The Economic Basis of Attitudes towards the European Community: Familiarity Breeds Content?

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the economic basis of mass support for, and opposition to the European Community. In other words the main question is: to what extent, and in what ways, is popular support or opposition to the EC dependent upon economic circumstances and considerations? Behind this research question lies the matter of the legitimacy of the EC in the eyes of citizens across Europe.
In some respects the results of this study are frustrating and inconclusive. In other respects, however, the results suggest some clear generalizations and conclusions. First, we have found rather little evidence that the EC or European unification are evaluated in primarily economic terms. Secondly, support seems to be associated more strongly with social and attitudinal variables of a non-economic kind. Thirdly, the figures suggest that diffuse and somewhat idealistic reasons for supporting unification and EC membership tend to outweigh more specific reasons. Fourthly, a solid foundation of inertia, custom, and national tradition seem to maintain support and make it grow.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Theory

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the economic basis of mass support for, and opposition to the European Community. In other words the main question is: to what extent, and in what ways, is popular support or opposition to the EC dependent upon economic circumstances and considerations? The paper will concentrate on »specific« evaluations of the European Community as a whole.

Behind this research question lies the matter of the legitimacy of the EC in the eyes of citizens across Europe. Inglehart argues that »favourable economic payoffs are conducive to – perhaps even essential to – the processes of national and supranational integration«. (Inglehart 1978, 69, see also Reif and Inglehart 1991, 7). In much the same way integration theory, though it does not give an important part to public opinion, claims that economic rewards for the general population are of some significance in the drive towards integration. Nye, for example, points out that it is important that economic benefits are perceived to flow from integration (1971, 83 – 4).

Some theorists argue that a widespread recognition of rewards is a necessary precondition of stronger and more enduring ties of loyalty (see, for example, Shepherd 1975, chap 6. and Hewstone 1986, 43). In the case of the EC it seems obvious that of the many kinds of reward, economic benefits are likely to be the most important. As Dalton and Eichenberg suggest, »at the base of any utilitarian model of public support for the European community must be considerations about its economic performance«. (1990, 3. See also Reif and Inglehart 1991, 7). To what extent does economic performance underpin utilitarian support for the EC, and is there any evidence to suggest that this sort of support preceded stronger ties of loyalty and legitimacy?

It is equally obvious that economic benefits alone are not enough to establish the legitimacy of the EC. The stability of any political institution is uncertain if it depends wholely, or even largely, on a good economic climate. It is entirely appropriate that economic considerations and performance should enter into the calculus of consent, but like nation states, the Community cannot depend upon utilitarian support of an economic kind. It must build its future prospects to some extent on values that can both transcend and outlast calculations of economic gain and loss; it must have roots that are deep enough and strong enough to weather even severe economic drought.

Some research studies have concluded that the EC lacks democratic legitimacy, that its foundations of »permissive consensus« are not deeply rooted (Lindberg and Scheingold 1970, Stavridis 1992), and that it depends too much upon instrumental calculations of personal and national interests. The EC, it is said, is caught in a vicious circle, as a weakly integrated system it finds difficulty in promoting European integration, and without support for integration it finds it difficult to promote policies which reinforce support (Caporaso 1973; Caporaso 1974; Handley 1981, 360;). Not suprisingly, research which finds the EC too heavily dependent on utilitarian and specific support (especially economic support) often finds that adverse economic circumstances tend to undermine its popularity (see, for example, Caporaso 1974; Handley 1981; Lindberg and Scheingold 1970; Shepherd, 1975; Jowell and Hoinville 1977).

On the other hand, others have argued that the EC has built up support of a more enduring and diffuse or affective kind. They see signs of a growing European identity and trust, and of beliefs in the goals and ideals of European integration, especially among the younger generation. (Hewstone 1986; Inglehart 1977; Inglehart 1990; Inglehart and Rabier 1978; Merritt and Puchala 1968). Questions about the nature and strength of EC support remain however.

In Easton's terminology, does the EC attract the diffuse and enduring support of Europeans, or is it rather more dependent on specific support of a more short-run kind? (Easton 1965, 249).

The practical matter of the legitimacy of the EC is the first general concern of this paper. The second is a more theoretical interest in the extent to which economic circumstances and factors mould – even determine – our political world view. In the context of the EC this question turns on the matter of whether citizens evaluate the EC in terms of their material or in terms of their ideal interests? Economic interests are among the most important material matters; ideal interests include such things as world peace, European co-operation, social justice, and environmental protection. Studies of politics at the national level suggest that economic conditions and perceptions have a strong impact on support for governments and on electoral behaviour. At the same time, these economic influences are not necessarily of a selfish or »pocket-book« nature, but often socially aware and »sociotropic« (see, for example, Tufte 1978, 65; Lewis-Beck 1986; Lewin 1991; Rattinger 1991, 50). Is the same true of support for the EC? The fact that this study will be both cross-national (nine to twelve nations), and across-time (up to seventeen years) adds to its interest as a test case for the »economic voting« hypothesis at the level of international government.

There is no hard and fast distinction to be drawn between economic and non-economic, or between the material and the ideal. Nor is there a simple dichotomy between »narrow materialism« and »high minded-idealism«. More to the point, mass opinion about anything as large and complex as the European Community is highly likely to be based upon a mixture of different factors and dispositions, ranging from naked economic self-interest, through sociotropic calculations of an economic nature, to considerations of an idealistic kind. Moreover, the mix of different sorts of reasons for supporting or opposing the EC may well change over time in different countries according to different, social, political, and economic circumstances.

1.2. Methods

Economic conditions and circumstances may affect support for the European Community in three ways. First, they may be related to differences between countries at any given point in time. For example, it may be that the wealthier nations are inclined to show the highest levels of support because their citizens believe that the EC has helped to create the conditions of their economic success. The first stage of the analysis, therefore, compares levels of support in different nations at the same point in time – a cross-sectional analysis.

Secondly, changing economic circumstances may affect levels of mass support for the EC in the same nation over a period of time. For example, support may grow in those countries whose economies are growing, or whose inflation or unemployment rates rates are low or falling. According to Dalton and Eichenberg, for example, »the improvement in national economies during the 1980s yielded a substantial measure of support for the Community« (Dalton and Eichenberg 1991, 13). The second part examines how changing economic circumstances in the same country influence support for the EC over a period of time – a time-series analysis.

The first two approaches deal with aggregate data at the national level. The third type of analysis deals with individual citizens. It uses the Eurobarometer surveys to analyses EC support among individuals with different economic characteristics. For example, it may be that the

employed are more favourably disposed towards the EC than the unemployed, or that wealthier individuals are more favourable. The third section of the paper, therefore, deals with individuals. In this sense it complements the national or aggregate analysis of the first two sections.

And a last preliminary point. The concentration upon economic variables in this paper does not suggest that these are the only ones worth considering, or that we have exhausted the topic of EC support if we deal with them systematically. It simply reflects a division of labour within the project Beliefs in Government, Vol. II. Other questions about support for the EC are discussed elsewhere (see Duchesne and Frognier, Janssen).

1.3. The EC as an Economic Organization

First, it is necessary to show that citizens of EC nations do indeed see it as an economic organization. If they believe it has little or nothing to do with economics, then to ask questions about its economic basis would be pointless. Does the public think of the EC as having an important economic role? Fortunately it is relatively simple to answer this question, and the answer is reasonably clear.

The most direct attempt to answer the question is found in the June 1987 Eurobarometer survey (Commission of the European Communities, Eurobarometer, No. 27, 1987, 19–33) which asked, »What things in your opinion bring the countries of the European Community together most?«. Most people (41 per cent) answered in terms of »the economy« or »world peace«. In other words, they mixed material and idealistic reasons in equal parts. These two responses tied for first place, some 13 per cent ahead of the third option.

More circumstantial evidence is available in other Eurobarometer surveys. They show that most people in the EC believe that it does have a significant economic role and should play an even larger one. For example, the 1989 and 1990 surveys (Eurobarometer, No. 32, 1989, 62; No. 33, 1990, 27) find that a majority (51 per cent in 1990, 57 per cent in 1989) of people in the EC believe that currency decisions should be decided by the EC, and a smaller percentage (40 per cent and 35 per cent) believed that these should be national decisions. Similarly, more believed that VAT rates should be decided jointly within the European Community (48 per cent in 1990, 51 per cent in 1989) than believed they should be decided nationally (39 per cent and 36 per cent).

It is not necessary to labour the point. The Eurobarometer surveys show over and over again that the public sees the EC both as an important economic organization, and as an equally important political and diplomatic organization concerned with such things as peace, co-operation, European integration, environmental protection, social justice and development, and equality (see, for example, Eurobarometer, No. 31, 1989, 20–21; Eurobarometer, No. 24, 1985, 79–80).

Dalton and Eichenberg argue that »For the European Community economic policy is the raison d'etre the EC is above all an economic institution« (Dalton and Eichenberg, 1991, 3, 14). The evidence presented here does not support so strong a conclusion so far as mass opinion is concerned, the surveys show that the public does see it as having an important economic function, and an increasingly large majority want it to play an even greater economic role . At the same time, the EC is also seen as having a range of important non-economic goals of a more ideal nature (see also Inglehart and Rabier 1978, 97).

There are national differences in this respect, some being more utilitarian or economic than others. We can gauge this from answers to the

open-ended question asked in 1987, »When you hear about the European Community what does that bring to your mind«? (Eurobarometer, 1987, 1–7). When the results are coded into economic and political responses, it appears that some nations, notably Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, and the UK have a preponderance of people who see the EC primarily in economic terms. People in some other countries are inclined to see it more as a political organization – Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, and The Netherlands (see Table 1). We will return to this continuum of economic–political perceptions later in the paper. Meanwhile we can safely conclude that it is sensible to ask questions about the economic basis of support for the EC, while recognizing that citizens across Europe see it as having both political and economic functions.

1.4. Indicators of Support

Responses to four standard questions used to measure support for European integration and for the EC will be used in this paper. They will be referred to in shorthand as »unification«, »membership«, »benefit«, and »dissolution«. Of the four, the »unification« question is the broadest, the most general and, the one that comes closest to asking about diffuse attitudes. Towards the other end of the continuum, the »benefits« question comes closest to asking about specific support. Although the question is carefully worded and avoids mentioning any particular type of benefit, it seems likely that some will have economic benefits in mind when they respond to it. On the diffuse–specific continuum, the membership question fits somewhere in the middle. The fourth question dealing with »dissolution« can be set aside for the moment. It is hypothetical and, not suprisingly, a relatively large proportion (about 50 per cent or more) give an »indifferent« (don't know) response, or no reply.

The »unification« question produces easily the strongest support. Well over 70 per cent of EC citizens regularly endorse this aim, sometimes over 80 per cent. On average, about 10–15 per cent fewer support their country's membership of the EC. Even so, support for membership has claimed a clear majority across Western Europe over the long run. A lower percentage – but still a majority – claim benefits from their country's membership of the EC. Since the question was first asked regularly in 1983 about 50–55 per cent have claimed that they have benefited. The conclusion seems to be that diffuse support is more widespread than specific support across Europe as a whole (see Beliefs in Government, chapter 3).

2. Macro-Economic Factors

2.1. Cross-Sectional Variations between Countries

Support for the EC in any given year varies quite substantially from one country to another. The differences between nations have persisted over a relatively long period of time. This section of the paper is concerned with these cross-sectional differences between nations.

The first and most elementary point to make is that some of the difference between countries is to be explained very simply in terms of when they joined the EC (see Beliefs in Government, chapter 3). None the less, the pattern is not simple or uniform. For example, Italy has generally shown higher levels of support than Germany, while Denmark and the UK have usually shown levels of support lower than Ireland. Spain and Portugal show higher levels of support than some of the older members. In other words, there are still differences between nations which joined at the same time, and a certain amount of overlap between some nations which joined at different times. To what extent do these national variations relate, among other things, to the economic circumstances of different countries?

The simplest proposition, and the one which comes closest to a calculation of naked economic self-interest, is that countries which receive more from EC funds than they pay into them will be more supportive. According to one analysis »the EC has a budget which derives revenue and distributes benefits in a manner entirely unrelated to levels of national wealth«. (Ardy 1988, 425). This fact may encourage those who benefit and those who pay to make economic calculations the basis of support or opposition. Moreover, the publicity surrounding the Common Agricultural Policy, by far the largest part of the EC budget, may also encourage such economic calculations.

For example, support for the EC in the UK was relatively low during the period in which Mrs Thatcher was arguing about the British payment, which she claimed, with a great deal of national publicity, was far too high. Support rose substantially after a lower contribution was negotiated. Just before the new financial settlement as few as 25 per cent of the British claimed that EC membership was »a good thing«; a year later the figure rose to 37 per cent. None the less, this highly publicized incident seemed to disturb the long-term upward trend of support in the UK for only a short time.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to get satisfactory figures for net country receipts from the EC over a period of years. This is because the annual contributions of member states to Community revenues are published, but the totals of their annual receipts are not (Office for Official Publications of the European Communities 1991). However, precise figures for the average of 1982, 1983, and 1984 have been painstakingly calculated and published (Ardy 1988). Although this provides us with only nine cases (Belgium and Luxembourg are grouped together), we can examine them to see if they fit any pattern.

At this stage of the analysis support for the EC is measured in terms of responses to the »membership« question which has the longest run in the Eurobarometer survey. Table 3 shows levels of support for membership of the EC in 1984 by country, and the average net per capita payments to (negative), or receipts from (positive) EC funds over the 1982–84 period. The table displays no obvious pattern. For example, Denmark, which was a substantial net beneficiary of EC finances, shows the lowest level of support (31 per cent) compared with Germany (53 per cent), a substantial net

contributor to funds. The Irish combined by far the largest net receipts with a lower than average level of support (43 per cent). The five countries which were net contributors to EC funds (Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, France, and the UK) had a 54 per cent level of support. For the five net receivers of EC funds (Netherlands, Italy, Ireland, Greece, and Denmark) support was 52 per cent. The two largest receivers (Ireland and Greece) combined had a level of support of 40.5 per cent. For the two largest contributors (Belgium/Luxembourg and Germany) the figure was 61 per cent.

The figures clearly support Dalton and Eichenberg's conclusion that »EC budget distributions have no impact on citizen support for European institutions« (1990, 15). In fact, Table 3 deepens the mystery. Why are almost six out of ten among the Irish low on support when the EC contributes so heavily to their national economy? The same might be asked of the Greeks and the Danes, although they benefit less heavily. On the other side of the coin, why should two-thirds of the French support the EC when, on average, they make a (relatively small) annual net per capita payment into EC funds of about 10 ECU? We will return to these questions shortly.

Meanwhile, we can try another tack. Perhaps national variations in EC support can be explained in terms of more general macro-economic considerations, such as national wealth or economic growth. After all the EC budget is an arcane matter, but issues such as inflation, unemployment, and economic growth have an immediate impact on everyday life. One hypothesis is that the wealthier countries with stronger economies will be able to compete more effectively in a larger and more open economic market and will therefore show higher levels of support for the EC. Germany would be an obvious case in point. Equally, it may be that poorer countries think that they will gain most, in the long run, from the modernizing effects of the EC, and will show high levels of support accordingly. Spain, Greece, and Portugal might be examples. Perhaps both propositions are true, in which case plotting Gross National Product against EC support would produce a U-curve.

Table 4 presents figures for Gross National Product per capita and support for the EC in 1975, 1980, and 1985. Once again, the small number of cases makes it impossible to draw any hard and fast conclusions. Nevertheless there is little evidence to suggest an association between national wealth and EC support. On the contrary, the figures suggest no kind of linear relationship, either positive or negative, or any other kind of U, S, or J-curve. Luxembourg, Germany, and Denmark, were the three most affluent nations, but they had relatively high, intermediate, and low levels of support respectively. Conversely, Italy, Ireland, and Greece had relatively low GDPs, but whereas Italy had high support figures, Ireland and Greece had low ones. There seems to be a random relationship between GNP per capita and EC support.

Perhaps, then, it is a dynamic matter related to economic growth – countries which are doing well, and expanding their economies and growing richer will feel well-disposed towards the EC, perhaps attributing some of their success to it? Or perhaps it is the other way round; rich countries may feel that they could do even better outside the EC, whereas the poorer ones feel they need to be inside the market? Once again, there is nothing in the figures to support either hypothesis (see Table 5). For example, Germany sustained a rather higher growth rate than Italy 1968–1985, but Italian support for the EC was regularly higher over the same period. In the 1979– 85 period, Luxemburg's economy grew only marginally faster than Denmark's, but whereas Luxembourg was strongly supportive, Denmark

was not. Luxembourg's population was generally favourable whether its economic growth was relatively good (1968–73 and 1979–85) or relatively poor (1973–9). Likewise, Ireland's relatively good growth rate of 3 per cent in 1973–9 was associated with relatively low support for the EC. In short, there is no systematic difference between fast and slow growth countries so far as support of the EC is concerned.

We will not burden readers with any more figures showing no clear relationship between macro-economic indicators and levels of support for EC membership. It is enough to say that we tried to find patterns for unemployment, for exports and imports both within the EC and outside, for trade dependence, and for growth of exports and imports and trade dependence. Tables were scrutinized, figures rearranged in different ways, totals and sub-totals for different groups of nations aggregated and reaggregated, and scattergrams drawn up, but the figures were as randomly arranged as those in the tables presented.

The search for economic determinants should not end here. So far we have considered the »membership« indicator of support, but we might expect economic factors and calculations to be reflected most clearly in response to the »benefits« question. Though it does not specifically mention economic benefits, it does ask respondents to think in terms of benefits, and economic benefits may come easily to mind. Perhaps the matter of payments into and receipts from the EC budget will be reflected in answers to the benefits question?

At first sight, there is a suggestion in the figures that they do (see Table 3). In 1984 the five countries which were beneficiaries of EC funding claimed to have benefited more frequently (53 per cent) than the four which made net payments into the EC budget (44.5 per cent). The pattern is clearest at the extremes. Belgium/Luxembourg and Germany were the two largest net contributors, and only 49.5 per cent of their population claimed benefits. Ireland and Greece were the two largest beneficiaries, and 56 per cent of their populations claimed benefits.

On closer examination budgetary considerations are evidently muted by other considerations. The five net beneficiaries were barely more likely to claim to have benefited (53 per cent) than the EC average (52 per cent). Both Greece and Denmark were substantial net receivers of funds, but fewer of their citizens claimed to have benefited than the EC average. In fact, fewer of the Danes claimed to have benefited than the Germans, the French, or the Belgians who were net payers. In financial terms the Netherlands and Italy were relatively worse off than Ireland, Greece and Denmark, but the Dutch and the Italians claimed greater benefit. The difficulty of interpreting the figures is also complicated by the fact that in the case of Belgium and Luxembourg, the benefits flowing from the location of the main bureaucracy must be added to the direct transfer of budget payments.

A third look at the figures (Table 6) suggests that budgetary matters are mixed up with length of membership in the following way. Of the original six, the net receivers (The Netherlands and Italy) perceive greater benefit than the net payers (Belgium/Luxembourg, France, and Germany). And of the later members, the net receivers (Ireland, Greece, and Denmark), perceive greater benefit than the net payers (UK). The pattern is clearest at the extremes, those who joined early and are net receivers of funds are most likely to perceive benefits (Italy and The Netherlands) compared with those who joined late and are net payers (the UK). In the middle groups, however, the pattern is jumbled. It seems that even when they are asked to consider the benefits of EC membership, many people do not have the hard facts of the distribution of the EC budget in mind.

Attempts to match other economic variables to responses to the »benefits« question were largely unsuccessful, as Tables 4 and 5 show. As before, reasons of space prevent the presentation of many tables showing random associations. They may be summarized briefly, answers to the »benefit« question do not seem to be consistently or strongly related to any of the macro-economic variables which have been matched with the membership question – GNP per capita, growth of GNP, unemployment, exports and imports within and outside the EC, and trade dependency. For the most part the association was usually nonexistent. At best they were weak and marked by many exceptions.

The economic variables used so far are all objective measures. Modern voting studies, however, suggest that subjective measures of voter perceptions are better indicators of support for parties and governments, especially measures of consumer confidence and well-being – the »feel-good factor«. Is the same true of support for the EC? Perhaps the best starting point is Table 1 which shows countries on the »economic–political« continuum. In the light of what was said earlier about the newer and older members of the EC it is clear that the figures show that the most recent members of the EC tend to have a relatively strong economic image of the EC – Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, and GB. Conversely, the older members tend to have a stronger political image, especially Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, and The Netherlands. Moreover, there is a rough fit between economic images and lower levels of support, and political images and higher levels of support (See Table 7). The four countries with the strongest economic image had an average support level of 64 per cent in 1987; the four countries with the strongest political image had an average support level of 80 per cent. Unfortunately, Britain and Denmark spoil this neat pattern in a decisive way.

These two major exceptions apart, however, there is evidence here to suggest that the more the population of a country treats the EC as an economic organization, the less supportive of the EC that population is likely to be. The generalization must be tentative at this stage. First, it is based on the individual level aggregated at the national level, and therefore more than a little suspicious.Secondly, it tells us nothing about causal relations. Do people in countries which have a political image of the EC support it because of its political benefits; or do people in countries which generally support the EC focus on its political aspects; or is there a third, common factor which underlies both support and political images? It seems best to leave these questions to the last section of the paper which deals with the individual level of analysis.

We cannot conclude from this first section that macro-economic conditions do not affect levels of support for the EC. First there are far too few countries to draw any firm conclusions. Secondly, we have found some evidence, albeit weak and secondary, of an association between the »benefits« question and net payments into or receipts from the EC budget.Thirdly, we have also found some evidence of an association between political images of the EC and support for it. However, with these two exceptions the analysis so far has come up with rather little to suggest that macro-economic variables are associated with popular support for, or opposition to, the EC. To this extent the results reinforce the conclusion that economic determinants of support are »weak and casual«. (Zeus 1990, 45).

There are, perhaps, three simple reasons for this conclusion. First, it is unlikely that many people in Europe know even the broad features of such things as net payments into or receipts from EC funds, or degree of trade dependency upon the EC. On the occasions that such things become

headline news (such as the controversy Thatcher created about the UK contribution to the EC budget), they may have an affect on EC support, but the impact seems generally to be fairly short lived. Secondly, the economic trends and circumstances that citizens are aware of, such as unemployment or inflation or GNP growth, are not seen as related to or caused by the EC. In Lewis-Beck's term (1986, 108) there is little or no »attribution of responsibility« to the EC for economic conditions. A general mood of consumer confidence may rub off on to general feelings about government at the international level, but the association is likely to be distant and contingent. Thirdly, it may be that a substantial proportion of EC citizens weigh the ideal of European unification and co-operation more heavily than more instrumental considerations of an economic kind. The circumstantial evidence is that they do.

2.2. Changes Within Countries Over Time

Support for the EC has increased gently and unevenly, but consistently over the long run (see Table 2). Furthermore the overall trend is fairly similar in most member states, although the rise from comparatively low levels has been rather more steep in recent years in Spain, Greece, and Portugal. Most countries, however, impose their own set of short-term bumps and slumps in support from year to year, and most recently problems with the Maastricht agreement have been associated with a slump in support. To what extent is the overall upward trend or the year-to-year variations in particular countries the consequences of economic circumstances and change?

Inglehart and Rabier (1978, 74) conclude from a time-series analysis of the nine member states in the 1973 – 1977 period that »Public evaluations of membership in the Community seem linked with economic growth or decline«. Handley (1981, 360) agrees, stating that »Inflation, unemployment and stagnation [in the mid-1970s] were undoubtedly influencing public attitudes and government policy stands toward Europe, its institutions, and peoples«. Dalton and Eichenberg (1991, 13) find that »the improvement in national economies during the 1980s yielded a substantial measure of support for the Community«.

This section of the paper will examine changes in support over time, using the »membership« question as the main indicator. This question is the longest running in the Eurobarometer survey and provides a time-series from 1973 to 1990. The »unification« question was also used because it provides a time-series from 1978–1990. The macro-economic variables related to these two questions are those already used in the previous section, namely unemployment, inflation, GNP, trade relations (both exports and imports within and outside the EC as a percentage of GNP), and trade dependence.

In addition, a set of non-economic control variables were used to test the strength of economic factors. These were drawn from the Eurobarometer surveys in the form of questions tapping »satisfaction or dissatisfaction with life on the whole«, »happiness or unhappiness with all things taken together«, »satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the way democracy works in your country«, and whether respondents thought next year would be »better, worse, or the same, as this year« (see the appendix to this paper for further details of the questions). Responses to these questions were aggregated for each nation, and for each year of the time-series. In addition, because the most cursory inspection of the graphs and previous research (Zeus 1990, 56–7) shows that support is strongly related to (1) length of membership of the EC, and (2) the simple passage of time, these two variables were also entered into the time-series regressions.

Nine member states were analysed, the time-series for Spain, Greece, and Portugal being too short for reliable analysis. Each indicator of support was analysed in two ways. The first related absolute levels of support to absolute levels in the independent variables. The second related year-on-year changes in both dependent and independent variables as a way of maximizing the variance from one year to the next. Each of these was run twice, the first for concurrent years, the second lagged the support measure by twelve months. A previous study suggested that twelve months would be the optimum time period (Inglehart and Rabier 1978, 72).

The result of this work was eight regression equations for each of the nine countries. Rather than presenting this large volume of statistics, most of them inconclusive or insignificant or both, we will briefly summarize the results.

1. Most of the variables are insigificant, and even when statistically significant they are substantively small – they explain 5 per cent or less of the variance.

2. The pattern of significant variables varies from one country to the next and from one dependent variable to the next. Sometimes the same variable has a positive effect in one country, a negative one in another.

3. Economic variables do not generally appear in the equations. So far as economic change has an impact at all, it seems to be a short-term one which is smoothed over by the long-term trend. Simple correlations suggest a moderately strong relationship between levels of economic confidence and EC support, but the regressions show that this is more likely to be

attributable to a more general »feel good« factor which includes economic, political and personal satisfaction with life and with future prospects.

4. At first sight there seems to be a close correlation between attitudes towards the EC and various indicators of national trade within the Community. Countries with a high proportion of exports and imports within the EC show higher levels of support for it. On closer inspection, however, this turns out to be a spurious relationship. If we control for inflation the correlation is reduced to insignificance. Moreover, support for the EC continues to rise even in the countries, such as the UK, with an increasingly adverse balance of trade within the EC.

5. Social and political rather than economic attitudes seem to be more influential, especially happiness, satisfaction with democracy, and optimism about next year. Even so, their effect is generally fairly weak when significant, and it is quite often not significant at all. Support for EC membership seems to be rather more closely related to these attitude variables than support for European unification, which, if anything, seems to be slightly less sensitive to changes in popular mood.

6. One variable stands out as important – the passage of time. Support for EC membership and for European unification simply grows slowly in the long term. Each year seems to add, on average about a fifth to a quarter of 1 per cent to approval of European unification and EC membership. The rate of growth does not seem to vary much according year of joining the EC. However, the inclusion of Greece, Spain, and Portugal might change this conclusion. Their support increased dramatically just before membership and continued to rise relatively steeply after.

It should be emphasized that a seventeen-year time-series is not a particularly reliable basis for statistical generalization. It is more satisfactory than a cross-sectional analysis of six, ten, or twelve nations, but the results are still tentative. Never the less, the results of the cross-sectional and time-series studies carried out here are consistent. Both are consistent with the conclusions of the Zeus study (Zeus, 1990). This pools data for different countries and different years so as to produce a larger number of observations, and concludes that socio-economic variables generally have a weak and variable impact on the four Eurobarometer indicators of support, while length of membership has a strong and consistent impact – »The longer a country belongs to the Community, the more its people appreciate it«. (Zeus 1990, 59).

3. Micro-Economic Factors

3.1. Attitudes Among Member States of the EC

It is possible that individuals with different economic characteristics may vary in their support for the EC, even though countries with different economic characteristics do not. For example, relatively wealthy individuals within nations may support the EC, even though wealthy countries may not do so. The difference between aggregate figures and individual-level data is, of course, the basis of the psychological and ecological fallacies, and we must be careful not to fall for either. In this section we will stick to individual-level explanations. A plausible example might be that wealthier people may approve of the EC because they believe that it promotes the business which is the basis of their affluence. As always, this proposition may also be reversed; perhaps the poorer sections of a population support the EC on the grounds that it will help them improve their economic circumstances, whereas the rich tend to be opposed to it because of its attempts to redistribute resources.

In dealing with the individual-level explanations we are on strong statistical ground because the EC itself has conducted its Eurobarometer surveys in each EC member state at least once a year since 1973. Even so, the common core questions asked in each country and in each year do not include the full range of economic data required for the present analysis. Therefore, it must rely upon questions which have been asked at irregular intervals since 1973. Since there are still gaps in the data it is necessary to analyse slightly different sets of variables, and slightly different sets of years for different countries. None the less, it is possible to use the Eurobarometer surveys to achieve a reasonable degree of comparability across different nations and across time.

The individual economic data are of two types. The first deal with the objective economic characteristics of respondents, social class, family income, and employed/unemployed status. In addition, it is possible to identify farmers and fishermen. They are of particular and special interest because they benefit directly from the EC's largest single item of expenditure, the Common Agricultural Policy.

The second type deals with subjective economic expectations and attitudes, including, whether respondents expect more or fewer strikes in the next year (a measure of economic optimism); whether governments should play a greater role in reducing income inequality; whether government should intervene more in economic affairs; and whether governments should expand public ownership. Altogether, therefore, the Eurobarometer surveys have data about four objective and four subjective economic variables.

These are contrasted with a set of seven non-economic control variables which are included in many, but not all, Eurobarometer surveys. There are three objective ones – age, gender, and the age at which the respondent left school – and four subjective ones – overall life satisfaction, satisfaction with society, optimism or pessimism about next year, and left–right party support. A final variables straddles the economic and the non-economic. It groups people according to their materialism and postmaterialism scores (Inglehart 1977, 1990). Further details of these variables are contained in the appendix to this paper.

3.2. Membership of the EC

As before, the first indicator of support for the EC will be the »membership« question. And as before, the analysis will be done on a country-by-country basis. Pooling the survey data for the whole of the EC is possible, but the persistent differences between countries means that this is likely to confuse rather than clarify. As a first step we examined the simple correlations between economic and non-economic variables and support for the EC in each member state. The figures are not presented here partly because the tables are far too bulky, and partly because they are only preliminary to the regression analysis. The results can be summarized in a few sentences.

1. The table contains 486 cells related to the eight economic variables. Of these, 195 (40 per cent) contain significant correlations. The table contains 669 cells relating to non-economic variables, and of these 375 (56 per cent) are significant.

2. The figures that are statistically significant are generally rather low and of no great substantive significance. The sample size of a thousand in most countries (except Luxembourg) means that quite small correlations can be statistically significant. Few rise much above 0.20, and most are generally lower. This is generally true of non-economic and economic variables alike.

3. The same economic variable was significant in some countries (e.g. class in Denmark, UK, Ireland, and France) but not others (Italy, Belgium, The Netherlands, and Luxembourg).

4. The direction of the association sometimes varies from year to year, and country to country.

5. On the other hand, some of the non-economic control variables are more consistently related to support for the EC, most notably satisfaction with life, education, and the left–right variable. (On the importance of the left–right variable and of party cues, see Hewstone 1991, 99; Worre 1988).

However, these statements are based on simple correlations. Could it be that the real effects of economic circumstances are only revealed after making allowances for social and political variables? To answer this question, multivariate regression analysis is undertaken as shown in Table 8. This table does not show regression coefficients for the non-economic control variables, because these are discussed in greater depth and detail in other papers in this volume. It should be remembered, however, that the multivariate results reported in Table 8 include the non-economic control variables of life satisfaction, happiness, satisfaction with democracy, expectations for next year, age, education, left–right party, and gender.

The regression results do not reveal powerful or widespread economic effects. On the contrary, economic variables do not make much contribution to the regression equations. Those that are statistically significant generally make a scattered, weak, and fairly random appearance in different countries and years. The only economic variable to make much of a showing is the occupational category for farmers and fishermen.

Nor are the non-economic variables particularly strong either, but a few of them, including education, gender, and life satisfaction, are persistently more significant than any of the economic measures. In particular, the general measure of optimism or pessimism about next year (answers to the question, »Do you think next year will be better, the same, or worse than this«?) emerges as significant in most countries in at least some years. The left–right political dimension is important in Denmark, the UK, and France, and sometimes in other countries. Life satisfaction and optimism/pessimism about next year also made modest contributions, as

they did to the time-series analysis reported earlier. This suggests a degree of consistency with the time-series section of this study.

The time-series analysis suggested that the simple passage of time is associated with growing support for unification and the EC. This may be explained in two ways, or a combination of them both. First, support for the EC may grow as the population as a whole becomes accustomed to it. Secondly, support may grow as the older population is replaced by younger age cohorts who are more favourable. In the latter case we would expect to find age appearing as a significant variable in the regression results reported in Table 6. With the exception of Denmark, however, age is not generally significant. It would seem, therefore, that support is growing in the population as a whole, and not especially in the younger age groups. Overall the results of the regression equations are not particularly encouraging in the sense that economic and non-economic variables taken together do not explain a substantial proportion of the variance – generally less than 30 per cent and often less than 10–15 per cent. Non-economic variables are generally more significant than economic ones, but neither are powerful.

3.3. Support for European Unification

The same set of regressions as those reported in Table 8 were run using support for European unification as the dependent variable. The »unification« question was not asked regularly in the Eurobarometer survey until the autumn of 1978, so we do not have the same number of years for analysis. Nevertheless, taking into account holes in the available data in some countries or in some years, it is possible to run seperate regressions for each member state in 1979, 1984, and 1990.

The results were even worse, if anything, than those already presented in Table 8, so that once again they can be briefly summarized in a few sentences. Of the 142 cells for economic variables, eleven beta coefficients were statistically significant (8 per cent). Of the 138 cells for non-economic variables, seventeen were statistically significant (12 per cent). This means that neither economic nor non-economic variables are closely associated with support for European unification, although the non-economic variables are marginally better. No single variable stands out as worthy of note even in this array of poor results. The result is a thin and patchy distribution of weak coefficients which have different effects in different countries and in different years. In sum, we have what might be called a Jackson Pollack, no discernible pattern.

3.4. Farmers and Fishermen

We will finish the paper with two brief test-cases which put the economic hypothesis to the acid test. The first involves the farmers and fishermen of the EC. The Common Agricultural Policy is the largest single item in the EC budget. Irrespective of payments and receipts from EC funds in any given country, farmers and fishermen in all countries benefit directly from EC payments and subsidies from the CAP. Some benefit very substantially. If any social or occupational group has an incentive to support the EC on grounds of personal financial interest, it is the farmers and fishermen in the member states. At the same time it is not difficult to imagine why some farmers and fishermen might be strongly opposed to the EC. Perhaps farmers associate the painful restructuring of the agricultural sector over the past two or three decades with the EC. In sum, it may be that farmers and fishermen will support the EC because it provides them with a high

proportion of their income, but it is also possible that they will oppose it strongly in spite of CAP payments and subsidies. Either way it is to be expected that farmers and fishermen will have a stronger feeling about the EC one way or another than their compatriots.

Do farmers and fishermen support or oppose EC membership more often than other employed citizens in their own country? Table 9 presents the summary results of a statistical test of this proposition in EC countries over a set of seven years. It should be noted that in spite of the total sample sizes in each country (except Luxembourg) the numbers of farmers and fishermen in the survey is often low in some countries. As a result, quite large percentage differences are sometimes not statistically significant.

The table presents the familiar picture of a fairly thin scattering of rather variable results. Of the sixty-nine possibilities only twenty-two (32 per cent) are statistically significant. In other words, farmers and fishermen are not generally significantly different from the other employed people in their own country. The exceptions are Ireland and Denmark, and to some extent Germany.

In most other countries and in most of the years farmers and fishermen have much the same sorts of attitudes as anyone else. In Italy, they reflect the national pattern in all the seven years analysed.

Table 9 also gives the direction of the significant differences, a plus sign showing support that is stronger than other employed people in the country, and a negative sign showing less support. In Denmark and Ireland, the sign is always positive, but in Germany it is more usually negative. As in other parts of the analysis, this shows that the same set of economic circumstances can have entirely different effects in different countries, or in different years.

In fact in 1990 all the significant figures (France, Belgium, Germany, and Luxembourg) were negative, and there were no positive ones, even among the usually supportive Danes and Irish. This contrasts with the four out of five positive signs in 1974. There are some indications that farming communities have turned against the Common Market and the Maastricht agreement (notable in the recent French referendum), and it is possible that the general mood has switched across Europe. For the moment, however, it seems safer to conclude that the relationship is variable, that recent opposition is due to problems with GATT and farming support, and that the pattern may well reverse in future years when and if these problems are sorted out.

The overall distribution of figures in Table 9 is consistent with those in previous tables in this paper. First, there is little indication that economic considerations play a strong role in the evaluation of the EC, even among the occupational group which benefits most from its budget. Farmers and fishermen are much the same as everybody else. Secondly, the relatively small number of significant figures form no obvious pattern so far as most countries and most years are concerned. The exceptions are Denmark, Ireland, and Germany. But in France, where the CAP is a highly politicized matter, the figure is significant in only two out of seven years. Thirdly, the direction of the effect differs from one country to another, being positive in some countries, negative in others.

3.5. Spain and Portugal

The second limiting test of the economic hypothesis centres on Spain and Portugal. In laying out the foundations for this study Section 2 showed that citizens in some member states see the EC more as an economic than a political organization. Later it was shown that the most economic images of the EC are to be found mainly in the newer member states, notably Greece, Spain, and Portugal. Moreover, it was also shown (generally but not invariably) that the nations which see the EC more in economic than political terms tend to have lower levels of support for it. However, it was suggested that there are different interpretations of this three-cornered relationship.

We can now investigate this set of associations in greater depth, focusing on Spain and Portugal because they they are among the most »economic« nations (Table 1) and because the Eurobarometer surveys asked some interesting questions in these two countries just before they joined. First, the surveys asked in the autumn of 1985 what future economic benefits were expected of the EC. Generally speaking those who expected economic benefits also supported membership in both Spain and Portugal (gamma = 0.70, 0.87 respectively).

Before concluding that prospective economic judgements are related to EC support, however, a set of other questions about benefits should be considered. The surveys also asked about political benefits for democracy,

and about benefits for the roles of Spain and Portugal in the world. Not supprisingly, the responses to the three questions about economic, political, and diplomatic benefits are closely associated (gamma = 0.80, 0.73, 0.91 for Spain; 0.87, 0.84, and 0.87 for Portugal). Moreover, there is also a close association between expectations for all three benefits and support for EC membership (gamma = 0.70, 0.54, and 0.61 for Spain; and 0.87, 0.78, and 0.83 for Portugal). In short, those who expected their country to benefit economically also expected it to benefit politically and diplomatically, and these people, in turn, supported EC membership. In other words, economic expectations appear to play an important role, but not necessarily more important than political and social factors. Moreover, we cannot even assume causal primacy for the economic variable. On the contrary, the survey results seem to suggest a generally favourable disposition towards the EC, from which flow a set of economic, political, and diplomatic expectations, and support for membership. This serves to qualify the conclusion reached earlier in the paper. (For a more detailed discussion of the Spanish and Portugese cases see Bosch 1992 and Bosch 1993).

As before we might offer some tentative suggestions about why economic variables have rather little impact on attitudes of the general population towards either European unification or EC membership. First, the EC is fairly remote from the everyday experience of ordinary citizens. As a result, the sorts of economic circumstances and attitudes which typically have an impact on national voting and political attitudes may have a looser association with attitudes towards Europe and the EC. Citizens are more likely to praise or blame national government than the EC for economic gains or losses.

Secondly, the strong support for European unification as a general goal suggests that individuals generally see the EC rather more in terms of ideal than material interests. Of course, it might be argued that the very remoteness of the EC is precisely why the harsh facts of economic reality do not intrude much upon popular support for it. Hence, even the unemployed, the poor, and the working class do not evaluate the EC in a significantly different way from the employed, the rich, and the upper class.

Following this line of argument, it might be suggested that people do not so much choose to support the EC for diffuse or ideal reasons, but rather fail to make the connection between the EC and their own life experiences. The physical and political distance from Brussels, the democratic deficit, and the fact that national governments may intervene between the citizen and economic circumstances all help to protect the EC from economic accountability and judgement. Hence, circumstances may conspire to protect the average European's rosy and idealistic view of European unification and the EC. Is this another case where distance makes the heart grow fonder?

The evidence about farmers and fishermen rather argues against this interpretation. The EC is not at all remote for them. On the contrary, its effects are personal, powerful, immediate, and of very great economic importance. One would have thought that farmers and fishermen, of all people, would take a stand one way or the other on EC membership. They do not. In most countries and in most years they are not different from their otherwise employed compatriots. And where they are different, the stand they take is not necessarily supportive, in spite of the funds they receive directly from the CAP. Whatever else may be the case, their attitudes towards the EC can scarcely be explained in terms of its remoteness.

4. Conclusion

In some respects the results of this study are frustrating and inconclusive. So far as economic considerations or variables do appear be associated with attitudes of support or opposition to the EC and European unification, they seem to have different effects in different countries and in different years. This makes it difficult to draw out any general conclusions.

In other respects, the results suggest some clear generalizations and conclusions. First, we have found rather little evidence that the EC or European unification are evaluated in primarily economic terms. Never the less, the fact that we have been unable to find the evidence even after exhaustive analysis does not prove that it does not exist. At the same time, the results of this study are consistent with the systematic and wide-ranging study produced by Zeus (1990), which shows a weak, variable, and patchy association between a wide range of economic variables and the four indicators of support. Those who find evidence of an economic impact (cf. Inglehart and Rabier 1978; Handley 1981; Dalton and Eichenberg 1991) seem to be generalizing about rather short-term effects, which, though significant at the time, tend to be smoothed out by long term-trends.

Secondly, support seems to be associated more strongly with social and attitudinal variables of a non-economic kind. In regression analysis at the individual level it seems that optimism/pessimism about next year, left–right orientation, education, and satisfaction with life in general are more closely associated with support than such things as income, class, or unemployment. In this sense the results of the individual surveys, based upon a large number of observations, are generally consistent with the conclusions of national-level analysis, which is necessarily limited to a small number of countries or a fairly short time-series. Given the differences between aggregate national data and individual survey data, there is no necessary theoretical reason why the results of the different levels of analysis should be the same. Nevethertheless, the fact that they support each other lends strength to the conclusion that support for the EC is not generally or powerfully determined by economic considerations.

Thirdly, the figures suggest that diffuse and somewhat idealistic reasons for supporting unification and EC membership tend to outweigh more specific reasons. Not only is there rather little evidence of economic calculation as the basis of support, but there is clear evidence that the general goal of unification is supported more strongly than EC membership. Membership, in turn, has more supporters than those who see benefits in EC membership. The conclusion seems to be that support for membership, and even more for unification is at a high level, even among some of those who see few benefits.

Fourthly, a solid foundation of inertia, custom, and national tradition seem to maintain support and make it grow. This is apparently true in two rather different ways, the countries which joined the EC first still maintain the highest levels of support; and support tends to increase slowly and unsteadily over the long term. In spite of short-term disturbances, some of them associated with economic circumstances, the long-term trend is for support to increase, suggesting that the people of the EC like it more as they grow accustomed to it. There is no evidence that support grows because an older and less favourable age group is replaced by a younger and better disposed one. It seems that the population as a whole is growing slowly but steadily more supportive. Familiarity breeds content.

We might end with an even more speculative set of comments. First, we have found little evidence that specific calculations of an economic

nature have gradually been replaced by or converted into stronger and deeper ties of loyalty, as some theorists of integration and institution building have suggested (Shepherd 1975; Hewstone 1986, 43). Rather the EC seems to have accumulated both material and ideal support over the years, at least since the Eurobarometer surveys started.

Secondly, we have found rather little evidence that support for the EC is elite lead or manipulated. If it were, we would expect parties to play a significant role as cueing agencies for mass attitudes. However, this study finds only a weak relationship between left–right orientations and support for EC membership in most member nations, except for Denmark and the UK, and to a lesser extent France.

Thirdly, so far as the study suggests a role for economics at all, it indicates sociotropic rather than pocket-book calculations. Variables such as household income and employment/unemployment are weakly related to EC support; variables such as anticipated national benefits of an economic, political, and diplomatic kind are more strongly associated.

However, behind the conclusions of this study there lurks a general problem which we cannot tackle here, and which is scarcely touched upon by the Eurobarometer surveys. It concerns the possibility that support for the EC, though widespread, is also rather flimsy and without great conviction. The EC is not a particularly salient issue for most people most of the time, and therefore favourable attitudes might easily be eroded or even reversed. The not infrequently high level of »Don't know« or non-committal responses to the four questions tapping support for European unification and the EC suggest that this may be the case. On the other hand, the evidence also suggests rather slow, long-term changes in support, punctuated by more extreme but generally short-lived fluctuations. This long-term stability combined with glacial changes suggests that EC support has fairly substantial foundations.

The EC has recently suffered major set backs with the Maastricht Treaty and the European Monetary System. However, if we can generalize from the past – always a beguiling but dangerous activity – the effects on popular support for the EC, though considerable in the short run, are likely to wear off. The trends for support are likely to pick up and continue much as they were for most of the 1973–1990 period.

Appendix

Full information about the data and the variables for the individual level analysis in this paper is presented in the codebook of the Cumulative Euro-Barometer, 1973–1991, created by Dr Richard Topf, Department of Politics and Government, Guildhall University, London for the Beliefs in Government project of the ESF. The codebook is available from the Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung, University of Cologne.

The Eurobarometer data and variables are based upon the following questions and codings:

Strikes: »Looking ahead to next year, do you think that strikes and industrial disputes (in this country) will increase, decrease, remain the same«? The options are coded 3, 2, 1 respectively.

Income Inequality: »Do you agree or disagree that greater effort should be made to reduce inequality of income«? Strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, disagree strongly are coded 5–1 respectively.

Public ownership: »Do you agree or disagree that public ownership of private industry should be expanded«? Agree strongly, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree. disagree strongly are coded 5–1 respectively.

Government management: »Do you agree or disagree that government should play a greater or sdmaller role (intervene less) in the management of the economy«?. Agree strongly, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, disagree strongly are coded 5–1 respectively.

Class: Respondents are classified according to occupation into five groups – professionals, business owners, executives and managers, white collar, and manual workers.

Employed: The employed are coded 1, the unemployed 0.

Income: Gross family income is computed in quartiles of family incomes of each nation.

Materialist-postmaterialist: The standard Inglehart variable is used, coding postmaterialists 3, materialists 1, and mixed 2.

Dissatisfaction with life: »On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the life you lead«? These are coded 1–4 respectively.

Unhappiness: »Taking all things together, how would you say things are these days - would you say you are very happy, fairly happy, nor not too happy these days«? Coded 1–3 respectively.

Dissatisfaction with democracy: »On the whole are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in your country«? Coded 4–1 respectively.

A worse future: »So far as you are concerned, do you think next year will be better or worse than this year«? Worse, same, better coded 3–1 respectively.

Age: Age in years.

Education: Coded 1–9 according to the year the respondent left school between »up to 14« and »22 or over«.

Left–right: The Cumulative Eurobarometer file codes party preference according to whether the respondent supports a rightist, centrist, or leftist party, coded 1–3 respectively.

Gender: Males and females coded 1 and 2 respectively.

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Tables

Table 1: *Economic-Political Images of the European Community, 1987*

Belgium	−3
Denmark	11
Finland	10
Germany	14
Great Britain	17
Greece	39
Ireland	24
Italy	−1
Luxembourg	−11
NL	−13
Portugal	24
Spain	20

Source: *Eurobarometer*, No. 27, June 1987

Note: The figures are the percentage of respondents in each country presenting a primarily economic image of the EC minus the percentage presenting a primarily economic one. A positive figure shows an economic image, a negative one a political one.

Table 2: *Indicators of Support by Length of EC Membership*

	1970	1975	1980	1983	1985	1986	1989
Unification[1]							
EC6	74	74	76		81		82
EC10	–	69	72		77		78
EC12	–	–	–		74		78
Membership[2]							
EC6	–	67	64		69		69
EC10	–	59	53		60		65
EC12	–	–	–		60		63
Benefit[3]							
EC10				52		55	59
EC12				–		46	59

1 percentage supporting 'very much'/'to some extent'
2 percentage who regard it as a 'good thing'
3 percentage claiming to have 'benefited'

Source: Commission of the European Communities, *Eurobarometer: Public Opinion; in the European Community,* No. 32, December 1989, Vol. II, Trend; Variables: 41–78

Table 3: *Net Payments/Receipts and Support for the EC*

Country	% reporting membership a 'good thing' – 1984	% claiming to have bene- fited – 1984	Net per capita payments from EC funds*
Belgium/Luxembourg	69	53	–47.07
Denmark	31	44	+57.83
EC(10)	55	52	
France	62	47	–9.98
Germany	53	46	–45.02
Greece	38	51	+80.00
Ireland	43	61	+205.61
Italy	70	63	+17.28
NL	80	64	+17.11
UK	32	32	–19.61

* Receipts minus payments in ECU, averaged over 1982, 1983 and 1984

Source: Hardy 1988; *Eurobarometer*, No. 32, 57–72

Table 4: *GDP Per Capita and Support for the EC*

Country	% saying membership a 'good thing'			% claiming to have benefited	GDP per capita ($'000)*		
	1975	1980	1985		1975	1980	1985
Belgium	57	54	64	52	10.4	12.0	12.4
Denmark	36	33	35	44	11.6	12.9	14.6
France	64	51	68	50	10.7	12.3	13.0
Germany	56	65	54	45	11.2	13.2	14.2
Ireland	50	52	53	62	4.9	5.7	6.0
Italy	71	74	72	65	6.8	8.1	8.7
Luxembourg	65	84	84	73	11.3	12.5	14.3
NL	64	75	77	63	10.9	12.0	12.3
UK	47	21	32	31	8.8	9.5	10.3

* GDP is real GDP per capita in constant prices expressed in thousand dollars at 1980 exchange rate.

Source: *Eurobarometer*, No. 32, 57–72; Lane, McKay and Newton 1991, 49

Table 5: *Economic Growth and Support for the EC*

Country	% saying membership a 'good thing'			% claiming to have benefited	GDP per capita ($'000)*		
	1973	1979	1985		1968–73	1973–9	1979–85
Belgium	57	65	64	52	10.4	12.0	12.4
Denmark	42	37	29	44	11.6	12.9	14.6
France	61	56	68	50	10.7	12.3	13.0
Germany	63	66	54	45	11.2	13.2	14.2
Ireland	56	54	53	62	4.9	5.7	6.0
Italy	69	78	72	65	6.8	8.1	8.7
Luxembourg	67	83	84	73	11.3	12.5	14.3
NL	63	84	77	63	10.9	12.0	12.3
Portugal	–	24	28	–	–	1.5	1.1
Spain	–	58	62	–	–	1.4	1.4
UK	31	33	32	31	8.8	9.5	10.3

Source: *Eurobarometer*, No. 32, 1989, 57–72; Lane, McKay, and Newton 1991, 60

Table 6: *Benefits of EC Membership by Length of Membership and Net Payments or Receipts*

	Net receipts (+) or payments (–) in 1982, 4 (ECU)	% claiming to have benefited in 1984
Early Members		
Belgium/Luxembourg	–47.07	53.0
France	–9.98	48.5
Germany	–45.02	42.5
Italy	+17.25	60.5
NL	+17.11	65.5
Later Members		
Denmark	+57.83	43.0
Greece	+80.00	48.0
Ireland	+205.61	60.0
UK	–19.61	32.0

Source: Compiled from Table 2

Table 7: *Economic or Political Images and Support for the EC, 1987*

	Economic images	% believing membership a 'good thing' – 1987
Belgium	–3	70
Denmark	11	39
France	10	74
Germany	14	62
Greece	39	58
Ireland	24	64
Italy	–1	79
Luxembourg	–11	87
NL	–13	83
Portugal	24	68
Spain	20	64
UK	17	46

Source: Table 1 and *Eurobarometer*, No. 27: 1–7

Table 8: *Economic and Non-Economic Variables and Support for Membership of the EC Significant regression (beta) coefficients for available years*

Country	Year	Strikes	Equal	Pub Own	Gov. Man	Class	Empl	Farm Fish	Inc.	Post Mat
France	1973	–	–	–	–			–		
	1976	–				*.16*	–			
	1979	–								–
	1981									
	1984	–		–						
	1986		–	–	–			–14		
	1990	–	–	–	–					
Belgium	1973	–	–	–	–					
	1976	–	–	–	–			–	.13	
	1979	–					–.23	–.20		–
	1981		–.17							
	1984	–		–						
	1986		–	–	–					
	1990	–	–	–	–			–.15	*–.23*	
Netherlands	1973	–	–	–	–			*–.34*		
	1976	–	–	–	–		–			
	1979	–			.17					–
	1981									
	1984	–		–						
	1086		–	–	–					
	1990	–	–	–	–					
Germany	1973	–	–	–	–					.11
	1976	–	–	–	–			–		
	1979	–		–.13				–		–
	1981		.15							
	1984	–	–.14	–	*.15*	.25			–.15	
	1986		–	–	–			–.13		
	1990	–	–	–	–			–.12		
Italy	1973	–	–	–	–					
	1976	–	–	–	–		–			
	1979	–		*–.23*						–
	1981									
	1984	–		–						
	1986		–	–	–		.19			-.16
	1990	–	–	–	–					
Luxembourg	1973	–	–	–	–					
	1976	–	–	–	–		–			
	1979	–					*.40*			–
	1981						–			
	1986		–	–	–					
Denmark	1973	–	–	–	–	.12		*.20*		
	1976	–	–	–	–		–	.13	.13	
	1979	–		*–.16*						–
	1986		–	–	–					
	1990	–	–	–	–					

Country	Year	Strikes	Equal	Pub Own	Gov. Man	Class	Empl	Farm Fish	Inc.	Post Mat
Eire	1973	–	–	–	–			.11		
	1976	–	–	–	–	*.23*	–	*.29*		
	1979	–								–
	1981						*–.25*			
	1986		–	–	–					
UK	1973	–	–	–	–					
	1976	–	–	–	–		–			
	1979	–	–.12							–
	1981								–	
	1984	–		–					–	
	1986		–	–	–	*.18*	.16			
Greece	1981			–.16						
	1986		–	–	–					
	1990	–	–	–	–					
Spain	1986		–	–	–					
	1990	–	–	–	–					
Portugal	1986		–	–	–	.21	*–.22*			*–.18*
	1990	–	–	–	–	.26				

Note: (a) Italicized numbers are significant at 0.01; all others at 0.05. (b) Some variables are not available in all years. A line has been drawn through cells where the data is missing. Empty cells indicate insignificant beta coefficients.

Table 9: *Support for EC Membersphip: Comparison of Farmers and Fishermen and other Employed Citizens in EC Member States*

Country	1974	1976	1979	1981	1984	1986	1990
Belgium							*(–)*
Denmark	*(+)*	*(+)*	*(+)*	*(+)*		*(+)*	
Eire		*(+)*	*(+)*	*(+)*	*(+)*		–
France				*(–)*			*(–)*
Germany	*(+)*	*(–)*				*(–)*	*(–)*
Greece	–	–	–	*(+)*	*(+)*		
Italy							
Luxembourg	*(+)*						*(–)*
NL	*(–)*						
Portugal	–	–	–	–	–		
Spain	–	–	–	–	–		
UK	*(+)*						–

Note: Italicized signs (Chi-square statistic) are significant at 0.01 all others at 0.05; a line has been drawn through cells where the data is missing or not applicable.