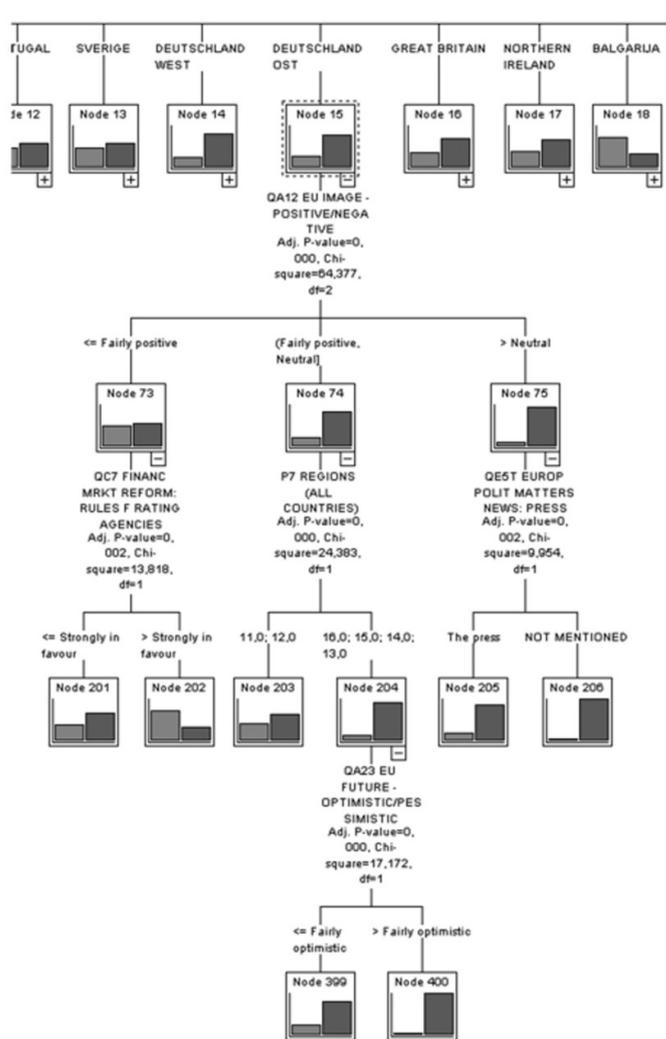
Source: Authors.

Figure 9: Classification tree fragment for West Germany of data from EB 78.1



Source: Authors.

Figure 10: Classification tree fragment for East Germany of data from EB 78.1



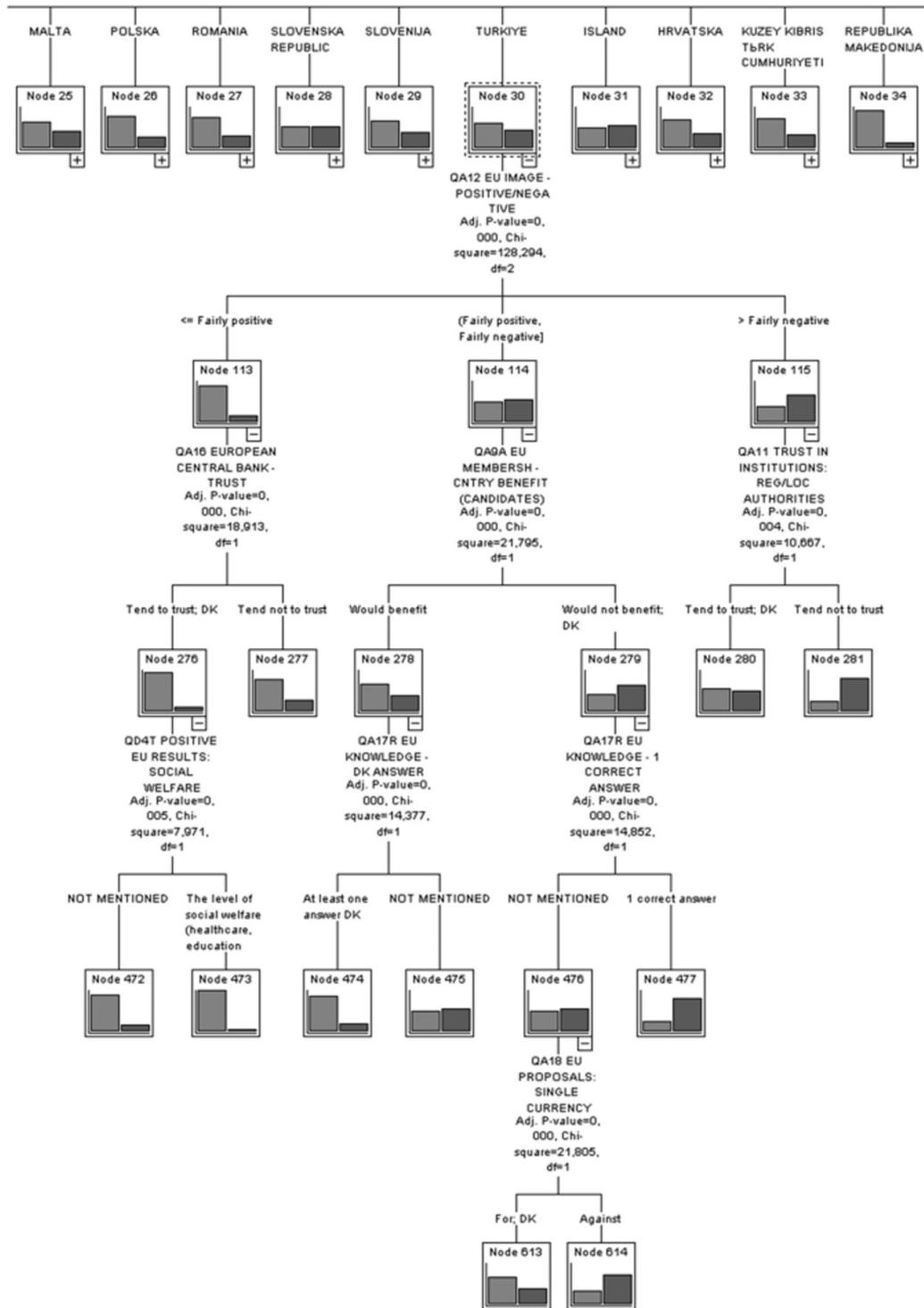
Source: Authors.

Germany follows Austria in the share of expressed disapproval of future enlargement. There are some differences between the former East and West parts of the country. For both, the *second most important factor is the image of the EU*: the more negative about the image, the more negative about the enlargement. The third-level factors, however, differ for the East and the West. In both parts, there is one node which is predominantly in favour of the enlargement, but *the defining factors of these nodes are different*. About 70 percent of the respondents in West Germany, who simultaneously find the EU image positive a) do not use the radio as a source of information; b) do not think that EU means bureaucracy; and c) do not rely on the press for news on European issues, are in favour of the enlargement. In East Germany about 70 percent of the respondents who consider the image of the EU as positive and, surprisingly, *do not strongly support the introduction of "rules for rating agencies"* are in favour of the enlargement.⁴¹ What is more important,

41 This is a rather specific case that needs special explanation, but this would take us too far away from the subject of interest in this study.

there is an asymmetric influence of a single factor within a society, depending on whether it influences the positive or negative attitudes towards the enlargement of the EU.

Figure 11: Classification tree fragment for Turkey of data from EB 78.1



Source: Authors.

What has been said above would mean that one should consider the eastern and the western part of Germany as 'separate countries', but that could not be done here. This is why we limit our attention to several typological cases.

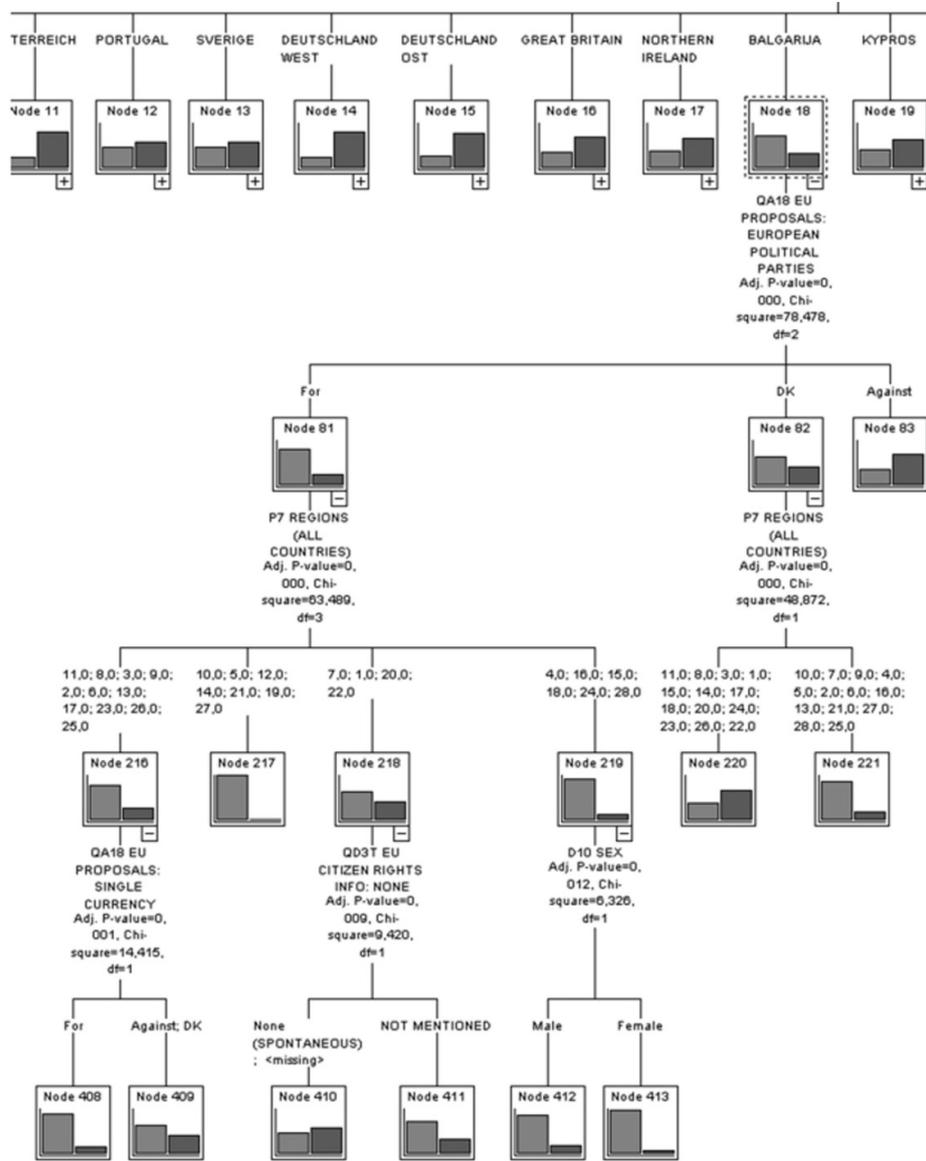
No doubt, Turkey is such a case. In many respects the country is unique (Müftüler-Baç/Stivachtis 2008). Turkey is in the upper half of the ranking with a predominant share of the support for EU enlargement. The average support is about 60 percent. Here, similar to the German case, the second factor is the assessment of the EU image. Similarly, the more negatively the respondents assess the image of the Union, the more negatively they regard the enlargement. The third-level factor is different again, however.

There are ten terminal nodes in the Turkish subsample. Five of them are predominantly in favor of the enlargement, three are predominantly negative, and the rest is relatively equally split between the two categories.

Bulgaria is a typical example of a country from the 'last EU enlargement' and ranks seventh in the list with a relatively high share of supporters for the enlargement (about 70 percent). The second factor is *the attitude towards the European party federations*. Those who support them support the enlargement as well and vice versa. The Bulgarian sample is dominated by nodes with overwhelming shares of support for the enlargement. There are only two nodes that are decisively against it. We have already described the first one. The other one comprises the respondents which are undetermined in their position towards the European parties and live in specific regions of the country.

To summarize, the results of the analysis clearly demonstrate that there are two simultaneously occurring peculiarities. Firstly, the factors, analytically outlined according to the strength of their influence over the attitudes towards the enlargement of the EU are anything but self-evident. Secondly, the outlined conceptual relationships are far from extraordinary or in sharp contradiction to common sense logic. This does not mean, however, that we could rely on the palpability of the common sense when discussing the formation of the attitudes towards the enlargement of the EU. The overview of the typological cases in the classification trees makes evident the influence of social practices, specific political principles and common values over the attitudes of the respondents.

Figure 12: Classification tree fragment for Bulgaria of data from EB 78.1



Source: Authors.

4. Final Methodological Qualifications

4.1 Are the Structural Specifics of the Factor Influences which Determine the Variance in the Support of the EU Enlargement and for the Support towards the EU Commensurable?

The reader can probably forebode the idea of our main finding – the two ‘subjective realities’, although strongly correlated, are different social realities indeed. When applying the classification tree method to the data of EB 78.1 from 2012 this time using ‘trust in the EU’ as the dependent variable, *the result is structurally and meaningfully different*.

Formally the new tree has 11 levels and 519 nodes out of which 287 are terminal, i.e. the analysis defines 287 specific subsets. The distribution of the confidence in the EU in each of these subsets is significantly different from the others. *The finite nodes are produced by 108 determining factors*.

The meaningful differences in the arrangement of the determining factors are the following:

Table 3: Trust in the EU: first-, second- and third-level factors in EB 78.1

First-level Factor	Second-level Factors	Third-level Factors
Trust in the European Commission ⁴²	Trust in the UN	Image of the EU
	Image of the EU ⁴³	Trust in the UN
		Economic Situation in Europe

Dependent variable: Trust in institutions: European Union

Source: Authors.

Recalling that the ‘three leading factors’, that is, the strongest factors, which appear at the first three levels on the same data (EB 78.1) for the previous tree – positive attitude towards future enlargement – are:

42 On the importance of trust in the European Commission for attitude formation, cf. Beaudonnet/Di Mauro (2012).

43 On the importance of the EU’s image for attitude formation, cf., again, Beaudonnet/Di Mauro (2012).

Table 4: Attitudes towards EU enlargement: first-, second- and third-level factors in EB78.1

First-level Factor	Second-level Factors	Third-level Factors	
Country of Citizenship	Age, Education	EU info useful on the web: info sites	
		Council of the EU — trust	
	Trust in institutions: political parties	EU meaning: cultural diversity	
		EU citizen rights info need (2nd)	
	EU image – positive/negative		Regions (all countries)
			Present direction – country
			Trust in institutions: European Union
			Trust in institutions: regional/local authorities
			European Central Bank – trust
			Political discussion – European matters
			EU statements: better future outside EU
			EU membership – country benefit (candidates)
			Crisis effects – most capable actor
			European economy improvement: reduce public deficits
			Financial market reform: rules for rating agencies
			EU citizen rights info: working abroad
			EU benefits: less expensive flights
			European political matters news: press
			EU information sources: internet
	EU information sources: radio		
	EU proposals: common defense policy		Trust in institutions: European Union
			European central bank – trust
	EU proposals: common foreign policy		EU image – positive/negative
			EU concept: protective
			EU proposals: common defense policy
			EU proposals: European political parties
			EU proposals: single currency
			EU statements: better future outside EU
			EU statements: federation of nation-states
			EU statements: globalization enables EU citizens
	EU statements: safer because of membership		

EU proposals: European political parties	Regions (all countries)
EU proposals: single currency	Trust in institutions: press
	EU image – positive/negative
	EU concept: protective
	EU proposals: common defense policy
	EU proposals: common foreign policy
	Democracy satisfaction – European Union
	EU statements: country interest respected
	EU statements: globalization/ EU protects citizens
	EU statements: globalization is opportunity
	EU future – optimistic/pessimistic
	EU membership – good/bad (candidates)
	EU membership – country benefit (candidates)
	Crisis: EU will be stronger in the long run
Media presentation EU: radio	
Democracy satisfaction – European Union	EU proposals: European political parties
	EU citizen rights info: none
EU statements: better future outside EU	Respondent occupation scale
	EU meaning: external frontier control
	Council of the EU – trust
EU statements: country interest respected	EU meaning: external frontier control
	Crisis: feeling closer to other EU citizens
EU statements: federation of nation-states	Present direction – European Union
	Positive EU results: free movement
EU future – optimistic/pessimistic	Age recoded (6 cat)
	Internet use frequency: somewhere else
	Regions (all countries)
	EU meaning: cultural diversity
	EU meaning: loss of cultural identity
	EU meaning: more crime
	European Central Bank – trust
	EU proposals: single currency
	Democracy satisfaction – country
	EU statements: my voice counts in country
	EU 2020 goals: 25% less Europeans in poverty

EU membership – good/bad (candidates)	Ownership house/apartment (summarized)
	Trust in institutions: European Union
	Trust in institutions: press
	Trust in institutions: United Nations
	European parliament – trust
	EU proposals: single currency

Dependent variable: EU proposals: future enlargement

Source: Authors.

As we can see, the leading factors are completely different to the ones in the tree of the support for the enlargement of the Union. The rate of determination of the attitudes towards the Commission over the attitudes towards the EU is practically incomparable to anything else!

No analytical equivalent could be found within the structure of the other classification tree. This fact trumps the fundamental assumption of classical science about the presumed sustainability of influencing factors (be they individuals, types, levels/dimensions or ‘variables families’, (see Arnold et al. 2012: 29; Beaudonnet/Di Mauro 2012; Toshkov 2011). In other words, we provide some *empirical proofs for the non-classical epistemology* (Mamardashvili 2010).⁴⁴

Another politically and analytically interesting finding is the correlation between the trust in the EU and the trust in the UN (if we keep in mind the fact that the attitudes towards the EU mainly do not depend on itself). Of course, there are findings close to the common sense knowledge: the more positive the assessment of the EU image, the higher the trust in the Union (obviously, such elementary findings lack the sophistication of more complex analysis provided by researchers such as Arnold et al. (2012) and Beaudonnet/Di Mauro (2012)). If we take just the first three levels of the tree, the highest percentage of confidence in the EU (96.6 percent) is found among the respondents who trust the European Commission and the UN, and find the image of the EU very positive. The lowest percentage of trust in the EU (0.5 percent) is found among the respondents, who do not trust the Commission, find the EU image very negative and consider the economic situation in Europe as unsatisfying and worrying.

Everything said so far is indicative of the usefulness of the analytical method chosen because of its capability to make explicit the true complexity of mass attitudes at a single moment in time.

⁴⁴ For a comprehensive explanation of the distinction between classical and non-classical epistemology see Mamardashvili’s “Classical and Non-classical Ideals of Rationality” (Mamardashvili 2010) and for interpretations of his ideas in English see Gasparyan (2011) and King (1994, 2001), the sources in Russian and Bulgarian are countless.

4.2 Does ‘Time’ Matter?

Time looks like a universal factor for the dynamics of the different indicators, but this happens to be an interpretative illusion. We already mentioned that ‘time’ is just a conventional ‘common denominator’ for multiple sets/constellations of facts. All we know about them is that they influence the outcome variable, but we do not know which (and what) they are and how are they interrelated. Given that premise, we logically expect that ‘time’ *has diversified impact over every single factor*, which influences the mass attitudes towards the enlargement(s) of the EU on its own. This assumption requires an empirical verification.

For that purpose, we take the 2006-2012 Eurobarometer data and study the dynamics of the answers to the sustainably used questions. We use data on the 28 independent variables to register the individual dynamics in relation to time. This is done through simple linear regression models using each factor as an outcome, with time being a factor of influence. The result is summarized in the table below.

Table 5: Temporal dynamics of 28 key indicators

Variable	Influence of time
EU MEANING: WASTE OF MONEY	Increase
TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS: JUSTICE	No change
EU MEANING: EXTERNAL FRONTIER CONTROL	No change
EU MEANING: UNEMPLOYMENT	No change
EU MEANING: BUREAUCRACY	No change
EU MEANING: LOSS OF CULTURAL IDENTITY	No change
EU MEANING: OTHER	No change
EU MEANING: EURO	No change
EU MEANING: Don’t Know	No change
EU MEMBERSHIP – COUNTRY BENEFIT (% of “Benefited”)	Decrease
PRESENT DIRECTION – COUNTRY (% of “Right direction”)	Decrease
PRESENT DIRECTION – EUROPEAN UNION (% of “Right direction”)	Decrease
EU IMAGE – POSITIVE	Decrease
EU MEANING: PEACE	Decrease
EU MEANING: ECONOMIC PROSPERITY	Decrease
EU MEANING: DEMOCRACY	Decrease
EU MEANING: SOCIAL PROTECTION	Decrease
EU MEANING: TRAVEL/STUDY/WORK ABROAD	Decrease
EU MEANING: CULTURAL DIVERSITY	Decrease
EU MEANING: STRONGER IN THE WORLD	Decrease
TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS: EUROPEAN UNION	Decrease
TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS: UNITED NATIONS	Decrease

Variable	Influence of time
TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS: POLITICAL PARTIES	Decrease
TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS: NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	Decrease
TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS: NATIONAL PARLIAMENT	Decrease
EU MEMBERSHIP – GOOD	Decrease
EU MEANING: MORE CRIME	Decrease
EU PROPOSALS: FUTURE ENLARGEMENT	Decrease

Source: Authors.

The reasons for the decrease in the support for the EU and its enlargement are so obvious that any comments would be unnecessary.⁴⁵ Everyday life concerns are the main predictor of the attitudes towards the EU's enlargement(s). It is not abstract and universal 'time' – it is real life that matters.

5. Conclusion

Let us briefly summarize what we have done so far. First, we have demonstrated that in contrast to the naive assertions of the common sense argument, the public opinion towards the EU and its enlargement is not a subject of persisting nature throughout Europe (and, respectively, what would vary is its numeric expression/proportions only). On the contrary, in the course of time and in accord with the variance of situations, the attitudes of the Europeans towards the EU and the enlargement loose (and gain) the properties of a public opinion, (i.e. they change qualitatively in the course of events).

Secondly, we have proved that, what is claimed to be a public opinion, registered by the Eurobarometer and similar surveys *as* public opinion, and, because of this largely interpreted as *the* public opinion towards the EU and its enlargement, is, to a great extent, *not a derivative of the characteristics of the EU itself. This fact should not be mixed with* "the multidimensionality of support for Europe: to what extent do European citizens' opinions reflect different kinds of support for the performance of the EU (i.e. specific support) and for the European political system itself (i.e. diffuse support)" (Beaudonnet/Di Mauro 2012: 4). Pro/contra EU enlargement attitudes are largely a *construct* of diverse and multifaceted relationships of countless components. It is mainly *a projection* of an extremely complex set of other attitudes and other premises *upon the EU's future*, which all together, as a system, establish the structure of what seems to be an 'attitude towards the EU and its enlargement'.

These arguments directed the analysis towards purely methodological and technological issues of surveying the attitudes towards the EU and its enlargements, because only *the methodical control of the studies*

45 This is simply the flipside of the same coin, already empirically tested and proved – "on the whole, the primary individual-level predictors of trust in these institutions were the utilities people perceive to gain from membership in the EU, their ideological stance, their general satisfaction with life, and political satisfaction with the way democracy functions" (Arnold et al. 2012: 29).

(of the attitudes of the European citizens) is the premise for trust in their results (in terms of meaningful proportions among different attitudes and their dynamics). As a result, the question of whether the 'attitudes towards the EU and towards its enlargement(s)' exist at all became especially substantial. We have demonstrated that attitudes towards the EU and its enlargements are highly inter-correlated, but depend on varying structures of 'other factors', as well.

This necessarily led to the following cognitive tasks. First, to identify exactly the structure of determining factors, which construe the attitudes towards the enlargement of the EU. This task included: a) clarification of the types of real factors among the hundreds of indicators provided by the Eurobarometer; and b) on the basis of the empirical finding that the national dissimilarities are most essential. It became very important to study the typologically significant cases of the strongest and weakest support for the enlargement, as well as in the cases of Turkey (a special case of a candidate country) and Bulgaria (as a typological case of the last enlargement). *Poland appeared as an interesting example of one of the very few instances where a real positive public opinion towards the enlargement of the EU exists, and which is altered by multiple factors only in quantitative values, but not in qualitative terms of the declared pro-enlargement attitudes.*

The analysis ends up with a comparison between the classification trees of the factors determining the attitudes towards the EU and towards its enlargement based on the last available Eurobarometer data from 2012. The analysis proves that the construction of the two types of public attitudes is a result of interaction between complex sets of very diverse factors both substantively and configurationally. The general trends are clear:

1. Citizens' attitudes are not always formulated as real opinion.
2. The attitudes are clearly polarized in most societies; moreover, the negative attitudes prevail nowadays.⁴⁶
3. The structural causes for these polarizations are, most significantly, nationally specific and go deep down to 13 levels of factor influences.
4. The strongest among all these factors are based on most pragmatic aspects of social life, thus depending on the membership status of the respective country and national policy-making. These factors exert influence in different proportions – in line with the diversity of multiple national and regional contexts. The polarization is a result of *varying sets of factors*, which on top of that vary in every single case in strength and significance. We certainly would agree with Beaudonnet and Di Mauro that 'European citizens' perceptions (about the EU as both a system and project) represent a kaleidoscopic set of attitudes" (Beaudonnet/Di Mauro 2012: 22).

⁴⁶ At present, if both the EuroStat and Eurobarometer data is correct, roughly 224,660,000 citizens out of 429,313,000 (that is 52.33 percent of those aged 15 and above) in EU28 countries are against the future enlargement of the Union and about ten percent have no opinion.

This does not depreciate the general finding that there is a clear and steady trend of decrease in the attractiveness of the EU to European citizens (with the substantial exception of the citizens of the candidate states who expect to be a part of the next enlargement, but which are also very heterogeneous in their attitudes towards the enlargement). This raises the acute question of the political responsibility for the national and European policies, since, by and large, they modify the support for the enlargement of the EU, beyond value and structural determinants of the attitudes.

On the basis of these analytical results, we considered the heuristics of the classification trees methodology as demonstrated in practice. This methodological experiment could be expanded with current trends in the attitudes towards the enlargement in future years (if there is an interest in the nonobvious knowledge that could become available). If the direct political inference of this research finding is not self-evident, let us state it directly: these research results lead to a direct and hardly contestable imperative for contextualization of the policies for the enlargement of the EU, that is the individual and not the block approach of accession is more likely to be productive (Ágh 2008). We agree with the famous Hungarian social scientist on the key issue that to redefine our European vision is an urgent political task:

“[...] the ‘definition’ of the EU has been even more a social construction that has changed radically after each wave of enlargement. After the Eastern enlargement from the EU15 to the EU27, however, this definition has changed beyond recognition. At the earlier enlargements the subsequent redefinitions of the EU were present-oriented as conceptual frameworks for the existing Union. With the Eastern enlargement the EU seems to have reached its internal and external limits for a long time, neither widening nor deepening cannot continue as before. Nowadays the EU needs a new, future oriented definition. The EU is not ‘given’, it has to be ‘reinvented’ or redefined, and this new definition as a social construct depends on our decision or on our vision where to go” (Ágh 2008: 11-12).

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Annex

Table A1: Factors determining the attitudes towards the enlargement of the EU listed by importance

ORIGINAL TNS COUNTRY CODE
QA23 EU FUTURE - OPTIMISTIC/PESSIMISTIC
P7 REGIONS (ALL COUNTRIES)
QD2 EU CITIZENSHIP: FEEL TO BE EU CITIZEN
QC7 FINANCE MRKT REFORM: RULES F RATING AGENCIES
QD4A MOST POSITIVE RESULT OF THE EU (1ST)
QC4 CRISIS: FEELING CLOSER TO OTHER EU CITIZENS
QA13 EU MEANING: LOSS OF CULT IDENTITY
QA14 EU CONCEPT: EFFICIENT
QB1 EU 2020: HELP THE POOR AND SOCIALLY EXCLUDED
QA13 EU MEANING: MORE CRIME
QA20A EU STATEMENTS: BETTER FUTURE OUTSIDE EU
QA16 COUNCIL OF THE EU – TRUST
QA13 EU MEANING: EXT FRONTIER CONTROL
D62 INTERNET USE FREQ: AT PLACE OF WORK
QE13 ONLINE SOC NTW & POLITICS: HAVE YOUR SAY
C14 RESPONDENT OCCUPATION SCALE
QD4T POSITIVE EU RESULTS: PEACE AMONG MEMBERS
QA13 EU MEANING: DEMOCRACY
QD3T EU CITIZEN RIGHTS INFO: BUYING SERVICES
QA18 EU PROPOSALS: SINGLE CURRENCY
QA14 EU CONCEPT: PROTECTIVE
QE9 EU INFORMATION SOURCES: INTERNET
QA5A IMPORT ISSUES CTRY: ECONOMIC SITUATION
QD8 EU CITIZENS INITIATIVE: EMPLOYMENT
QC4 CRISIS: EU WILL BE STRONGER IN THE LONG RUN
QA18 EU PROPOSALS: COMMON FOREIGN POLICY
QA21 BUILDING EUROPE - CURRENT OBJECTIVE
D60 DIFFICULTIES PAYING BILLS - LAST YEAR
QA20A EU STATEMENTS: CNTRY INTEREST RESPECTED
QA17R EU KNOWLEDGE - 3 CORRECT ANSWERS
QE9 EU INFORMATION SOURCES: TELEVISION
QA18 EU PROPOSALS: EUROPEAN POLITICAL PARTIES
D10 SEX
QA13 EU MEANING: EURO
QA18 EU PROPOSALS: COMMON DEFENCE POLICY
QA16 EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK – TRUST

QD6 EU BENEFITS: LESS BORDER CONTROLS
QE3R MEDIA USE - ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKS
QA11 TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS: EUROPEAN UNION
QD5 INTERNET CONTACT: SOCIALIZED WITH PEOPLE
QA7 IMPORT ISSUES EU: ECONOMIC SITUATION
QD4T POSITIVE EU RESULTS: FREE MOVEMENT
QA11 TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS: POLITICAL PARTIES
QA13 EU MEANING: CULTURAL DIVERSITY
QA7 IMPORT ISSUES EU: IMMIGRATION
QB1 EU 2020: DEVELOP E-ECONOMY BY FAST INTERNET
QA13 EU MEANING: WASTE OF MONEY
QA17R EU KNOWLEDGE - WRONG ANSWER
QD3B EU CITIZEN RIGHTS INFO NEED (2ND)
QA20A EU STATEMENTS: GLOBALISTN IS OPPORTUNITY
QA3A SITUATION: NATIONAL ECONOMY
QD4T POSITIVE EU RESULTS: POLITICAL INFLUENCE
D11 AGE RECODED (4 CAT)
QA20A EU STATEMENTS: MY VOICE COUNTS IN EU
QE9 EU INFORMATION SOURCES: DAILY NEWSPAPER
QD3T EU CITIZEN RIGHTS INFO: MEDICAL ASSISTANCE
QA20A EU STATEMENTS: GLOBALISTN EU PROTECTS CITIZ
QA4A EXPECTATIONS: FINANCIAL SITUATION
QA13 EU MEANING: TRAV/STUDY/WORK ABROAD
QA7 IMPORT ISSUES EU: UNEMPLOYMENT
QA16 EUROPEAN COMMISSION – TRUST
D8 AGE EDUCATION
QE12 EU INFO USEFUL ON THE WEB: INFO SITES
QD3T EU CITIZEN RIGHTS INFO: BUYING GOODS
QC1 CRISIS JOB MARKET IMPACT – PHASE APPRAISAL
QD8 EU CITIZENS INITIATIVE: FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS
D62 INTERNET USE FREQ: SOMEWHERE ELSE
QE6 NAT POLIT MATTERS WEB NEWS: SOCIAL NETWORKS
QD8 EU CITIZENS INITIATIVE: ENERGY
QE1 EU INFORMEDNESS - CNTRY ASSESSMENT
QC3A CRISIS EFFECTS - MOST CAPABLE ACTOR
D40ABC HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION
QA7 IMPORT ISSUES EU: MEMBER FINANCES
QA11 TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS: PRESS
QA22 BUILDING EUROPE - PREFERRED OBJECTIVE
D46 OWNERSHIP DURABLES: INTERNET ACCESS

QA2 POLITICAL DISCUSSION - EUROPEAN MATTERS
QA19B DEMOCRACY SATISFACTION - EUROPEAN UNION
QC5 EUROP ECONOMY IMPRVM: COMPANY CREDIT ACCESS
QB2 EU 2020 GOALS: 25% LESS EUROPEANS IN POVERTY
QE5T EUROP POLIT MATTERS NEWS: INTERNET
QA13 EU MEANING: STRONGER IN THE WORLD
D11 AGE RECODED (6 CAT)
QB2 EU 2020 GOALS: SCHOOL DROPOUT MAXIMUM 10%
D46 OWNERSHIP DURABLES: APP/HOUSE PAYING
QE2 EU INFORMEDNESS – RESPONDENT
QA20A EU STATEMENTS: MY VOICE COUNTS IN COUNTRY
QA12 EU IMAGE - POSITIVE/NEGATIVE
QE9 EU INFORMATION SOURCES: RADIO
QA13 EU MEANING: BUREAUCRACY
QE5T EUROP POLIT MATTERS NEWS: PRESS
QC7 FINANC MRKT REFORM: EUROBONDS
QA10A PRESENT DIRECTION – COUNTRY
QA20A EU STATEMENTS: SAFER BECAUSE OF MEMBERSHIP
QA20A EU STATEMENTS: FEDERATION OF NATION-STATES
QE3 MEDIA USE - ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKS
D15A OCCUPATION RESPONDENT
QE12 EU INFO USEFUL ON THE WEB: NONE
QD3T EU CITIZEN RIGHTS INFO: NONE
QA20A EU STATEMENTS: GLOBALISTN EU ENABLES CITIZ
QA19A DEMOCRACY SATISFACTION - COUNTRY
QC5 EUROP ECONOMY IMPRVM: COMPANY CREATION
D25 TYPE OF COMMUNITY
D43A PHONE AVAILABLE - FIXED IN HH
D46 OWNERSHIP DURABLES: CAR
QD6 EU BENEFITS: LESS EXPENSIVE FLIGHTS
QD3T EU CITIZEN RIGHTS INFO: STUDYING ABROAD
QE12 EU INFO USEFUL ON THE WEB: OFFICIAL SITES
QA11 TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS: INTERNET
QE13 ONLINE SOC NWTW & POLITICS: GET INTERESTED
QD4T POSITIVE EU RESULTS: STUDENT EXCHANGE
QD3T EU CITIZEN RIGHTS INFO: DK
QA10A PRESENT DIRECTION – EUROPEAN UNION
QE5T EUROP POLIT MATTERS NEWS: RADIO
D7 MARITAL STATUS & PARENTAL RELATIONS
D46_7/8 OWNERSHIP HOUSE/APARTMENT (SUMMARIZED)

QC4 CRISIS: REDUCE PUBLIC DEBT NOT PRIORITY NOW
D7 MARITAL STATUS (RECODED)
QA2 POLITICAL DISCUSSION - LOCAL MATTERS
QD3T EU CITIZEN RIGHTS INFO: WORKING ABROAD
D15A OCCUPATION RESPONDENT (REC)
QA13 EU MEANING: UNEMPLOYMENT
NATIONAL ECONOMIC SITUATION (QA3A_1/QA4A_2)
QA6A IMPORT ISSUES PERS: FINANCIAL SIT HH
QC5 EUROP ECONOMY IMPRVM: EDUCATION/TRAINING
QA6A IMPORT ISSUES PERS: RISING PRICES/INFLATION
QC7 FINANC MRKT REFORM: TAX ON TRANSACTIONS
QD8 EU CITIZENS INITIATIVE: CONSUMER PROTECTION
QA16 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT – TRUST
D46 OWNERSHIP DURABLES: APP/HOUSE PAID
QC5 EUROP ECONOMY IMPRVM: REG FINANCIAL MARKETS
QB2 EU 2020 GOALS: MIN 40% OF YOUNG HAVE DIPLOMA
QD2 EU CITIZENSHIP: KNOW EU CITIZEN RIGHTS
QD4T POSITIVE EU RESULTS: SOCIAL WELFARE
QA9A EU MEMBERSH - CNTRY BENEFIT (CANDIDATES)
QA17R EU KNOWLEDGE - DK ANSWER
QA17R EU KNOWLEDGE - 1 CORRECT ANSWER
QA11 TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS: REG/LOC AUTHORITIES
QA8A EU MEMBERSH - GOOD/BAD (CANDIDATES)
QA6A IMPORT ISSUES PERS: PENSIONS
QA6A IMPORT ISSUES PERS: UNEMPLOYMENT
QA13 EU MEANING: PEACE
QE13 ONLINE SOC NTW & POLITICS: NOT TRUSTWORTHY
D43B PHONE AVAILABLE - PRIVATE MOBILE
QA11 TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS: UNITED NATIONS
D46 OWNERSHIP DURABLES: DVD PLAYER
QA13 EU MEANING: ECONOMIC PROSPERITY
EUROPEAN ECONOMIC SITUATION (QA3A_2/QA4A_6)
QE11 MEDIA PRESENTATION EU: RADIO



“Maximizing the integration capacity of the European Union: Lessons of and prospects for enlargement and beyond”

The ‘big bang enlargement’ of the European Union (EU) has nurtured vivid debates among both academics and practitioners about the consequences of ‘an ever larger Union’ for the EU’s integration capacity. The research project MAXCAP will start with a critical analysis of the effects of the 2004-2007 enlargement on stability, democracy and prosperity of candidate countries, on the one hand, and the EU’s institutions, on the other. We will then investigate how the EU can maximize its integration capacity for current and future enlargements. Featuring a nine-partner consortium of academic, policy, dissemination and management excellence, MAXCAP will create new and strengthen existing links within and between the academic and the policy world on matters relating to the current and future enlargement of the EU.