

# **Interests and identities in the enlarged EU: A re-assessment of affective factors as determinants of Euroscepticism in the context of the crisis**

Aleksandra Sojka

Postdoctoral researcher, Department of Political Science, University of Granada

[sojka@ugr.es](mailto:sojka@ugr.es)

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“Certainly, you have to go far in Western Europe to find such enthusiastic Europeans –that is, supporters of a supranational community called Europe–, as you will find at every turn in Eastern Europe.”

– Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern*

## **1. Introduction**

The focus in comparative empirical research on political attitudes in Central and Eastern Europe –both as candidate countries, as well as European Union (EU) member states– has been so far on the utilitarian and ideological factors in relation to support for European integration. However, affective determinants, and especially the European identity issue, have become central to the current understanding of public opinion regarding the European Union (Hooghe and Marks 2005; de Vries and van Kersbergen 2007; Boomgaarden et al. 2011; Van Klingeren, Boomgaarden, and De Vreese 2013). Moreover, the ongoing economic and financial crisis sparked debates on matters of solidarity and legitimacy in transnational governance across Europe, further

highlighting the functional role of identification with European political institutions (Fuchs 2011), especially as a buffer against discontent (Wessels 2007).

The economic downturn which occurred at the end of the first decade of the XXI century (sometimes referred to as the Great Recession), triggered severe recessions in almost all EU countries, accompanied by banking and sovereign debt crises in various Eurozone countries. These developments contributed to a deep change in the perceptions of the EU, as being a member state no longer can be viewed as a guarantor of economic well-being. The problems in the EU-15<sup>1</sup> member states of Southern EU periphery, and the resulting division between debtors and creditor countries received a great deal of attention in the media and political discourse. These perceived difficulties could undermine the “unconditional support” for membership in Central Eastern Europe—a general positive image of the EU, which was a key dimension of support for EU membership in CEE-10 countries before accession (Guerra 2013a, 143). Moreover, most of the new member states from Central and Eastern Europe also experienced deep economic problems precisely because upon choosing market economy in their post-1989 transition they opted for a deeper connection to the global economy in general, and the European economy in particular.

In this context, I explore the importance of political identities as determinants of EU attitudes in the new member states, comparing to utilitarian factors, before and after the crisis has made its mark on public opinion perceptions of the EU. The main assumption is that the above described problems could seriously undermine the perception of benefits from membership, which constitutes a central determinant of EU

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<sup>1</sup> EU-15 denotes the fifteen EU member states before the Eastern enlargement, EU-17 refers to these fifteen member states plus Malta and Cyprus, CEE-10 is short for the ten Central Eastern European new member states.

support, according to the utilitarian approach (Eichenberg and Dalton 2007; Gabel and Palmer 1995). Therefore, I argue that almost ten years after the first Eastern enlargement, given the perceived declining performance of European economy and the issue of solidarity as the main challenge ahead, the importance of more stable, affective factors as determinants of EU attitudes must be re-evaluated.

The paper is structured as follows. Firstly, I discuss the impact of the Great Recession on the perceptions of the EU and European identity. Consequently, on the basis of the comprehensive model of EU attitude formation which takes into account the influence of political identities and utilitarian factors, I formulate several hypotheses related to East-West differences and the impact of the crisis. In the empirical part of the paper, the proposed theoretical model is tested on EU perceptions in Central and Eastern European countries, immediately after the accession and after the Great Recession has reshaped public opinion across Europe. Subsequently, the same model is applied to the whole of the EU-27 as I further test for the differential impact of interests and identities, between East and West. Finally, the empirical results are discussed, focusing on the importance of political identities as a key element in structuring European attitudes, and the changing character of the utilitarian factor in the new member states.

## **2. Interests and identities before and after the crisis: research hypotheses**

While much research in the recent decades has addressed the issue of attitudes towards European integration and its determinants in Western and Southern Europe, the Eastward enlargement brought about academic interest in the structure and determinants of mass attitudes in the post-socialist new member states (Kucia 1999; Cichowski 2000; Tucker, Pacek, and Berinsky 2002; Caplanova, Orviska, and Hudson 2004; Tverdova

and Anderson 2004; Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2006; Christin 2005; Garry and Tilley 2009; Wagner 2012; Guerra 2013a; Guerra 2013b). Most of these studies focus specifically on EU support before or/and after accession and approach the issue as a test of the applicability of existing theories to CEE countries.

The first issue which must be addressed are the possible differences in the factors which shape mass opinion in the new and the old EU member states. Historical experience of socialist regimes, nation-building under adverse circumstances, and, more recently, an intense period of market-building and democratic reforms which deeply re-structured societies in Central and Eastern Europe, could all affect the way in which the new European citizens relate to the issue of European integration. While some scholars suggest that these processes structure differently EU attitudes and identities in the CEE-10 member states (Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2006), others argue the cognitive processes which underlie EU attitude formation in new and old member states are very similar (Sanders et al. 2012, 229). This study contributes to this debate by testing several hypotheses regarding the determinants of EU attitudes and the role of identities in new and old member states. In view of the previous studies on the topic, I do not assume that there are any essential differences in the cognitive processes between East and West of Europe, but I am still interested in how the changing context of accession and economic problems which emerged in the early phase of membership affect the ways in which attitudes are formed in the CEE member states.

In terms of specific predictors of public opinion attitudes towards the EU in these new member states, early studies put much emphasis on the *ideological preferences* as determinants of EU support: their basic expectations was that attitudes towards democracy and market economy should constitute the most important predictors of support for the planned EU membership (Cichowski 2000; Rohrschneider

and Whitefield, 2006). Another relevant explanatory framework is that of *domestic proxies*, which relies on the observation that most citizens of Central and Eastern European new member states have a very limited knowledge of the institutions of the EU and, therefore, have to rely on clues from national institutions in forming their opinion on European integration (Guerra 2008; Wagner 2012). However, the most widely accepted explanation of EU support in the region is that of *instrumental rationality*. As the quote at the beginning of this paper illustrates, people in CEE-10 new member countries were hopeful that implementing democracy, capitalism, and joining the EU as a guarantee for these changes, would improve their lives in many ways, and the process was framed as a symbolic “return to Europe” (Cichowski 2000). However, the deep economic and social changes which occurred post-1989 and continued in the framework of European integration have been also very costly for some. Thus, scholars of EU support in Central and Eastern Europe often focus on utilitarian considerations based on the experience of transition to capitalism as their central explanatory dimension. The findings of these studies confirm that winners of post-socialist transitions tend to be significantly more pro-European (Tucker, Pacek, and Berinsky 2002; Caplanova, Orviska, and Hudson 2004; Tverdova and Anderson 2004). Moreover, some authors argue that, after accession, the importance of the utilitarian factor becomes more salient as determinant of support, underlining further the importance of economic perceptions in the region (Guerra 2013a). Therefore, the first hypothesis which will be tested in this paper is related to the possible difference between new and old member states, and the role of utilitarian considerations. Since EU accession of CEE countries has been framed to a great extent in terms of its benefits, I expect that these factors will have a more pronounced effect in the new member states than in the more established EU countries:

*H.1 Utilitarian considerations constitute a stronger predictor of positive EU perceptions in the CEE new member states, than in the old member states.*

While the research on EU attitudes in the CEE-10 countries has been mostly focused on interests as their principal drivers, European and national identification, as well as perception of threats have been confirmed as key determinants of attitudes in recent research (Hooghe and Marks 2004; Hooghe and Marks 2005; McLaren 2006; de Vries and van Kersbergen 2007; Wessels 2007; de Vreese, Boomgaarden, and Semetko 2008).

The affective approach considers not only European identification, but also national identities and identity threat as key determinants of European attitudes. The most relevant distinction is to be made between national identities which are inclusive of European identity and those which remain exclusive of such identification (Hooghe and Marks 2005). In this sense, national identity formulated as exclusive of the European element, constitutes a strong predictor of Euroscepticism (Hooghe and Marks 2004; Hooghe and Marks 2005). From this point of view, a stronger national allegiance could constitute an obstacle to support the EU in the CEE-10. This could be the case especially in the newly independent countries where accession to supranational institutions could constitute a bigger threat to national identities (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2004). However, it is important to investigate the meanings of identities. Specifically, in CEE countries European integration has been considered as a way to assure national independence and sovereignty, as well as a guarantee of further modernization and democratization (Grabbe and Hughes 1999). As such, the newly found political sovereignty has been configured as essentially embedded in Western institutions and economies. This is what the catchphrase “return to Europe” encapsulated—establishing institutional frameworks similar to those of Western

European countries and asserting the “essentially European character of national identity” (Batt 2002, 1). Therefore, it is entirely possible that following the accession national identity does not constitute an obstacle to the formation of positive attitudes in the region, and cognitive and affective European identification constitute important foundations of stable EU support. In this sense, as summarized in hypothesis 2, I expect that the impact of identity will be at least as significant as that of utilitarian interests:

*H.2 In the new member states, identities constitute at least as strong of a predictor of positive EU perceptions as utilitarian considerations.*

Finally, in terms of how the crisis has affected attitudes towards the EU in old and new member states, this paper argues that almost ten years after the first Eastern enlargement, and given the perceived declining performance of European economy and the issue of solidarity as the main challenge ahead, the importance of more stable, affective factors must be re-evaluated. Undoubtedly, the economic and financial crisis has substantially undermined the perception of benefits from membership and the image of the EU as a guarantor of economic stability. Since European identity can function as a buffer against discontent and a “reservoir of goodwill” which might maintain support for a political system in times of declining outputs, I check whether, in line with such assumption, its impact is greater after the crisis. This is summarized in hypothesis 3:

*H.3 The effect of European identity as a predictor of positive EU perceptions is stronger after the effects of the crisis have made its mark on European public opinion.*

In order to explore the consequences of European identity on EU perceptions, I test the proposed hypotheses in a series of statistical models of public opinion survey data immediately after the accession (2004) and after the Great Recession has made an

impact on the perceptions of average citizens. While I am chiefly interested in the way in which attitudes are formed in the new member states, in order to be able to draw conclusions about possible differences between CEE-10 and the old member states of EU-15, I present both a country-by-country test of the proposed theoretical model, as well as a single hierarchical model for EU-27, controlling for the effect of new member states.

### **3. The impact of the crisis on European attitudes**

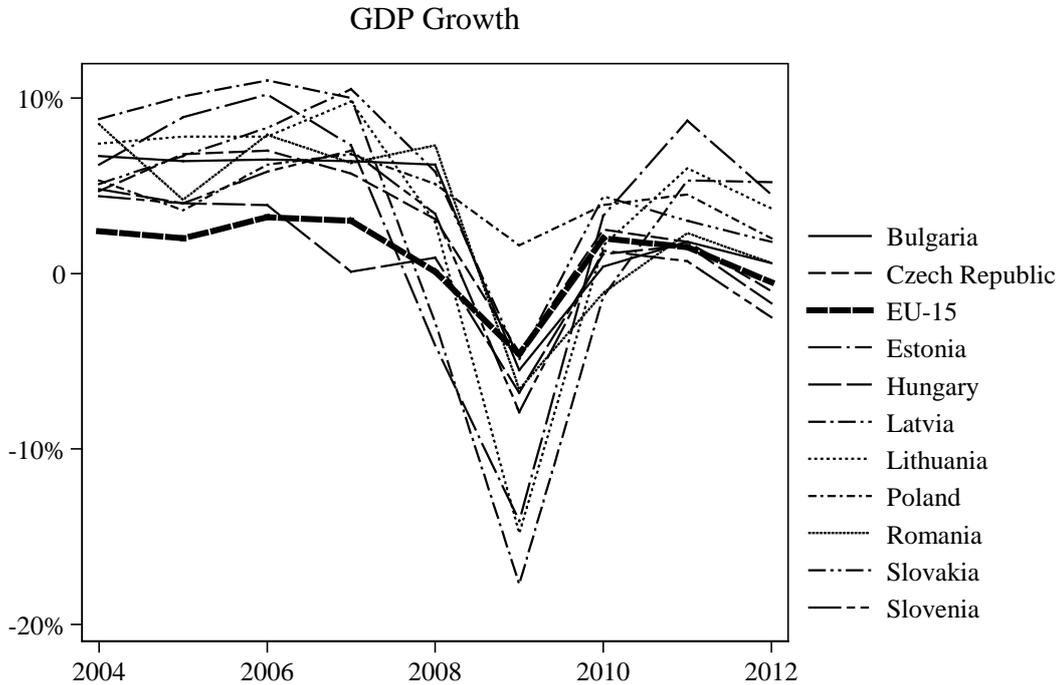
While the 2004-2007 Eastern enlargement constituted an unprecedented challenge to the European Union, soon enough another, even greater challenge arose. The onset of the global financial crisis and the ensuing recession, followed by the banking and sovereign debt crises in several EU member states have painfully highlighted the flaws inherent in the setup of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). The political inability of European leaders to efficiently tackle the problems, and the austerity measures which followed in several EU member states, proved to be a ripe ground for populism and a growing popular and party-based Euroscepticism (Serricchio, Tsakatika, and Quaglia 2013; Demetriou 2014), even in countries such as Germany, where questioning the foundations of European integrations was until recently unthinkable (Scicluna 2014).

Whereas problems in the periphery of the old member states focused most of the attention in the coverage of the European branch of the global crisis, CEE-10 new member states also paid a high price for choosing the Western economic model. As the graph below illustrates, GDP growth in the CEE EU member states after the 2004 enlargement has been steadily higher than the average of the EU-15, contributing to a closing of the gap in GDP between new and old member states. However, after experiencing several years of economic boom, when the financial crisis made its mark

on European economies, recessions hit the CEE economies harder than most of the old member states (see Figure 1) and further divisions emerged between these countries.

Poland is the only EU economy which managed to avoid recession at the end of the first decade of the XXI century. The Baltic countries, on the other hand, have deeply suffered the disadvantages of deregulated capitalism. As early as 2008-2009 these champions of neoliberal market policies experienced profound recessions, managing to overcome the problems relatively quickly by implementing even more reforms at the expense of their citizens' suffering. As Tsoukalis (2014) notes, the Soviet experience seems to have prepared the citizens of these countries for endurance and pain which followed from more structural reforms during the crisis. Moreover, countries such as Romania and Hungary continue to suffer from a combination of slower change with erroneous policy choices and both had to apply for financial assistance from the EU and the IMF, when the global economic downturn struck Europe. Overall, as Connolly remarks, with the exception of Poland, the region suffered "a more severe reversal of pre-crisis output trends than any other region of the world economy" (Connolly 2012, 64).

Figure 1. GDP growth (2004-2012)



Note: Graph represents percentage change over previous period. The detailed data for all EU-27 countries can be found in the annex. Data: Eurostat.

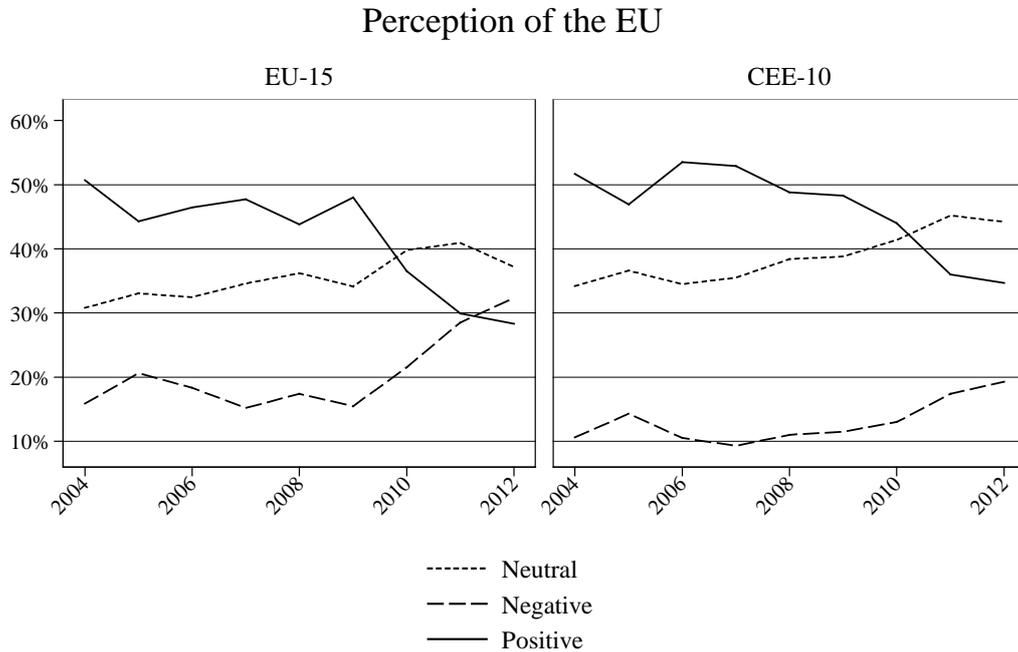
Problems in the periphery of the Eurozone also affected the CEE-10 countries more directly. Slovakia, for instance, as a Eurozone member, was one of the countries which contributed to the first bailout of Greece. This caused a severe government crisis and public opinion uproar, as it was portrayed in the media as “the poor Slovaks paying for the rich Greeks” (*The Economist* 2010). Thus, just a few years after becoming EU members, as a result of the global financial crisis, the “downside of capitalist system embedded in a global economic order” was revealed in CEE-10 countries (Hoen 2011, 31) and some of the previously established roles within the community have been inverted. Problems did not come from the new member states, rather from the heart of the pre-existing institutional setup and longer-established members. In the crisis, the CEE countries were “green islands” (Poland), champions of reform (the Baltic states)

and even contributors to the rescue funds constituted to save some of the most troubled EU members (Slovakia, and the rest of the CEE countries which adopted euro as their currency in the recent years). In what follows, I explore how these challenges affected European attitudes in three aspects: the image of the EU, its perceived meanings, and the levels of European identity, with substantial focus is on the comparison between new and old member states of the EU.

### **3.1 Perception of the EU**

As the effects of the crisis made its mark on public opinion, popular support for integration suffered a clear decline over the recent years. The economic problems triggered by the global financial crisis have been successfully exploited as political munition among populist, nationalist, and Eurosceptic parties, as the 2014 elections to the European Parliament and several national elections made clear. These changes in the perceptions of the EU are very easily traceable when we look at public opinion surveys of EU attitudes from the last decade.

**Figure 2. Change in perception of the European Union (2004-2012)**



Note: Survey question: In general, does the EU conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive neutral, fairly negative or very negative image? Responses very positive and fairly positive grouped as “Positive” and fairly negative and very negative grouped as “Negative”. EU-15 – EU member states before 2004, CEE-10 – ten new member states from Central Eastern Europe who joined in 2004/2007.

As Figure 2 illustrates, in the period around the Eastern accession (2004-2007) more than 50% of European citizens held a positive image of the EU, and only 10-15% exhibited a negative stance, with a slightly higher share in the old member states. At that point, around one third of European public opinion remained neutral regarding the EU and did not admit to holding either a positive or a negative image. These numbers, however, became quite different as the economic problems unraveled. In 2012, only one third of EU citizens remained positive about the EU in the old member states, and those holding a positive view of the EU (30%) were actually outnumbered by those with a negative perception (31,5%). This change was slightly less dramatic in the CEE-10 new member states. We can see that there positive perceptions dropped to less than 40% but in contrast to the more established members, still the share of those with a negative

view of the EU is only around 20%. Therefore, it seems that the drop in positive views in CEE-10 countries had as its effect a bigger number of people without a clear image of the EU, rather than a dramatic rise in negative attitudes, as occurred in the old member states of the EU.

If we look further at the ways in which these perceptions changed in different EU countries, we can see that, as could be expected, the biggest drops in support can be observed in the EU-15 periphery most hardly hit by the Eurozone crisis (see Table 1). Unsurprisingly, positive perceptions of the EU in Greece, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Ireland plummeted by 30-40% during the crisis and the negative views rose by 20-30%. As a result, by 2012 the share of positive stances dropped to less than 30% in EU-15, and negative views of the EU almost doubled. Unsurprisingly, Britain is the most acute example of popular Euroscepticism in the old member states—in 2012 only 16% of the Brits still hold a positive view of the EU while almost half of the citizens (47%) have a negative image. Positive perceptions of the EU in the new member states of Central and Eastern Europe dropped significantly as well, however, here the drop was less steep, as observed before. In contrast to the old member states, new European citizens became to greater extent neutral about the EU (almost 45%) and in 2012 positive views of the EU (average of 35%) still outnumbered the negative stance (around 20%) in CEE countries. Among the most Eurosceptic new member states, we find Czech Republic and Hungary, with slightly more than one third of its citizens considering that the EU has a negative image.

Table 1. Perceptions of the EU, by country (2004/2012)

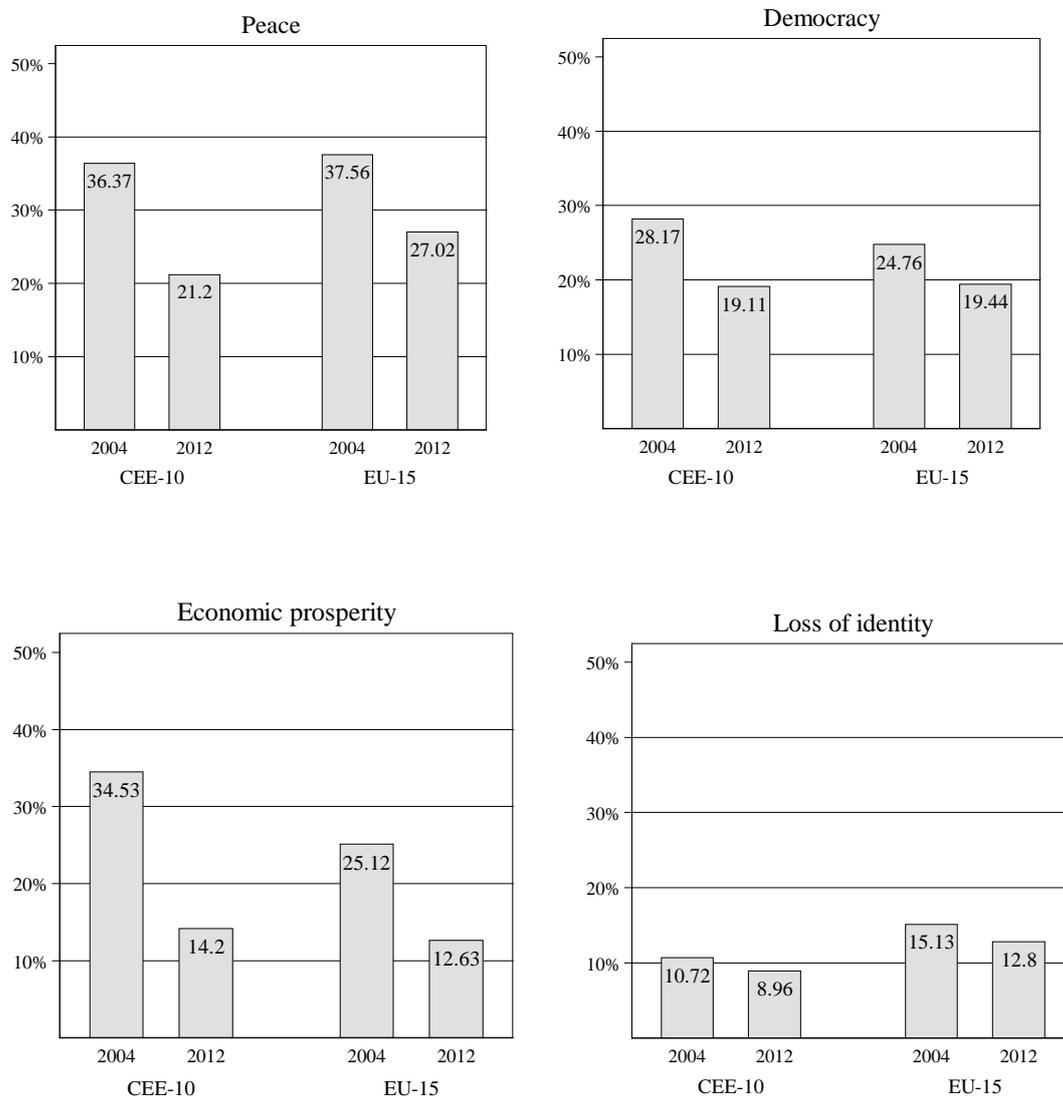
Country	2004			2012			Change 2004-2012		
	Negative %	Neutral %	Positive %	Negative %	Neutral %	Positive %	Negative %	Neutral %	Positive %
<b>Austria</b>	26,7	39,1	34,3	36,0	41,5	22,6	+9,3	+2,4	-11,7
<b>Belgium</b>	8,4	31,9	59,8	24,7	38,5	36,8	+16,4	+6,6	-23,0
<b>Denmark</b>	20,6	39,8	39,6	18,5	49,0	32,5	-2,0	+9,1	-7,1
<b>Finland</b>	22,0	44,1	33,9	33,2	44,9	21,9	+11,2	+0,8	-12,0
<b>France</b>	16,7	28,9	54,4	26,8	33,4	39,8	+10,1	+4,5	-14,6
<b>Germany</b>	16,4	36,9	46,7	26,5	43,7	29,8	+10,1	+6,8	-16,9
<b>Great Britain</b>	30,5	33,9	35,5	47,1	36,6	16,4	+16,5	+2,7	-19,2
<b>Greece</b>	10,2	30,2	59,6	41,7	32,7	25,6	+31,5	+2,6	-34,0
<b>Ireland</b>	5,0	17,6	77,4	28,9	34,4	36,7	+23,9	+16,8	-40,7
<b>Italy</b>	7,5	26,1	66,4	29,6	40,3	30,2	+22,1	+14,1	-36,2
<b>Luxembourg</b>	9,8	28,3	61,9	24,1	34,2	41,8	+14,3	+5,9	-20,2
<b>Portugal</b>	12,7	27,3	60,0	38,2	36,8	25,0	+25,5	+9,5	-35,0
<b>Spain</b>	6,6	31,3	62,1	33,9	43,3	22,8	+27,3	+12,0	-39,3
<b>Sweden</b>	31,5	30,0	38,6	33,3	37,2	29,5	+1,9	+7,2	-9,1
<b>The Netherlands</b>	17,0	39,2	43,8	30,1	35,7	34,3	+13,1	-3,5	-9,6
<b>Mean EU-15</b>	<b>16,1</b>	<b>32,3</b>	<b>51,6</b>	<b>31,5</b>	<b>38,8</b>	<b>29,7</b>	<b>+15,4</b>	<b>+6,5</b>	<b>-21,9</b>
<b>Bulgaria</b>	10,0	21,8	68,2	15,4	29,6	55,0	+5,4	+7,8	-13,2
<b>Czech Republic</b>	20,6	41,4	38,0	34,0	43,7	22,3	+13,5	+2,3	-15,7
<b>Estonia</b>	12,6	50,2	37,2	12,2	54,0	33,9	-0,4	+3,8	-3,3
<b>Hungary</b>	14,7	40,0	45,3	33,3	42,7	24,0	+18,6	+2,7	-21,3
<b>Latvia</b>	15,4	44,8	39,8	15,5	58,9	25,7	+0,1	+14,1	-14,2
<b>Lithuania</b>	5,0	33,0	62,0	11,6	53,7	34,8	+6,6	+20,7	-27,3
<b>Poland</b>	11,3	41,6	47,1	14,2	45,3	40,5	+2,9	+3,7	-6,5
<b>Romania</b>	4,3	14,5	81,1	14,6	35,1	50,4	+10,2	+20,5	-30,8
<b>Slovakia</b>	11,3	43,4	45,4	23,4	42,5	34,1	+12,2	-0,9	-11,3
<b>Slovenia</b>	5,2	30,5	64,3	23,6	37,4	39,0	+18,4	+6,9	-25,3
<b>Mean CEE-10</b>	<b>11,0</b>	<b>36,1</b>	<b>52,8</b>	<b>19,8</b>	<b>44,3</b>	<b>36,0</b>	<b>+8,7</b>	<b>+8,1</b>	<b>-16,9</b>

Data: Eurobarometer 62.0 (2004) and 77.3 (2012). Entries in the table are percentages.

### 3.2 Meanings of the EU

The increase in general Euroscepticism is not the only result of the economic problems of the recent years. Another way to understand the changes in European public opinion in the last decade is to look at the meanings which citizens attach to the EU.

Figure 3. Meanings of the EU in new and old member states (2004 and 2012)



Note: Question: What does the EU mean to you personally? The figures show the average share of respondents who mentioned the item in a given year. Cyprus and Malta excluded. Data: EB 62.0 and EB 77.3.

Rise in general negative attitudes is accompanied by a significant drop in the share of citizens who consider the EU can still be associated with some of its traditional positive goals and values. Most notably, in 2012 significantly fewer citizens continue to believe that the EU embodies its founding values of preserving peace and democracy (see figure 3). The drop in positive meanings is especially apparent as far as EU association with economic prosperity is concerned. Between 2004 and 2012, the share of citizens who think that European integration entails economic well-being halved in the countries of EU-15. This drop is even steeper among the citizens of the new member states. While in 2004 CEE-10 citizens were significantly more positive about the fact that EU membership could bring economic prosperity than their Western counterparts, there has been a negative convergence, and in 2012 only around 14% –one third of the 2004 level–continue to believe so. Here it can be assumed that such drop is, at least partially, the effect of a more direct experience of integration after 2004 and the realization that the EU will not bring economic prosperity overnight, and not only the consequence of economic crisis.

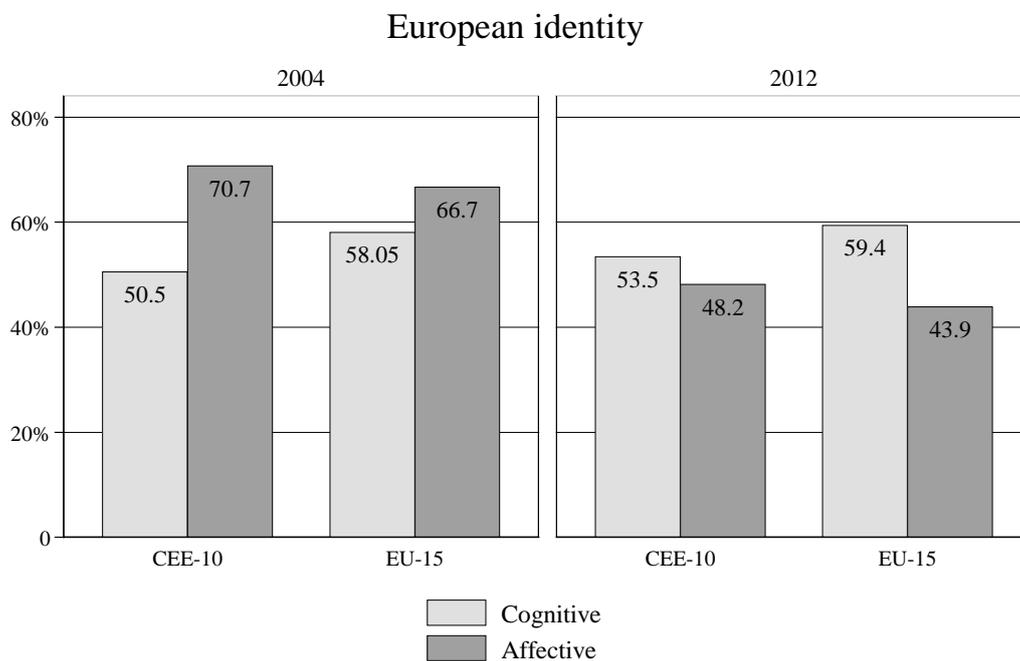
Finally, there are also positive developments. In terms of threat perception, and in spite of the rise in popularity of parties with nationalist stances, the share of citizens who consider the EU to be threat to national identity has actually dropped between 2004 and 2012. It is especially low in the new member states (less than 10%), a picture which contradicts the view that citizens in these countries could possibly perceive the EU predominantly as a threat to their recently regained sovereignty.

### **3.3 European identity**

The role of political identities in political systems' stability lies in the fact that they provide a pool of positive attitudes that helps members to accept or, at least, tolerate

outputs the effects of which are not entirely to their benefit (or even opposed to their own interests) (Easton 1979, 273). Therefore, the existence of a well-rooted political identity facilitates the emergence of a more stable support for the political system. Political identity, as part of subjective legitimacy—that is a legitimacy of the political system which rests upon the beliefs of the citizens—, is necessary for a political system to survive major shocks and hard times which might fall on the community pointing to the functional value of identity (Fuchs 2011). Accordingly, in the context of the EU, empirical studies confirm that European identification serves as a buffer against negative attitudes (Wessels 2007) which puts this element of EU attitudes at the center stage of the developments during the crisis of the first decade of 2000s.

**Figure 4. European identity (2004 and 2012)**



Note: Cognitive European identity: share of “National and European,” “European and National”, “Only European”. Affective European identity: Share of “Very attached” and “Fairly attached” to Europe/European Union. Cyprus and Malta excluded. Data: EB 62.0 and EB 77.3.

Here I operationalize European identity in its affective and cognitive aspect (cf. Citrin and Sides 2004). In these terms we can observe two major developments in the EU in the context of the Great Recession of the first decade of XXI century (see Figure 4). On the one hand, cognitive European identity, has actually grown—in spite of the crisis, slightly more people declare to identify as Europeans in 2012 than in 2004, both in new member states, as well as in the old ones. The share of those who identify either as European and national (or the other way round) or solely European is, on average, around 60% in the old member states. Cognitive European identity is slightly lower in CEE-10 countries due to shorter socialization of the older generation as European citizens (Ceka and Sojka, forthcoming). and persistent differences in levels of economic and social welfare. Still, between 2004 and 2012 the share of citizens who acknowledge the European element of their self-perception grows from 50.5% to 53.5% in CEE-10 countries.

The picture is less positive, however, when we look at the affective component of European identity: while in 2004 almost 70% of EU citizens (slightly more in the new member states than in EU-15) declared to feel attached or very attached to Europe, in 2012 this number dropped to around 45%, being still slightly higher in the new member states (48%). These observations support the theoretical distinction in terms of the two dimensions of identity. Cognitive European identity (based on perceived similarity, cf. Turner et al. 1987) remains rather stable, while affective identity—established through the association of positive meanings with the object of identification (Tajfel 1981)—, decreases as the general opinion of citizens on the EU becomes substantially worse.

What conclusion can be drawn from this initial descriptive picture? Unarguably, Euroscepticism has become an acute issue in the post-recession Europe. However, in the

case of the new member states, the predominant trend seems to be towards becoming more neutral, rather, than negative, while negative attitudes increase sharply in EU-15, especially in its Southern periphery. Furthermore, even if after several years of crisis, fewer citizens perceive the EU in the positive terms of peace, democracy, and economic prosperity, feelings of threat to identity have not been activated in spite of the growing presence of Eurosceptic and nationalist parties. European identity remains stable in its cognitive aspect (or even grows, if only slightly) while the affective identification has decreased, but still around 40%-50% of EU citizens feel attached to the EU. In this context the main question of the present paper is whether such declining perceptions of the EU as an effective economic actor affects the determinants of EU support over this period, especially in terms of the importance of political identities, as the “reservoir of goodwill” which might maintain support for a political system in times of its declining outputs.

#### **4. Research design and data**

In order to answer the main question of the paper, I devise a comparative empirical research design with Eurobarometer data. Specifically, I focus on two time points: autumn 2004 (EB 62.0), shortly after accession of the first group of Central and Eastern European member states, and spring 2012 (EB 77.3), after the Great Recession has made its mark on European economies and societies. Admittedly, in order to trace changes in attitudes over time a panel dataset would be more appropriate, however, this kind of data is not readily available, much less for all Central European countries. Eurobarometer, on the other hand, does include all EU countries in its regular surveys and it could possibly be used to construct a model which would better account for change at the country-level European identification over time. However, the EB does

not contain questions regarding perceptions of the EU and identity in most of its studies after 2004. After a careful inspection of the available data, the two chosen datasets constitute the best possible combination of data availability and time spread, to reflect the impact the Great Recession, and more specifically the Eurozone problems, on perceptions of the EU in the new member states.

Attitudes of citizens towards the EU are formed at the individual level with intervening factors such as socio-economic characteristics, domestic proxies, economic expectations, values and political identities. This paper explores—within the limits of the dataset at hand—the effects of instrumental rationality and affective factors while controlling for the impact of normative evaluations and domestic proxies.

It is also necessary to take into account the social embeddedness of individuals in the context of specific countries with different economic and political characteristics. Unarguably, such disparities between countries have become more salient with the Eastward enlargement of the EU as the CEE-10 constitute a group of relatively poorer countries. Furthermore, some scholars argue that such differences are also present in terms of attitudes in the new member states, shaped to an important extent by previous non-democratic regimes, with most notable differences in levels of trust (Mishler and Rose 1997; Thomassen and Bäck 2009), civic engagement (Fuchs and Klingemann 2002), and salience of political identities (Weiss 2003). A multilevel model allows me to test for this assumed difference and adequately account for the clustering of the data.

#### **4.1 Dependent variable**

The dependent variable in this part of the study is the perception of the European Union, as I am substantially interested in exploring the impact of interests and identity

on its positive perceptions. The measure used in this study is the EU image item from the EB study, with the following question:

*In general, does the EU conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive neutral, fairly negative or very negative image?*

There are several arguments in favor of using this item. In previous research on EU support this measure has been used less frequently than others, such as positive/negative perception of EU membership or perceived country benefit from membership, both more directly related to regime support. However these more traditional measures have not been repeated in EB surveys since 2011. Moreover, the EU image question offers the possibility to choose between answers which vary from “very negative”, “negative”, “neutral”, to “positive”, and “very positive”. Therefore, this survey item is more sensible to different positions regarding the EU as it is measured on a 5 point scale, in comparison to the binary character of the membership support measures. Thus, it allows to express feelings about the EU which might vary between outright rejection, mild rejection, through indifference to being mildly positive and very positive about the EU. Most notably, in some of the recent studies of EU attitude formation, the importance of indifferent positions receives a renewed consideration (Stoeckel 2013; Van Ingelgom 2014) and my assumption is that it is particularly important to account for these positions in the context of more recent member states, where citizens might be less knowledgeable about the EU and adopt such positions more readily. Therefore, the image variable constitutes the most suitable operationalization of the dependent variable in this part of the study.

## 4.2 Independent variables: Utilitarian expectations and identities

The independent variables included in the models reflect the main objective of the paper: to verify to what extent utilitarian perceptions and political identities constitute determinants of EU attitudes, before and after the crisis.

The *utilitarian* factors include several predictors: occupation, education, personal expectations, and perception of the EU in terms of economic prosperity. As noted above, in the context of the new member states of Central and Eastern Europe, early analyses emphasized the importance of the social divide between transitional winners and losers. Occupation and education can be fitted in this dimension since higher educated and white collar workers have been found by previous studies to be significantly more positive about European integration due to their privileged position to reap benefits from the process. Central to the utilitarian dimension is a general positive orientation in terms of future expectations (the “winners of transition” argument), operationalized with a variable constructed on the basis of three distinct survey questions which refer to one’s future expectations regarding life in general, financial situation of the household and personal job situation<sup>2</sup>. In concordance with the discussion above, I expect to find a positive impact of future expectations, which should be have a stronger effect for the citizens of CEE-10 countries, as transitional winners will support to greater extent further reforms which EU membership entails. The last element of the utilitarian approach is a more general consideration that EU membership brings economic prosperity. This explanatory dimension is referred to as the “economic factor” and it is expected to have a positive impact on overall EU attitude. Overall, I

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<sup>2</sup> The Cronbach’s alpha measure of scale reliability is 0,709 for the 2004 survey and 0,726 for the 2012 data. An overview of the elements considered in the models, its operationalization and summary statistics can be found in Annexes 3-5.

expect the utilitarian factor to have a stronger effect in the new member states of CEE, as EU accession has been portrayed in these countries as a means to achieving Western European levels of economic development and general welfare.

As my previous discussion has shown, even though most studies of EU attitudes in the new member states focus on the utilitarian and ideological factors of EU support, there are important reasons to expect that identification constitutes an important element of EU support in these countries. Thus, in terms of the impact of political identities, there are four elements to this dimension which operationalize the influence of *affective* factors in EU attitude formation, relative to the national and European identities and their relationship. National identity in its affective aspect is controlled for with the inclusion of the variable which refers to attachment to one's country. I also include perception of the EU as threatening to the existence of national identities (association of the EU with the threat of loss of cultural identity). Identity threat should have a negative impact on EU support, and its effect could be stronger in the new member states, as in these countries the fresh memories of regaining national sovereignty might make it dearer to their citizens.

European identity is operationalized with two variables which account for the two dimensions of identity as mentioned above<sup>3</sup>. Cognitive European identity denotes the self-perception as European (either as part of the national belonging, or solely as a European), in contrast to holding an exclusive national identity (perceiving oneself as

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<sup>3</sup> While affective and cognitive European identity both refer to the underlying dimension of European identity, there are theoretical arguments in favor of distinguishing them as substantially different dimensions of the concept. Nevertheless, in order to exclude possible problems with multicollinearity in the model (that is, the possibility that there could be a linear relationship between these independent variables which would cause the other coefficients in the regression to be unstable), I checked the bivariate correlations of independent variables in the model, as well as ran a series of parallel regression models with the individual level independent variables and calculated the variance inflation factor (VIF) as suggested by Fox (1991). The tests did not reveal any multicollinearity problems.

only national). The affective European identity, on the other hand, is operationalized as attachment to Europe/EU<sup>4</sup> as it denotes identification based on evaluative attitudes and positive distinction. Thus, in line with the previous discussions, I expect that European identity constitutes at least as important determinant of positive EU perceptions as the utilitarian rationale, also immediately following the enlargement.

### 4.3 Control variables

The control variables include general *socio-economic indicators* such as age (coded in 6 category age cohorts), sex (reference category: woman), and habitat (reference category: village), as well as elements related to the most relevant alternative explanatory frameworks: normative factors and domestic proxies. As noted before, some of the previous studies have argued that *normative* orientations could constitute an important determinant of EU attitudes, especially in the post-socialist new member states, structured to greater extent by the experience of transitions. While the empirical evidence largely rejected the view that these elements should have more impact in the new member states, I include them as control variables. Normative preferences regarding EU membership as a source of democratic stability and peace, while not the most significant, could still constitute a noteworthy element of EU attitude formation.

Moreover, an important issue to be taken into account is that European integration is a relatively new phenomenon in Central Eastern Europe, and citizens could only form a more or less informed opinion on the process once their country had become a member state. This observation triggered a set of studies which look into the role of *national proxies* in the new member states (Guerra 2008; Wagner 2012).

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<sup>4</sup> The 2004 survey includes the question of attachment to Europe, while the 2012 survey asks about feeling attached to the European Union. The EB has not asked about attachment to Europe since 2007.

However, it is important to point out that the use of heuristics in Central and Eastern European member states is more plausible in terms of perceptions of national economic and political performance, rather than taking cues from political parties. As Guerra (2012) notes, the very low levels of political trust in these countries make it unlikely that people would form their opinion regarding the EU on the basis of their partisan orientation<sup>5</sup>. Thus, for this reason I include the perception of national democracy and trust in national institutions as controls in the model.

Finally, in terms of the contextual level variables, previous research provides empirical evidence on the relationship between national economic characteristics –such as macro-level indicators of national economy and whether a state is a net beneficiary of EU budget– and support for integration (Anderson and Reichert 1995; Eichenberg and Dalton 2007). Therefore, in the second part of my explanatory analysis (hierarchical models with data for all EU-27 countries), I control for the effect of the context of the new member states (CEE-10) as well as some principal economic characteristics: GDP growth and net fiscal transfers from the EU (as a % of GNI)<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> This untrustworthiness which opposes “us” the people against “them”, the *nomenklatura* of communist parties, is one of the most important legacies of the non-democratic socialist regimes institutions (Mishler and Rose 1997).

<sup>6</sup> As the new member states are significantly poorer than the EU-15, especially in 2004, there could be some multicollinearity issues between the dummy for CEE-10 countries and contextual economic indicators such as Net fiscal transfers in 2004. In order to discard such potential problems, I ran a series of diagnostic tests on the issue as suggested by Fox (1991) and the multicollinearity in the 2004 model does not seem to be causing any problems (square root of VIF is not greater than 2), therefore, it should not affect the robustness of the results presented.

## 5. Results and discussion

### 5.1 Determinants of individual EU attitudes in Central and Eastern Europe, before and after the crisis

The first step of my explanatory analysis is to assess the importance of the two factors of interest—identities and utilitarian considerations—as part of the broader model of European attitudes in Central and Eastern Europe, before and after the crisis. In order to compare the impact of the different theoretical factors I run a series of regression analyses in all CEE-10 countries for 2004 (Table 2) and 2012 (Table 3)<sup>7</sup>. While there is much heterogeneity between the countries of the region, all elements included in the models account for a good portion of variation in the individual-level attitudes towards the EU immediately after the accession (Table 2). The adjusted R<sup>2</sup> is anywhere between an acceptable 19% of explained variance (Slovenia) and a satisfactory 44% in Bulgaria.

As far as the controls are concerned, *domestic proxies* seem to have some impact, especially in terms of satisfaction with national democracy, and it is overall positive—those satisfied with the workings of national democracy and trusting national institutions develop more positive perceptions of the EU. The impact of satisfaction with national democracy is the strongest in Czech Republic and Estonia. *Normative factors*, on the other hand, receive a more mixed support. Their impact is relatively low with the exception of perceptions of EU as a source of democracy in Czech Republic, Bulgaria, and Poland. Therefore, in line with previous research, normative reasons do not constitute the strongest predictors of EU attitudes in the region.

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<sup>7</sup> In order to make the results of the regressions more easily interpretable, all variables have been centered on their mean. Furthermore, all numeric variables have been divided by two times their standard deviation, allowing the interpretation of numerical variables in the same way as binary output – as change from low to high values. For a detailed discussion of this approach see Gelman (2008) and Gelman and Hill (2006).

**Table 2. Linear regression models predicting positive perceptions of EU in CEE-10 (2004)**

Variables	Czech Rep.	Estonia	Hungary	Latvia	Lithuania	Poland	Slovakia	Slovenia	Bulgaria	Romania
<b>Controls</b>										
Age	0,156 (0,086)	0,095 (0,079)	<b>-0,159*</b> (0,080)	<b>0,192*</b> (0,085)	0,156 (0,088)	0,159 (0,098)	0,073 (0,072)	0,078 (0,098)	0,088 (0,106)	-0,003 (0,083)
Sex (Ref.: Woman)	-0,085 (0,050)	-0,003 (0,052)	-0,089 (0,052)	0,064 (0,059)	0,069 (0,058)	0,018 (0,057)	-0,061 (0,044)	<b>-0,148**</b> (0,055)	-0,012 (0,060)	-0,001 (0,060)
Habitat (Ref.: Village)	-0,091 (0,052)	0,014 (0,053)	<b>-0,207***</b> (0,054)	0,044 (0,059)	0,042 (0,063)	<b>-0,159**</b> (0,060)	0,020 (0,043)	-0,071 (0,055)	<b>-0,137*</b> (0,069)	-0,031 (0,054)
National trust	<b>0,190**</b> (0,059)	<b>0,271***</b> (0,053)	<b>0,236***</b> (0,053)	<b>0,260***</b> (0,064)	<b>0,149*</b> (0,063)	<b>0,278**</b> (0,091)	<b>0,178***</b> (0,051)	<b>0,088</b> (0,056)	<b>0,195**</b> (0,074)	<b>0,120*</b> (0,054)
National democracy	<b>0,381***</b> (0,061)	<b>0,420***</b> (0,066)	<b>0,232***</b> (0,057)	<b>0,201***</b> (0,058)	<b>0,235***</b> (0,062)	<b>0,256***</b> (0,057)	<b>0,202***</b> (0,051)	<b>0,203**</b> (0,066)	<b>0,174**</b> (0,063)	<b>0,466***</b> (0,064)
EU=peace	<b>0,135*</b> (0,053)	<b>0,164**</b> (0,060)	<b>0,204***</b> (0,055)	0,123 (0,075)	0,078 (0,064)	<b>0,179**</b> (0,062)	<b>0,179***</b> (0,046)	0,097 (0,057)	<b>0,169*</b> (0,067)	0,084 (0,062)
EU =democracy	<b>0,344***</b> (0,058)	-0,042 (0,067)	<b>0,219***</b> (0,056)	0,036 (0,085)	0,099 (0,069)	<b>0,282***</b> (0,069)	0,072 (0,052)	0,056 (0,061)	<b>0,300***</b> (0,068)	<b>0,143*</b> (0,060)
<b>Utilitarian considerations</b>										
Occupation (omitted)										
Education < 15	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Education >15	0,057 (0,084)	<b>0,277**</b> (0,086)	0,090 (0,060)	0,070 (0,093)	0,152 (0,088)	-0,086 (0,081)	0,093 (0,070)	0,036 (0,077)	-0,035 (0,083)	0,026 (0,068)
Education >20	<b>0,232*</b> (0,104)	<b>0,215*</b> (0,091)	<b>0,172*</b> (0,086)	0,004 (0,101)	0,061 (0,091)	-0,015 (0,094)	0,147 (0,090)	0,035 (0,090)	0,031 (0,097)	0,057 (0,080)
Personal expectations	<b>0,291***</b> (0,076)	<b>0,246***</b> (0,050)	<b>0,169**</b> (0,055)	<b>0,322***</b> (0,060)	<b>0,233***</b> (0,059)	<b>0,265***</b> (0,064)	<b>0,183***</b> (0,049)	0,042 (0,056)	<b>0,196**</b> (0,064)	<b>0,140**</b> (0,051)
EU = prosperity	<b>0,368***</b> (0,057)	0,076 (0,064)	<b>0,257***</b> (0,058)	<b>0,196*</b> (0,078)	<b>0,343***</b> (0,059)	<b>0,340***</b> (0,068)	<b>0,494***</b> (0,046)	<b>0,266***</b> (0,060)	<b>0,552***</b> (0,066)	<b>0,320***</b> (0,059)
<b>Affective factors</b>										
National identity	-0,002 (0,061)	<b>-0,180**</b> (0,057)	<b>-0,164*</b> (0,074)	-0,019 (0,059)	0,019 (0,064)	<b>-0,149*</b> (0,076)	-0,089 (0,045)	-0,007 (0,073)	-0,113 (0,075)	-0,057 (0,055)
EU=loss of identity	<b>-0,267***</b> (0,072)	-0,018 (0,064)	<b>-0,524***</b> (0,114)	0,129 (0,086)	<b>-0,348***</b> (0,091)	<b>-0,333**</b> (0,106)	<b>-0,280***</b> (0,058)	<b>-0,285***</b> (0,075)	<b>-0,701***</b> (0,096)	<b>-0,257*</b> (0,108)
European identity (Affective)	<b>0,367***</b> (0,074)	<b>0,389***</b> (0,057)	<b>0,310***</b> (0,072)	<b>0,468***</b> (0,058)	<b>0,315***</b> (0,060)	<b>0,283***</b> (0,071)	<b>0,267***</b> (0,053)	<b>0,338***</b> (0,068)	<b>0,143*</b> (0,061)	<b>0,337***</b> (0,062)
(Cognitive)	<b>0,206***</b> (0,051)	<b>0,129*</b> (0,055)	<b>0,253***</b> (0,055)	<b>0,255***</b> (0,059)	0,002 (0,061)	<b>0,259***</b> (0,060)	<b>0,264***</b> (0,046)	<b>0,135*</b> (0,057)	<b>0,303***</b> (0,067)	<b>0,174**</b> (0,059)
Constant	3,343*** (0,041)	3,380*** (0,034)	3,299*** (0,043)	3,461*** (0,038)	3,772*** (0,038)	3,579*** (0,049)	3,425*** (0,036)	3,687*** (0,033)	3,783*** (0,049)	3,636*** (0,038)
Observations	877	813	808	797	758	759	989	771	699	794
R-squared	0,387	0,296	0,374	0,286	0,237	0,316	0,416	0,215	0,462	0,316

Note: Entries in the table are coefficients from a linear regression. \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001. Results for occupation not shown. Dependent variable – perception of the EU. All independent variables are standardized. Data: EB 62.0, October-November 2004.

Unsurprisingly, *utilitarian considerations* do matter across CEE; however, not in terms of resources such as higher education or different occupation status (the latter was not significant in any of the models, and it is not shown due to space limitations).

Rather, utilitarian considerations matter in terms of a more straightforward positive

future outlook or positive economic perceptions. In these terms, winners of transitions (those with positive expectations for the future) tend to be more positive about the EU in all of the countries except for Slovenia. The second element of the utilitarian dimension—considering the EU as source of economic prosperity—has an even greater impact and it is only insignificant in Estonia. For half of the CEE countries—Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania—association of the EU with economic prosperity constitutes the factor with the strongest positive impact on EU perceptions. Therefore, we find strong support for the hypothesis that utilitarian calculations constitute a significant factor in EU attitude formation across the region.

In terms of the *identitarian approach*, first of all, national identity does not seem to constitute a significant obstacle to the formation of positive EU perceptions. Its negative impact in 2004 is the highest in Estonia—in line with the observations of Vetik et al (2006) who note a kind of “reactionary identity” emerging in this country around accession—, and it also seems to have some negative impact on EU perceptions in Poland and Hungary, but compared to other factors the values of the coefficients are not very high. European identity, on the other hand, matters in all of the countries. However, it becomes clear that the affective dimension is the most relevant. Affective European identity constitutes the single most important positive factor in Latvia, Slovenia, and Hungary, and it comes second in all of the other CEE states. Cognitive European identity also has a positive impact in all of the CEE-10 countries except for Lithuania, but its impact is considerably lower than that of the affective dimension in most countries (except for Bulgaria and Slovakia).

Finally, perception of the EU as a threat to cultural identity has a considerably negative impact on all of the countries except for Estonia and Latvia. This could be due to the presence of big Russian minorities in both of these countries, which constitutes a

substantial threat to national identity and potentially deactivates the negative effect of such threat from the EU. In this sense, as discussed previously, being considered European, and thus, Western, can be constructed as the opposite of association with the Soviet past, Russia, and “the East”. The impact of identity threat on Euroscepticism is the most significant in Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary, where it constitutes the most important predictor of EU attitudes in the proposed models. These are also countries in which cognitive identification has a substantial effect on EU perceptions. We can conclude, thus, that the extent to which EU perceptions are linked to issues of national identity and threat vary greatly between countries, while the impact of affective European identity is more homogenously positive across the region.

**Table 3. Linear regression models predicting positive perceptions of EU in CEE-10 (2012)**

Variables	Czech Rep.	Estonia	Hungary	Latvia	Lithuania	Poland	Slovakia	Slovenia	Bulgaria	Romania
<b>Controls</b>										
Age	-0,049 (0,078)	-0,030 (0,071)	0,091 (0,089)	-0,101 (0,077)	-0,140 (0,078)	0,013 (0,072)	0,017 (0,077)	0,096 (0,094)	0,052 (0,083)	0,070 (0,093)
Sex (Ref.: Woman)	-0,006 (0,050)	-0,053 (0,047)	0,028 (0,056)	-0,001 (0,050)	0,010 (0,049)	-0,042 (0,046)	0,007 (0,049)	0,050 (0,053)	-0,037 (0,050)	-0,039 (0,064)
Habitat (Ref.: Village)	0,077 (0,050)	-0,073 (0,047)	-0,065 (0,058)	-0,059 (0,050)	-0,003 (0,054)	-0,042 (0,051)	<b>0,127*</b> (0,049)	0,015 (0,053)	0,074 (0,059)	0,034 (0,057)
National trust	<b>0,405***</b> (0,079)	<b>0,167***</b> (0,050)	<b>0,171**</b> (0,064)	<b>0,243***</b> (0,065)	<b>0,318***</b> (0,081)	<b>0,324***</b> (0,056)	<b>0,235***</b> (0,045)	<b>0,397***</b> (0,062)	<b>0,185**</b> (0,063)	<b>0,460***</b> (0,087)
National democracy	<b>0,403***</b> (0,061)	<b>0,286***</b> (0,060)	0,116 (0,061)	<b>0,214***</b> (0,057)	<b>0,260***</b> (0,061)	<b>0,270***</b> (0,059)	<b>0,526***</b> (0,059)	<b>0,261***</b> (0,065)	<b>0,277***</b> (0,063)	<b>0,344***</b> (0,066)
EU=peace	<b>0,237***</b> (0,060)	0,076 (0,058)	<b>0,225***</b> (0,068)	0,110 (0,064)	0,038 (0,072)	<b>0,151*</b> (0,065)	0,091 (0,064)	<b>0,155*</b> (0,060)	<b>0,199***</b> (0,056)	<b>0,205*</b> (0,088)
EU=democracy	<b>0,189**</b> (0,069)	0,123 (0,070)	<b>0,303***</b> (0,069)	<b>0,191*</b> (0,086)	<b>0,354***</b> (0,069)	<b>0,316***</b> (0,057)	<b>0,338***</b> (0,068)	0,124 (0,074)	<b>0,129*</b> (0,056)	<b>0,322***</b> (0,078)
<b>Utilitarian considerations</b>										
Occupation (omitted)										
Education <15	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Education >15	0,119 (0,130)	0,006 (0,089)	-0,039 (0,070)	-0,110 (0,112)	-0,059 (0,116)	0,046 (0,071)	0,108 (0,119)	0,015 (0,082)	-0,064 (0,080)	0,139 (0,075)
Education >20	0,098 (0,142)	0,019 (0,094)	0,034 (0,096)	-0,045 (0,119)	0,010 (0,119)	0,087 (0,081)	0,148 (0,131)	0,121 (0,094)	0,062 (0,093)	<b>0,235**</b> (0,089)
Personal expectations	-0,041 (0,060)	0,057 (0,043)	<b>0,178**</b> (0,068)	0,049 (0,045)	<b>0,177***</b> (0,050)	<b>0,127*</b> (0,049)	<b>0,192***</b> (0,052)	0,112 (0,064)	0,035 (0,054)	<b>0,195**</b> (0,061)
EU=prosperity	<b>0,360***</b> (0,088)	<b>0,269**</b> (0,082)	<b>0,394***</b> (0,083)	<b>0,263**</b> (0,088)	<b>0,356***</b> (0,061)	<b>0,345***</b> (0,073)	<b>0,250***</b> (0,073)	<b>0,365***</b> (0,077)	<b>0,269***</b> (0,064)	<b>0,375***</b> (0,089)
<b>Affective factors</b>										
National identity	-0,055 (0,049)	-0,012 (0,049)	<b>-0,185***</b> (0,056)	<b>-0,111*</b> (0,051)	-0,079 (0,047)	-0,064 (0,059)	-0,060 (0,057)	<b>-0,126*</b> (0,060)	-0,098 (0,067)	<b>0,133*</b> (0,057)
EU=loss of identity	<b>-0,270***</b> (0,074)	-0,140 (0,077)	<b>-0,342***</b> (0,102)	-0,161 (0,093)	-0,086 (0,078)	<b>-0,399***</b> (0,089)	-0,091 (0,070)	<b>-0,429***</b> (0,091)	<b>-0,622***</b> (0,100)	<b>-0,274*</b> (0,123)
European identity										
(Affective)	<b>0,541***</b> (0,062)	<b>0,320***</b> (0,053)	<b>0,522***</b> (0,055)	<b>0,257***</b> (0,053)	<b>0,161**</b> (0,051)	<b>0,488***</b> (0,060)	<b>0,577***</b> (0,064)	<b>0,361***</b> (0,058)	<b>0,600***</b> (0,055)	<b>0,243***</b> (0,066)
(Cognitive)	<b>0,256***</b> (0,055)	0,086 (0,051)	<b>0,249***</b> (0,056)	<b>0,190***</b> (0,052)	<b>0,194***</b> (0,053)	0,061 (0,052)	<b>0,185**</b> (0,057)	<b>0,192**</b> (0,059)	<b>0,172**</b> (0,061)	<b>0,190**</b> (0,065)
Constant	3,046*** (0,039)	3,242*** (0,030)	2,925*** (0,036)	3,182*** (0,035)	3,433*** (0,039)	3,231*** (0,029)	3,080*** (0,035)	3,236*** (0,032)	3,513*** (0,039)	2,986*** (0,044)
Observations	892	857	900	838	841	761	900	892	875	807
R-squared	0,44	0,24	0,34	0,21	0,26	0,44	0,45	0,32	0,46	0,32

Note: Entries in the table are coefficients from a linear regression, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001. Results for occupation not shown. Dependent variable – perception of EU. All independent variables are standardized. Data: EB 77.3, May 2012.

The same explanatory models are tested for the 2012 data, after the Great Recession has made its mark on European attitudes and perceptions (Table 3). The explanatory power of the proposed model remains similar as in 2004, however the impact of the different dimensions slightly changes.

In the 2012 models, the impact of *domestic proxies* is overall positive and significant with the exception of the influence of satisfaction with national democracy in Hungary. We observe the strongest positive effect of satisfaction with democracy in Slovakia and Czech Republic, and that of national trust in Romania and, again, Czech Republic.

In terms of the *interests vs. identity* question we observe some significant changes in the determinants of EU perceptions after the crisis. National identity has a relatively small negative effect on EU perceptions in Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia, and Romania, and overall its impact is not very considerable. The identity threat variable on the other hand, seems to be losing some of its importance—it has a negative effect in six out of the ten countries with the strongest impact in Bulgaria. However, in 2012 European identity—mostly in its affective dimension—constitutes the most significant positive predictor in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. Overall the influence of affective European identity increases, as compared to the 2004 model, in six out of the ten CEE countries, while that of cognitive identification is also higher in five out of the ten cases. Therefore, there could be some evidence to support the hypothesis which posits a bigger role of identification in European attitude formation after the crisis.

As far as the *utilitarian* considerations are concerned, the biggest change can be observed in terms of how personal future expectations matter. Almost a decade after the accession referendums, the “winners of transition” argument loses its explanatory power. People who have a positive outlook towards the future tend to be significantly more positive about the EU only in half of the CEE-10 countries: Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Romania, and even there the effect of this variable is not sizable.

What can be concluded from this first step of analysis? Utilitarian considerations and European identity constitute the two strongest predictors of positive EU perception in the region. Affective factors seem to be gaining importance after the crisis, while the impact of being a “winner” of transition and integration matters less in relation to EU attitudes in 2012. In terms of sources of Euroscepticism, national identity does not necessarily constitute a significant obstacle to favorable EU attitudes in most of the countries, and, more importantly, perception of identity threat becomes somewhat less important in the recent years. In order to provide definitive answers to the hypothesis formulated at the beginning of this paper, I now turn to the analysis of the whole set of EU-27 countries’ data.

## **5.2 Determinants of EU perceptions in the enlarged EU, before and after the crisis**

As mentioned in the introduction, most studies concerned with new member states focus on data only from the region and develop specific models for CEE-10 countries. However, such approach makes it impossible to test the relevant theoretical models on the whole of the enlarged EU and provide definitive answers regarding possible differences between new and old member states. Thus, here I present a single hierarchical model which incorporates all of the EU countries, and allows me to account for the possible differential effect of the context of the new member states.

The first step in verifying the possible differences in EU attitudes formation, between new and old member states, is to compare the bivariate correlations of our main independent variables and the dependent variable in the two groups (Table 4). Here we can already observe some interesting patterns.

**Table 4. Bivariate correlations of EU perception with selected independent variables**

<b>EU perception</b>	<b>2004</b>		<b>2012</b>	
<i>Individual variables</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>
<b><i>Domestic proxies</i></b>				
National trust	0,24	0,24	0,33	0,27
National democracy	0,24	0,22	0,33	0,30
<b><i>Normative preferences</i></b>				
EU= peace	0,26	0,27	0,25	0,17
EU= democracy	0,26	0,28	0,25	0,24
<b><i>Utilitarian considerations</i></b>				
Personal expectations	0,13	0,26	0,10	0,19
EU= prosperity	0,31	0,37	0,21	0,27
<b><i>Affective factors</i></b>				
National	0,02	0,09	0,05	0,05
EU= loss of identity	-0,25	-0,16	-0,24	-0,18
European (Cognitive)	0,29	0,28	0,31	0,29
European (Affective)	0,38	0,29	0,46	0,42
<b><i>Contextual variables</i></b>				
CEE-10	0,06		0,12	
GDP growth	0,09		0,11	
Net EU fiscal transfers	0,08		0,08	

Note: Table entries are Pearson correlation coefficients. All significant at .001 level.

In terms of *utilitarian* considerations, as the analysis in the previous section indicates, personal expectations matter much more in the new member states immediately after the accession, however, their impact becomes less significant after almost a decade of membership. On the other hand, perception of EU as a source of economic prosperity matters in both groups of countries, with a stronger effect in the new member states.

As far as the *affective* factors are considered, national identity does not seem to be correlated with EU image, while perception of threat to identity has a considerable negative effect in both groups of countries. However, it is the European affective identity that has the strongest impact on positive perceptions of the EU, especially after the Great Recession.

Finally, *contextual* variables—GDP growth and net EU fiscal transfers—have a positive effect. Therefore, it seems that people in countries with higher levels of growth and bigger transfers from the EU budget tend to feel more positive about the EU. Also, new member states (CEE-10) seem to be more positive about the EU than their Western counterparts, especially after the Great Recession. The latter observation is anticipated already in the descriptive analysis of how the attitudes have changed between 2004 and 2012 in the previous sections. As previously noted, the drop in positive perceptions of the EU has been smaller in CEE-10 countries, and the increase has been mostly in neutral attitudes, and not in negative perceptions.

However, these are only correlations, and these relationships have to be verified in the general model, where the effect of other relevant variables is controlled for. This will also allow me to test for the possible differential impact of some of the variables, between new and old member states<sup>8</sup>.

The integrated model for 2004 (Table 5) offers some interesting insight into the sources of EU support immediately after the enlargement.

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<sup>8</sup> The Interclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) for the 2004 model is 10%, while in 2012 it is 5,5% - the between countries heterogeneity has clearly diminished following the economic crisis, from the aggregate level data it seems that EU countries converge not so much on a more negative stance, but a more neutral one.

**Table 5. Regression on positive perceptions of EU (2004)**

Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
<b>Individual level</b>						
<b>Controls</b>						
Age	0,017	(0,017)	0,017	(0,017)	0,015	(0,017)
Sex ( <i>Ref.: Woman</i> )	<b>-0,025*</b>	(0,011)	<b>-0,025*</b>	(0,011)	<b>-0,024*</b>	(0,011)
Habitat ( <i>Ref.: Village</i> )	-0,020	(0,011)	-0,020	(0,011)	-0,019	(0,011)
National trust	<b>0,196***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,195***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,195***</b>	(0,012)
National democracy	<b>0,249***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,249***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,247***</b>	(0,012)
EU=peace	<b>0,214***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,214***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,214***</b>	(0,012)
EU=democracy	<b>0,180***</b>	(0,013)	<b>0,181***</b>	(0,013)	<b>0,181***</b>	(0,013)
<b>Utilitarian considerations</b>						
Manual worker	Ref,		Ref,		Ref,	
House person	-0,004	(0,023)	-0,004	(0,023)	-0,007	(0,023)
Student	0,060	(0,031)	0,060	(0,031)	0,059	(0,031)
Unemployed	-0,038	(0,024)	-0,038	(0,024)	-0,037	(0,024)
Retired	0,020	(0,020)	0,020	(0,020)	0,022	(0,020)
Farmer	0,005	(0,046)	0,005	(0,046)	0,004	(0,046)
Self-employed	0,016	(0,025)	0,016	(0,025)	0,016	(0,025)
Managers	0,024	(0,021)	0,024	(0,021)	0,024	(0,021)
Other white collar	0,028	(0,019)	0,028	(0,019)	0,029	(0,019)
Education <15	Ref,		Ref,		Ref,	
Education >15	<b>0,082***</b>	(0,015)	<b>0,083***</b>	(0,015)	<b>0,083***</b>	(0,015)
Education >20	<b>0,080***</b>	(0,016)	<b>0,080***</b>	(0,016)	<b>0,081***</b>	(0,016)
Personal expectations	<b>0,159***</b>	(0,011)	<b>0,159***</b>	(0,011)	<b>0,136***</b>	(0,014)
EU= prosperity	<b>0,299***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,299***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,285***</b>	(0,016)
<b>Affective factors</b>						
National identity	<b>-0,106***</b>	(0,012)	<b>-0,106***</b>	(0,012)	<b>-0,107***</b>	(0,012)
EU=loss of identity	<b>-0,337***</b>	(0,015)	<b>-0,336***</b>	(0,015)	<b>-0,367***</b>	(0,018)
European identity						
(Affective)	<b>0,412***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,412***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,412***</b>	(0,012)
(Cognitive)	<b>0,210***</b>	(0,011)	<b>0,210***</b>	(0,011)	<b>0,209***</b>	(0,011)
<b>Contextual factors</b>						
CEE-10	<b>0,185<sup>x</sup></b>	(0,106)	0,047	(0,139)	0,047	(0,139)
GDP (2004)			0,089	(0,134)	0,088	(0,134)
Net fiscal transfers (2004)			<b>0,260**</b>	(0,092)	<b>0,260**</b>	(0,092)
<b>Cross-level interactions</b>						
CEE*Personal expectations					<b>0,063**</b>	(0,022)
CEE*EU means prosperity					0,032	(0,024)
CEE*EU means loss of identity					<b>0,095**</b>	(0,032)
Constant	3,444***	(0,051)	3,245***	(0,233)	3,248***	(0,232)
<b>Log likelihood</b>	-24251,34		-24247,38		-24237,92	
<b>AIC</b>	48556,67		48552,76		48539,83	
<b>Observations</b>	21533		21533		21533	
<b>Number of groups</b>	27		27		27	

Note: Entries are maximum likelihood estimates (xtmixed command in Stata) with standard errors in parentheses, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001, <sup>x</sup> p<0.01 (only for contextual variables). All variables are standardized. Data: EB 62.0 (2004).

Firstly, the model for 2004 demonstrates that immediately after the accession, even when we account for the effect of all relevant individual-level variables (model 1), citizens in the new member states were slightly more positive about the UE than their Western counterparts. This effect, however, disappears when controls for economic contextual variables are included (model 2) and the effect of fiscal transfers from the EU appears as especially significant. This finding is in line with previous studies which argue that the significantly more positive attitudes towards the EU in the CEE-10 countries can be explained by the relatively lower levels of economic development in these countries (Garry and Tilley 2009; Guerra 2013b).

As in the case of individual country models, domestic proxies and ideological factors seem to play a positive role as determinants of EU's image. The former, especially, positive evaluations of national democracy correlate positively with an improved image of the EU. However, it is the variables in the affective dimension that have the strongest impact, while the utilitarian factors are relevant but slightly less so.

Affective European identity constitutes the strongest determinant of positive EU perceptions, and cognitive identification also has a positive impact but it is significantly lower than the former aspect. Therefore our H2 is further confirmed. In terms of the utilitarian factors, we find some positive effect of education and positive future expectations but they are relatively small, when compared to the general economic factor, the second strongest positive predictor of EU perceptions in the whole model. In terms of negative effects, greater Euroscepticism is determined mainly by perception of identity threat, while national identity has a much smaller (albeit also significantly negative) impact.

To test for possible East-West differences, in model 3, I introduce cross-level interactions which account for a differential effect of personal expectations, association

of the EU with economic prosperity, and identity threat in the new member states. The model fit criteria indicate that the model which includes interaction terms is substantially improved. In terms of the utilitarian considerations, as expected, positive future personal expectations matter slightly more in the CEE-10 new member states while there is no difference in the way the general economic factor affects perceptions of the EU (H1 confirmed). The identity threat interaction is significant too, and it has a positive coefficient. Since the main effect of identity threat is negative this can be interpreted as a reduced effect of this variable in new member states, in other words, the negative effect of identity threat on EU perceptions is significantly smaller in CEE-10 countries.

**Table 6 Regression models on positive perceptions of EU (2012)**

Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Individual level	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
<b>Controls</b>						
Age	<b>-0,032*</b>	(0,016)	-0,031	(0,016)	-0,031	(0,016)
Sex ( <i>Ref.: Woman</i> )	<b>0,020*</b>	(0,010)	0,020	(0,010)	0,020	(0,010)
Habitat ( <i>Ref.: Village</i> )	0,002	(0,011)	0,002	(0,011)	0,002	(0,011)
National trust	<b>0,256***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,256***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,256***</b>	(0,012)
National democracy	<b>0,297***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,298***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,298***</b>	(0,012)
EU=peace	<b>0,177***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,177***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,178***</b>	(0,012)
EU=democracy	<b>0,197***</b>	(0,013)	<b>0,197***</b>	(0,013)	<b>0,198***</b>	(0,013)
<b>Utilitarian considerations</b>						
<i>Education &lt;15</i>	<i>Ref.</i>		<i>Ref.</i>		<i>Ref.</i>	
Education >15	0,020	(0,015)	0,020	(0,015)	<b>0,021</b>	(0,015)
Education >20	<b>0,064***</b>	(0,017)	<b>0,065***</b>	(0,017)	<b>0,065***</b>	(0,017)
<i>Manual worker</i>	<i>Ref.</i>		<i>Ref.</i>		<i>Ref.</i>	
House person	-0,009	(0,026)	-0,009	(0,026)	-0,010	(0,026)
Student	0,013	(0,032)	0,014	(0,032)	0,016	(0,032)
Unemployed	<b>-0,068**</b>	(0,021)	<b>-0,068**</b>	(0,021)	<b>-0,068**</b>	(0,021)
Retired	0,007	(0,020)	0,007	(0,020)	0,008	(0,020)
Farmer	0,033	(0,048)	0,032	(0,048)	0,034	(0,048)
Self-employed	-0,000	(0,024)	-0,001	(0,024)	-0,001	(0,024)
Managers	0,000	(0,022)	0,000	(0,022)	0,000	(0,022)
Other white collar	-0,004	(0,018)	-0,003	(0,018)	-0,004	(0,018)
Personal expectations	<b>0,099***</b>	(0,011)	<b>0,099***</b>	(0,011)	<b>0,108***</b>	(0,013)
EU= prosperity	<b>0,277***</b>	(0,015)	<b>0,277***</b>	(0,015)	<b>0,233***</b>	(0,019)
<b>Affective factors</b>						
National identity	<b>-0,068***</b>	(0,011)	<b>-0,068***</b>	(0,011)	<b>-0,068***</b>	(0,011)
EU=loss of identity	<b>-0,322***</b>	(0,016)	<b>-0,322***</b>	(0,016)	<b>-0,346***</b>	(0,019)
European identity						
(Affective)	<b>0,494***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,494***</b>	(0,012)	<b>0,495***</b>	(0,012)
(Cognitive)	<b>0,163***</b>	(0,011)	<b>0,163***</b>	(0,011)	<b>0,164***</b>	(0,011)
<b>Contextual factors</b>						
CEE	<b>0,329***</b>	(0,063)	<b>0,179*</b>	(0,102)	<b>0,174*</b>	(0,101)
GDP (2012)			-0,040	(0,062)	-0,038	(0,062)
Net fiscal transfers (2012)			<b>0,206*</b>	(0,095)	<b>0,211*</b>	(0,094)
<b>Cross-level interactions</b>						
CEE*Personal expectations					-0,023	(0,021)
CEE*EU means prosperity					<b>0,113***</b>	(0,030)
CEE*EU means loss of identity					<b>0,080*</b>	(0,033)
Constant	2,890***	(0,038)	2,945***	(0,047)	2,948***	(0,047)
<b>Log likelihood</b>	-26168,24		-26165,84		-26156,15	
<b>AIC</b>	52390,47		52389,68		52376,31	
<b>Observations</b>	23113		23113		23113	
<b>Number of groups</b>	27		27		27	

Note: Entries are maximum likelihood estimates (xtmixed command in Stata) with standard errors in parentheses, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001, \* p<0.01 (only for contextual variables). All variables are standardized. Data: EB 77.3 (2012).

The same explanatory model is tested with the 2012 data (Table 6), when the financial and economic crisis has already made its mark on European societies.

We can see that after the crisis, citizens in the new member states tend to be significantly more positive about the EU (model 1), and here this effect is reduced when we control for contextual economic variables, but it is still significant (model 2). Therefore, while before the crisis the overall more positive perceptions of the EU in the new member states could be explained by economic difference, it seems that in 2012, citizens in these countries tend to hold a significantly more positive view of the EU even when we control for such differences. This could be due to the fact that perceptions of the EU have been affected significantly more negatively by the effects of the crisis in the old member states, than in the CEE-10 countries, as the previous descriptive analysis reveals.

In terms of the individual-level factors there are several interesting changes in comparison to the 2004 results. First of all, the effect of *domestic proxies* increases: both national trust and satisfaction with national democracy have a more pronounced positive effect on EU image in 2012, than before the crisis. There is not much change in the (smaller) relevance of the *normative* factors.

As far as the *utilitarian* variables are concerned, the effect of positive future expectations in 2012 is rather small and becomes reduced as compared to the 2004 model. Also the coefficient for the general economic factor becomes smaller.

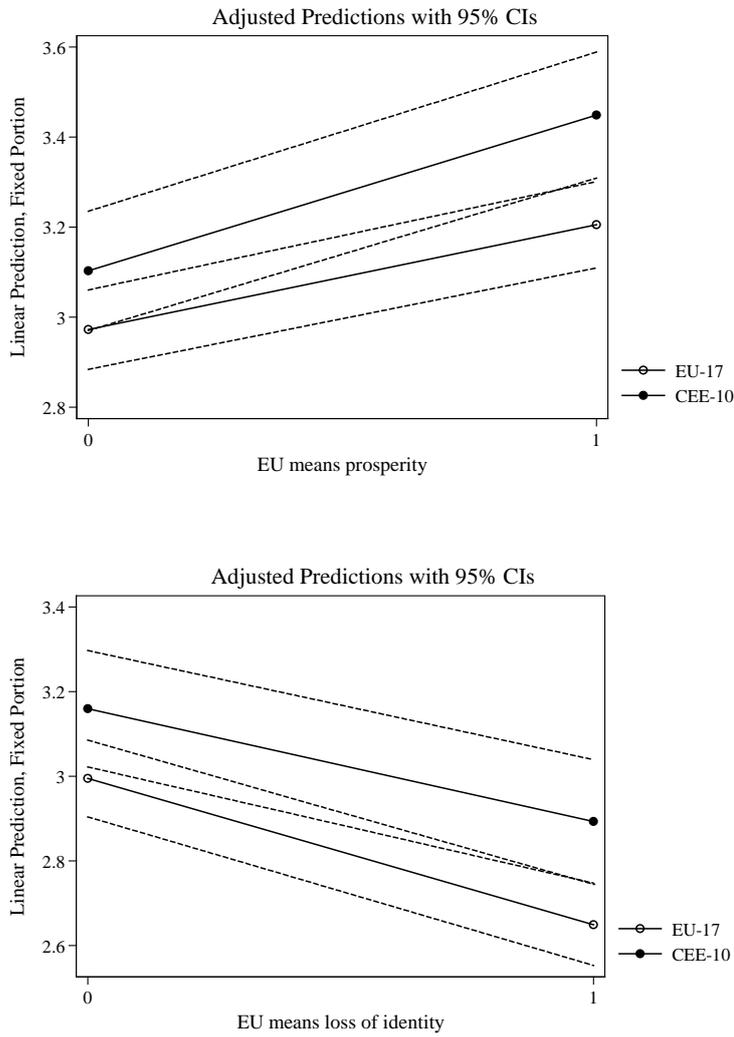
Most importantly, in comparison to 2004, *affective* European identity becomes more significant in predicting positive EU perceptions, while the importance of cognitive identity is slightly reduced. In order to confirm that there has been in fact change in the importance of affective identity as determinant of positive EU

perceptions, I run a pooled hierarchical model using the 2004 and 2012 data. The coefficient for change in 2012 as compared to 2004 is 0,082 and it is significant at .001 level (data not shown), our H10 is, therefore, confirmed, and the importance of distinguishing the different dimensions of identity is further underlined here. Positive perceptions of the EU correlate highly with affective identification and this effect becomes more important after the crisis, while cognitive identification is less relevant and does not become more salient in the comparison over time.

Finally, another relevant observation is that factors related to national identity and identity threat seem to play a less important role in the 2012 model. The negative impact of national identity is very small, and the identity threat variable continues to be a relevant source of Euroscepticism. However, overall, so far we do not find evidence of a politicization of national identities against the EU in the context of the crisis.

In terms of interactions (model 3), in 2012 personal expectations no longer seem to matter more in the CEE-10 countries, but there is a significant difference in the impact of the general economic factor. Citizens of new member states who continue to believe that EU can be associated with economic prosperity tend to be significantly more positive about it than those in the old member states who believe the same is true (see Figure 5 for a graphic representations of the interaction terms). On the other hand, the impact of identity threat in new member states is again reduced. Therefore, people who believe that EU entails identity threat tend to be negative about it, but slightly less so in Central Eastern Europe.

**Figure 5. Interaction terms, regression on EU perceptions (2012)**



Note: Predicted probabilities from regression on EU perception, calculated from the models presented in table 6 (2012 data) with the margins command in Stata.

To summarize the findings of this paper, my initial hypotheses regarding the impact of economic and affective factors on EU support are confirmed in the empirical analysis. In terms of the utilitarian considerations, positive future expectations correlate with more positive image of the EU and the economic factor does indeed constitute a strong predictor of positive EU perceptions in the enlarged EU. However, positive future expectations (the “winners of transition argument”) have a stronger positive impact in new member states only immediately after the accession, while the economic factors become more relevant in the CEE-10 countries after the crisis (H1 confirmed). As far as the affective factors are concerned, European identity is in fact the strongest predictor of EU support, especially after the crisis, but only in its affective aspect (H2 confirmed). Finally, in terms of the differential effect of identity before and after the crisis, comparing between the two models, the positive effect of the affective dimension of European identity actually becomes stronger in 2012 which indicates that in times of economic hardship affective attachment to the EU does indeed become a more relevant factor to explain EU support in the enlarged EU (H3 confirmed). The latter finding is in line with some other recent research regarding the changing relevance of affective factors for the formation of EU support in the context of the crisis (Serricchio, Tsakatika, and Quaglia 2013). This potential change should be further explored, as more recent data is made available, to see whether there is a real transformation in the structure of European attitudes with a growing relevance of the more stable affective factors after the crisis.

## 6. Conclusions

In the decade that followed the Eastern enlargement, the EU has suffered one of its biggest crises so far. Deep economic problems of the Eurozone affected directly many European citizens and undermined the idea that European integration could only bring benefits to the people of Europe. The inability of European political leaders to agree on efficient answers to the difficulties further contributed to the perception that the Union was no longer the solution and could actually be the problem. The initial divide between new and old member states, has been substituted by a possibly even bigger division between creditors and debtors, painfully drawing public attention to the issues of solidarity in a political community. Consequently, popular and party-based Euroscepticism have been on the rise in the first decade of the XXI century.

This is obviously a very different context than that of the 2004/2007 Eastern enlargements when the EU was viewed in these countries predominantly positively, as a guarantor of democratic institutions, and accession was perceived in terms of increased future welfare. Accordingly, early studies of EU attitudes in Central and Eastern European countries focused on utilitarian and normative factors as main elements in attitude formation. This paper argues that almost ten years after the first Eastern enlargement and in the context of a perceived declining performance of European economy and the issue of solidarity as the main challenge ahead, the importance of more stable, affective factors must be re-evaluated. In this sense, I explore the importance of political identities as determinants of support for the EU in the new member states, as compared with utilitarian factors, before and after the crisis.

The question of political identities has been recognized as a key dimension of European attitudes in the last decade, however, its impact has not yet been researched thoroughly in the new member states. Attesting to the change of scope of integration

which occurred in the 1990s,—when it shifted from strictly economic to broader policy issues of a political community—, this paper shows that European identity constitutes a key determinant of positive perceptions of the EU, immediately after accession, as well as almost a decade later, after the Great Recession. In line with recent research on the topic, my findings confirm that the effect of affective factors seems to become more significant in the recent years, when the image of EU membership as a source of European prosperity has been undermined. Furthermore, and contrary to popular assumptions, perceived identity threat has actually less impact on Euroscepticism in Central and Eastern Europe than in the old member states.

This is not to argue that utilitarian considerations have lost their weight. However, it seems that the character and source of these attitudes changed slightly over the course of the last decade. While immediately after the accession positive future expectations constituted a significant source of support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe—in line with the “winners of transition” argument—, more recently it is a more general positive economic perception that determines EU support in Central Eastern European member states. Moreover, my empirical analysis shows that the effect of this general economic factor is actually stronger in these new member states than in the more established members.

These findings should be interpreted in the light of some limitations. As noted in the beginning, the analysis is based on cross-sectional data. This implies that I cannot provide definitive account of the changes occurred at the individual level during the Great Recession. Rather, I focus on comparisons between individuals at two points in time. Moreover, the issue of causality is controversial. It is possible that people who feel more positive about the EU tend to acknowledge a European identity more readily and the causality is reversed. This point is very significant and I do not try to make an

argument about it one way or another, however, I do argue that there is an important relationship between identity and EU support, especially in times of economic crisis.

In spite of such limitations the present study sheds new light on the determinants of European attitudes in the new member states, extending the existing research which focused on utilitarian and ideological factors, to consider the role of political identities as key factors in the region and the whole of the enlarged EU after the crisis. Moreover, it presents an integrated approach to EU attitudes, testing the theoretical model on all EU member states, while accounting for the possible differences in EU attitude formation between the new and the old member states which remain in the wake of the first decade of their membership.

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## 8. Annex

Table 7. GDP growth in the EU-27, by country (2004-2012)

Country	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Austria</b>	2,60	2,40	3,70	3,70	1,40	-3,80	1,80	2,80	0,90
<b>Belgium</b>	3,30	1,80	2,70	2,90	1,00	-2,80	2,30	1,80	-0,10
<b>Denmark</b>	2,30	2,40	3,40	1,60	-0,80	-5,70	1,40	1,10	-0,40
<b>Finland</b>	4,10	2,90	4,40	5,30	0,30	-8,50	3,40	2,80	-1,00
<b>France</b>	2,50	1,80	2,50	2,30	-0,10	-3,10	1,70	2,00	0,00
<b>Germany</b>	1,20	0,70	3,70	3,30	1,10	-5,10	4,00	3,30	0,70
<b>Greece</b>	4,40	2,30	5,50	3,50	-0,20	-3,10	-4,90	-7,10	-7,00
<b>Ireland</b>	4,20	6,10	5,50	5,00	-2,20	-6,40	-1,10	2,20	0,20
<b>Italy</b>	1,70	0,90	2,20	1,70	-1,20	-5,50	1,70	0,40	-2,40
<b>Luxembourg</b>	4,40	5,30	4,90	6,60	-0,70	-5,60	3,10	1,90	-0,20
<b>Netherlands</b>	2,20	2,00	3,40	3,90	1,80	-3,70	1,50	0,90	-1,20
<b>Portugal</b>	1,60	0,80	1,40	2,40	0,00	-2,90	1,90	-1,30	-3,20
<b>Spain</b>	3,30	3,60	4,10	3,50	0,90	-3,80	-0,20	0,10	-1,60
<b>Sweden</b>	4,20	3,20	4,30	3,30	-0,60	-5,00	6,60	2,90	0,90
<b>United Kingdom</b>	3,20	3,20	2,80	3,40	-0,80	-5,20	1,70	1,10	0,30
<b>EU-15</b>	<i>2,40</i>	<i>2,00</i>	<i>3,20</i>	<i>3,00</i>	<i>0,10</i>	<i>-4,60</i>	<i>2,00</i>	<i>1,50</i>	<i>-0,50</i>
<b>Bulgaria</b>	6,70	6,40	6,50	6,40	6,20	-5,50	0,40	1,80	0,60
<b>Czech Rep.</b>	4,70	6,80	7,00	5,70	3,10	-4,50	2,50	1,80	-1,00
<b>Estonia</b>	6,20	8,90	10,20	7,30	-4,10	-14,10	3,30	8,70	4,50
<b>Hungary</b>	4,80	4,00	3,90	0,10	0,90	-6,80	1,10	1,60	-1,70
<b>Latvia</b>	8,80	10,10	11,00	10,00	-2,80	-17,70	-1,30	5,30	5,20
<b>Lithuania</b>	7,40	7,80	7,80	9,80	2,90	-14,80	1,60	6,00	3,70
<b>Poland</b>	5,30	3,60	6,20	6,80	5,10	1,60	3,90	4,50	2,00
<b>Romania</b>	8,50	4,20	7,90	6,30	7,30	-6,60	-1,10	2,30	0,60
<b>Slovakia</b>	5,10	6,70	8,30	10,50	5,80	-4,90	4,40	3,00	1,80
<b>Slovenia</b>	4,40	4,00	5,80	7,00	3,40	-7,90	1,30	0,70	-2,50
<b>CEE-10</b>	<i>6,19</i>	<i>6,25</i>	<i>7,46</i>	<i>6,99</i>	<i>2,78</i>	<i>-8,12</i>	<i>1,61</i>	<i>3,57</i>	<i>1,32</i>

Note: Entries in the table represent percentage change over previous period. Data: Eurostat.