Staying together in times of crisis?

The Russian invasion of Ukraine and Europeans' attitudes towards the EU

Eric Johansson
Bachelor level thesis
January 5th, 2023

Abstract

Are the European people more positive towards the European Union after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022? In light of an increasingly politicized EU, this thesis investigates if the citizens of the EU are more or less positive to the idea of the European Union now afterwards. The study contributes towards research into external shocks on public opinions, and applies its methodology and thinking on a present – and ongoing – case. Using Benchmarking theory and the theory of rally-round-the-flag effects, this thesis investigates how and if euroscepticism levels among EU27 citizens has changed since the invasion. The study, using a descriptive statistics approach, makes use of Eurobarometer survey data from before and after the Russian invasion and investigates both support of leaving the EU and support of a common defense and security policy. The results show a small decrease in euroscepticism overall, especially for general support of EU membership, thus lending some support to the idea of the invasion having driven the European people closer to the EU. The effects, however, are limited and differ greatly among countries and regions, and the same results are not found on the level of policy-specific support for defense and security.

Key words: external shocks, EU, public opinions, euroscepticism, Russo-Ukrainan War
Words: 9951

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1   Introduction and background

The purpose of this section is to introduce the thesis topic, place it within its historic and scientific context as well as state and delimit the scope and research question.

1.1   Introduction

After several years of conflict and a period of increased intensity in hostilities and build up on the Ukrainan border, Russia took the next step and launched a full-scale invasion of the country in the winter of 2022. Ukraine now finds itself waging a war to defend its borders and territory. As Ukraine are not members of the European Union as of yet, the collective security guarantees of the Lisbon Treaty – requiring that member states "aid and assist it by all the means in their power" (EUR-lex n.d.) – did not come into play. Ukraine has since been given official candidacy status as part of a massive outpouring of solidarity and support from the European community and the NATO powers (Rankin 2022).

This issue of EU membership and non membership and its implications for national security in the face of external threats raises the issue of how extreme events such as this – a war of aggression in Europe – impacts the sentiments of the rest of the European populace. More specifically as they relate to European cooperation and integration. The role and importance of public opinion regarding the EU has increased over the years, in tandem with the deepening and widening of the EU's powers (Hobolt and DeVries 2016, p. 415). The process of European integration is nowadays, as the saying goes, one of "constraining dissensus" rather than "permissive consensus" (Hooghe and Marks 2009, p. 5).

It is thus pertinent to consider and investigate these public opinions. As will be explored in the coming sections, there is a sizeable body of scholarly work on the effects of external events on public opinions of the EU. They include presidential elections, global pandemics and of course wars. The Russo-Ukrainian War provides an opportunity to contribute to this body of

research. The purpose of this thesis is therefore to explore how and if Europeans attitudes towards the EU have changed since the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

To summarize, the outline of the thesis is as follows. Section 1 provides background into the context relevant to the thesis, as well as the scope and ambitions. Section 2 provides an overview of relevant literature and previous research as it pertains to the research topic, as well as hypotheses of the thesis' expectations. Section 3 presents and discusses the research design. Section 4 presents the results. Finally, section 5 offers discussion and conclusions from the results, as well as a short discussion of potential openings for future research.

1.2 Background - The increased salience of the European Union

The aim of this sub-section is to briefly outline the relevant and necessary background of a changing and more politicized EU, where public opinions are increasingly paid attention to. This is done in order to map out the wider context into which the research topic fits.

Over time, the European Union has changed. Not just geographically, with eastward expansions during the first twenty years of the 21st century (Tallberg 2021, p. 30). Its scope has also increased significantly. What started out as a framework for reducing barriers to trade – and creating relationships of interdependence that would reduce the risk for wars (ibid, p. 19-20) – has since developed into something bigger. It consists today of 27 nations, with several countries eyeing membership status for the future (ibid, p. 26-29). The EU has now turned into an "economic and political union with wide-ranging competences" (Hobolt and DeVries 2016, p. 415).

As mentioned earlier, this transformation has increased the salience of EU issues for the national parties and citizens of member states (Netjes and Binnema 2007, p. 39; Hobolt and DeVries 2016, p. 414). The EU today contains several populist parties with negative attitudes towards the EU, such as UKIP in the United Kingdom, leading the way to Brexit in 2016 (BBC 2016). Other examples include the Danish People's Party; Alternative for Germany; the French

National Front movement; Hungary's Jobbik and Fidesz parties and the Sweden Democrats (Rooduijn et al., 2019).

Hooghe and Marks have captured many of these developments with their postfunctional theory of European integration. Increased integration and the increased politicization of European issues that it brings has awakened identity-based and socioeconomic conflicts (Hooghe and Marks 2019, p. 1116-1117). European integration has thus "produced a profound cultural divide" (ibid). Parallel to this increased salience of European integration and the rise in radical political parties (ibid) we have an EU that is sometimes described as being in a state of "permacrisis" (Zuleeg, Emmanouilidis, Borges de Castro 2021). The Russo-Ukrainian War is the most recent one, but in the last twelve years it was preceded by the coronavirus, Brexit, the refugee crisis and the eurozone crisis (Lehne 2022).

There is thus increased contestation and politicization of EU matters, coupled with tumultuous developments and external events of various kinds. Examples of how this can impact public opinions of the EU will be dealt with extensively in the following sub-section on previous research. Already at this stage it can be established that this thesis treats the Russian invasion of Ukraine as an event fitting the aforementioned context – that of a Europe where sudden and external events can have an impact on popular attitudes towards the EU and European integration.

1.3   Scope and research question

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate how and if Europeans attitudes towards the European Union has shifted since the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Several delimitations have been made, both in terms of method and selected material – these will be discussed more in depth in their respective sub-sections. Already at this stage it is worth mentioning that the word "Europeans" in the context of this thesis is used to refer to citizens of the 27 EU countries (the EU27).

The research question that will guide the thesis is the following:

"How have the attitudes of Europeans towards the European Union changed since the Russian invasion of Ukraine?"

The chosen research question thus acts as a delimiting factor determining the scope of the research project. In part, the explicit EU focus has been selected to differentiate the study from the existing research that will be covered more in depth in the following sub-section. Furthermore, the phrasing of the question shows that the ambitions of the research project are not to establish causality. The aim is thus not to determine a causal link between the Russian invasion and changes in support of the EU. Instead, statistics are used to describe the attitudes of the citizens of the EU, and how they have changed over time. In this sense, the ambitions of this thesis are descriptive (Gerring 2012, p. 722).

Depending on the results of the study, however, there could be implied causality that goes beyond the description of the changes over time. This in the sense that the study supports, or contradicts, the expectations of the thesis' hypotheses. Thus, the study has the additional ambition of providing support for the idea that the Russian invasion has impacted Europeans' attitudes towards the EU, should the results suggest this. A more overarching ambition is therefore to inform about the current state of Europeans' attitudes towards the EU and provide indications that can form a base for further research with causal ambitions.

In regards to methods and ambitions, this puts the thesis in a similar vein as several other studies on EU public opinions. Some of which this thesis will return to in the sub-section on previous research (Hobolt and DeVries 2016; DeVries 2017; Bordignon, Diamanti and Turato 2022). This thesis will also make use of survey data from the Eurobarometer, and the research design section will contain a further discussion on its use and its strengths and weaknesses.

2   Previous research, theory and hypotheses

This section will provide an overview of previous research that is relevant for the chosen research topic, as well as map out the central theories that will guide the research process. This is necessary in order for the process to be scientific and systematic, as well as for being a cumulative contribution to the field of research (Esaiasson et al. 2017, p. 20-21). Lastly, hypotheses of the expected results are presented.

2.1   Previous research

Given the fact that it is an ongoing and quite recent development, there is not as of yet an immense body of scholarly work on the Russian invasion and how it has affected attitudes towards the EU specifically. One noteworthy study has been conducted on the Italian population, showing that the Italian peoples' support for Russia has decreased quite drastically, while trust levels towards both France and Germany have increased by almost 20 percent (Bordignon, Diamanti and Turato 2022, p. 381). A survey-based study on students in European universities shows increased support for the EU and European integration after the Russian invasion (Steiner et al 2022, p. 19). Within the population of students, there is a "significantly higher attachment to Europe" in the surveys examined after the invasion (ibid). Thus, both these studies indicate a strengthening of support for Europe and the EU as a result of the invasion.

This type of renewal of "Western and European commitments" for voters (Bordignon, Diamanti and Turato 2022, p. 383) could be indicative of a European people that see EU membership as the safest bet for the future. The findings above provide an opportunity to test this, and whether the results of the studies above can be generalized to other EU-countries and the populations as a whole. By doing this, focusing more precisely on the attitude towards the EU, the ambition is to build on previous research and further the knowledge in the area. Thus, the work aims towards being scientifically relevant by being cumulative (Teorell and Svensson 2007, p. 18).

This study can also provide a basis for further research on the topic, where individual countries and causal links can be examined more closely.

The research topic ties in with the wider idea of external events having an impact on popular attitudes on political leaders and systems, and approaching them as "natural experiments" (Minkus, Deutschmann and Delhey 2019, p. 400). This has been explored in regards to the Brexit vote by Catherine DeVries, who applies her benchmarking theory of public opinion towards the EU. The theory posits that the publics' support for EU membership depends on a comparison between what seems most attractive – membership or non-membership. The public decides this by benchmarking the events in other non-membership states, and non-membership is only supported if it appears to be a preferable option to the status quo (DeVries 2017, p. 40-41). In the case of Brexit, she finds that Europeans' support for the EU increased immediately after the vote, indicating "the status quo of membership look more favourable and the prospect of leaving less so" (ibid, p. 50). Similar findings by Walter on Brexit and its consequences echo this, indicating that Europeans "watch how voter-endorsed disintegration processes unfold and draw their own conclusions from observing this experience" (Walter 2021, p. 2407). Their support for disintegration is contingent on how the other country fares (ibid). DeVries' benchmarking theory and its expectations on public opinion are very much guiding the expectations of this thesis, which is why it will be covered in more detail in the theory section.

Minkus, Deutschmann and Delhey treat the election of Donald Trump in 2016 as a similar "external shock" (2019, p. 400). They find causal support for the idea that his victory did increase the popularity of the EU, especially among those who "perceive their country as economically struggling" (ibid, p. 409). Furthermore, they identify a "shift in the EU's base of support" in the sense that the increase was especially noticeable on the right side of the political spectrum (ibid). The shock-factor has also been applied to research on public opinion shifts of other kinds, such as Norwegians' attitudes towards immigration after the Oslo terror attacks of 2011 (Jakobsson and Blom 2014).

As stated earlier, the findings above are also consistent with and related to the classic concept of "rally round the flag"-effects, where crises and external threats tend to increase support for political leaders (Mueller 1970, p. 21). The phenomenon is invoked in several of the studies mentioned above (Steiner et. al 2022; Bordignon, Diamanti and Turato 2022). Another recent example of this observed phenomenon is the increase in institutional trust in Sweden during the

covid 19-pandemic (Esaiasson et al. 2021, p. 748). The theory and its original, post-war American origins will be discussed more in depth in the theory section.

The ambition is thus to contribute towards the research into the aforementioned areas of research by focusing on a major and ongoing event of the 2020's. Since the study concerns the way that people react to war in Europe, it is fair to say that the scientific demand for public relevance is also fulfilled (Teorell and Svensson 2007, p. 18). This study can contribute towards both (in some ways related) bodies of work discussed above – that of external shocks and their effects on public opinion, and that of rallying effects.

2.2   Theory and hypotheses

The purpose of this sub-section is to outline the theoretical perspectives that are guiding the research topic and question. Having done that, a primary and a secondary hypothesis derived from the theories will be presented.

2.2.1   Euroscepticism

As shown earlier, the salience of the EU has increased, and with it the research on negative attitudes towards it. Research into this often uses the term euroscepticism[1], as will this thesis. This is due to its commonality within the context of research that guides the thesis and in which the thesis aims to place itself.

With euroscepticism being an ever present "corollary of increased integration" (Taggart 1998, p. 363), several expressions of the phenomenon comes to mind: for example UKIP and the Brexit vote, as mentioned in section 1.2. Paul Taggart's oft-referred to definition from 1998 is the one that will guide this thesis and its research process:

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[1] Authors note: As of December 2022, a search for "euroscepticism" generates almost 30 000 hits on Google Scholar.

"Euroscepticism expresses the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration" (ibid, p. 366).

It is thus a term that is used to capture the many different facets of opposition to the EU or European integration. Numerous typologies and systems of classification can be found in the existing literature on euroscepticism. On the level of party-based Euroscepticism, Taggart distinguishes between four different types of eurosceptical parties. "Single issue Eurosceptical parties" have opposition to the EU as their main political issue, while "Protest based parties with Euroscepticism" have opposition to the EU as just one aspect of their "general opposition to the functioning of political systems" (ibid, p. 368). "Established part[ies] with Eurosceptical position[s]" on the other hand, are parties that have been part of government or are close to governmental parties (ibid). Finally, there are "Eurosceptical factions" within certain parties that on the whole support the EU and European integration (ibid, p. 369).

Differences also arise between euroscepticism coming from the far-left and the far-right. Right-wing euroscepticism is often based in "cultural concerns" – being opposed to immigration and thus seeing the EU as a threat to the nation (Braun, Popa and Schmitt 2019, p. 799-800). The main concern from the far-left is economic aspects such as the threat to national welfare systems (ibid). Furthermore, Szczerbiak and Taggart have conceptualized a dichotomy between "hard" and "soft" euroscepticism that has gained a lot of ground in scholarly research. Hard euroscepticism is characterized by firm opposition to membership of the EU; the soft variety on the other hand means just opposition to one of several policy areas of the EU or the current functionings of the EU (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2003, p. 2-3). Several other systems of classification have been suggested. For example, Kopecký and Mudde have created a two-dimensional framework of study that distinguishes between "Europhiles" and "Europhobes" on one axis and "EU-optimists" and "EU-pessimists" on the other (Kopecký and Mudde 2002, p. 301-303).

As shown above, euroscepticism is quite a wide term. Kaniok and Komínková have criticized the fact that "the academic community has accepted Euroscepticism as a vague, elastic umbrella term" (2020, p. 80) and perhaps rightfully so. Nevertheless, it is a concept that can be rendered usable by focusing on a specific issue and operationalizing it in a clear and precise way, as will be done in the research design section. This thesis will primarily operationalize and investigate

euroscepticism in the sense of being opposed to membership of the EU or supporting leaving the EU.

2.2.2 The benchmarking theory

Catherine E. DeVries' Benchmarking theory sees support for the EU or scepticism against it as the result of what she calls the "EU differential" (DeVries 2018, p. 36). This differential is the difference between the "status quo" and the "alternative state", and it is by weighing the benefits or downsides of these two against each other that people decide on what they prefer (ibid). This process of evaluation is perhaps best introduced schematically:
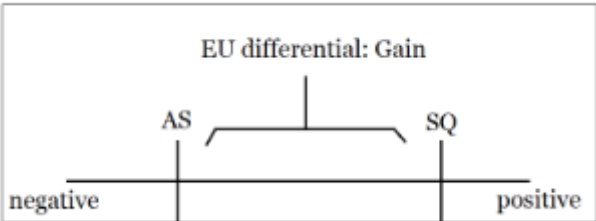

*Figure 1. EU support (*adapted from illustration in *DeVries 2018, p. 38)*

DeVries bases this logic on prospect theory, where decisions are made "based on the potential value of losses and gains, rather than the final outcome" (DeVries 2018, p. 36). This comparison between the perceived benefits of AS, the alternative state, compared to SQ, the status quo, is based on an external benchmark – a "reference point" (ibid). Thus, a positive differential as illustrated above means support (Evaluation of SQ > Evaluation of AS), and the opposite relationship applies for euroscepticism (ibid, p. 38).

Put simply, a comparison is made between the perceived benefits received from remaining in the EU and those of the alternative state of being outside it. When considering the value of the status quo versus the alternative state, DeVries posits that people evaluate on the two levels of "policy" and "regime" (ibid, p. 44). The regime level concerns "the ways in which the rules and procedures, as laid down in the various Treaties or the constitution, operate in practice"; the policy level concerns mainly "the degree to which a system delivers the policies and public goods they prefer, and reflect evaluations of the policies and outcomes of the day" (ibid).

While the theory mainly deals with the perceived benefits that people see in their own countries – they benchmark internal factors – the theory can also be extrapolated to perceptions of how other countries fare (for example DeVries 2017). This is also the sense in which the theory is used in this thesis, since the assumption will be that citizens of European countries observe what has happened in the non-membership state of Ukraine. This thesis also applies the theory a bit differently in the sense that Ukraine was not and has been a member state before, as opposed to with the case of Brexit mentioned in the section on previous research.

In regards to constructing a hypothesis for the research question at hand, the hypothesis as it will be formulated is based on the assumption of the security situation in Ukraine being the benchmark on which Europeans base their preference for membership or non-membership. Put simply, the expectation is that Europeans will look to the fate of Ukraine as a non-member state and draw the conclusion that membership is the preferable option. Of course, an implicit assumption made here is that Russia would not have invaded a member state. Without straying too far into purely speculative territory, it seems a fair assumption to make. This given the fact that the two major Russian military aggressions in the last 20 years have been against non-member states – Georgia in 2008 and the Ukraine in 2022 (NATO Association, n.d.).

2.2.3 Rally-round-the flag effects

As mentioned earlier in the sub-section on previous research, the phenomenon of rally-effects are widely observed and have been given extensive attention in political science. In constructing its hypotheses, this thesis aims at combining the insights and expectations from DeVries' benchmarking theory and the idea of rally-effects.

John Mueller's seminal work on the subject is fitting in order to provide a theoretical foundation upon which the thesis can be built. As stated earlier, the main observation is the following: "certain intense international events generate a "rally round the flag" effect which tends to give a boost to the President's popularity rating" (Mueller 1970, p. 21).

Mueller maps out several necessary characteristics for events to induce rally effects. The event must be international; it must involve the United States and "particularly the President directly";

it must also be "specific, dramatic and sharply focused" (Mueller 1970, p. 21). Regarding the last condition, Mueller posits that it is necessary to "assure public attention and interest" (ibid). More gradually unfolding events are thus excluded, since "their impact on public attitudes is likely to be diffused" (ibid).

Though developed in an American post-war context, its main assumptions can be extrapolated onto other situations. Since its inception, this has been done many times, thus widening the use of the concept from its original context – in research today, the term is often used for any situation where "a perceived external threat can bring members of a social entity to unite" (Minkus, Deutschmann and Delhey 2019, p. 401).

The case of the Russian invasion of Ukraine thus seems fitting, since it was arguably a more sudden and dramatic event compared to the more slow-burning separatist conflicts that have been plaguing the region for the last ten years. This reasoning for the condition of being an international event is "because only developments confronting the nation as a whole are likely to generate a rally round the flag effect" (Mueller 1970, p. 21). This, too, fits the selected case – given that one sees the EU as at least to some extent having state-like features. As already established, the EU today is an "economic and political union with wide-ranging competences" (Hobolt and DeVries 2016, p. 415).

2.2.4 Hypotheses

This sub-section will outline a primary hypothesis for the thesis, based on a combination of three theoretical concepts explained above – euroscepticism, benchmarking effects and rally effects. It will also present a secondary hypothesis.

The term *euroscepticism* will mainly be operationalized in the thesis as being opposed to membership of the European Union for one's country. The expectation is that these attitudes will decrease following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The reasoning for this is that people make decisions and draw conclusions based on perceived points of references, *benchmarks*, of other non-membership countries. Given what happened to Ukraine as a non-member state, the expectation is thus that membership of the EU will appear to be the preferable option for the citizens of the EU countries. In turn, the expectation is that the dramatic and sudden event of

the Russian invasion will lead to increased support for the incumbent political leadership, with the EU here seen as a collective leadership and point of reference for the citizens of the EU. Put plainly, this thesis expects a combination of benchmarking effects and rally-effects.

This results in a primary hypothesis formulated as follows:

H1: There will be a decrease in euroscepticism among the citizens of the EU states after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

This hypothesis aims at overall attitudes towards EU membership. It does not, however, distinguish between support for EU membership and support for individual policies. As a secondary hypothesis, complementing the research question and primary hypothesis, this thesis will look at support for individual aspects of EU policy. Given the research topic and primary hypothesis, the policy area of security and defense comes to mind first. Presently, this is a policy area that to a large extent remains within the control of individual member states – formally, it is a matter of national competence, with the EU mandated only to coordinate (Tallberg 2021, p. 55-56).

By looking at Europeans attitudes towards common defense and security policies, this thesis can gain a more nuanced understanding of the primary research question and hypothesis. In doing so, one also makes the distinction between "regime support" and "policy support" (Hobolt and DeVries 2016, p. 415-416). Regime support is "support for the constitutional settlement of the European Union as laid down in the various treaties, including support for membership of the Union"; policy support is "support for the content of collective decisions and actions taken by EU actors" (ibid).

With the distinction above, the primary hypothesis can be seen as looking at the regime level of support for the European Union. This secondary hypothesis applies the theoretical reasoning behind H1 to a specific policy-level area of the EU:

H2: There will be increased support for a common defense and security policy for EU member states after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

3 Research design

This section will account for the research design and methodology of the thesis, including materials and operationalizations. The strenghts and weaknesses of the choices made will be discussed throughout as well as in a separate sub-section.

3.1 Methodology

The thesis will approach the research question with a quantitative method, using descriptive statistics to provide the base for analysis, discussion and conclusions. As mentioned earlier, the decided research question means that we treat Europeans attitudes towards the European Union as the *dependent variable* and the Russian invasion as the *independent variable* (Teorell and Svensson 2007, p. 24). This means using the Russian invasion of Ukraine and public opinions as a natural experiment, where "researchers discover the sites after the intervention has already occurred and conceptualize the events in terms of an experiment" (Crasnow 2015, p. 427). Here, it is done by investingating the public opinion levels before the Russian invasion has taken place and after, and analyzing and discussing the results.

The units of analysis will be the 27 member states of the European Union. Considering the amount of countries in the EU it is feasible to include all as far as time is concerned. An alternative would have been a strategic selection (Teorell and Svensson 2007, p. 84) of a few countries instead - but since time, capacity or access to data is not a constraint there is seemingly no reason for this. If the ambition is to say something about attitudes towards the EU among Europeans, one should thus include as many countries as possible. This addresses the potential issue of lacking generalizability, since the selection of units of analysis reflect the population accurately (ibid, p. 68-69). It also significantly decreases the risk of selection bias on my part (ibid, p. 222-223). Note also that the United Kingdom has been excluded totally from the investigation, due to their recent secession from the EU.

3.2   Materials

The selected material consists of answers to specific questions in the Standard Eurobarometer produced yearly by the European Commission of the EU. Eurobarometer data from the latest 7 years – 2016 to 2022 – will be used. The values in the datasets are in the interval scale form since they are measurable and comparable (Teorell and Svensson 2007, p. 108). The numbers have been rounded off to the nearest decimal. The selected datasets and their corresponding dates are presented below:

Number	Date
85	Spring 2016
86	Autumn 2016
87	Spring 2017
88	Autumn 2017
89	Spring 2018
90	Autumn 2018
91	Spring 2019
92	Autumn 2019
93	Summer 2020
94	Winter 2020-2021
95	Spring 2021
96	Winter 2021-2022
97	Summer 2022

Table 1. Selected Eurobarometer datasets (Eurobarometer n.d.a)[2]

As displayed above, the changes between the last two points of measurement, 96 to 97, are the ones of main relevance for answering the research question.

The Standard Eurobarometer surveys are conducted in all member states. The minimum sample size is always n=1000, except for the countries of Malta, Cyprus and Luxembourg where the minimum n is 500, due to their populations being below 1 million inhabitants. The respondents are older than 15 years of age. Respondent selection is randomized and weighted for demography and geography. The surveys are conducted using a combination of face-to-face interviewing, telephone interviews and online surveys (Eurobarometer n.d.b).

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[2] The bibliography contains a reference and link to the main Eurobarometer webpage, from where the datasets have been downloaded. Included in the appendix are links to the individual datasets for every year.

There are several reasons for including and delimiting the material to the last 7 years. The issue of feasibility in terms of time and effort is one aspect, but it is mainly a case of relevance. Since the main issue of relevance is the Russian invasion of Ukraine and how public opinions have changed since, the most relevant period is just before it and after it. Inclusion of data from much earlier in time, such as the 1990's is thus not relevant. Furthermore, the composition of the EU before the major eastward expansions of the 2000's was drastically different compared to the present, and Croatia did not join until 2013 (Tallberg 2021, p. 30). On the other hand, there is a case to be made for not just including data from *immediately* before and after the invasion. This could skew the impressions and interpretations of the data – it is apt to consider historical fluctuations in order to draw conclusions on the relevance of effects.

The Eurobarometer data is appropriate for several reasons. It is a very common source to use in political science research (see for example Hobolt and DeVries 2016; Petrarca, Giebler and Weßels 2022; Gruchol and Slawek-Czochra 2021; Nägel and Vera 2021). Furthermore, it is a matter of necessity, since the Eurobarometer is "the only data source that allows for cross-national and longitudinal comparisons" (Hobolt and DeVries 2016, p. 416). It is also official EU material, which in itself arguably gives it a certain weight and credibility. On the other hand, one could argue that this means that there is a risk of bias towards portraying the EU in a positive light. However, nothing found in the data indicates this, and this thesis thus leans on the fact that it is commonly used and accepted in research.

The relevant data for the used Eurobarometer question from every year has been collected and processed using Microsoft Excel. Appendix A contains the tables of data that has been used to generate visual representations and calculations. This is done in order to strengthen the intersubjectivity of the research process (Esaiasson et al. 2017, p. 25-26). By being transparent and systematic with the ways in which the data has been handled, one ensures that the process can be replicated and double-checked all the way through.

3.3   Operationalizing Europeans' attitudes

The research question of Europeans' attitudes towards the EU needs to be operationalized in order to arrive at something measurable (Esaiasson et al. 2017, p. 56). Paul Taggart's definition of euroscepticism as "the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating

outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration" (Taggart 1998, p. 366) has been guiding in the selection of the Eurobarometer questions. Anchoring the method in previous research could also strengthen the aforementioned cumulative ambitions of the thesis. The selected definition has been used to choose the following question:

"To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (OUR COUNTRY) could better face the future outside the EU (%)" (Eurobarometer 2022, p. 60).

The question has been selected to appropriately operationalize Euroscepticism as opposition to EU membership/support for leaving the EU and fit with the research question and hypothesis. In terms of validity, it is appropriate since it closely mirrors the theoretical definitions and concepts (Esaiasson et al. 2017, p. 22) Designing a new survey with another question - such as "Should (my country) leave the EU?" – would have required a reduction in the number of units of analysis, which is best avoided. Thus, the strategy has been to select the best operationalization out of the available options.

The possible answers were the following:

- "Totally agree"
- "Tend to agree"
- "Tend to disagree"
- "Totally disagree"
- "Don't know"

(Eurobarometer 2022, p. 60).

The two positive answers of "Totally agree" and "Tend to agree" (ibid) will be used. They will be combined and measured over time. The rationale behind combining the two is to create an encompassing measure of euroscepticism as it has been operationalized in this thesis. Using both of them helps to better capture the nuances in the changes over time. It is possible, for example, that major increases or decreases occur over time for the tend to disagree-answer, and they would not be captured if one only registered the totally agree-answers. Again, these additions were made in Microsoft Excel from the tables of raw data available in Appendix A.

As mentioned in the hypotheses sub-section, this thesis also aims at complementing the investigation of euroscepticism as support for leaving the EU with investigating an instance of specific policy support. The support for the policy area of increased integration of common defense and security will also be operationalized with a question from the Eurobarometer surveys that is available for all the same points of measurements presented above. The question is as follows:

"What is your opinion on each of the following statements? Please tell for each statement, whether you are for it or against it. A common defence and security policy among EU Member States (%)"
(Eurobarometer 2022, p. T70).

The available answers are the following:

- "For"
- "Against"
- "Refusal"
- "Don't know"

(ibid)

The selected question is a fitting choice since it, in a very explicit way, answers the question to which the secondary hypothesis aims at answering. The same selection of units of analysis and timeframe applies for this question as well. The answer of "For" (ibid) will be used and measured over time. Since it is a secondary and complementary aim of the thesis, and because of the constraints of the thesis, it will be investigated only on the macro level. To clarify, support for a common defense and security policy can be seen as the dependent variable in this case.

3.4 Data presentation

The data with responses to the questions will be presented in part in a grouped fashion by dividing the countries into subcategories. The three categories that will be used are adapted from a set of four categories developed by Hobolt and Devries (2016, p. 417):

North	South	East
Austria	Cyprus	Bulgaria
Belgium	France	Croatia
Ireland	Italy	Czech Republic
Finland	Greece	Estonia
Germany	Malta	Hungary
Luxembourg	Portugal	Latvia
Netherlands	Spain	Lithuania
Denmark		Poland
Sweden		Romania
		Slovakia
		Slovenia

Table 2: Adjusted division of countries for presentation (Adapted from Hobolt and DeVries 2016, p. 417).

The four-group categories used by Hobolt and DeVries distinguishes between eurozone- and non-eurozone members of the North. Since that is not of relevance to the research topic at hand in this thesis, the above three categories are used instead. The decision to present the data mainly in this grouped fashion has been made partly on the basis of comprehension and clarity. Given the large number of units of analysis, it is necessary to split them up into smaller groups to provide a workable base from which conclusions can be drawn. Furthermore, it provides the possibility of seeing potentially interesting geographical differences. It also adds to the cumulative ambitions of the thesis, in applying an existing framework that has been used in prior research.

Furthermore, for every region, the mean percentages will also be presented for the changes between the Eurobarometer survey conducted before the Russian invasion and the one after – the last two of the selected datasets. It is also worth noting that, if need be, the y-axes on the visual representations of the data will be truncated. It is important to be transparent about this, so as not to mislead the reader. The purpose of it is to be able to zero in on small changes that otherwise might not be as visible.

3.5 Discussions on methodology

Prior to the presentation of the results in section 4, this sub-section contains a few brief remarks on methodological considerations with the research topic and research design.

Descriptive studies can sometimes be accused of being largely redundant in themselves, lacking in "intrinsic scientific value" (Gerring 2012, p. 721). However, as addressed in the subsection on scope, the aim is to make a scientific contribution by answering the research question that is firmly based in political science research and existing literature. Secondly, there could potentially be implied causality in the results. In this sense, the study could provide ground for future research. Thirdly, as was also mentioned in the scope section, this thesis builds on and expands the knowledge regarding the use of the Eurobarometer for scientific research. In this sense the ambition is exploratory, by testing when and when not it is appropriate to use it.

The study aims towards a high degree of intersubjectivity (Esaiasson et al 2017, p. 25). This is done partly by using the rigorously produced Eurobarometer surveys that are commonly used in research; partly by striving towards transparency regarding the material and data. The potential pitfall of errors in the data is preempted by aiming towards working in a systematic and careful way, as well as providing for the reader the data that has been used and processed.

Concerning ethical implications of the study, it draws on publicly available data, consisting of anonymous - and voluntarily provided - responses to survey questions.

4   Results

The purpose of this section is to present data and data visualizations of the responses to the selected questions. They will be presented for the three selected sub-groups of countries – North, South and East. Initially, the macro level of all individual countries will be covered, after which every region will be handled individually in more detail. After that, support for the specific policy area of defense and security will be presented.

4.1   The macro level

Initially, it is appropriate to briefly approach the results on an overall level for all three country areas. This is done in order to gain an overview prior to analyzing the different areas and individual countries.
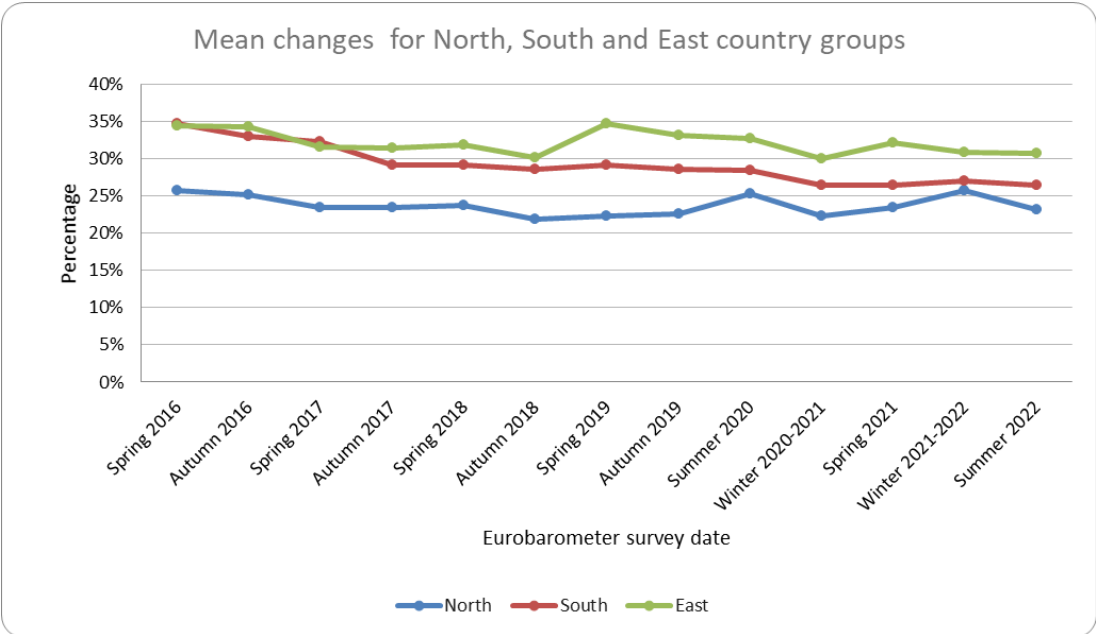

Figure 2: Mean levels for the North, South and East areas - percentage of agreeing responses to the question of whether one believes that one's country could better face the future outside the EU[3].

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[3] Note that the y-axis has been truncated.

Figure 2 shows the mean levels for the three country groups of North, South and East EU-countries – the total percentage of agreeing responses to the selected question of whether one believes that one's country could better face the future outside the EU.

The graph shows a very minor decrease in the dependent variable for all three areas between the winter 2021/2022 survey and the Summer 2022 survey. This signals a slight decrease in support for leaving the EU after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The decrease is noticeably larger for the North EU area than for the South or East. However, for all three areas, the change does not stand out particularly from historical fluctuations – such as the sharp increase for the North between the autumn 2019 and summer 2020 surveys, or the increase between the autumn 2018 and spring 2019. The changes in the dependent variable appear even more modest when addressed numerically, by looking at the mean changes for each area and for all EU27 countries together:

Area	Mean percentage decrease
North	-3%
South	-1%
East	0%
EU27 Overall	-1%

Table 3: Mean percentage decreases between surveys
96 and 97 for North, South, East areas and the EU overall.

In order to provide a further overview here and for the forthcoming analysis section, it is also useful to include the changes in the dependent variable between Winter 2021-2022 and Summer 2022 for all countries:

Country	Percentage change
Austria	-1%
Belgium	-6%
Ireland	-3%
Finland	-4%
Germany	-1%
Luxembourg	-6%
Netherlands	3%
Denmark	-2%
Sweden	-3%
Cyprus	-3%
France	0%
Italy	1%
Greece	-5%
Malta	5%
Portugal	0%
Spain	-2%
Bulgaria	1%
Croatia	5%
Czech Republic	6%
Estonia	-2%
Hungary	1%
Latvia	-7%
Lithuania	-2%
Poland	0%
Romania	-4%
Slovakia	-3%
Slovenia	3%

Table 4: Percentage decrease in agreeing answers between surveys 96 and 97 for all EU countries.

As the numbers above show, the changes in the dependent variable of support for leaving the EU are small for all the 27 EU countries. No change in either direction is larger than 7 percent and it is smaller for the majority of countries, with the overall mean decrease in support for leaving the EU being just -1 percent.

4.2 North

Now it is time to present the individual areas, in order to gain a more detailed understanding of the changes in the individual countries. Starting with the countries of North Europe:
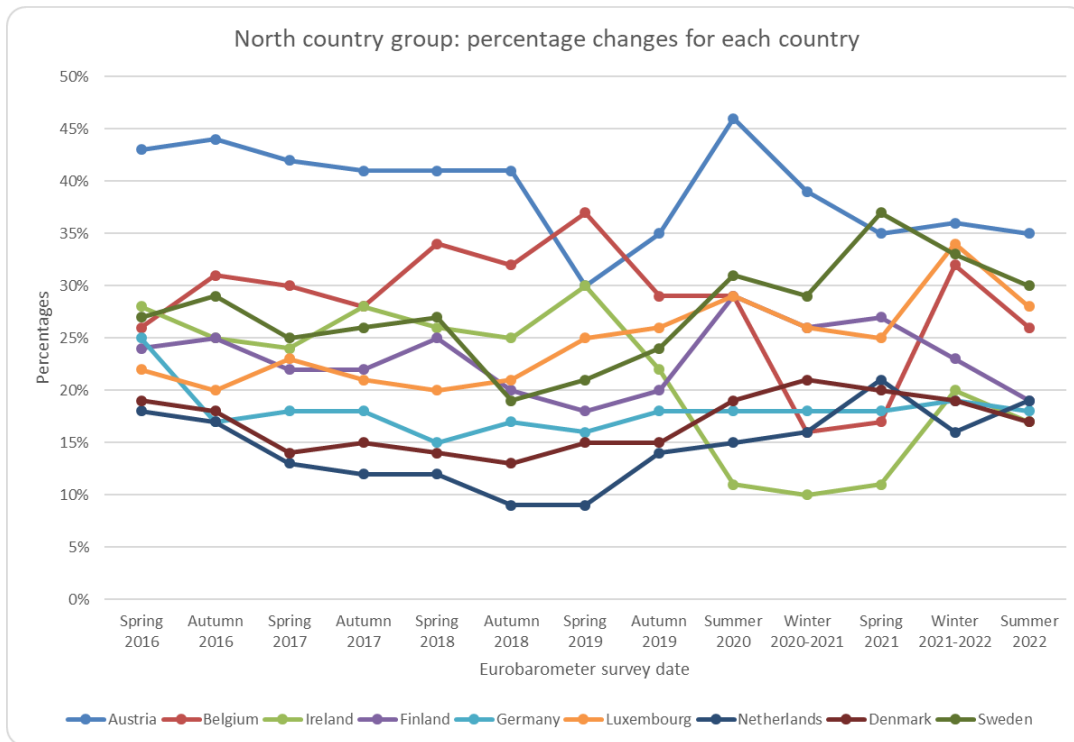
Figure 3: North countries - percentage of agreeing responses to the question of whether one believes that one's country could better face the future outside the EU [4]

Figure 3 contains the percentage of agreeing responses to the selected question – again, the question of whether one believes that one's country could better face the future outside the EU. The changes in the dependent variable, support for leaving the EU, display a quite high level of cohesion between the last two points of measurement with a discernible decrease for all countries except for the Netherlands. The sharpest decreases in the dependent variable are for Luxembourg, Belgium and Finland. The countries display decreases in the dependent variable of -6 percent, -6 percent and -4 percent, respectively. Germany, Austria and Denmark show much smaller decreases of -1 percent, -1 percent and -2 percent, respectively. As noted, the Netherlands stand out with an increase in the dependent variable of 3 percent. Nevertheless, the overall pattern, albeit consisting of small decreases, is one of decreased support for leaving the European Union.

Similar to the macro level, it is not possible to say that the changes in the dependent variable are larger than the previous fluctuations at earlier points of measurements – especially Austria and Belgium display particularly large changes over time.

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[4] Note again that the y-axis has been truncated.

4.3 South

Turning now towards the group of South European countries, the changes will be displayed in the same way as earlier:
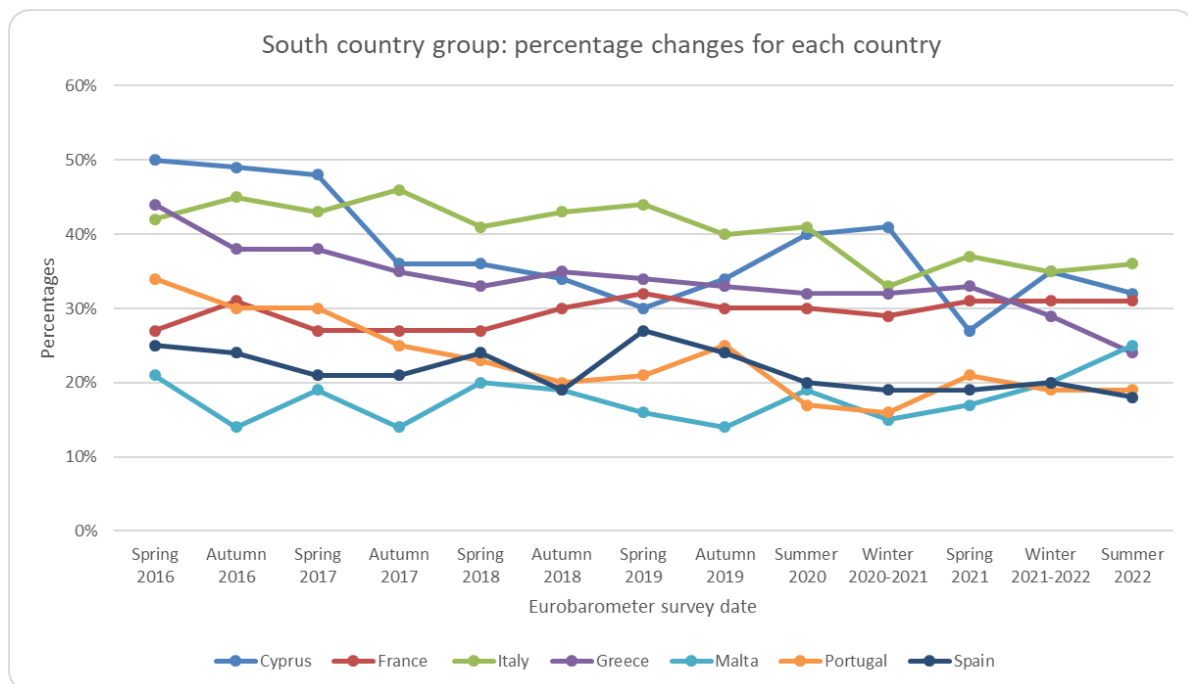

Figure 4: South countries - percentage of agreeing responses to the question of whether one believes that one's country could better face the future outside the EU[5]

Figure 4 shows the percentage of agreeing responses to the selected question for the countries of South Europe. As stated earlier, the mean decrease in the dependent variable is a mere -1 percent for the South country group. Spain, Greece and Cyprus display the sharpest decreases in the dependent variable of support for leaving the EU, with decreases of -2 percent, -5 percent and -3 percent, respectively. With France and Portugal displaying 0 percent changes, the remaining countries instead display slight increases in the dependent variable: Italy with 1 percent and Malta with 5 percent.

Two further things can be stated from the data and the graph. Firstly, it is not possible to say that the changes in the dependent variable greatly stand out from historical fluctuations.

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[5] Note again that the y-axis has been truncated.

Secondly, there is not a clear cohesive pattern of most countries moving in the same direction, as was the case for the North area.

4.4 East

Finally, this sub-section deals with the countries of the East group.
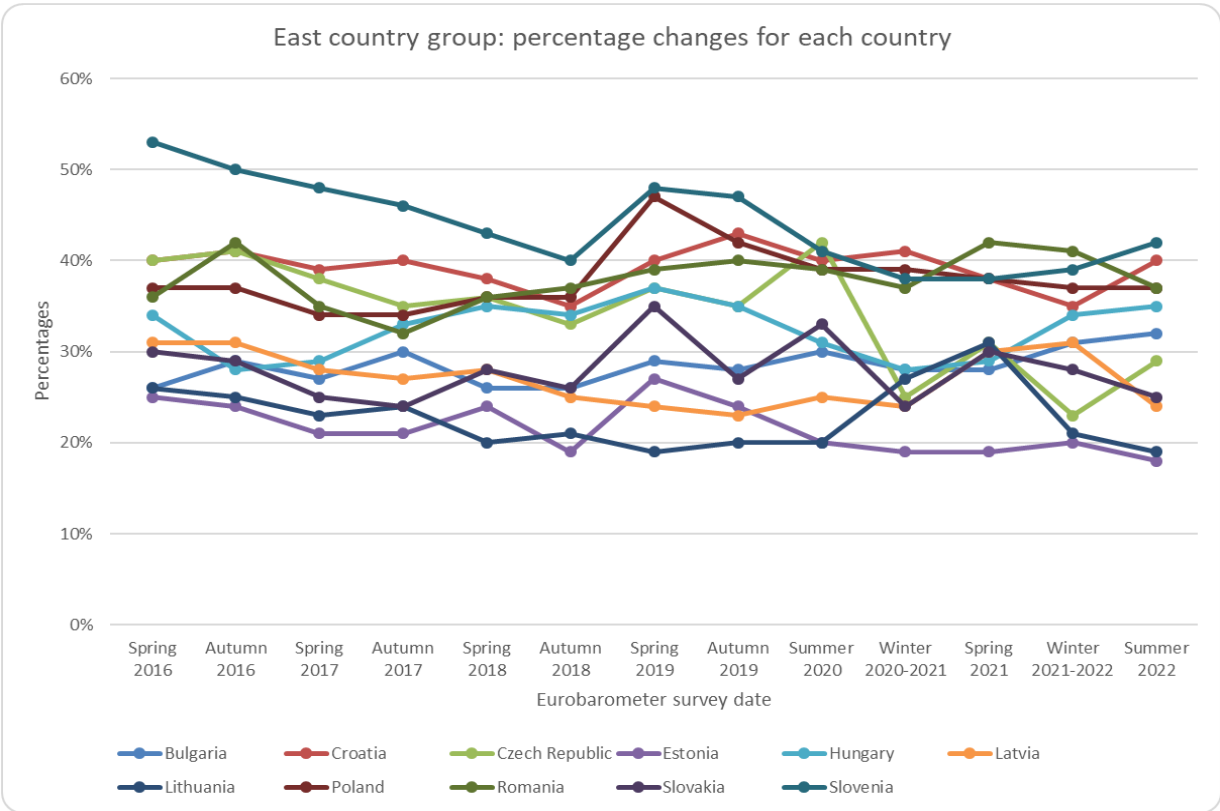
Figure 5: East countries - percentage of agreeing responses to the question of whether one believes that one's country could better face the future outside the EU[6]

Figure 5 displays the percentage of agreeing responses for the countries of the East group. It is the group of countries that stand out most clearly among the three, with the mean decrease in the dependent variable being zero percent.

The sharpest decreases in the dependent variable between the last two points of measurement are seen for Latvia, Romania and Slovakia – with decreases of -7 percent, -4 percent and -3

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[6]Note again that the y-axis has been truncated.

percent, respectively. Lithuania and Estonia display decreases of -2 percent. Poland remains unchanged, and the remaining countries display increases of 6 percent (Czech Republic), 5 percent (Croatia), 3 percent (Slovenia) and 1 percent (Bulgaria and Hungary). As is apparent, just over half the countries display *increases* in the dependent variable rather than decreases, signalling increasing support for leaving the EU. Of the three country areas, the East thus displays the least amount of cohesion in terms of changes. Furthermore, the changes do not greatly stand out from earlier fluctuations since 2016.

4.5   A closer look at the policy level

This sub-section aims at testing the expectations of the second hypothesis. As mentioned in the theory section, a secondary aim of the thesis is to investigate the distinction between regime and policy support, in order to complement the research question. Having mapped the former already with overall support for membership of the EU/support for leaving the EU, it is now time to take a look at the policy-specific level of attitudes towards the European Union.

All areas: Percentages "for" a common security and defense policy

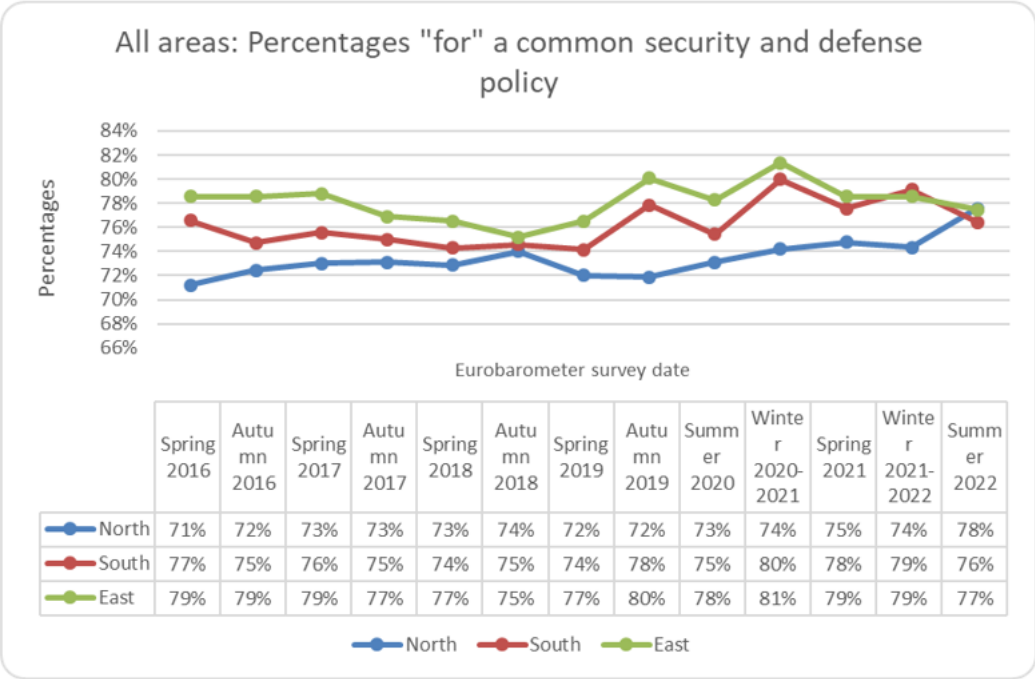|	Spring 2016	Autumn 2016	Spring 2017	Autumn 2017	Spring 2018	Autumn 2018	Spring 2019	Autumn 2019	Summer 2020	Winter 2020-2021	Spring 2021	Winter 2021-2022	Summer 2022
North	71%	72%	73%	73%	73%	74%	72%	72%	73%	74%	75%	74%	78%
South	77%	75%	76%	75%	74%	75%	74%	78%	75%	80%	78%	79%	76%
East	79%	79%	79%	77%	77%	75%	77%	80%	78%	81%	79%	79%	77%

Figure 6: Percentage of responses "for" a common defense and security policy in the EU among the EU27 countries, for the North, South and East countries. [7]

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[7] Note again that the y-axis has been truncated.

Figure 6 shows the percentage of "for" answers to the question of whether one is for or against a common defense and security policy for EU member states. Again, the EU27 countries have been divided into the three areas used in previous sections.

As before, we focus on the changes between the last two points of measurement, Winter 2021-2022 and Summer 2022, which were conducted prior to and after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The immediate observation to make is that the movements of the three areas follow a similar general pattern to the previous ones for the question of a future outside the EU. For the North group, there is a distinct upward trend, an increase in the dependent variable of support for a common security and defense policy. This is consistent with the decrease in euroscepticism for the North area observed in the previous section: the North area showed by far the largest shift in the dependent variable. In other words, the decreased support for leaving the EU is matched by an increase in support for a common defense and security policy in the EU.

For the South and East areas, there is a downward movement for the dependent variable, signaling a decrease in support for a common defense and security policy. In one sense this is in line with the observed effects for those groups in the previous section, with noticeably smaller decreases in the dependent variable of support for leaving the EU. However, the East area displayed the smallest, virtually non-existent decrease in support for leaving the EU – it does not display the sharpest decrease in support for a common defense and security policy, that is for the South region.

Addressed numerically, the graph shows a 4 percent increase in the dependent variable for the North area, as well as a 3 percent and 2 percent decrease for the South and East areas, respectively. On the overall level of the EU27 countries, the mean change is 0 percent, however[8]. For the North area, the decrease is arguably slightly more notable even in the context of previous fluctuations. The same cannot be said for the South and East areas, however. For several reasons, the analysis will stop here at the macro level, without looking further at individual countries as for the previous question. Firstly, the purpose was to see whether a similar trend was visible on the level of individual policies – to some extent that was the case, thus not warranting further analysis. Secondly, it would be outside of the scope and constraints

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[8] A data table of the individual countries responses is available in the appendix to this thesis.

of this thesis. It is worth mentioning, however, that the all used data for the individual countries in regards to this question, including mean calculations, is available on request.

Briefly summarizing section 4, the overall results for both hypotheses point towards the following. There are small but noticeable decreases in the dependent variable of overall support for leaving the EU on the macro scale. Upon closer examination, they are the most noticeable in the North area countries, smaller but existent in the South and non-existent in the East. Concerning support for a common defense and security policy, the increase in the dependent variable is the greatest in the North group, while both the South and East area display decreases. The following section will address the results presented in this section and discuss them in relation to the research question and hypotheses.

5 Discussion, summary and conclusions, and avenues for future research

This section contains a discussion of the results in relation to the theories, research question and hypotheses. Furthermore, it includes a summary of the thesis and its conclusions, and discusses possible areas for future research.

5.1 Discussion

This thesis approached the data using the following research question: *"How have the attitudes of Europeans towards the European Union changed since the Russian invasion of Ukraine?"*. When analyzing the shifts between the surveys conducted soon before and after the invasion for support for leaving the EU, the results show an overall decrease in the dependent variable on the macro level, albeit a small one. This signals a slight decrease in support for leaving the EU among citizens in EU countries. This overall cohesive pattern of decrease is in line with the hypothesis of declining support for euroscepticism correlating with the time of the invasion. As stated earlier however, the changes are small and the heterogeneity is apparent when looking closely at the individual countries.

By far the sharpest discernible decrease in euroscepticism is for the countries of the North group, with a mean decrease of 3 percent in total before and after the invasion. The highest decreases are for the countries of Belgium, Luxembourg and Finland. The clear exception among these countries is the Netherlands, with a 3 percent increase. For the South group of countries, Greece and Cyprus have the sharpest decreases, while the remaining countries show more modest or non-existing decreases. The clear exception here is Malta, with a 5 percent increase in euroscepticism. Perhaps surprisingly, the countries of the East area display no real decrease in euroscepticism, with the overall mean decrease being 0 percent. Given the geographical proximity to Russia, one might have expected those countries in particular to

consider the security guarantees of the EU as attractive in light of Russian aggression in the region. Indeed, the Russian neighboring country of Finland shows the highest decrease in the dependent variable of the North group of countries.

What do these results tell us, in regards to the expectations and theories applied? The expectation was that the people of Europe would benchmark the fate of a non-member state, Ukraine, and form their opinions on EU membership based on this. Because of this they would, in a time of crisis and aggression from the outside, rally around the flag of the EU as an institution and leader. These factors led to the expectation of decreased levels of support for euroscepticism, operationalized as support for leaving the EU. The overall pattern of decrease – especially for the North countries – point towards this to a small extent. As does the overall cohesive trend of the majority of countries showing a change in the same direction at the same time.

The issue of East Europe and the virtually non-existent decrease in the dependent variable, combined with Finland's relatively high decrease also raises the question of NATO membership as a potential covariating factor. It is possible that NATO membership weighs heavier and decreases the perceived necessity of EU membership for security for one's country. With NATO being an outright military alliance as opposed to the EU, and the majority of the countries of the East group being members, this appears likely. This points against a benchmarking effect having taken place for the citizens of this region.

The very limited overall effects also say something interesting about rally effects. The results could be indicative of Europeans not to a large extent identifying themselves with the EU and its leadership, not seeing them as "their" leaders. At least not to the extent that this thesis expected in its primary hypothesis. It is therefore possible that rally effects would be stronger if one analyzed the support for the internal leaders, such as incumbent prime ministers. Also, one should consider the fact that the Russian invasion of Ukraine was preceded by the annexation of Crimea. Even though it culminated in a full scale invasion in 2022, this may have decreased some of its shock value – the suddenness that rally effects are usually associated with. Again, connecting to the NATO distinction mentioned earlier: a possible conclusion to draw is that for citizens of NATO member states, the EU is not perceived as that much of a flag to rally around.

Several factors indicate that one should view the results with caution. Firstly, the very small percentage changes in the dependent variables. Secondly, the fact that they must be viewed in the context of the historical fluctuations up and down at previous points of measurement. This makes it more difficult to draw strong conclusions about the Russian invasion having a causal impact on the levels of euroscepticism. Thirdly, the potential covariating factors of for example NATO and covid-19 to mention two examples – internal factors within member states could also be of importance. However, there is a noticeable decrease overall and for the majority of countries between the surveys carried out soon before and after the Russian invasion. This points towards some confirmation of the H1 hypothesis.

The secondary hypothesis, H2, was tested in section 4.5. To some extent, the results mirror the overall pattern observed in the previous section on support for EU membership. Among the EU27 countries, there is a noticeable increase in support for a common defense and security policy for the North group of countries. It is thus evident that, since the invasion of Ukraine, the countries of North countries display an increase in support for EU membership in general, as well as policy-specific support for deepened European integration. The South and East countries, however, display decreasing support for this deepened integration of European politics. This strengthens the possibility of a benchmarking and rally effect having taken place for the people of the North countries after the Russian invasion in two ways. Firstly, since there is decreased euroscepticism not only in the overarching way of support for leaving the EU, but also increased policy-specific support for *increased* European cooperation on the key areas of defense and security. Secondly, since there is a level of cohesion between the membership level and the policy level for the North countries. Here too, the issue of NATO as a covariate variable is worth considering in the same way for the East countries.

An ambition of the thesis has also been to further test the suitability of using Eurobarometer data to answer questions about changes in public opinions. Partly out of necessity, given the limited available data, partly in order to contribute to the knowledge regarding its use. A tentative lesson to be learned here is perhaps that more specific and close points of measurement – *immediately* after and *immediately* before the invasion – would have been even more suitable. Of course, data which somehow explicitly connects the Russo-Ukrainian War to opinions on the EU could also have presented a different image.

5.2 Summary and conclusions

The purpose of this thesis has been to investigate how and if euroscepticism among Europeans has changed since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February of 2022. The thesis investigated euroscepticism in the sense of attitudes towards membership of the EU and complemented it with investingating policy-specific support for a common defense and security policy. Its methodology was an exploration into descriptive statistics using the Eurobarometer survey data to capture changes over time. The expectations, grounded in DeVries's benchmarking theory and Mueller's theory of rally-effects, were that euroscepticism would decrease following the invasion of Ukraine. This meant using the external shock of the Russian invasion of Ukraine as the independent variable, and euroscepticism as the dependent variable.

The findings of the thesis indicate small but noticeable decreases in euroscepticism – both on the level of support for EU membership and support for increased integration of defense and security for the North countries. Thus, some confirmation of the hypotheses were offered. The results however are very small and show a lot of heterogeneity among the EU27. For example, with the strongest effects clearly being for the North group of countries. For the East group of countries, there was a non-existent decrease in support for leaving the EU and a decrease in support for a common defense and security policy.

The research question can be answered in the following way. Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine there has been a decrease in euroscepticism among Europeans, with increased support for EU membership. The decrease is small, and the most discernible in the countries of Northern Europe. Also on the policy specific level, the results point towards decreased euroscepticism in the way of increased support for integration of defense and security policy for EU member states mainly for the North countries. The results therefore show some support for H1, and no overall support for H2.

Why are the findings of the thesis important? Firstly, they contribute towards research into euroscepticism, external shocks and their impact on public opinions on the EU. This is done by finding some support for the idea that the Russian invasion has contributed towards Europeans being more positive towards the EU. It is clear that the effects are very small on the overall EU27 level, especially when considered within the context of historical fluctuations. That is

also an insight in itself that complements previous research into the topic. Secondly, it builds on and contributes to the literature on euroscepticism, benchmarking effects and rally-effects, by applying the theories and testing them on an ongoing phenomenon. Thirdly, the findings provide a base for further research on the topic – perhaps especially into the heterogeneity among the EU27 citizens opinions and the apparent divide between North and East that the results point towards.

5.3   Avenues for future research

The thesis' findings provide a multitude of paths for future research into external shocks and their impacts on public opinions of the EU. Causal testing and confirmation of the results, with adjustments for potential covariating factors could be done on individual countries through the use of representative interview studies and such. Worth exploring further is also the heterogeneity of the results among countries, such as the countries of East Europe. It potentially has interesting implications regarding whether the people of Eastern Europe really see the EU's role as a leader and point of reference in their lives, as well as the EU's capabilities for collective security. A repeated study which distinguishes between NATO member and non-member states could be interesting.

Concluding, it will be interesting to see whether or not the findings of this thesis signify a lasting effect. Given the fact that the availability of data is limited at the time of writing and should improve with time, this will most likely be the object of much research. Those findings will perhaps also depend on the outcome of a war which has just entered its second winter.

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[9] Eurobarometer survey data were accessed from this page; the appendix includes links to all individual surveys.

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7. Data Appendix

Presented below is the data from the questions in the Eurobarometer surveys. It has been collected and compiled into table form from the raw data downloaded from the Eurobarometer webpage. Calculations and visual representations have been created from these tables.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (OUR COUNTRY) could better face the future outside the EU (%)

"Totally agree":

	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97
Belgium	7%	9%	5%	7%	9%	8%	9%	8%	6%	6%	5%	9%	9%
Bulgaria	9%	9%	9%	11%	10%	9%	9%	11%	11%	10%	12%	12%	12%
Czech	11%	13%	13%	10%	11%	10%	12%	12%	16%	10%	13%	8%	12%
Denmark	6%	7%	6%	7%	6%	5%	5%	6%	8%	7%	7%	6%	6%
Germany	11%	7%	7%	6%	5%	6%	6%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%
Estonia	7%	7%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	8%	6%	7%	5%	5%
Ireland	11%	8%	10%	11%	9%	8%	11%	7%	3%	4%	4%	8%	6%
Greece	18%	14%	13%	14%	13%	14%	12%	13%	13%	13%	16%	11%	10%
Spain	7%	6%	7%	6%	7%	4%	7%	7%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
France	9%	11%	10%	10%	10%	11%	11%	12%	12%	11%	14%	11%	10%
Croatia	9%	11%	9%	7%	10%	12%	10%	15%	14%	11%	11%	9%	12%
Italy	14%	16%	14%	16%	15%	13%	12%	15%	15%	11%	13%	11%	10%
Cyprus	25%	25%	21%	16%	13%	15%	13%	13%	21%	16%	12%	12%	12%
Latvia	14%	12%	13%	11%	10%	9%	10%	8%	9%	7%	10%	11%	9%
Lithuania	6%	7%	6%	6%	6%	7%	5%	7%	5%	10%	11%	7%	7%
Luxembourg	8%	6%	8%	8%	7%	7%	6%	9%	6%	9%	11%	10%	7%
Hungary	9%	8%	7%	11%	8%	9%	11%	11%	9%	9%	9%	9%	10%
Malta	7%	4%	4%	2%	5%	6%	5%	4%	6%	6%	5%	5%	14%
Netherlands	8%	5%	5%	4%	4%	3%	4%	6%	6%	6%	8%	8%	8%
Austria	15%	18%	16%	15%	16%	14%	4%	16%	21%	16%	13%	13%	15%
Poland	11%	12%	9%	12%	11%	11%	16%	17%	14%	11%	13%	12%	12%
Portugal	9%	8%	7%	5%	4%	4%	4%	6%	4%	6%	5%	6%	4%
Romania	13%	13%	11%	7%	9%	6%	11%	14%	12%	11%	15%	15%	12%
Slovenia	21%	20%	23%	19%	17%	17%	17%	20%	19%	13%	17%	14%	15%
Slovakia	10%	7%	8%	6%	8%	9%	12%	7%	10%	7%	11%	10%	8%
Finland	9%	9%	6%	8%	8%	6%	6%	6%	9%	10%	8%	7%	7%
Sweden	11%	12%	8%	9%	10%	7%	8%	10%	10%	7%	10%	10%	8%

"Tend to agree":

	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97
Belgium	19%	22%	25%	21%	25%	24%	28%	21%	23%	10%	12%	23%	17%
Bulgaria	17%	20%	18%	19%	16%	17%	20%	17%	19%	18%	16%	19%	20%
Czech	29%	28%	25%	25%	25%	23%	25%	23%	26%	15%	18%	15%	17%
Denmark	13%	11%	8%	8%	8%	8%	10%	9%	11%	14%	13%	13%	11%
Germany	14%	10%	11%	12%	10%	11%	10%	11%	11%	11%	11%	12%	11%
Estonia	15%	14%	14%	13%	13%	12%	13%	14%	16%	15%	13%	14%	15%
Ireland	17%	17%	14%	17%	17%	17%	19%	15%	8%	6%	7%	12%	11%
Greece	26%	24%	25%	21%	20%	21%	22%	20%	19%	19%	17%	18%	14%
Spain	18%	18%	14%	15%	17%	15%	20%	17%	15%	14%	14%	15%	13%
France	18%	20%	17%	17%	17%	19%	21%	18%	18%	18%	17%	20%	21%
Croatia	31%	30%	30%	33%	28%	23%	30%	28%	26%	30%	27%	26%	28%
Italy	28%	29%	29%	30%	26%	30%	32%	25%	26%	22%	24%	24%	26%
Cyprus	25%	24%	27%	20%	23%	19%	17%	21%	19%	25%	15%	23%	20%
Latvia	17%	19%	15%	16%	18%	16%	14%	15%	16%	17%	20%	20%	15%
Lithuania	20%	18%	17%	18%	14%	14%	14%	13%	15%	17%	20%	14%	12%
Luxembourg	14%	14%	15%	13%	13%	14%	19%	17%	23%	17%	14%	24%	21%
Hungary	25%	20%	22%	22%	27%	25%	26%	24%	22%	19%	20%	25%	25%
Malta	14%	10%	15%	12%	15%	13%	11%	10%	13%	9%	12%	15%	11%
Netherlands	10%	12%	8%	8%	8%	6%	5%	8%	9%	10%	13%	8%	11%
Austria	28%	26%	26%	26%	25%	27%	26%	19%	25%	23%	22%	23%	20%
Poland	26%	25%	25%	22%	25%	25%	31%	25%	25%	28%	25%	25%	25%
Portugal	25%	22%	23%	20%	19%	16%	17%	19%	13%	10%	16%	13%	15%
Romania	23%	29%	24%	25%	27%	31%	28%	26%	27%	26%	27%	26%	25%
Slovenia	32%	30%	25%	27%	26%	23%	31%	27%	22%	25%	21%	25%	27%
Slovakia	20%	22%	17%	18%	20%	17%	23%	20%	23%	17%	19%	18%	17%
Finland	15%	16%	16%	14%	17%	14%	12%	14%	20%	16%	19%	16%	12%
Sweden	16%	17%	17%	17%	17%	12%	13%	14%	21%	22%	27%	23%	22%

Combined answers for "Totally agree" and "Tend to agree":

	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97
Austria	43%	44%	42%	41%	41%	41%	54%	35%	46%	39%	35%	36%	35%
Belgium	26%	31%	30%	28%	34%	32%	60%	29%	29%	16%	17%	32%	26%
Ireland	28%	25%	24%	28%	26%	25%	75%	22%	11%	10%	11%	20%	17%
Finland	24%	25%	22%	22%	25%	20%	49%	20%	29%	26%	27%	23%	19%
Germany	25%	17%	18%	18%	15%	17%	70%	18%	18%	18%	18%	19%	18%
Luxembourg	22%	20%	23%	21%	20%	21%	72%	26%	29%	26%	25%	34%	28%
Netherlands	18%	17%	13%	12%	12%	9%	55%	14%	15%	16%	21%	16%	19%
Denmark	19%	18%	14%	15%	14%	13%	65%	15%	19%	21%	20%	19%	17%
Sweden	27%	29%	25%	26%	27%	19%	60%	24%	31%	29%	37%	33%	30%
Cyprus	50%	49%	48%	36%	36%	34%	41%	34%	40%	41%	27%	35%	32%
France	27%	31%	27%	27%	27%	30%	47%	30%	30%	29%	31%	31%	31%
Italy	42%	45%	43%	46%	41%	43%	39%	40%	41%	33%	37%	35%	36%
Greece	44%	38%	38%	35%	33%	35%	31%	33%	32%	32%	33%	29%	24%
Malta	21%	14%	19%	14%	20%	19%	58%	14%	19%	15%	17%	20%	25%
Portugal	34%	30%	30%	25%	23%	20%	66%	25%	17%	16%	21%	19%	19%
Spain	25%	24%	21%	21%	24%	19%	59%	24%	20%	19%	19%	20%	18%
Bulgaria	26%	29%	27%	30%	26%	26%	42%	28%	30%	28%	28%	31%	32%
Croatia	40%	41%	39%	40%	38%	35%	48%	43%	40%	41%	38%	35%	40%
Czech Republic	40%	41%	38%	35%	36%	33%	35%	35%	42%	25%	31%	23%	29%
Estonia	25%	24%	21%	21%	24%	19%	59%	24%	20%	19%	19%	20%	18%
Hungary	34%	28%	29%	33%	35%	34%	54%	35%	31%	28%	29%	34%	35%
Latvia	31%	31%	28%	27%	28%	25%	34%	23%	25%	24%	30%	31%	24%
Lithuania	26%	25%	23%	24%	20%	21%	60%	20%	20%	27%	31%	21%	19%
Poland	37%	37%	34%	34%	36%	36%	64%	42%	39%	39%	38%	37%	37%
Romania	36%	42%	35%	32%	36%	37%	58%	40%	39%	37%	42%	41%	37%
Slovakia	30%	29%	25%	24%	28%	26%	53%	27%	33%	24%	30%	28%	25%
Slovenia	53%	50%	48%	46%	43%	40%	35%	47%	41%	38%	38%	39%	42%

What is your opinion on each of the following statements? Please tell for each statement, whether you are for it or against it. A common defence and security policy among EU Member States (%)

"For":

	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97
Austria	60%	55%	61%	56%	57%	66%	60%	62%	64%	57%	63%	61%	61%
Belgium	84%	80%	78%	85%	85%	84%	82%	86%	86%	93%	91%	86%	87%
Ireland	69%	66%	67%	64%	67%	61%	72%	64%	63%	70%	66%	75%	73%
Finland	60%	65%	65%	67%	65%	72%	68%	66%	67%	74%	73%	70%	78%
Germany	82%	85%	85%	85%	86%	87%	85%	85%	83%	83%	83%	83%	84%
Luxembourg	84%	87%	85%	85%	84%	82%	81%	80%	93%	93%	83%	85%	88%
Netherlands	79%	83%	81%	82%	81%	84%	74%	80%	76%	76%	81%	83%	83%
Denmark	68%	70%	68%	69%	68%	66%	68%	66%	68%	64%	71%	68%	69%
Sweden	55%	61%	67%	65%	63%	64%	58%	58%	58%	58%	62%	58%	75%
Cyprus	81%	77%	82%	84%	90%	86%	89%	93%	88%	92%	90%	95%	86%
France	80%	80%	78%	78%	74%	77%	74%	76%	75%	71%	74%	68%	69%
Italy	68%	65%	68%	67%	71%	71%	69%	72%	72%	74%	75%	78%	73%
Greece	78%	75%	76%	67%	66%	65%	67%	75%	76%	73%	74%	79%	71%
Malta	74%	75%	69%	74%	67%	69%	65%	71%	63%	67%	73%	76%	83%
Portugal	74%	68%	70%	67%	70%	70%	72%	73%	69%	96%	73%	77%	70%
Spain	81%	83%	86%	88%	82%	84%	83%	85%	85%	87%	84%	81%	83%
Bulgaria	74%	72%	76%	75%	73%	72%	70%	78%	69%	71%	70%	68%	64%
Croatia	78%	75%	76%	67%	66%	65%	67%	75%	76%	73%	74%	79%	71%
Czech Republic	75%	74%	71%	73%	77%	73%	75%	78%	73%	89%	83%	86%	80%
Estonia	81%	83%	86%	88%	82%	84%	83%	85%	85%	87%	84%	81%	83%
Hungary	78%	75%	76%	67%	66%	65%	67%	75%	76%	73%	74%	79%	71%
Latvia	85%	85%	82%	84%	87%	86%	84%	85%	87%	88%	82%	80%	85%
Lithuania	89%	89%	88%	87%	85%	87%	88%	88%	87%	90%	90%	89%	89%
Poland	74%	81%	80%	78%	79%	79%	80%	80%	78%	78%	75%	77%	84%
Romania	75%	69%	75%	71%	72%	65%	67%	71%	70%	72%	67%	71%	67%
Slovakia	76%	78%	78%	75%	76%	72%	77%	82%	77%	84%	80%	73%	79%
Slovenia	79%	83%	79%	81%	79%	79%	84%	84%	83%	90%	85%	81%	79%

Links to the individual Eurobarometer surveys used. For each one, the "Volume A "Countries" dataset was downloaded in Microsoft Excel format.

85: https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2130_85_2_std85_eng?locale=en
86: https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2137_86_2_std86_eng?locale=en
87: https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2142_87_3_std87_eng?locale=en
88: https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2143_88_3_std88_eng?locale=en
89: https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2180_89_1_std89_eng?locale=en
90: https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2215_90_3_std90_eng?locale=en
91: https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2253_91_5_std91_eng?locale=en
92: https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2255_92_3_std92_eng?locale=en
93: https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2262_93_1_93_1_eng?locale=en
94: https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2355_94_1_std94_eng?locale=en
95: https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2532_95_3_95_eng?locale=en
96: https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2553_96_3_std96_eng?locale=en
97: https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2693_97_5_std97_eng?locale=en