

# **Euroscepticism in times of crisis: The multiple dimensions of public opinion**

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# Project background

- **‘Euroscepticism: dimensions, causes and consequences in times of crisis’**
- A three-year project led by Sofia Vasilopoulou
- Funded by the Economic Social and Research Council Future Leaders scheme
- Based at the Department of Politics, University of York, UK
- Studies **the changing nature of Euroscepticism amid the Eurozone crisis**
- See <https://euroscepticism.org/> for more

# Euroscepticism is multidimensional

- When we talk about Euroscepticism then what are we talking about?
- Different EU policies **create different responses...**
  - ... because **winners and losers are structured differently** across policies
- Therefore, important to examine public preferences not only on **the general direction** of European integration but also on **specific EU-related issues**

# Empirical approach

Public attitudes towards two EU policies:

## 1) Freedom of movement

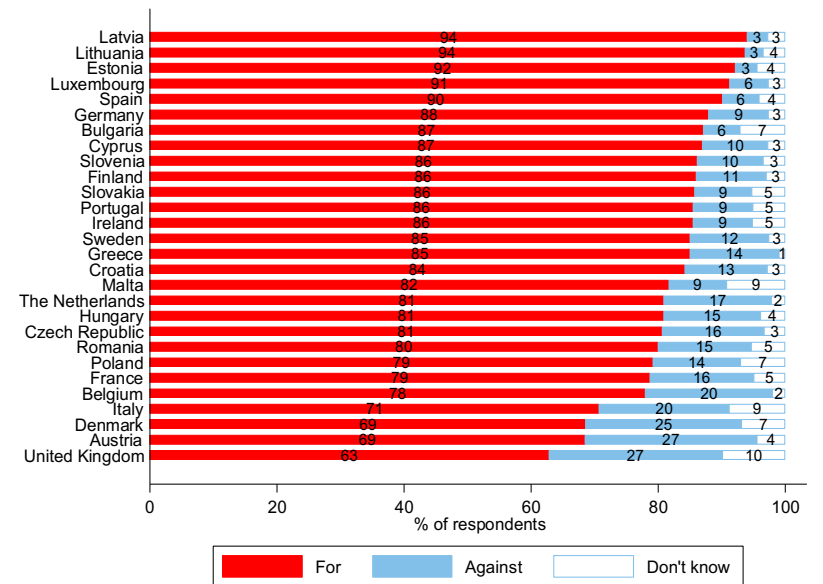
- Eurobarometer data 2015–2017 (n=106,178)
- Article published in 2018 in *Journal of European Public Policy*

## 2) Fiscal solidarity

- European Election Studies (EES) Voter Study 2014 (n=30,064)
- Article under review in *West European Politics*

# Freedom of movement

- Support varies greatly across countries
- **Higher support** in poor member states
- **Denmark** among the most sceptical
- Country context also matters **indirectly**:
  - Support in **poor countries** evenly high, incl. among those typically Eurosceptic
  - Attitudes in **richer countries** depend on economic and identity considerations



**Figure 1. Support for EU freedom of movement by country**  
 Source: Eurobarometer 84.3 (November 2015), 85.2 (May 2016), 86.2 (November 2016) and 87.3 (May 2017).

# Fiscal solidarity

- Support varies greatly across countries
- **Lower support** in poor member states
- **Denmark** among the most sceptical
- Country context also matters **indirectly**:
  - Support in **poor countries** evenly low, incl. among those typically pro-EU
  - Attitudes in **richer countries** depend on economic and identity considerations

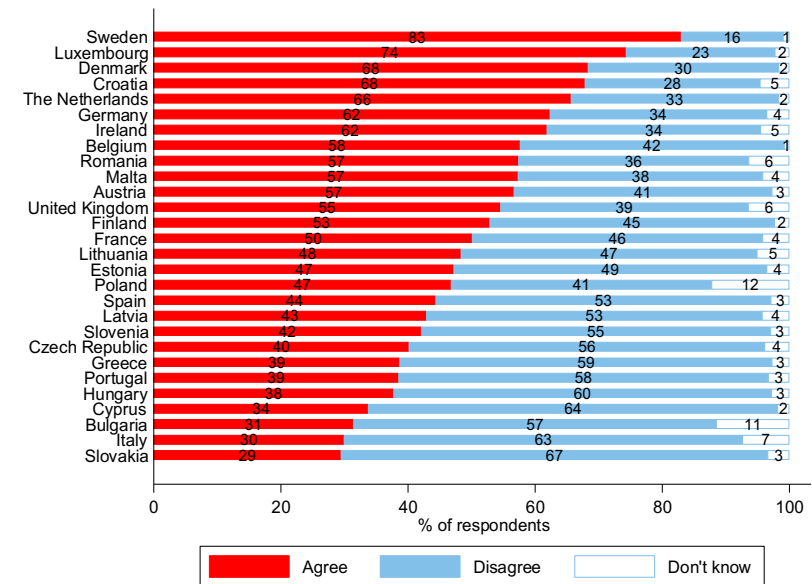


Figure 2. Support for providing fiscal aid by country  
Source: European Election Studies Voter Study 2014.

# Conclusions

- **Policy-specific attitudes do not merely mirror general EU support** but are embedded in contextual conditionality
- Individuals with **similar predispositions but living in different countries** take widely **varying views** towards different EU policies
- Thus, a **one-size-fits-all strategy** for addressing the challenge of Euroscepticism is **not likely to be successful**