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## Does political knowledge increase support for Europe? A cross country investigation of the attitudes of European citizens

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# Does Political Knowledge Increase Support for Europe? A Cross Country Investigation of the Attitudes of European Citizens

## Abstract

We study the impact of political knowledge on the attitudes of European citizens towards the possible distribution of responsibilities between European level institutions and national governments in three policy areas: foreign policy, defence and immigration policy. The hypothesis tested is that if citizens are not knowledgeable about how the EU works, they are more likely to be wrong about the consequences of a mismatch in the allocation of competences. In order to identify the causal effect of political knowledge on attitudes we use an instrumental variables approach. The results show that more informed citizens have a considerably higher probability of being in favour of the process of EU integration.

JEL-Code: H700, D800.

Keywords: European Union, information, attitudes, political economy.

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# 1 Introduction

Most economists agree that providing more information in the economy is efficiency-enhancing because economic policy decisions should follow optimization problems solved by rational and well-informed agents. A standard assumption in the political economy literature is that rational and well-informed citizens-voters are able to assess the consequences of alternative policy proposals, so that they understand which policy options are in their best interest.

In this paper we consider this issue. We analyze the impact of information on the attitudes of European citizens towards the possible distribution of responsibilities between European level institutions and national governments. The hypothesis under investigation is that if Europeans are poorly informed on the functioning of the European institutions, they are more likely to be wrong about the consequences of a mismatch in the allocation of responsibilities between the European Union and the Member States because, in the absence of knowledge, European citizens draw on other factors to determine their policy preferences concerning the management of certain policy issues.

Note that this hypothesis is not just an intellectual speculation put forward by the political economy literature; it is also a very popular view in part of the European Commission itself. In February 2006 the European Commission adopted a White Paper on a European Communication Policy whose main purpose was to promote actions to inform citizens better and to be more responsive to their concerns.<sup>1</sup> In the Commission's view these actions are crucial in raising awareness and creating commitment to the European project.<sup>2</sup> Note that the White Paper followed the main conclusion reached by the Commission the previous year (January 2005) when - after the vote by the European Parliament in favour of the draft European Constitution - a special survey on the draft Constitution was commissioned by the Commission from Eurobarometer. The survey showed that the more people know about the text of the Constitution, the more they are in favour of it.<sup>3</sup> Put briefly, in recent years

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<sup>1</sup>Commission of the European Communities, (2006). During the press conference announcing the White Paper, the Vice-President of the Commission Margot Walstrom said that "Communication is first and foremost a matter of democracy. People have a right to know what the EU does and what it stands for. And they have a right to fully participate in the European project. Communicating Europe is not just a Brussels affair. EU institutions and Member States must work on it together. The European Union has grown up as a political project but has not found a place in people's heart and minds".

<sup>2</sup>For an evaluation of all the measures taken by the European Commission in the years 2000 to 2005, based on Margot Wallstrom's "Action Plan to Improve Communication Europe", see Brueggemann et al. (2006).

<sup>3</sup>The main conclusion of this special survey was as follows: "The data show that information is today a

a popular view on the part of the Commission is that the current crisis in the EU can be overcome if the European institutions become more committed to communicating the advantages of the European project. If citizens are more informed about how the EU works, they will be more informed about the advantages of the policies adopted, and they will thus begin to appreciate the EU more.

However, whilst it is indubitably true that many citizens do not know a great deal about the EU, to the best of our knowledge there are no studies that have investigated whether it is equally true that rendering more information to citizens about the EU and its policies would increase popular support for the European project as such.

The aim of this paper is to address this topic by bringing together two different strands of studies. Firstly, there has recently been a growing body of literature which seeks to understand the attitudes of individuals. This literature has been concerned to study attitudes for instance towards redistribution, pension reform, immigration and economic policy issues. Among the determinants, much emphasis has been placed on factors linked to the self-interest of individuals (Landier et al., 2008; Facchini and Mayda, 2008), and to the role of information in shaping these attitudes (Blinder and Krueger, 2004; Boeri et al., 2002; Boeri and Tabellini, forthcoming). The second strand of studies has sought to determine the attitudes of European citizens toward policies adopted by the European Union. This literature, however, is still in its infancy. For instance, the papers by Ahrens et al. (2008) and Alesina et al. (2005) provide only descriptive results. Other papers (Cerniglia and Pagani, 2009; Gartner, 1997) use econometric methodology, but their main objective is to explain Europeans' attitudes in terms of almost exclusively socio-economic determinants.

The main interest of this paper concerns the role of information, which we include among the variables explaining citizens' support for the European project. More specifically, what we mean by information is factual knowledge possessed by European citizens about the functioning of certain European institutions. We refer to this knowledge as 'political knowledge'. In other words, our aim is to determine whether correct political knowledge about some institutional variables increases the degree of support for the European Union because Europeans who are more informed are also better able to understand the potential benefits deriving, for instance, from a more efficient allocation of competences between the European Union and the Member States. This is therefore the first paper which empirically assesses the role

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crucial factor in changing opinion in the direction of more clear-cut support for the text." (pag 47). The Eurobarometer special survey is no. 214 (January 2005).

of the political knowledge possessed by European citizens in shaping their attitudes towards the European Union.

The causal effect of political knowledge on preferences is identified by using an instrumental variable (IV) approach. Moreover, we perform a number of robustness checks estimating the model using different IV. Thus, the main contribution of our study is that it is the first evaluation of the causal effect of factual information (or political knowledge) on Europeans' attitudes regarding the process of EU integration and, more in general, a test of the political economy hypothesis that well-informed citizens-voters understand better which policy options are in their best interest.

To sum up, the questions that we try to answer in this work are: 1) Does more political knowledge reveal the advantages of EU and thus increase support for the European project? 2) What other factors determine support for the EU?

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows: Section 2 presents the dataset and describes the sample. It also explains how the variables of interest to us – support for European integration and political knowledge – are measured and reports descriptive evidence on the relationship between these two variables. Section 3 presents the estimation strategy and discusses some methodological issues; Section 4 shows the results of econometric analysis. Section 5 concludes and discusses some policy implications.

## 2 Data and descriptive results

The empirical analysis is based on Eurobarometer micro-data. The Eurobarometer surveys are an enormous source of information with which to investigate, monitor and understand the attitudes of European citizens towards various issues and policies adopted by the EU. The universe of the survey is citizens aged 15 and over residing in the European Union, and each Eurobarometer dataset contains approximately 1000 face-to-face interviews per each EU Member State (except Germany: 1500, Luxembourg: 500, United Kingdom: 1300 including 300 in Northern Ireland, Cyprus: 500, Malta: 500). To the aim of our work, we use the 2007 Eurobarometer 67.2 “European Union Enlargement, Personal Data Privacy, the National Economy, and Scientific Research, April-May 2007”, which contains individual information on 26,717 EU citizens from 27 Member States.

The 67.2 edition of the Eurobarometer has the valuable feature of containing: i) a set of questions about the willingness to pool authority and create a common policy in the areas

of defence, foreign policy and immigration; and ii) a set of questions that enable assessment of the degree of correct political knowledge possessed by European citizens on some key institutional features of the EU (see the next subsections for a detailed description of these variables). By combining this information, we are allowed to investigate the relationship between political knowledge and attitudes towards the European Union.

Beside these questions, the survey collects data on a standard set of demographic and other socio-economic background variables, including age, gender, nationality, marital status, job market position and education. Moreover, the dataset provides information about citizens' ideology, such as their left/right political position. This is also an important feature of the survey, given that some papers have shown that ideology plays a role in shaping individuals' attitudes towards the European project.<sup>4</sup> Finally, the survey also includes a specific set of questions on political trust, that is, the extent to which individuals have confidence in the main institutions of the political system. More specifically, we have information on citizens' trust in the national parliament and the national government. Using these questions we are able to study the relationship between political trust and attitudes towards the European Union.<sup>5</sup>

Table 1 shows some key features of the sample. On average, respondents are 45 years old, and 52% are female. Almost one quarter of the sample (23%) completed education before the age of 15; 40% between 16 and 19; and 24% after the age of 20. As regards labour-market position, retired persons represent 25% of the sample, a percentage similar to that of manual workers (23%). The modal value of the political position is Centre (34%), followed by Left (27%) and Right (20%). One fifth of respondents either refuse to answer this question or state that they do not know. The percentages of citizens who trust the national government and parliament are, respectively, 41% and 43%.

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<sup>4</sup>See Gabel (1998b) and Eichengreen (2006); for instance, Kessler and Freeman (2005) study public opinion in the EU on immigration and find that political ideology is an important predictor of citizens' immigration positions.

<sup>5</sup>On this point there is evidence that higher levels of various types of trust foster better governance and increase institutional effectiveness, and that institutional trust is essential for the stability of societies and for the functioning of democracy (see Morrone et al., 2009 for a survey).

**Table 1.** Sample characteristics

|                                   | <i>Mean</i> | <i>Std. Dev.</i> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| <i>Demographics</i>               |             |                  |
| Female                            | 0.52        | 0.50             |
| Age                               | 45.7        | 18.5             |
| Married                           | 0.60        | 0.49             |
| <i>Age at completed education</i> |             |                  |
| <=15                              | 0.23        | 0.42             |
| 15-19                             | 0.40        | 0.49             |
| >=20                              | 0.24        | 0.43             |
| Still studying                    | 0.10        | 0.31             |
| Other                             | 0.02        | 0.15             |
| <i>Occupation</i>                 |             |                  |
| House person                      | 0.09        | 0.28             |
| Student                           | 0.10        | 0.31             |
| Unemployed                        | 0.06        | 0.24             |
| Retired                           | 0.25        | 0.43             |
| Manual worker                     | 0.23        | 0.42             |
| Low-skilled white-collar          | 0.11        | 0.31             |
| High-skilled white-collar         | 0.12        | 0.32             |
| Businessman                       | 0.05        | 0.21             |
| <i>Ideology</i>                   |             |                  |
| Left                              | 0.27        | 0.44             |
| Right                             | 0.20        | 0.40             |
| Centre                            | 0.34        | 0.47             |
| Refusal/don't know                | 0.20        | 0.40             |
| <i>Trust</i>                      |             |                  |
| National Government               | 0.41        | 0.49             |
| National Parliament               | 0.43        | 0.49             |
| Observations                      | 26,082      |                  |

## 2.1 Measuring citizens' attitudes for European integration

We focus on the attitudes of European citizens towards the possible distribution of responsibilities between European-level institutions and national governments in three policy areas – foreign policy, defence and immigration policy – which certainly represent key policy issues and important challenges for the EU in the near future. Recall that these policies have to date been almost exclusively under the sovereignty of the Member States, but under the terms of the Lisbon Treaty the EU will become more involved in these policy areas in the next few years. Undoubtedly, as long as the European Union successfully manage these policies the process of integration will be strengthened. If citizens want greater EU intervention instead

of exclusive involvement of the Member States, their opinions can be seen as indicative of support for greater European integration.

Moreover, from a strictly economic perspective such policies - being typical case of pure public goods - would be more efficiently handled at the European level because a unified Europe can obviously yield greater benefits than several small states acting alone in the international arena.

In order better to justify the validity of our analysis as regards European integration, we provide further information about the source of data used to obtain our results and reach our conclusions. Firstly, doubts may be raised as to whether the questions asked in the Eurobarometer opinion polls assess Europeans' true preferences towards policy issues in which the European Union is involved.<sup>6</sup> However, this is not the question asked here, because if the opinions expressed by European citizens in the Eurobarometer opinion polls influence policy decisions taken by the European Commission (as the White Paper and the following actions tell us) it seems worth delving deeper into the determinants of these opinions. Moreover, it is well known that in recent years the EU - having almost completed the internal market and having accomplished the task of making economic and monetary union work - is becoming increasingly involved in new policy areas where different values, ideas and political opinions play a key role.<sup>7</sup> In other words, in these policy areas there may be high heterogeneity of preferences among European citizens. This means that, since the EU is now facing these new policy challenges, it can no longer engage in a decision-making process isolated from real political debates. Understanding citizens' opinions on these matters - in other words, the factors influencing those opinions - is more important than ever, otherwise the difficulty of overcoming the current policy gridlock will be more severe.

The Eurobarometer survey we are exploiting in this paper includes questions that elicit information on citizens' opinions regarding the enhancement of EU involvement in the three policy areas above mentioned: foreign policy, defence and immigration policy. These questions are the basis for building the dependent variables of our econometric analysis. The precise wording of the questions is:

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<sup>6</sup>Among the papers making this point clear see Page and Shapiro (1983) and Bertrand and Mullainathan (2001).

<sup>7</sup>Besides defence, foreign, security, and immigration policies, other examples are employment and social policy, as well as policies for solidarity and welfare, education, training and youth, and asylum. For a complete list of all the EU's policy responsibilities and their extent see Alesina and Spolaore (2003, chapter 12).

*“What is your opinion on each of the following statements? Please tell me for each statement, whether you are for it or against it:*

- 1. A common foreign policy among the Member States of the EU, towards other countries*
- 2. A common defence and security policy among EU Member States*

In order to gain information on European citizens’ opinions on immigration policy as well, we used another question, whose exact wording is:

*“Do you tend to agree or tend to disagree with the following statement?*

*The EU should have a common immigration policy towards people from outside the EU”*

Respondents are asked whether they agree with the previous statements, disagree with them, or whether they do not have an opinion. In our view, the above questions are concrete proposals for European integration and can yield a good picture of the degree of Europeans’ support for (or opposition against) the European Union. Put differently, if respondents opt for a common intervention (or common policy) in these areas rather than national intervention, this may be seen as support among European citizens for greater European integration.

## **2.2 Measuring political knowledge**

As said, a remarkable feature of the 67.2 Eurobarometer survey is that it contains a set of questions about factual knowledge by European citizens of some EU institutions. Correct responses by citizens to questions aimed to assess knowledge on the functioning of the EU institutions can be seen as a good proxy for political knowledge. This is a very important feature of the survey because no solid conclusion could be drawn on the relationship between knowledge and attitudes using “subjective information” instead of factual knowledge. To illustrate the point, suppose that respondents state that they know the functioning of a certain institution and it is not possible to verify whether the answers provided are truthful. It may be that the ascertained level of knowledge is upward biased if respondents are ashamed of saying they do not know something. This is not our case, because we are able to control the respondents’ exact level of political knowledge. The question in the survey used to infer the citizens’ level of political knowledge is:

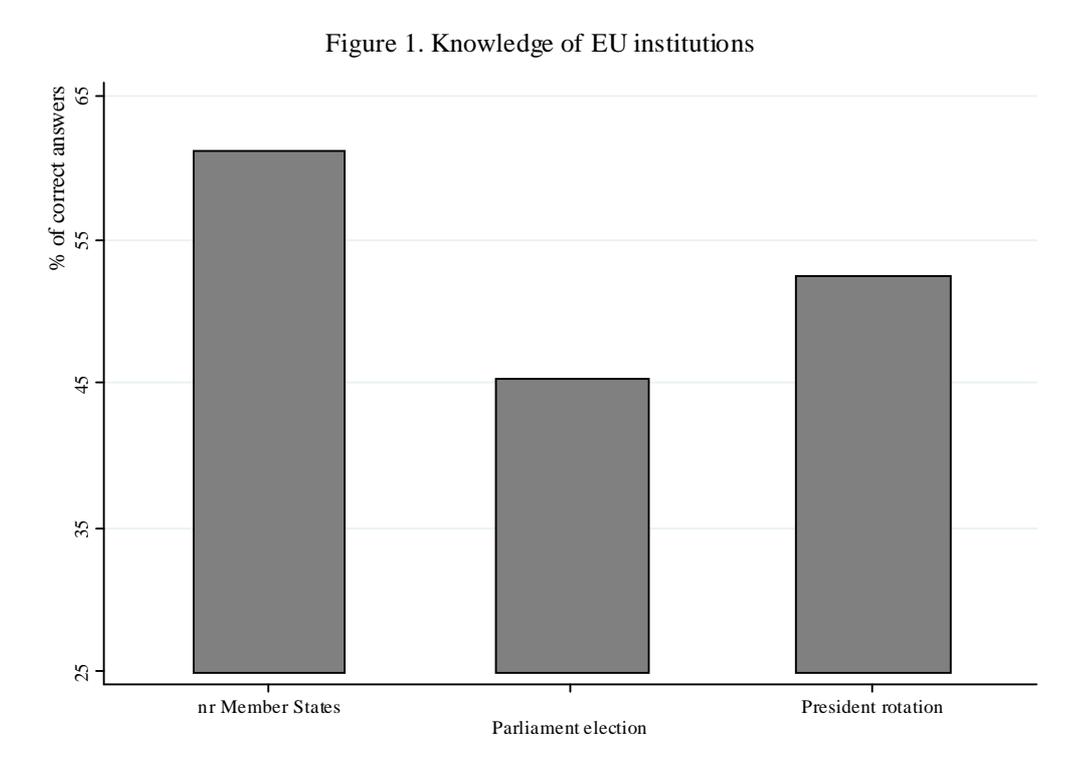
*“For each of the following statements about the European Union could you please tell me whether you think it is true or false?*

- 1. The EU currently consists of fifteen Member States*

2. *The members of the European Parliament are directly elected by the citizens of the EU*
3. *Every six months, a different Member State becomes the President of the Council of the European Union".*

This question is also significant because it allows us to assess citizens' knowledge about three different aspects of the functioning of the EU institutions. According to the exactness of the answers provided, we can understand the extent to which the respondent is knowledgeable about the EU institutions.

Figure 1 shows the percentage of correct answers to the three questions provided by EU citizens.



Among the three topics used to infer citizens' level of knowledge about the EU, the highest percentage of correct answers regards the number of Member States, which is correctly known

by more than 60% of respondents, while less than half of the sample (45%) knows that the members of the European Parliament are directly elected by the citizens of the EU, and just over half (52%) knows that the President of the Council of the European Union changes every six months.

### 2.3 Political knowledge and support for integration

Table 2 provides a first sketch of citizens' opinions about concrete proposals for greater European integration and about the relationship between these latter and political knowledge. Overall, a very large majority of respondents (more than 70% in all three policy areas) are in favour of a common policy. It therefore seems that (as also noted by Alesina et al., 2005) – consistently with the theory on fiscal federalism – citizens correctly perceive that there are high economies of scale and externalities in these areas, and therefore that greater involvement by the European Union could make the management of these policies more efficient. Note that defence shows the highest percentage of support (77%), probably because in this policy area the benefits arising from economies of scale are much more easily understood by citizens.

On average, male and more educated citizens have a more favourable attitude towards greater EU integration. In addition, the level of consensus is highest among high-skilled workers (professionals and general management) while it is at the lowest level for house persons, followed by retired individuals, unemployed and manual workers. This evidence may be explained by considering that high-skilled workers are more likely to gain from EU integration, for instance because it allows them to increase their job opportunities and, more in general, to make the most of their human capital. By contrast, low-skilled and unemployed workers are likely to fear the increased competition on the labour market that EU integration may bring.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>We take this point from Hix (2008), whose main aim is to understand the present-day public attitudes towards the EU. Hix argues: “Cost-benefit calculations also explain variations in public support at the individual level. For example, one group in society that has benefited enormously from European integration is the economic, political and societal elite. European integration has provided elites with new opportunities to live and work where they choose, to travel more freely and cheaply, to interact with a greater number of people, and to make the most of their human capital (their educational level and economic assets). Not surprisingly, while public support for the EU at the mass level has declined, Europe’s economic, political and societal elites remain strongly committed to the project” (p. 59). This point (or utilitarian hypothesis) is not completely new. Other studies have argued that EU citizens in different socioeconomic situations experience different costs and benefits from integrative policy: see Gabel and Palmer (1995) and Gabel (1998a).

**Table 2.** Support for EU integration and political knowledge

|                                     | Average consensus <sup>a</sup> |                |                    | % change in support <sup>b</sup> |                |                    |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
|                                     | <i>Foreign policy</i>          | <i>Defence</i> | <i>Immigration</i> | <i>Foreign policy</i>            | <i>Defence</i> | <i>Immigration</i> |
| <i>All</i>                          | 0.71                           | 0.77           | 0.75               |                                  |                |                    |
| <i>Demographics</i>                 |                                |                |                    |                                  |                |                    |
| Male                                | 0.74                           | 0.80           | 0.78               | 0.46                             | 0.30           | 0.43               |
| Female                              | 0.68                           | 0.75           | 0.73               | 0.55                             | 0.38           | 0.54               |
| Age 15-24                           | 0.72                           | 0.81           | 0.74               | 0.52                             | 0.33           | 0.47               |
| Age 25-34                           | 0.71                           | 0.79           | 0.76               | 0.47                             | 0.31           | 0.39               |
| Age 35-44                           | 0.73                           | 0.79           | 0.77               | 0.44                             | 0.25           | 0.38               |
| Age 45-54                           | 0.71                           | 0.79           | 0.77               | 0.37                             | 0.28           | 0.43               |
| Age 55-64                           | 0.71                           | 0.77           | 0.77               | 0.55                             | 0.37           | 0.56               |
| Age 65+                             | 0.66                           | 0.72           | 0.72               | 0.82                             | 0.61           | 0.81               |
| <i>Age at completed education</i>   |                                |                |                    |                                  |                |                    |
| <=15                                | 0.62                           | 0.69           | 0.68               | 0.82                             | 0.57           | 0.77               |
| 16-19                               | 0.73                           | 0.79           | 0.77               | 0.37                             | 0.24           | 0.38               |
| >=20                                | 0.75                           | 0.82           | 0.80               | 0.26                             | 0.14           | 0.22               |
| <i>Labour market position</i>       |                                |                |                    |                                  |                |                    |
| house person                        | 0.66                           | 0.69           | 0.71               | 0.84                             | 0.64           | 0.86               |
| retired                             | 0.68                           | 0.74           | 0.73               | 0.68                             | 0.48           | 0.67               |
| unemployed                          | 0.68                           | 0.74           | 0.72               | 0.41                             | 0.30           | 0.56               |
| manual worker                       | 0.70                           | 0.78           | 0.75               | 0.41                             | 0.26           | 0.44               |
| student                             | 0.73                           | 0.82           | 0.74               | 0.51                             | 0.25           | 0.40               |
| low-skilled white-collar            | 0.74                           | 0.81           | 0.80               | 0.27                             | 0.14           | 0.23               |
| businessman                         | 0.75                           | 0.82           | 0.79               | 0.47                             | 0.25           | 0.22               |
| high-skilled white-collar           | 0.78                           | 0.83           | 0.81               | 0.29                             | 0.19           | 0.19               |
| <i>Ideology</i>                     |                                |                |                    |                                  |                |                    |
| Left                                | 0.72                           | 0.77           | 0.76               | 0.39                             | 0.28           | 0.35               |
| Right                               | 0.73                           | 0.81           | 0.77               | 0.50                             | 0.35           | 0.46               |
| Centre                              | 0.73                           | 0.79           | 0.78               | 0.38                             | 0.24           | 0.32               |
| Refusal/don't know                  | 0.64                           | 0.71           | 0.67               | 0.80                             | 0.54           | 0.87               |
| <i>Trust</i>                        |                                |                |                    |                                  |                |                    |
| National Government                 | 0.76                           | 0.82           | 0.80               | 0.47                             | 0.34           | 0.46               |
| National Parliament                 | 0.75                           | 0.81           | 0.80               | 0.45                             | 0.33           | 0.45               |
| <i>Country</i>                      |                                |                |                    |                                  |                |                    |
| EU15                                | 0.68                           | 0.74           | 0.75               | 0.54                             | 0.37           | 0.40               |
| New Member States                   | 0.74                           | 0.83           | 0.76               | 0.57                             | 0.41           | 0.65               |
| <i>EU info (nr correct answers)</i> |                                |                |                    |                                  |                |                    |
| 0                                   | 0.53                           | 0.63           | 0.58               | -                                | -              | -                  |
| 1                                   | 0.69                           | 0.77           | 0.73               | -                                | -              | -                  |
| 2                                   | 0.76                           | 0.82           | 0.81               | -                                | -              | -                  |
| 3                                   | 0.80                           | 0.84           | 0.84               | -                                | -              | -                  |

a. % of EU citizens stating they are for a common EU policy

b. % change in support moving from 0 to 3 EU institutions known

Oldest citizens (aged 65 and over) are less favourable to an European common policy than citizens of other ages. Moreover, responses seem unrelated to stated political position or ideology, while individuals without a declared political position show the lowest consensus on European integration. Citizens who trust national institutions exhibit a high level of agreement. Finally, it is noteworthy that citizens of new Member States are on average

better disposed towards a common EU policy than are EU15 citizens with regard to all the policy areas considered.

As a first preliminary evidence of the link between political knowledge and consensus towards EU integration, the last lines of Table 2 show the consensus level for a common policy separately for the three topics and for varying levels of knowledge. The figures in the table suggest a strong role for political knowledge, showing that it is positively related to attitudes in favour of more EU involvement: as political knowledge improves, so does the average consensus for more EU power in the considered policy areas.

For the whole sample, moving from zero EU institutions known to knowledge about three aspects, average consensus for the three policies grows from 53% to 80% in the case of foreign policy, from 63% to 84% in the case of defence and from 58% to 84% in the case of immigration. Very interestingly, knowledge plays a role especially for those respondents on average less well disposed towards Europe (see the last three columns of Table 2). As an example, for the least educated, moving from zero to three EU institutions known is related to an increase in support for EU management of the three policies equal, respectively, to 82% (foreign policy), 57% (defence) and 77% (immigration). We will delve into this issue in section 4.3.

To sum up, the evidence in Table 2 illustrates the existence of substantial consensus among citizens on a common policy in regard to foreign affairs, defence and immigration. This evidence is consistent with the findings of previous studies (see Alesina et al., 2005; Ahrens et al., 2008). Moreover, descriptive results suggest both that higher levels of support are associated with higher levels of knowledge about the EU institutions and that there exists a certain degree of heterogeneity across citizens as far as this relationship is concerned. Obviously, these are only descriptive results and a deeper analysis is required to get more reliable evidence on the causal effect of knowledge on EU consensus. This is the objective of the following sections.

### **3 Empirical strategy**

In this section we describe the empirical approach and discuss some methodological issues.

We model the probability to support a greater involvement of EU in policy  $i$ ,  $Pr(S_i)$  as a function of a set of demographic and other socio-economic background variables  $X$  (age, squared age, gender, education, marital status, occupation and home ownership as a

proxy for income), on country groups fixed-effects  $C$  (the groups considered are: Mediterranean countries, i.e. Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain, Continental countries, i.e. Austria, France and Germany, Benelux countries, Nordic countries, i.e. Denmark, Finland and Sweden, English-speaking countries, i.e. Ireland, Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and new Member States), on political ideology variables  $I$  (a set of dummies for left/right political positions) and on two variables for trust  $T$  (whether the respondents trust the national parliament and the national government).

Finally, political knowledge, which is our variable of interest, is included among regressors. As already said, we consider knowledge about some EU institutions. We built one single variable ( $EU\ info$ ) by summing the number of right answers to the questions regarding the functioning of the three EU institutions, so that the variable  $EU\ info$  ranges between zero (no correct answer) and three (all correct answers). In order to facilitate interpretation of the results we dichotomise this variable and thus enter it in the estimation equation as a dummy variable ( $D_{EU\ info}$ ) taking the value of one in the case of high knowledge (two or three correct answers) and zero in the case of low knowledge (zero or one correct answers). Hence, to model attitudes towards the EU we assume that the probability of being in favour of the  $i$ -th policy is captured by the following regression equation:

$$Pr(Si) = \alpha + \beta_1 C + \beta_2 X + \beta_3 I + \beta_4 T + \beta_5 (D_{EU\ info}) + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

Equation (1) is fitted by three standard probit models where the dependent variables are dummy variables taking the value of one when individuals are in favour of, respectively, a common foreign policy, a common defence and security policy and a common immigration policy. Averaging answers on the three policy areas, we observe that 9.8% of respondents do not have an opinion (the answer is “don’t know”). In our analysis, these individuals are merged with the “disagree” category, so that the dependent variables takes the value of zero if respondents either disagree or do not have an opinion.<sup>9</sup>

A very important point to take into account is that the estimation of standard regression models assuming that political knowledge is strictly exogenous to opinions on EU leads to biased results if, rather than knowledge having an exogenous causal effect on EU support, knowledge and EU support are jointly determined by underlying factors unobserved in the

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<sup>9</sup>Wee also estimated multinomial logit models with a three-values (agree, do not agree, don’t know) dependent variable. However, the results are unchanged. Multinomial logit estimation results are available from the authors upon request.

data. Stated differently, if we want to identify a causal relationship and not a simple correlation between political knowledge and attitudes towards the EU, we must consider that the former variable is likely to be endogenous to attitudes.

Therefore, in the following analysis we will test whether the positive relationship between knowledge and attitudes in favour of more EU involvement actually reflects a role of political knowledge or whether the knowledge level simply identifies those respondents who are in favour of European integration. The question that we want to answer is: does knowledge increase support because it reveals the advantages of the EU or is it simply a proxy for individuals who are in favour of European integration for other reasons? From a technical point of view, this means that we have to deal with the fact that knowledge about the functioning of EU institutions could be endogenous to attitudes. If this is the case, and if we ignore it, we would obtain biased estimates of the coefficients of interest. Endogeneity may arise if there are unobserved factors (like a generic preference for EU) that affect both positive attitudes towards European policies and the extent to which people get informed about the workings of EU institutions.

We deal with the endogeneity of political knowledge in two ways. First, we exploit a unique set of questions present in the 67.2 Eurobarometer survey that allow us to get information regarding the level of citizens' attachment to the EU. These questions are: i) Whether the EU conjures up a positive image; ii) Whether the respondent feels very attached to the EU; and iii) Whether s/he trusts the EU. We built a single variable by considering simultaneously the three questions. This variable, which ranges between 0 (minimum degree of europeanism) and 3 (maximum degree of europeanism), should proxy the unobservable generic positive attitude for EU (let us call it 'genuine europeanism'). If the source of endogeneity is genuine europeanism, which determines simultaneously preferences and knowledge, this variable should catch the variation in attitudes produced by genuine europeanism and thus contribute to isolate the causal effect of knowledge on citizens' attitudes.

Second, for the evaluation of the causal effect of political knowledge on attitudes we use an IV approach and we reach identification using a maximum-likelihood seemingly unrelated two-equations probit model with exclusion restrictions. In order to do so, we have to find valid instruments for political knowledge, that is variables correlated to knowledge but uncorrelated to the error term of the policy opinions equations. The Eurobarometer dataset provides three instrumental variables suitable for this aim. This allows us to perform some robustness checks by replicating estimates with the three different instruments.

First, we use as instrument citizens' actual knowledge of the main economic indicators of their country. More specifically, the 67.2 Eurobarometer survey contains three questions about the growth rate, the inflation rate and the unemployment rate in the respondent's country. The exact wording of each question is:

1. *What was the official growth rate of the economy (measured in terms of Gross Domestic Product) in (OUR COUNTRY) in 2006? I can tell you that this figure is between -1% and 15%.*
2. *What was the official inflation rate, the rate of which consumer prices increased or decreased, in (OUR COUNTRY) in 2006? I can tell you that the exact figure is between -1% and 20%.*
3. *What was the official unemployment rate, the percentage of active people who do not have a job, in (OUR COUNTRY) in 2006? I can tell you that the exact figure is between -1% and 20%.*

We have compared the answers provided by respondents to the actual figures for these economic variables and computed the errors. We built a variable by summing the number of answers characterized by low errors, where an error is considered low when it ranges between 0 and 2 percentage points, and dichotomised this variable so that it takes the value of one when 2 or 3 answers to the previous questions are provided with a low error. This variable should catch the propensity to be informed, and thus it should be correlated with political knowledge but not with opinions about the desirability of a common policy in the three areas we consider.

The second instrument is a dummy variable built using an Eurobarometer question where respondents are asked to say whether or not they agree that it is necessary to know economic figures like the growth rate, inflation rate and unemployment rate. The dummy variable takes the value of one when the respondent totally agree or tend to agree, and zero otherwise (tend to disagree or totally disagree). Also this variable should control for the inclination to get informed, and, as such, it should be correlated with the level of political knowledge about the EU but not with citizens' policy opinions.

Finally, we use as an instrument a dummy variable for individuals stating that they are interested in politics. The underlying assumption is that when an individual is interested in politics, s/he is likely to acquire more information about the EU, but there are no reasons

to assume that people more interested in politics are more likely to be in favour of EU integration.

Our estimation strategy consist of estimating two-equation latent dependent-variable models: The estimated models are bivariate probit by which we estimate simultaneously an equation for citizens' attitudes with one endogenous dummy (political knowledge) and one reduced form equation for the endogenous political knowledge dummy. The exclusion restrictions are based on the IV described above.

## 4 Results

In this section we will delve into the relationship between political knowledge and attitudes towards EU integration by means of econometric analysis. In the first place, we will verify whether the positive relationship between the two variables remains after controlling for citizens' observable characteristics and assuming the exogeneity of political knowledge.

Second, we will try to assess the causal effect of knowledge on consensus for greater EU integration coping with the potential endogeneity of knowledge. Identifying a causal effect of knowledge on consensus is necessary if we want to draw some policy implications on how to increase support for the EU.

### 4.1 Exogenous political knowledge

The three columns of Table 3 present probit results for preferences towards a common EU foreign policy, defence and immigration policy when political knowledge is taken as exogenous to attitudes. In order to facilitate interpretation of the results we report marginal effects.

Before commenting on the relationship between political knowledge and consensus for more EU integration, we very briefly discuss the impact of the other equations' controls.

In the adopted specification, Mediterranean countries are the excluded category. Comparing country groups' coefficients, results highlight that the Nordic country group has the lowest support for EU integration, followed by English-speaking countries. For both groups of countries, the highest disagreement is found for foreign policy (-33.7% for Nordic countries and - 25.2% for English-speaking countries) and the lowest for immigration policy (-17.2% for Nordic countries and -8.6% for English-speaking countries). Citizens from new Member States and from the Mediterranean group of countries are generally more in favour of greater

EU involvement.

**Table 3.** Marginal effects on the probability of consensus fo more EU integration - Exogenous political knowledge

| <i>Variable</i>   | <i>Foreign policy</i> |              | <i>Defence</i> |              | <i>Immigration</i> |              |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
|   | coeff                 | std err      | coeff          | std err      | coeff              | std err      |
| <i>Country-groups (ref. Mediterranean countries)</i>          |                       |              |                |              |                    |              |
| Nordic  | -0.337 ***            | <i>0.017</i> | -0.245 ***     | <i>0.018</i> | -0.172 ***         | <i>0.017</i> |
| New Member States   | 0.000                 | <i>0.012</i> | 0.059 ***      | <i>0.010</i> | -0.009             | <i>0.012</i> |
| Continental   | -0.021                | <i>0.015</i> | 0.030 **       | <i>0.013</i> | 0.010              | <i>0.013</i> |
| Benelux   | -0.152 ***            | <i>0.018</i> | -0.016         | <i>0.015</i> | -0.007             | <i>0.015</i> |
| English-speaking  | -0.252 ***            | <i>0.020</i> | -0.220 ***     | <i>0.019</i> | -0.086 ***         | <i>0.018</i> |
| <i>Demographics</i>   |                       |              |                |              |                    |              |
| female  | -0.027 ***            | <i>0.009</i> | -0.018 **      | <i>0.008</i> | -0.029 ***         | <i>0.009</i> |
| married   | 0.028 ***             | <i>0.010</i> | 0.024 ***      | <i>0.009</i> | 0.014              | <i>0.009</i> |
| age   | 0.004 **              | <i>0.001</i> | 0.001          | <i>0.001</i> | 0.005 ***          | <i>0.001</i> |
| squared age   | -0.000 **             | <i>0.000</i> | -0.000         | <i>0.000</i> | -0.000 ***         | <i>0.000</i> |
| <i>Age at completed education (ref. &gt;=20)</i>              |                       |              |                |              |                    |              |
| <=15  | -0.123 ***            | <i>0.016</i> | -0.089 ***     | <i>0.015</i> | -0.076 ***         | <i>0.015</i> |
| 16-19   | -0.027 **             | <i>0.011</i> | -0.039 ***     | <i>0.011</i> | -0.022 **          | <i>0.011</i> |
| <i>Labour market position(ref. High-skilled white-collar)</i> |                       |              |                |              |                    |              |
| unemployed  | -0.025                | <i>0.024</i> | -0.038 *       | <i>0.023</i> | -0.013             | <i>0.022</i> |
| manual worker   | -0.035 **             | <i>0.018</i> | -0.004         | <i>0.016</i> | -0.004             | <i>0.016</i> |
| low-skilled white-collar                                      | -0.025                | <i>0.020</i> | -0.021         | <i>0.019</i> | -0.001             | <i>0.018</i> |
| businessman   | -0.028                | <i>0.026</i> | -0.000         | <i>0.024</i> | -0.020             | <i>0.025</i> |
| out of the labour force                                       | -0.033 **             | <i>0.017</i> | -0.033 **      | <i>0.016</i> | -0.010             | <i>0.016</i> |
| <i>House owned</i>  | -0.004                | <i>0.010</i> | -0.013         | <i>0.010</i> | 0.011              | <i>0.010</i> |
| <i>Trust</i>  |                       |              |                |              |                    |              |
| National government   | 0.051 ***             | <i>0.013</i> | 0.044 ***      | <i>0.012</i> | 0.030 **           | <i>0.013</i> |
| National parliament   | 0.063 ***             | <i>0.014</i> | 0.042 ***      | <i>0.013</i> | 0.053 ***          | <i>0.013</i> |
| <i>Ideology (ref. Left)</i>                                   |                       |              |                |              |                    |              |
| right   | -0.017                | <i>0.013</i> | 0.003          | <i>0.012</i> | 0.019              | <i>0.012</i> |
| centre  | 0.019                 | <i>0.012</i> | 0.015          | <i>0.010</i> | 0.043 ***          | <i>0.011</i> |
| refusal/don't know  | -0.068 ***            | <i>0.014</i> | -0.050 ***     | <i>0.013</i> | -0.034 ***         | <i>0.013</i> |
| <i>EU info</i>  | 0.122 ***             | <i>0.009</i> | 0.086 ***      | <i>0.008</i> | 0.116 ***          | <i>0.009</i> |
| Observations  | 26082                 |              | 26082          |              | 26082              |              |
| Prob > chi2   | 0.000                 |              | 0.000          |              | 0.000              |              |
| Pseudo R2   | 0.084                 |              | 0.084          |              | 0.055              |              |

\*signi?cant at 10%, \*\*signi?cant at 5%, \*\*\*signi?cant at 1%.

Robust standard errors in *italicus*

Females are on average slightly less in favour of common policies than men, and in the case of both foreign policy and immigration, consensus is increasing and concave in age. The results for education confirm the descriptive evidence by indicating high education as a factor enhancing support for Europe: respondents with the lowest education level (i.e. those who stopped education before 15) are less likely to be in favour of more EU involvement in each policy with respect to citizens with the highest education (i.e. those who stopped education after 20), with a stronger effect in the case of foreign policy (-12.3%). The difference in support between citizens with intermediate-level education (i.e. those who stopped education between 16 and 19) and highly-educated citizens ranges between 2.2% in the case of immigration and 3.9% in the case of defence.

As regards labour-market position, econometric analysis only partially confirms the descriptive results, which showed that high-skilled workers are more in favour of EU integration: individuals out of the labour force are less likely to demand more common policy in the areas of foreign policy and defence, while manual workers and unemployed are less supportive of integration only in the fields of, respectively, foreign policy and defence. Home ownership, which is entered as a proxy for income, has no effect on Europeans' preferences.

Turning to the relationship between attitudes and ideology, estimation results highlight that centrist citizens have a more positive attitude than both rightist citizens and leftist citizens towards greater EU power in the area of immigration, while the lowest consensus level for all three policies is instead found for citizens without a declared political position. Trust in one's country's political institutions is related to a more favourable attitude towards common policies for all the three areas analysed.

Considering our variable of interest, estimation results widely confirm the positive relationship between political knowledge and citizens' agreement on the assignment of more power to the EU that emerged from descriptive analysis. More specifically, moving from low to high EU knowledge is related to a 12.2% increase in the probability of being in favour of more EU powers in the field of foreign policy and to a 11.6% increase in the field of immigration. The lowest coefficient is instead found for defence (+8.5%). To conclude, estimation results seem to confirm the view that the more informed citizens are about EU institutions, the more ready they are to accept a common policy in some areas, thereby strengthening the process of European integration.

## **4.2 Endogenous political knowledge**

In this section we present estimation results obtained after controlling for endogeneity of political knowledge. Table 4 shows estimates when "genuine europeanism" is controlled for (see section 3). This variable should control for the unobservable preference for EU, which is likely to determine simultaneously approval of EU integration and the extent to which citizens inform themselves about the workings of the EU institutions. It should therefore help in identifying the causal effect of knowledge on citizens' preferences.

Table 4 shows marginal effects. First to be noticed is that some coefficients change when controlling for genuine europeanism. For example, the negative marginal effects previously found for Nordic countries and for English-speaking countries decrease in size suggesting that

part of the lower consensus for EU in these countries is related to a lower level of europeanism.

Also the coefficients of the education dummy variables decrease and, in the case of intermediate education, they become insignificant for foreign policy and immigration. This result confirms that more educated citizens are on average more EU-enthusiastic, probably because they are likely to gain more from the process of EU integration.

**Table 4.** Marginal effect on the probability of consensus fo more EU integration - Control for europeanism

| <i>Variable</i>   | <i>Foreign policy</i> |              | <i>Defence</i> |         | <i>Immigration</i> |         |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|---------|--------------------|---------|
|   | coeff                 | std err      | coeff          | std err | coeff              | std err |
| <i>Country-groups (ref. Mediterranean countries)</i>          |                       |              |                |         |                    |         |
| Nordic  | -0.274 ***            | <i>0.018</i> | -0.178 ***     | 0.018   | -0.128 ***         | 0.017   |
| New Member States   | -0.021                | <i>0.013</i> | 0.044 ***      | 0.010   | -0.022 *           | 0.012   |
| Continental   | 0.005                 | <i>0.014</i> | 0.053 ***      | 0.012   | 0.025 *            | 0.013   |
| Benelux   | -0.117 ***            | <i>0.018</i> | 0.012          | 0.014   | 0.012              | 0.015   |
| English-speaking  | -0.202 ***            | <i>0.020</i> | -0.168 ***     | 0.019   | -0.055 ***         | 0.017   |
| <i>Demographics</i>   |                       |              |                |         |                    |         |
| female  | -0.026 ***            | <i>0.009</i> | -0.017 **      | 0.008   | -0.028 ***         | 0.009   |
| married   | 0.025 **              | <i>0.010</i> | 0.021 **       | 0.009   | 0.012              | 0.009   |
| age   | 0.005 ***             | <i>0.001</i> | 0.001          | 0.001   | 0.005 ***          | 0.001   |
| squared age   | 0.000 ***             | <i>0.000</i> | 0.000          | 0.000   | 0.000 ***          | 0.000   |
| <i>Age at completed education (ref. &gt;=20)</i>              |                       |              |                |         |                    |         |
| <=15  | -0.096 ***            | <i>0.016</i> | -0.064 ***     | 0.015   | -0.060 ***         | 0.015   |
| 16-19   | -0.013                | <i>0.011</i> | -0.026 **      | 0.011   | -0.013             | 0.011   |
| <i>Labour market position(ref. High-skilled white-collar)</i> |                       |              |                |         |                    |         |
| unemployed  | -0.015                | <i>0.023</i> | -0.030         | 0.022   | -0.007             | 0.022   |
| manual worker   | -0.023                | <i>0.017</i> | 0.006          | 0.015   | 0.003              | 0.016   |
| low-skilled white-collar                                      | -0.015                | <i>0.020</i> | -0.012         | 0.018   | 0.004              | 0.018   |
| businessman   | -0.021                | <i>0.026</i> | 0.005          | 0.023   | -0.016             | 0.025   |
| out of the labour force                                       | -0.027                | <i>0.017</i> | -0.027 *       | 0.015   | -0.007             | 0.016   |
| <i>House owned</i>  | -0.006                | <i>0.010</i> | -0.015         | 0.009   | 0.009              | 0.010   |
| <i>Trust</i>  |                       |              |                |         |                    |         |
| National government   | 0.014                 | <i>0.014</i> | 0.009          | 0.012   | 0.007              | 0.013   |
| National parliament   | 0.011                 | <i>0.014</i> | -0.002         | 0.013   | 0.023 *            | 0.014   |
| <i>Ideology (ref. Left)</i>                                   |                       |              |                |         |                    |         |
| right   | -0.021                | <i>0.013</i> | 0.001          | 0.012   | 0.017              | 0.012   |
| centre  | 0.015                 | <i>0.012</i> | 0.012          | 0.010   | 0.040 ***          | 0.011   |
| refusal/don't know  | -0.059 ***            | <i>0.014</i> | -0.040 ***     | 0.013   | -0.027 **          | 0.013   |
| <i>Europeanism</i>  | 0.137 ***             | <i>0.007</i> | 0.117 ***      | 0.007   | 0.081 ***          | 0.006   |
| <i>EU info</i>  | 0.106 ***             | <i>0.009</i> | 0.070 ***      | 0.008   | 0.106 ***          | 0.009   |
| Observations  | 26082                 |              | 26082          |         | 26082              |         |
| Prob > chi2   | 0.000                 |              | 0.000          |         | 0.000              |         |
| Pseudo R2   | 0.117                 |              | 0.116          |         | 0.069              |         |

\*signi?cant at 10%, \*\*signi?cant at 5%, \*\*\*signi?cant at 1%

Robust standard errors in italicus

As expected, the variable for genuine europeanism has a very large and significant coefficient, especially in the case of foreign policy, and less so in that of immigration, suggesting

that more EU-enthusiastic citizens are more in favour of EU integration.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, our hypothesis that when citizens are keener on the European project, they are more likely both to inform themselves and to be in favour of EU integration is confirmed, as evidenced by the decrease in the coefficients for political knowledge with respect to the specification not controlling for genuine europeanism (see Table 3). The highest reduction in the marginal effect of knowledge is found for defence (-18.6%), suggesting that in this case europeanism plays a greater role than in the case of the other two policies, especially immigration, for which we find a reduction in the marginal effect of just 8.6%.

Hence, estimation of attitudes which neglects that knowledge is jointly determined with europeanism leads to upward biased results. This means that, at least to some extent, a generic positive attitude towards the EU simultaneously determines knowledge and attitudes towards European integration.

In order to better tackle the issue of endogenous knowledge, Table 5 shows the results obtained using IV techniques with exclusion restrictions. As before said, we replicate estimates using three different instruments: a dummy variable identifying citizens who know with minor error two or three of their country's economic indicators among the growth rate, the inflation rate and the unemployment rate; a dummy variable for individuals who states that it is important to know the main economic figures of their countries; and a dummy variable indicating whether the individual states that s/he is interested in politics.

To facilitate the interpretation of empirical results, in this case too the table contains marginal effects computed after bivariate probit estimation.<sup>11</sup> We show only the coefficients of the variable of interest (political knowledge), while we report full estimates in the Appendix (table A1, A2 and A3)

Also the IV approach results highlight an important role of political knowledge and confirm that a greater amount of political knowledge has a marked positive effect on positive attitudes towards EU integration. Moreover, estimation results are very robust, given that the computed marginal effects do not change greatly when estimated with different instruments.

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<sup>10</sup>These results are closely in line with the literature that explains EU integration and EU attitudes in terms of a sort of "ideological commitment": see Dinan 1999, Urwin 1991, and Gabel 1998a, 1998b.

<sup>11</sup>More specifically, marginal effects are computed as the difference between the marginal probability of being in favour of centralisation of competencies given a high level of political knowledge less the marginal probability of being in favour of centralisation of competencies given a low level of political knowledge.

**Table 5.** Marginal effect of political knowledge - IV estimation

|                | IV 1 <sup>a</sup> | IV 2 <sup>b</sup> | IV 3 <sup>c</sup> |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Foreign policy | 0.097 ***         | 0.100 ***         | 0.099 ***         |
| Defence        | 0.065 ***         | 0.066 ***         | 0.067 ***         |
| Immigration    | 0.100 ***         | 0.103 ***         | 0.103 ***         |

\*\*\*signi?cant at 1%

a. IV: 1 if the individual knows 2 or 3 economic indicators with a low error

b. IV: 1 if the individual agrees that it is necessary to know economic figures like the growth rate, inflation rate and unemployment rate

c. IV: 1 if the individual states that s/he is interested in politics

With respect to previous estimates, we observe a slight decrease in the marginal effects of knowledge; and this finding confirms that estimating the effect of knowledge on opinions when neglecting endogeneity leads to upward biased results. When considering foreign affairs, our results show that knowledge about the EU produces an increase of consensus of around 10%. A similar effect is found in the case of immigration, while in the case of defence the marginal effect is around 6.5%.

At this stage of analysis, we may be quite sure that what we have found is a causal effect of knowledge on citizens' opinions concerning greater European integration.

### 4.3 Political knowledge and education

Descriptive evidence has pointed out that the role of knowledge is particularly strong for the lowest educated citizens (i.e. those who stopped education before the age of 15). For this latter group, moving from zero to three correct answers about EU institutions, the share of people in favour of EU competencies grows by 82%, 57% and 77% in the cases of, respectively, foreign policy, defence and immigration (the corresponding values for the highest educated citizens are, respectively, 26%, 14% and 22%. See Table 2).

In this section we want to test whether this result is confirmed by econometric analysis taking the endogeneity of political knowledge into account. In other words, we examine whether the effect of political knowledge on attitudes towards EU is different for low and high educated citizens. If this is the case, a campaign aimed at better informing citizens about the EU would be more effective if targeted towards low-educated citizens.

We estimate equation (1) separately on the sample of the lowest educated citizens, that is those who stopped education before 15, and on the sample of the highest educated, that

is those who stopped education after 15. We present three sets of results: the first when the exogeneity of political knowledge is assumed, the second when controlling for europeanism and the last when using the IV-approach.<sup>12</sup> Table 6 shows the marginal effects of the variable of interest for both sub-samples. Full estimates of equation (1) are in the Appendix (Table A4, A5 and A6)<sup>13</sup>.

**Table 6.** Marginal effect of political knowledge - High and low educated citizens

|                                | High education | Low education |
|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Exogenous information</i>   |                |               |
| Foreign policy                 | 0.107 ***      | 0.162 ***     |
| Defence                        | 0.071 ***      | 0.126 ***     |
| Immigration                    | 0.102 ***      | 0.150 ***     |
| <i>Control for Europeanism</i> |                |               |
| Foreign policy                 | 0.092 ***      | 0.142 ***     |
| Defence                        | 0.057 ***      | 0.108 ***     |
| Immigration                    | 0.093 ***      | 0.137 ***     |
| <i>IV<sup>a</sup></i>          |                |               |
| Foreign policy                 | 0.086 ***      | 0.124 ***     |
| Defence                        | 0.054 ***      | 0.096 ***     |
| Immigration                    | 0.088 ***      | 0.126 ***     |

\*\*\*signi?cant at 1%

a. IV: 1 if the individual knows 2 or 3 economic indicators with a low error

By and large the results confirm the positive effect of political knowledge on support for EU integration. The steady decrease of coefficients moving from the first to the last set of results highlights once again that political knowledge is endogenous to attitudes and that ignoring it would lead to upward biased results. The descriptive evidence suggesting a stronger role of political knowledge for the lowest-educated is confirmed by econometric analysis: For all the policy issues the coefficients of political knowledge are significantly higher for the lowest-educated citizens than for the most educated. Focusing on IV results, we see

<sup>12</sup>Also in this case we have performed robustness checks using all three IV. However, since results are very similar in the three cases, we report only results using actual knowledge of economic indicators as IV.

<sup>13</sup>Table A6 shows IV results only for the consensus equation. Estimation results of the political knowledge equation are available from the authors upon request.

that coefficients are more than 40% higher for this latter group in the cases of foreign policy and of immigration policy and even 77% more (from 5.4% to 9.6%) in the case of defence.

Hence, for both high and low educated citizens political knowledge favours positive attitudes towards EU integration, but the positive impact is more prominent for low-educated. This result, as said before, suggests that a targeted information campaign by the EU could be more useful for increasing support for the European project.

## 5 Conclusions

The findings of this paper show unambiguously that information matters in the European Union, and therefore that better-informed European citizens are more likely to favour European integration. Specifically, this paper has obtained the following empirical results.

Europeans' attitudes towards further integration are significantly shaped by the political knowledge that they possess about the correct functioning of some European institutions. This result holds also when considering the potential endogeneity of political knowledge with respect to attitudes. Endogeneity may arise, for instance, because there are unobserved factors that affect both positive attitudes towards European policies and the extent to which people inform themselves. We deal with endogeneity of political knowledge in two ways. First, we control for citizens' attachment to the EU by means of variables that proxy the unobservable generic positive attitude towards the EU (in short 'europeanism'). Second, we reach identification using an instrumental variable approach. Our findings points out that estimation of attitudes neglecting that knowledge is jointly determined with genuine europeanism leads to biased results, suggesting that a positive attitude towards the EU simultaneously determines knowledge and policy opinions. However, estimation results obtained through IV keep on highlighting an important role for knowledge about EU and confirm that EU political knowledge have a large positive effect on positive attitudes towards EU integration.

This is a result of great importance for two main reasons. Firstly, it confirms suggestions in the political economy literature that well-informed citizens-voters are better able to assess the consequences of alternative policy proposals and to understand which of them are in their best interest. Indeed, since the policies that we considered are typical cases of pure public goods, they would be more efficiently handled via greater involvement by the European-level institutions. Thus, our results suggest that when citizens are more familiar with the workings of the EU institutions, they are more likely to be in favour of greater EU integration because

they are better able to understand the potential benefits deriving from a greater degree of EU intervention in those policy areas.

Secondly, we have demonstrated that public support for the EU can be very effectively influenced by rendering citizens better informed about the workings of the EU institutions. Our results therefore confirm the conventional wisdom on the part of the European Commission that raising awareness about the EU can help create greater commitment to European integration among European citizens.

Finally, the results show that the positive impact of political knowledge is more prominent for the lowest educated citizens.

To sum up, our empirical findings may have important policy implications regarding the role of information. Since a positive causal relationship has been found between knowledge and greater public support for EU integration, from a practical point of view, this finding suggests that EU policy-makers should devote more effort and financial resources in order to inform citizens better. Better-informed citizens (i.e. voters) are more likely to favour fuller political and economic integration in Europe. Moreover, a well-targeted information campaign by the EU could be much more effective to assist the process of European integration.

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**Table A1. IV Bivariate probit estimates (IV: 1 if the individual knows 2 or 3 economic indicators with a low error)**

| Variable  | Foreign policy       |                      | Defence              |                      | Immigration          |                      |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
|   | Consensus equation   | Knowledge equation   | Consensus equation   | Knowledge equation   | Consensus equation   | Knowledge equation   |
| <i>Country (ref. Mediterranean countries)</i>                 |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |
| Nordic  | -0.722***<br>(0.047) | 0.019<br>(0.044)     | -0.540***<br>(0.048) | 0.017<br>(0.044)     | -0.377***<br>(0.047) | 0.015<br>(0.045)     |
| New Member States   | -0.034<br>(0.039)    | -0.100***<br>(0.036) | 0.185***<br>(0.041)  | -0.101***<br>(0.036) | -0.038<br>(0.040)    | -0.101***<br>(0.036) |
| Continental   | 0.006<br>(0.044)     | -0.041<br>(0.041)    | 0.190***<br>(0.047)  | -0.040<br>(0.041)    | 0.070<br>(0.045)     | -0.042<br>(0.041)    |
| Benelux   | -0.307***<br>(0.049) | -0.129***<br>(0.044) | 0.059<br>(0.052)     | -0.130***<br>(0.044) | 0.061<br>(0.049)     | -0.132***<br>(0.044) |
| English-speaking  | -0.491***<br>(0.058) | -0.275***<br>(0.051) | -0.479***<br>(0.060) | -0.278***<br>(0.051) | -0.105*<br>(0.058)   | -0.278***<br>(0.051) |
| <i>Demographics</i>   |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |
| female  | -0.013<br>(0.035)    | -0.275***<br>(0.026) | -0.010<br>(0.039)    | -0.276***<br>(0.026) | -0.015<br>(0.038)    | -0.274***<br>(0.026) |
| married   | 0.071**<br>(0.030)   | 0.020<br>(0.029)     | 0.072**<br>(0.033)   | 0.020<br>(0.029)     | 0.031<br>(0.031)     | 0.018<br>(0.029)     |
| age   | 0.010**<br>(0.005)   | 0.016***<br>(0.004)  | 0.001<br>(0.005)     | 0.016***<br>(0.004)  | 0.013***<br>(0.005)  | 0.015***<br>(0.004)  |
| squared age   | -0.000**<br>(0.000)  | -0.000*<br>(0.000)   | -0.000<br>(0.000)    | -0.000*<br>(0.000)   | -0.000***<br>(0.000) | -0.000*<br>(0.000)   |
| <i>Age at completed education (ref. &gt;=20)</i>              |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |
| <=15  | -0.184***<br>(0.056) | -0.423***<br>(0.043) | -0.146**<br>(0.060)  | -0.424***<br>(0.043) | -0.081<br>(0.059)    | -0.425***<br>(0.043) |
| 16-19   | 0.009<br>(0.038)     | -0.215***<br>(0.033) | -0.056<br>(0.042)    | -0.216***<br>(0.033) | 0.011<br>(0.040)     | -0.217***<br>(0.033) |
| <i>Labour market position(ref. High-skilled white-collar)</i> |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |
| unemployed  | -0.034<br>(0.070)    | -0.001<br>(0.068)    | -0.096<br>(0.076)    | 0.001<br>(0.068)     | -0.008<br>(0.072)    | 0.003<br>(0.068)     |
| manual worker   | -0.047<br>(0.053)    | -0.039<br>(0.051)    | 0.035<br>(0.057)     | -0.040<br>(0.051)    | 0.032<br>(0.053)     | -0.039<br>(0.051)    |
| low-skilled white-collar                                      | -0.051<br>(0.059)    | 0.063<br>(0.056)     | -0.049<br>(0.063)    | 0.064<br>(0.056)     | 0.008<br>(0.061)     | 0.064<br>(0.056)     |
| businessman   | -0.061<br>(0.077)    | 0.055<br>(0.073)     | 0.018<br>(0.085)     | 0.053<br>(0.073)     | -0.047<br>(0.080)    | 0.054<br>(0.073)     |
| out of the labour force                                       | -0.067<br>(0.051)    | -0.008<br>(0.049)    | -0.088<br>(0.055)    | -0.008<br>(0.049)    | -0.007<br>(0.052)    | -0.009<br>(0.049)    |
| <i>House owned</i>  | -0.038<br>(0.032)    | 0.091***<br>(0.030)  | -0.069**<br>(0.035)  | 0.093***<br>(0.030)  | 0.007<br>(0.033)     | 0.092***<br>(0.030)  |
| <i>Trust</i>  |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |
| National government   | 0.029<br>(0.044)     | 0.073*<br>(0.039)    | 0.020<br>(0.045)     | 0.073*<br>(0.039)    | 0.005<br>(0.043)     | 0.075*<br>(0.039)    |
| National parliament   | 0.002<br>(0.045)     | 0.149***<br>(0.040)  | -0.029<br>(0.048)    | 0.150***<br>(0.040)  | 0.041<br>(0.047)     | 0.150***<br>(0.040)  |
| <i>Ideology (ref. Left)</i>                                   |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |
| right   | -0.061<br>(0.040)    | -0.002<br>(0.038)    | 0.005<br>(0.043)     | 0.001<br>(0.038)     | 0.059<br>(0.041)     | 0.002<br>(0.038)     |
| centre  | 0.061*<br>(0.036)    | -0.049<br>(0.034)    | 0.053<br>(0.038)     | -0.046<br>(0.034)    | 0.148***<br>(0.037)  | -0.045<br>(0.034)    |
| refusal/don't know  | -0.102**<br>(0.047)  | -0.289***<br>(0.040) | -0.087*<br>(0.051)   | -0.289***<br>(0.040) | -0.007<br>(0.049)    | -0.286***<br>(0.040) |
| <i>Europeanism</i>  | 0.376***<br>(0.030)  | 0.181***<br>(0.018)  | 0.392***<br>(0.032)  | 0.181***<br>(0.018)  | 0.220***<br>(0.029)  | 0.180***<br>(0.018)  |
| <i>EU info</i>  | 0.856***<br>(0.152)  | -                    | 0.654***<br>(0.184)  | -                    | 0.938***<br>(0.178)  | -                    |
| IV  | -                    | 0.523***<br>(0.032)  | -                    | 0.521***<br>(0.032)  | -                    | 0.522***<br>(0.032)  |
| <i>Constant</i>   | -0.089<br>(0.130)    | -0.476***<br>(0.114) | 0.308**<br>(0.147)   | -0.478***<br>(0.114) | -0.248*<br>(0.135)   | -0.470***<br>(0.114) |
| Observations  | 26,082               | 26,082               | 26,082               | 26,082               | 26,082               | 26,082               |

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p&lt;0.01, \*\* p&lt;0.05, \* p&lt;0.1

**Table A2. IV Bivariate probit estimates ( IV: 1 if the individual agrees that it is necessary to know the main economic figures)**

| <i>Variable</i>   | Foreign policy            |                           | Defence                   |                           | Immigration               |                           |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|   | <i>Consensus equation</i> | <i>Knowledge equation</i> | <i>Consensus equation</i> | <i>Knowledge equation</i> | <i>Consensus equation</i> | <i>Knowledge equation</i> |
| <i>Country (ref. Mediterranean countries)</i>                 |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| Nordic  | -0.653***<br>(0.047)      | 0.081*<br>(0.044)         | -0.474***<br>(0.045)      | 0.081*<br>(0.044)         | -0.331***<br>(0.044)      | 0.076*<br>(0.044)         |
| New Member States   | -0.000<br>(0.037)         | -0.120***<br>(0.036)      | 0.195***<br>(0.037)       | -0.124***<br>(0.036)      | 0.006<br>(0.036)          | -0.120***<br>(0.035)      |
| Continental   | -0.013<br>(0.042)         | 0.074*<br>(0.040)         | 0.136***<br>(0.042)       | 0.078*<br>(0.040)         | 0.036<br>(0.041)          | 0.072*<br>(0.040)         |
| Benelux   | -0.252***<br>(0.046)      | -0.046<br>(0.043)         | 0.076*<br>(0.046)         | -0.043<br>(0.044)         | 0.074*<br>(0.044)         | -0.052<br>(0.043)         |
| English-speaking  | -0.369***<br>(0.054)      | -0.272***<br>(0.050)      | -0.310***<br>(0.053)      | -0.275***<br>(0.051)      | -0.003<br>(0.050)         | -0.278***<br>(0.050)      |
| <i>Demographics</i>   |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| female  | 0.066**<br>(0.030)        | -0.329***<br>(0.026)      | 0.101***<br>(0.029)       | -0.320***<br>(0.026)      | 0.086***<br>(0.029)       | -0.319***<br>(0.026)      |
| married   | 0.056*<br>(0.029)         | 0.022<br>(0.029)          | 0.050*<br>(0.030)         | 0.019<br>(0.029)          | 0.017<br>(0.029)          | 0.013<br>(0.029)          |
| age   | 0.004<br>(0.004)          | 0.020***<br>(0.004)       | -0.005<br>(0.004)         | 0.020***<br>(0.004)       | 0.005<br>(0.004)          | 0.019***<br>(0.004)       |
| squared age   | -0.000<br>(0.000)         | -0.000***<br>(0.000)      | 0.000<br>(0.000)          | -0.000***<br>(0.000)      | -0.000<br>(0.000)         | -0.000***<br>(0.000)      |
| <i>Age at completed education (ref. &gt;=20)</i>              |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| <=15  | -0.052<br>(0.049)         | -0.466***<br>(0.043)      | 0.030<br>(0.047)          | -0.463***<br>(0.043)      | 0.069<br>(0.045)          | -0.469***<br>(0.043)      |
| 16-19   | 0.064*<br>(0.034)         | -0.239***<br>(0.033)      | 0.029<br>(0.036)          | -0.238***<br>(0.033)      | 0.075**<br>(0.034)        | -0.246***<br>(0.033)      |
| <i>Labour market position(ref. High-skilled white-collar)</i> |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| unemployed  | -0.020<br>(0.066)         | -0.044<br>(0.067)         | -0.063<br>(0.070)         | -0.042<br>(0.067)         | 0.010<br>(0.065)          | -0.036<br>(0.066)         |
| manual worker   | -0.019<br>(0.050)         | -0.102**<br>(0.050)       | 0.061<br>(0.052)          | -0.101**<br>(0.049)       | 0.056<br>(0.049)          | -0.098**<br>(0.049)       |
| low-skilled white-collar                                      | -0.055<br>(0.055)         | 0.039<br>(0.055)          | -0.054<br>(0.058)         | 0.042<br>(0.055)          | -0.005<br>(0.056)         | 0.041<br>(0.055)          |
| businessman   | -0.054<br>(0.073)         | -0.001<br>(0.071)         | 0.014<br>(0.078)          | 0.001<br>(0.072)          | -0.038<br>(0.074)         | 0.007<br>(0.072)          |
| out of the labour force                                       | -0.047<br>(0.048)         | -0.056<br>(0.047)         | -0.057<br>(0.050)         | -0.060<br>(0.047)         | 0.012<br>(0.048)          | -0.054<br>(0.047)         |
| <i>House owned</i>  | -0.057*<br>(0.030)        | 0.093***<br>(0.030)       | -0.090***<br>(0.031)      | 0.094***<br>(0.030)       | -0.024<br>(0.030)         | 0.094***<br>(0.030)       |
| <i>Trust</i>  |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| National government   | 0.010<br>(0.041)          | 0.077*<br>(0.039)         | -0.003<br>(0.042)         | 0.079**<br>(0.040)        | -0.013<br>(0.039)         | 0.083**<br>(0.039)        |
| National parliament   | -0.035<br>(0.042)         | 0.148***<br>(0.040)       | -0.076*<br>(0.043)        | 0.148***<br>(0.041)       | -0.015<br>(0.041)         | 0.146***<br>(0.040)       |
| <i>Ideology (ref. Left)</i>                                   |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| right   | -0.053<br>(0.038)         | -0.016<br>(0.038)         | 0.008<br>(0.040)          | -0.006<br>(0.038)         | 0.052<br>(0.038)          | -0.012<br>(0.038)         |
| centre  | 0.068**<br>(0.035)        | -0.067**<br>(0.033)       | 0.068*<br>(0.035)         | -0.056*<br>(0.033)        | 0.143***<br>(0.034)       | -0.061*<br>(0.033)        |
| refusal/don't know  | -0.008<br>(0.042)         | -0.334***<br>(0.039)      | 0.046<br>(0.041)          | -0.325***<br>(0.039)      | 0.101**<br>(0.040)        | -0.329***<br>(0.039)      |
| <i>Europeanism</i>  | 0.289***<br>(0.028)       | 0.175***<br>(0.018)       | 0.267***<br>(0.027)       | 0.173***<br>(0.018)       | 0.127***<br>(0.023)       | 0.168***<br>(0.018)       |
| <i>EU info</i>  | 1.376***<br>(0.085)       | -                         | 1.408***<br>(0.066)       | -                         | 1.548***<br>(0.063)       | -                         |
| IV  | -                         | 0.218***<br>(0.025)       | -                         | 0.244***<br>(0.025)       | -                         | 0.235***<br>(0.024)       |
| <i>Constant</i>   | -0.296**<br>(0.117)       | -0.528***<br>(0.112)      | -0.051<br>(0.119)         | -0.549***<br>(0.112)      | -0.478***<br>(0.110)      | -0.522***<br>(0.111)      |
| <i>Observations</i>   | 26,082                    | 26,082                    | 26,082                    | 26,082                    | 26,082                    | 26,082                    |

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p&lt;0.01, \*\* p&lt;0.05, \* p&lt;0.1

**Table A3. IV Bivariate probit estimates (IV: 1 if the individual states that s/he is interested in politics)**

| <i>Variable</i>   | Foreign policy            |                           | Defence                   |                           | Immigration               |                           |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|   | <i>Consensus equation</i> | <i>Knowledge equation</i> | <i>Consensus equation</i> | <i>Knowledge equation</i> | <i>Consensus equation</i> | <i>Knowledge equation</i> |
| <i>Country (ref. Mediterranean countries)</i>                 |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| Nordic  | -0.702***<br>(0.050)      | -0.004<br>(0.044)         | -0.539***<br>(0.050)      | -0.006<br>(0.044)         | -0.377***<br>(0.049)      | -0.006<br>(0.045)         |
| New Member States   | -0.021<br>(0.039)         | -0.158***<br>(0.036)      | 0.187***<br>(0.042)       | -0.158***<br>(0.036)      | -0.036<br>(0.043)         | -0.158***<br>(0.036)      |
| Continental   | -0.002<br>(0.043)         | 0.011<br>(0.041)          | 0.186***<br>(0.048)       | 0.014<br>(0.041)          | 0.066<br>(0.045)          | 0.012<br>(0.041)          |
| Benelux   | -0.289***<br>(0.050)      | -0.135***<br>(0.044)      | 0.060<br>(0.052)          | -0.134***<br>(0.044)      | 0.061<br>(0.050)          | -0.136***<br>(0.044)      |
| English-speaking  | -0.448***<br>(0.064)      | -0.304***<br>(0.050)      | -0.473***<br>(0.077)      | -0.309***<br>(0.050)      | -0.100<br>(0.069)         | -0.307***<br>(0.050)      |
| <i>Demographics</i>   |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| female  | 0.018<br>(0.038)          | -0.308***<br>(0.026)      | -0.004<br>(0.055)         | -0.308***<br>(0.026)      | -0.009<br>(0.052)         | -0.307***<br>(0.026)      |
| married   | 0.066**<br>(0.030)        | 0.020<br>(0.029)          | 0.070**<br>(0.033)        | 0.021<br>(0.029)          | 0.030<br>(0.031)          | 0.019<br>(0.029)          |
| age   | 0.007<br>(0.005)          | 0.018***<br>(0.004)       | 0.001<br>(0.006)          | 0.018***<br>(0.004)       | 0.013**<br>(0.006)        | 0.018***<br>(0.004)       |
| squared age   | -0.000*<br>(0.000)        | -0.000**<br>(0.000)       | -0.000<br>(0.000)         | -0.000**<br>(0.000)       | -0.000**<br>(0.000)       | -0.000**<br>(0.000)       |
| <i>Age at completed education (ref. &gt;=20)</i>              |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| <=15  | -0.134**<br>(0.062)       | -0.454***<br>(0.043)      | -0.139<br>(0.086)         | -0.456***<br>(0.043)      | -0.073<br>(0.081)         | -0.457***<br>(0.043)      |
| 16-19   | 0.030<br>(0.039)          | -0.234***<br>(0.033)      | -0.052<br>(0.052)         | -0.234***<br>(0.033)      | 0.014<br>(0.047)          | -0.236***<br>(0.033)      |
| <i>Labour market position(ref. High-skilled white-collar)</i> |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| unemployed  | -0.029<br>(0.069)         | -0.035<br>(0.067)         | -0.094<br>(0.076)         | -0.034<br>(0.067)         | -0.008<br>(0.071)         | -0.031<br>(0.067)         |
| manual worker   | -0.036<br>(0.052)         | -0.083*<br>(0.050)        | 0.037<br>(0.058)          | -0.083*<br>(0.050)        | 0.034<br>(0.054)          | -0.081<br>(0.050)         |
| low-skilled white-collar                                      | -0.054<br>(0.058)         | 0.056<br>(0.056)          | -0.049<br>(0.063)         | 0.055<br>(0.056)          | 0.007<br>(0.061)          | 0.056<br>(0.056)          |
| businessman   | -0.058<br>(0.076)         | 0.017<br>(0.072)          | 0.018<br>(0.085)          | 0.016<br>(0.073)          | -0.047<br>(0.080)         | 0.018<br>(0.073)          |
| out of the labour force                                       | -0.060<br>(0.050)         | -0.047<br>(0.048)         | -0.087<br>(0.056)         | -0.047<br>(0.048)         | -0.006<br>(0.052)         | -0.046<br>(0.048)         |
| <i>House owned</i>  | -0.046<br>(0.032)         | 0.095***<br>(0.030)       | -0.070**<br>(0.035)       | 0.097***<br>(0.030)       | 0.005<br>(0.035)          | 0.096***<br>(0.030)       |
| <i>Trust</i>  |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| National government   | 0.021<br>(0.043)          | 0.070*<br>(0.039)         | 0.019<br>(0.046)          | 0.071*<br>(0.039)         | 0.005<br>(0.044)          | 0.073*<br>(0.039)         |
| National parliament   | -0.013<br>(0.045)         | 0.151***<br>(0.040)       | -0.032<br>(0.051)         | 0.152***<br>(0.040)       | 0.037<br>(0.051)          | 0.151***<br>(0.040)       |
| <i>Ideology (ref. Left)</i>                                   |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| right   | -0.059<br>(0.040)         | 0.004<br>(0.038)          | 0.005<br>(0.043)          | 0.008<br>(0.038)          | 0.058<br>(0.041)          | 0.007<br>(0.038)          |
| centre  | 0.064*<br>(0.036)         | -0.047<br>(0.033)         | 0.054<br>(0.039)          | -0.045<br>(0.033)         | 0.147***<br>(0.037)       | -0.045<br>(0.033)         |
| refusal/don't know  | -0.067<br>(0.050)         | -0.307***<br>(0.040)      | -0.081<br>(0.065)         | -0.307***<br>(0.040)      | -0.002<br>(0.062)         | -0.306***<br>(0.040)      |
| <i>Europeanism</i>  | 0.347***<br>(0.035)       | 0.180***<br>(0.018)       | 0.388***<br>(0.046)       | 0.181***<br>(0.018)       | 0.216***<br>(0.041)       | 0.179***<br>(0.018)       |
| <i>EU info</i>  | 1.070***<br>(0.177)       | -                         | 0.694**<br>(0.334)        | -                         | 0.973***<br>(0.304)       | -                         |
| IV  | -                         | 0.279***<br>(0.027)       | -                         | 0.272***<br>(0.029)       | -                         | 0.275***<br>(0.028)       |
| <i>Constant</i>   | -0.173<br>(0.135)         | -0.407***<br>(0.112)      | 0.290<br>(0.188)          | -0.409***<br>(0.112)      | -0.261<br>(0.162)         | -0.403***<br>(0.112)      |
| <i>Observations</i>   | 26,082                    | 26,082                    | 26,082                    | 26,082                    | 26,082                    | 26,082                    |

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p&lt;0.01, \*\* p&lt;0.05, \* p&lt;0.1

**Table A4.** Marginal effects with exogenous political knowledge - High- and low-educated citizens

|   | Foreign Policy             |                            | Defence                    |                            | Immigration                |                           |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
|   | High education             | Low education              | High education             | Low education              | High education             | Low education             |
|   | Coeff                      | Coeff                      | Coeff                      | Coeff                      | Coeff                      | Coeff                     |
| <i>Country (ref. Mediterranean countries)</i>                 |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                           |
| Nordic  | -0.356 ***<br><i>0.020</i> | -0.218 ***<br><i>0.036</i> | -0.245 ***<br><i>0.021</i> | -0.199 ***<br><i>0.036</i> | -0.180 ***<br><i>0.020</i> | -0.081 **<br><i>0.035</i> |
| New Members   | -0.016<br><i>0.015</i>     | 0.044 *<br><i>0.025</i>    | 0.056 ***<br><i>0.012</i>  | 0.059 **<br><i>0.022</i>   | -0.009<br><i>0.014</i>     | -0.018<br><i>0.024</i>    |
| Continental   | -0.036 **<br><i>0.017</i>  | 0.014<br><i>0.031</i>      | 0.020<br><i>0.015</i>      | 0.065 **<br><i>0.026</i>   | 0.000<br><i>0.016</i>      | 0.045<br><i>0.027</i>     |
| Benelux   | -0.167 ***<br><i>0.021</i> | -0.096 **<br><i>0.039</i>  | -0.022<br><i>0.017</i>     | 0.015<br><i>0.034</i>      | -0.012<br><i>0.017</i>     | 0.018<br><i>0.034</i>     |
| English-speaking  | -0.249 ***<br><i>0.024</i> | -0.286 ***<br><i>0.035</i> | -0.215 ***<br><i>0.023</i> | -0.242 ***<br><i>0.036</i> | -0.089 ***<br><i>0.022</i> | -0.073 **<br><i>0.034</i> |
| <i>Demographics</i>   |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                           |
| female  | -0.018 *<br><i>0.010</i>   | -0.050 **<br><i>0.022</i>  | -0.009<br><i>0.009</i>     | -0.044 **<br><i>0.021</i>  | -0.027 ***<br><i>0.009</i> | -0.035 *<br><i>0.021</i>  |
| married   | 0.020 *<br><i>0.011</i>    | 0.060 ***<br><i>0.023</i>  | 0.015<br><i>0.010</i>      | 0.053 **<br><i>0.022</i>   | 0.008<br><i>0.010</i>      | 0.029<br><i>0.022</i>     |
| age   | 0.001<br><i>0.002</i>      | 0.008 **<br><i>0.004</i>   | -0.001<br><i>0.002</i>     | 0.003<br><i>0.003</i>      | 0.003 *<br><i>0.002</i>    | 0.003<br><i>0.004</i>     |
| squared age   | -0.000<br><i>0.000</i>     | -0.000 **<br><i>0.000</i>  | 0.000<br><i>0.000</i>      | -0.000<br><i>0.000</i>     | -0.000<br><i>0.000</i>     | -0.000<br><i>0.000</i>    |
| <i>Age at completed education (ref. &gt;=20)</i>              |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                           |
| 16-19   | -0.027 **<br><i>0.011</i>  |                            | -0.035 ***<br><i>0.010</i> |                            | -0.023 **<br><i>0.010</i>  |                           |
| <i>Labour market position(ref. High-skilled white-collar)</i> |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                           |
| unemployed  | -0.043 *<br><i>0.025</i>   | 0.032<br><i>0.099</i>      | -0.055 **<br><i>0.025</i>  | 0.108<br><i>0.073</i>      | -0.029<br><i>0.024</i>     | 0.114<br><i>0.069</i>     |
| manual worker   | -0.033 *<br><i>0.017</i>   | -0.045<br><i>0.098</i>     | -0.013<br><i>0.016</i>     | 0.118<br><i>0.073</i>      | -0.011<br><i>0.016</i>     | 0.109<br><i>0.070</i>     |
| low-skilled white-collar                                      | -0.031 *<br><i>0.019</i>   | 0.047<br><i>0.107</i>      | -0.033 *<br><i>0.018</i>   | 0.150 *<br><i>0.069</i>    | -0.008<br><i>0.018</i>     | 0.116<br><i>0.074</i>     |
| businessman   | -0.026<br><i>0.026</i>     | -0.020<br><i>0.114</i>     | -0.017<br><i>0.025</i>     | 0.156 *<br><i>0.067</i>    | -0.040<br><i>0.027</i>     | 0.150 *<br><i>0.066</i>   |
| out of the labour force                                       | -0.045 ***<br><i>0.017</i> | -0.019<br><i>0.094</i>     | -0.040 **<br><i>0.016</i>  | 0.083<br><i>0.087</i>      | -0.025<br><i>0.017</i>     | 0.138 *<br><i>0.083</i>   |
| <i>House owned</i>  | 0.008<br><i>0.011</i>      | -0.047 *<br><i>0.025</i>   | -0.005<br><i>0.010</i>     | -0.041 *<br><i>0.023</i>   | 0.016<br><i>0.011</i>      | -0.007<br><i>0.023</i>    |
| <i>Trust</i>  |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                           |
| National government   | 0.054 ***<br><i>0.014</i>  | 0.039<br><i>0.034</i>      | 0.057 ***<br><i>0.013</i>  | -0.014<br><i>0.032</i>     | 0.031 **<br><i>0.014</i>   | 0.022<br><i>0.032</i>     |
| National parliament   | 0.055 ***<br><i>0.015</i>  | 0.084 **<br><i>0.034</i>   | 0.023 *<br><i>0.013</i>    | 0.109 ***<br><i>0.030</i>  | 0.044 ***<br><i>0.014</i>  | 0.085 ***<br><i>0.032</i> |
| <i>Ideology (ref. Left)</i>                                   |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                           |
| right   | -0.015<br><i>0.014</i>     | -0.025<br><i>0.034</i>     | 0.008<br><i>0.013</i>      | -0.021<br><i>0.031</i>     | 0.010<br><i>0.013</i>      | 0.049 *<br><i>0.029</i>   |
| centre  | 0.021 *<br><i>0.012</i>    | 0.009<br><i>0.028</i>      | 0.017<br><i>0.011</i>      | 0.006<br><i>0.026</i>      | 0.045 ***<br><i>0.012</i>  | 0.030<br><i>0.026</i>     |
| refusal/don't know  | -0.050 ***<br><i>0.016</i> | -0.113 ***<br><i>0.031</i> | -0.038 ***<br><i>0.015</i> | -0.081 ***<br><i>0.029</i> | -0.024 *<br><i>0.015</i>   | -0.053 *<br><i>0.029</i>  |
| <i>EU info</i>  | 0.107 ***<br><i>0.010</i>  | 0.162 ***<br><i>0.021</i>  | 0.071 ***<br><i>0.009</i>  | 0.126 ***<br><i>0.020</i>  | 0.102 ***<br><i>0.009</i>  | 0.150 ***<br><i>0.019</i> |
| Observations  | 20,486                     | 5,596                      | 20,486                     | 5,596                      | 20,486                     | 5,596                     |

\*significant at 10%, \*\*significant at 5%, \*\*\*significant at 1%

Robust standard errors in italicus

**Table A5.** Marginal effects with control for europeanism - High- and low-educated citizens

|   | Foreign Policy             |                            | Defence                    |                            | Immigration                |                           |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
|   | High education             | Low education              | High education             | Low education              | High education             | Low education             |
| <i>Country (ref. Mediterranean countries)</i>                 |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                           |
| Nordic  | -0.297 ***<br><i>0.021</i> | -0.152 ***<br><i>0.038</i> | -0.180 ***<br><i>0.020</i> | -0.139 ***<br><i>0.037</i> | -0.139 ***<br><i>0.020</i> | -0.040<br><i>0.034</i>    |
| New Members   | -0.038 ***<br><i>0.015</i> | 0.023<br><i>0.026</i>      | 0.040 ***<br><i>0.012</i>  | 0.044 *<br><i>0.023</i>    | -0.022<br><i>0.014</i>     | -0.031<br><i>0.025</i>    |
| Continental   | -0.016<br><i>0.017</i>     | 0.056 *<br><i>0.030</i>    | 0.040 ***<br><i>0.014</i>  | 0.097 ***<br><i>0.025</i>  | 0.013<br><i>0.015</i>      | 0.067 **<br><i>0.027</i>  |
| Benelux   | -0.136 ***<br><i>0.020</i> | -0.062<br><i>0.039</i>     | 0.004<br><i>0.015</i>      | 0.042<br><i>0.033</i>      | 0.005<br><i>0.016</i>      | 0.037<br><i>0.033</i>     |
| English-speaking  | -0.206 ***<br><i>0.024</i> | -0.220 ***<br><i>0.037</i> | -0.168 ***<br><i>0.022</i> | -0.182 ***<br><i>0.036</i> | -0.062 ***<br><i>0.021</i> | -0.033<br><i>0.033</i>    |
| <i>Demographics</i>   |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                           |
| female  | -0.019 **<br><i>0.010</i>  | -0.040 *<br><i>0.023</i>   | -0.010<br><i>0.009</i>     | -0.036 *<br><i>0.021</i>   | -0.027 ***<br><i>0.009</i> | -0.028<br><i>0.021</i>    |
| married   | 0.018 *<br><i>0.011</i>    | 0.057 **<br><i>0.023</i>   | 0.013<br><i>0.010</i>      | 0.048 **<br><i>0.021</i>   | 0.006<br><i>0.010</i>      | 0.026<br><i>0.022</i>     |
| age   | 0.002<br><i>0.002</i>      | 0.009 **<br><i>0.004</i>   | 0.001<br><i>0.002</i>      | 0.003<br><i>0.003</i>      | 0.004 **<br><i>0.002</i>   | 0.003<br><i>0.004</i>     |
| squared age   | 0.000<br><i>0.000</i>      | 0.000 **<br><i>0.000</i>   | 0.000<br><i>0.000</i>      | 0.000<br><i>0.000</i>      | 0.000<br><i>0.000</i>      | 0.000<br><i>0.000</i>     |
| <i>Age at completed education (ref. &gt;=20)</i>              |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                           |
| 16-19   | -0.014<br><i>0.011</i>     |                            | -0.023 **<br><i>0.010</i>  |                            | -0.015<br><i>0.011</i>     |                           |
| <i>Labour market position(ref. High-skilled white-collar)</i> |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                           |
| unemployed  | -0.032<br><i>0.024</i>     | 0.047<br><i>0.095</i>      | -0.044 **<br><i>0.024</i>  | 0.118<br><i>0.064</i>      | -0.021<br><i>0.023</i>     | 0.121<br><i>0.070</i>     |
| manual worker   | -0.019<br><i>0.017</i>     | -0.029<br><i>0.095</i>     | -0.002<br><i>0.015</i>     | 0.130 *<br><i>0.065</i>    | -0.004<br><i>0.016</i>     | 0.121<br><i>0.070</i>     |
| low-skilled white-collar                                      | -0.022<br><i>0.019</i>     | 0.072<br><i>0.101</i>      | -0.025<br><i>0.018</i>     | 0.165 **<br><i>0.058</i>   | -0.004<br><i>0.018</i>     | 0.130<br><i>0.071</i>     |
| businessman   | -0.018<br><i>0.025</i>     | -0.014<br><i>0.112</i>     | -0.011<br><i>0.024</i>     | 0.163 **<br><i>0.059</i>   | -0.035<br><i>0.026</i>     | 0.157 *<br><i>0.065</i>   |
| out of the labour force                                       | -0.037 **<br><i>0.017</i>  | -0.005<br><i>0.092</i>     | -0.033 **<br><i>0.016</i>  | 0.095<br><i>0.080</i>      | -0.021<br><i>0.017</i>     | 0.152 *<br><i>0.085</i>   |
| <i>House owned</i>  | 0.005<br><i>0.011</i>      | -0.052 **<br><i>0.025</i>  | -0.007<br><i>0.010</i>     | -0.042 *<br><i>0.023</i>   | 0.014<br><i>0.011</i>      | -0.008<br><i>0.023</i>    |
| <i>Trust</i>  |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                           |
| National government   | 0.018<br><i>0.014</i>      | 0.004<br><i>0.036</i>      | 0.023 *<br><i>0.013</i>    | -0.048<br><i>0.032</i>     | 0.009<br><i>0.014</i>      | -0.003<br><i>0.033</i>    |
| National parliament   | 0.009<br><i>0.015</i>      | 0.012<br><i>0.036</i>      | -0.017<br><i>0.014</i>     | 0.058 *<br><i>0.032</i>    | 0.017<br><i>0.015</i>      | 0.047<br><i>0.033</i>     |
| <i>Ideology (ref. Left)</i>                                   |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                           |
| right   | -0.020<br><i>0.014</i>     | -0.025<br><i>0.034</i>     | 0.005<br><i>0.012</i>      | -0.018<br><i>0.031</i>     | 0.008<br><i>0.013</i>      | 0.049<br><i>0.029</i>     |
| centre  | 0.016<br><i>0.012</i>      | 0.009<br><i>0.029</i>      | 0.012<br><i>0.011</i>      | 0.009<br><i>0.027</i>      | 0.042 ***<br><i>0.012</i>  | 0.031<br><i>0.026</i>     |
| refusal/don't know  | -0.047 ***<br><i>0.016</i> | -0.087 ***<br><i>0.031</i> | -0.034 **<br><i>0.014</i>  | -0.056 **<br><i>0.029</i>  | -0.021<br><i>0.014</i>     | -0.037<br><i>0.028</i>    |
| <i>Europeanism</i>  | 0.125 ***<br><i>0.007</i>  | 0.171 ***<br><i>0.020</i>  | 0.110 ***<br><i>0.007</i>  | 0.134 ***<br><i>0.018</i>  | 0.076 ***<br><i>0.007</i>  | 0.095 ***<br><i>0.016</i> |
| <i>EU info</i>  | 0.092 ***<br><i>0.010</i>  | 0.142 ***<br><i>0.022</i>  | 0.057 ***<br><i>0.009</i>  | 0.108 ***<br><i>0.020</i>  | 0.093 ***<br><i>0.009</i>  | 0.137 ***<br><i>0.020</i> |
| Observations  | 20,486                     | 5,596                      | 20,486                     | 5,596                      | 20,486                     | 5,596                     |

\*significant at 10%, \*\*significant at 5%, \*\*\*significant at 1%

Robust standard errors in italicus

**Table A6.** IV Bivariate probit estimates (consensus equation)<sup>a</sup> - High- and low-educated citizens

|   | Foreign policy       |                      | Defence              |                      | Immigration          |                     |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
|   | High education       | Low education        | High education       | Low education        | High education       | Low education       |
| <i>Country (ref. Mediterranean countries)</i>                 |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                     |
| Nordic  | -0.791***<br>(0.056) | -0.425***<br>(0.097) | -0.569***<br>(0.058) | -0.423***<br>(0.094) | -0.407***<br>(0.056) | -0.179*<br>(0.100)  |
| New Members   | -0.084*<br>(0.048)   | 0.088<br>(0.072)     | 0.181***<br>(0.051)  | 0.165**<br>(0.071)   | -0.037<br>(0.049)    | -0.040<br>(0.075)   |
| Continental   | -0.045<br>(0.053)    | 0.100<br>(0.095)     | 0.162***<br>(0.057)  | 0.227**<br>(0.092)   | 0.048<br>(0.054)     | 0.114<br>(0.101)    |
| Benelux   | -0.362***<br>(0.058) | -0.172*<br>(0.099)   | 0.031<br>(0.062)     | 0.106<br>(0.102)     | 0.048<br>(0.058)     | 0.082<br>(0.100)    |
| English-speaking  | -0.511***<br>(0.071) | -0.508***<br>(0.102) | -0.514***<br>(0.073) | -0.428***<br>(0.103) | -0.124*<br>(0.072)   | -0.027<br>(0.100)   |
| <i>Demographics</i>   |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                     |
| female  | 0.000<br>(0.038)     | -0.030<br>(0.079)    | -0.001<br>(0.043)    | -0.012<br>(0.077)    | -0.022<br>(0.042)    | 0.033<br>(0.092)    |
| married   | 0.048<br>(0.035)     | 0.152**<br>(0.061)   | 0.044<br>(0.039)     | 0.143**<br>(0.062)   | 0.011<br>(0.036)     | 0.078<br>(0.061)    |
| age   | 0.005<br>(0.006)     | 0.020*<br>(0.011)    | 0.001<br>(0.006)     | 0.004<br>(0.011)     | 0.010*<br>(0.006)    | 0.003<br>(0.011)    |
| squared age   | -0.000<br>(0.000)    | -0.000**<br>(0.000)  | -0.000<br>(0.000)    | -0.000<br>(0.000)    | -0.000<br>(0.000)    | -0.000<br>(0.000)   |
| <i>Age at completed education (ref. &gt;=20)</i>              |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                     |
| 16-19   | 0.003<br>(0.039)     |                      | -0.061<br>(0.044)    |                      | 0.001<br>(0.042)     |                     |
| <i>Labour market position(ref. High-skilled white-collar)</i> |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                     |
| unemployed  | -0.086<br>(0.076)    | 0.147<br>(0.268)     | -0.156*<br>(0.083)   | 0.406<br>(0.253)     | -0.054<br>(0.077)    | 0.399<br>(0.245)    |
| manual worker   | -0.031<br>(0.055)    | -0.080<br>(0.252)    | 0.008<br>(0.060)     | 0.398*<br>(0.237)    | 0.019<br>(0.056)     | 0.343<br>(0.221)    |
| low-skilled white-collar                                      | -0.070<br>(0.060)    | 0.147<br>(0.298)     | -0.094<br>(0.065)    | 0.521*<br>(0.294)    | -0.013<br>(0.062)    | 0.324<br>(0.272)    |
| businessman   | -0.062<br>(0.080)    | 0.002<br>(0.297)     | -0.046<br>(0.090)    | 0.620**<br>(0.291)   | -0.117<br>(0.084)    | 0.563**<br>(0.266)  |
| out of the labour force                                       | -0.097*<br>(0.054)   | -0.014<br>(0.249)    | -0.114*<br>(0.061)   | 0.264<br>(0.232)     | -0.048<br>(0.057)    | 0.393*<br>(0.217)   |
| <i>House owned</i>  |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                     |
|   | -0.007<br>(0.037)    | -0.138**<br>(0.067)  | -0.042<br>(0.040)    | -0.125*<br>(0.069)   | 0.020<br>(0.038)     | -0.027<br>(0.067)   |
| <i>Trust</i>  |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                     |
| National government   | 0.043<br>(0.048)     | -0.010<br>(0.097)    | 0.081<br>(0.052)     | -0.162*<br>(0.095)   | 0.015<br>(0.049)     | -0.038<br>(0.095)   |
| National parliament   | 0.004<br>(0.050)     | -0.018<br>(0.102)    | -0.078<br>(0.054)    | 0.106<br>(0.105)     | 0.030<br>(0.052)     | 0.055<br>(0.113)    |
| <i>Ideology (ref. Left)</i>                                   |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                     |
| right   | -0.057<br>(0.045)    | -0.079<br>(0.091)    | 0.024<br>(0.049)     | -0.071<br>(0.089)    | 0.036<br>(0.046)     | 0.114<br>(0.092)    |
| centre  | 0.073*<br>(0.041)    | 0.021<br>(0.077)     | 0.059<br>(0.044)     | 0.020<br>(0.078)     | 0.166***<br>(0.042)  | 0.079<br>(0.076)    |
| refusal/don't know  | -0.082<br>(0.053)    | -0.144<br>(0.099)    | -0.090<br>(0.058)    | -0.057<br>(0.099)    | -0.002<br>(0.054)    | 0.022<br>(0.111)    |
| <i>Europeanism</i>  |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                     |
|   | 0.368***<br>(0.031)  | 0.397***<br>(0.078)  | 0.408***<br>(0.033)  | 0.322***<br>(0.073)  | 0.221***<br>(0.031)  | 0.186**<br>(0.082)  |
| <i>EU info</i>  |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                     |
|   | 0.825***<br>(0.159)  | 0.944***<br>(0.354)  | 0.527***<br>(0.202)  | 1.022***<br>(0.304)  | 0.891***<br>(0.197)  | 1.231***<br>(0.424) |
| <i>Constant</i>   |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                     |
|   | 0.032<br>(0.158)     | -0.593<br>(0.397)    | 0.391**<br>(0.179)   | -0.431<br>(0.382)    | -0.153<br>(0.166)    | -0.512<br>(0.375)   |
| Observations  | 20,486               | 5,596                | 20,486               | 5,596                | 20,486               | 5,596               |

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p&lt;0.01, \*\* p&lt;0.05, \* p&lt;0.1

a. IV: 1 if the individual knows 2 or 3 economic indicators with a low error