

MAPLE

**European
Parliament
elections report on
media and survey
data
(BE-DE-EL-IE-PT-SP)
post-election Study**

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1. Overview

This report is part of MAPLE Project, ERC - European Research Council Grant, 682125, which aims to study the Politicisation of the EU before and after the Eurozone Crisis in Belgium, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain.

In the preparation of the 2019 EP elections we were able to implement two studies- one that covered one month of online newspaper data during the election campaign, another an online survey that is representative of the population in the six countries covered in MAPLE.

In the report on the media, we offer a preliminary analysis of the salience that the EU had during the 2019 EP election in the online news media of Belgium, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain.

In the online survey report, we offer an analysis of attitudes towards national and EU issues of representative samples of the population.

Thus, what follows is a summary of

- 1) the data collected, both in the media and among electors
- 2) descriptive findings for the salience of the EU during the campaign
- 3) descriptive findings concerning national and EU attitudes.

2. Technical Report- Media Campaign Analysis

Two mainstream/quality newspapers of each country were selected and their online articles collected during the 30 days before the 2019 EP election day. The newspapers, were selected for being quality newspapers of (slightly) different political inclinations in each country.

TABLE 2.1- Newspapers included in the Analysis

Country	Newspaper 1	Newspaper 2
Belgium	De Standaard	Le Soir
Germany	SZ	FAZ
Ireland	Irish Independent	Irish Times
Greece	Kathimerini	Ta Nea
Portugal	Público	Diario de Noticias
Spain	El Pais	El Mundo

In order to collect this data, an automated scraping application was built, using Python and the platform Heroku for building cloud applications, that downloaded every new article posted on the websites of each newspaper every 24 hours for the limited period we defined beforehand.

Starting from the home page and systematically excluding certain sections that are irrelevant to our research interest¹, the application searched for every new published article and collected its body (main text) and its title, as well as other relevant information like the author (if available), the section and whether it was featured in the home page of the website or not. All ethical guidelines were followed in this process.

In order to identify articles about the European Union (EU), a keyword list was elaborated (partly adapted, and further complemented, from an existing project's keyword list) which can be seen in Appendix 2. The grepl function of R was then used to search for matches of our list's patterns/expressions in the title, subtitle and body of the online articles. If one of those keywords appeared in any part of the article we considered it as an article mentioning the EU. This method has been previously validated/compared with two alternative methods (i.e. manual coding, topic modeling) and proved to be extremely consistent (being, nevertheless, the most inclusive method).

Additionally, if any of the keywords appeared in the title or subtitle, we considered the EU a central topic of that article. In this way, this section offers and discusses as well an alternative, and more exclusive, measure of EU salience in the news media.

The period of time of our analysis goes from 2019-04-24 to 2019-05-26². Additionally, all duplicated observations (articles with the exact same title and

¹ Sections like sports and culture were dropped. You can find a more detailed catalogue of these sections per newspaper in Appendix 1.

² Until 24th of May in case of Ireland.

body) were also dropped from the dataset unless those articles were purposely republished in different dates.

3. The Saliency of the EU during the Campaign for the EP elections

This section is divided, or structured, in four interrelated parts. The first one describes the data collected and presents the saliency that the EU had in each newspaper and respective countries. The second part, by comparing that data with similar data collected in a different period of time (early 2019), investigates to what extent the saliency that the EU dimension had in May 2019 derived mainly from the EP election and the respective campaign. The remaining two, smaller, parts further discuss this question. First by inspecting the time trends of EU saliency and finally by examining the most frequently used words in the EU mentioned articles for each country.

Table 3. 1 - Newspapers and online media data - The saliency of the EU during the 2019 EP elections

Country	Newspaper	Frequency	EU mentioned	%EU mentioned	Average size of EU mentioned articles (# of words)	EU Central	%EU Central	%Central/ Mentioned	%EU Mentioned	% EU Central	%Central/ Mentioned
BE	De Standaard	1837	124	6.8	506.3	18	1.0	14.5	5.7	1.5	28.4
	Le Soir	2989	137	4.6	292.8	58	1.9	42.3			
DE	Frankfurter AZ	3403	624	18.3	421	271	8.0	43.4	18.9	7.1	37.9
	Süddeutsche Z.	1353	263	19.4	612.7	85	6.3	32.3			
GR	Kathimerini	4553	1119	24.6	526.8	217	4.8	19.4	19.3	4.9	27.5
	Ta Nea	4388	618	14.1	464.3	220	5.0	35.6			
IR	The Irish Ind.	3567	565	15.8	571.5	130	3.6	23.0	18.7	5.4	27.9
	The Irish Times	2081	450	21.6	703.5	148	7.1	32.9			
PT	Público	3165	775	24.5	584.3	221	7.0	28.5	24.6	7.9	32.0
	DN	1655	408	24.7	649	145	8.8	35.5			
SP	El Mundo	4837	612	12.7	733.8	140	2.9	22.9	15.2	3.5	23.2
	El País	4898	869	17.7	830.4	204	4.2	23.5			
Maple	Total	38726	6564	16.9	574.7	1857	4.8	28.3	17.1	5.0	29.5
	Mean values			17.1			5.0	29.5			

As Table 3.2 shows us, a total of 38,726 articles from the 12 different newspapers were collected and analysed.

The salience that the EU dimension had in the different newspapers varied considerably between countries and between newspapers. In the (roughly) four weeks that preceded the 2019 EP election, which unsurprisingly is, together with EU treaties and referendums, one of the periods when EU is highly visible in the news media, Portugal was the country where the EU dimension was most salient, with both newspapers having a very similar (around 24.6%) proportion of articles mentioning the EU.

Contrarily, as Figure 3.1. shows, the EU had the lowest salience in the two Belgium newspapers. While in the case of the *De Standaard*, the EU was only mentioned in 6.8% of the articles, in the case of *Le Soir*, that figure was even lower, with only 4.6% of the articles published in the website of that newspaper mentioning the EU. As we will also see, the salience of the EU in this country was, compared to the other countries, also very low in a different period of time (from 16/01/2019 to 14/02/2019), suggesting that the EU dimension is not simply salient in the media of this country, even amid one this institution’s most important events (EP elections).

In the case of Greece, there was a more noticeable difference between the two newspapers analysed, regarding the proportion of articles mentioning the EU. More concretely, while 24.6% of the articles of *Kathimerini* mentioned EU, the same happened in only 14.1% of *Ta Nea* articles. Compared to *Kathimerini*, not only *Ta Nea* had, on average, less articles mentioning the EU, the size of those articles, on average, was also smaller. In the case of the other five countries, differences between newspapers were less prominent.

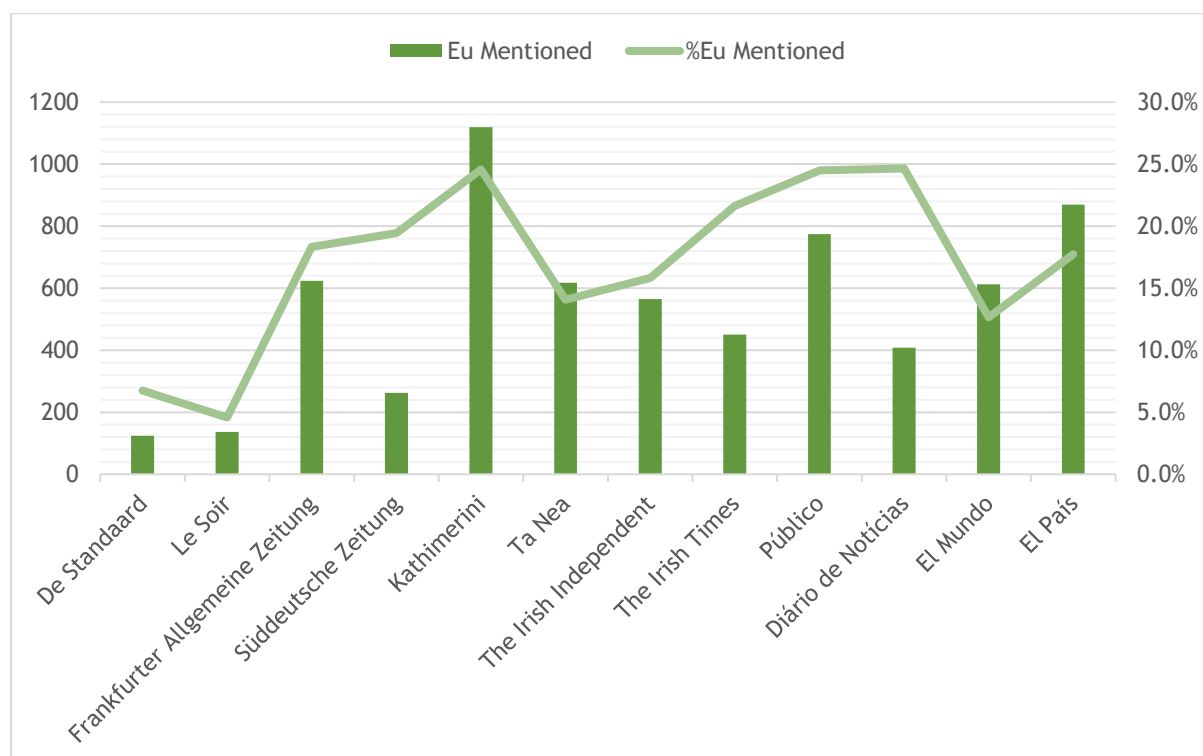


Figure 3.1 - Number and proportion of articles mentioning EU in each newspaper.

When we look at the articles that had the EU as one central aspect of the message the overall picture remains mostly unchanged (see Figure 3.2). Portugal,

followed by Germany, were the two countries with the highest proportion of EU central articles. In the case of Portugal, almost 8% of the articles mentioned the EU either in the headline or sub-headline of the article. In the case of Germany, the average proportion of EU central articles was 7.1%. Germany was also the country with the highest ratio between EU central and EU mentioned articles. Almost 40% of the articles that mentioned the EU did it also in the headlines of the article. When it comes to newspapers, it was also the DN (Portugal) and FAZ (Germany) that had the highest proportion of EU central articles, 8.8% and 8% respectively. It is also interesting to see that in the case of Greece, the proportion of EU central articles is relatively the same in both newspapers.

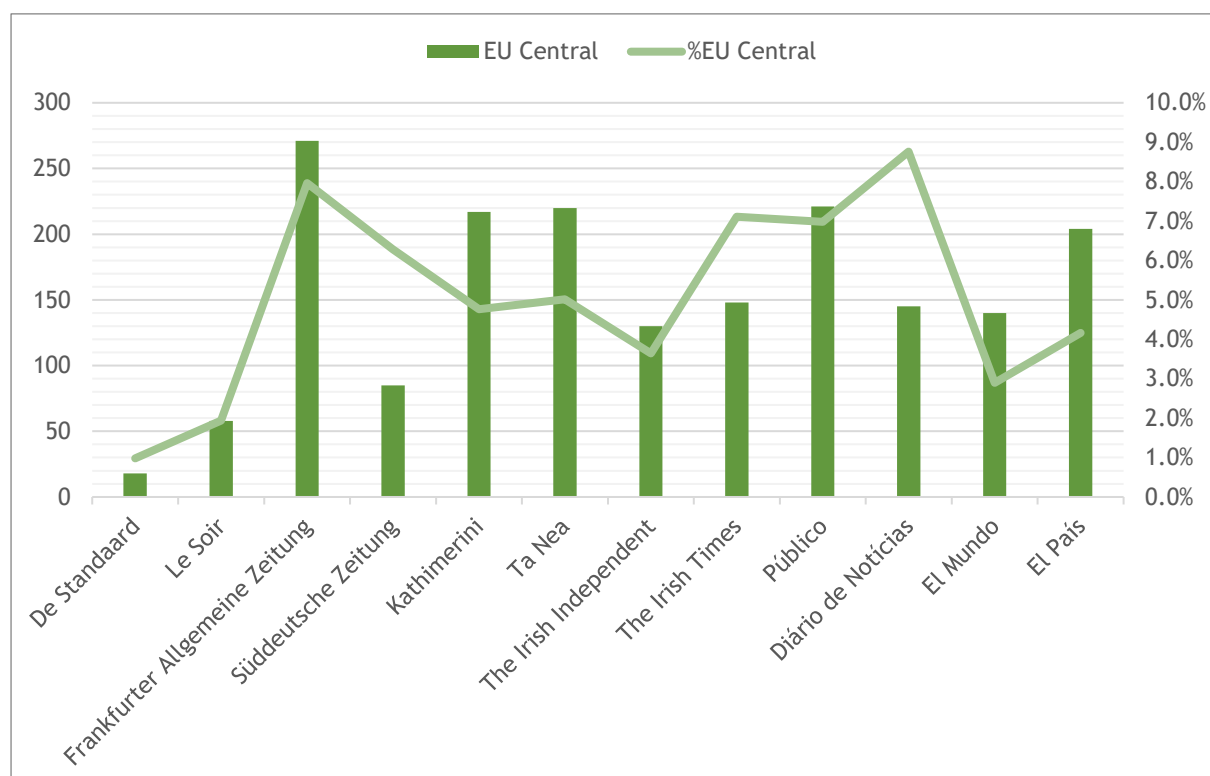


Figure 3.2 - Number and proportion of articles with EU mentioned in articles' headlines in each newspaper.

Unsurprisingly, Belgium was also the country with the lowest proportion of EU central articles. On average, only 1.5% of the articles published in the Belgium online media gave a central role to EU. It was however Spain that had, overall, the lowest ratio between articles with EU central and articles mentioning the EU. In the online media of this country only 23.2% of the articles mentioning the EU had one of the EU keywords in their titles, a proportion that was practically identical in both *El Mundo* and *El País*.

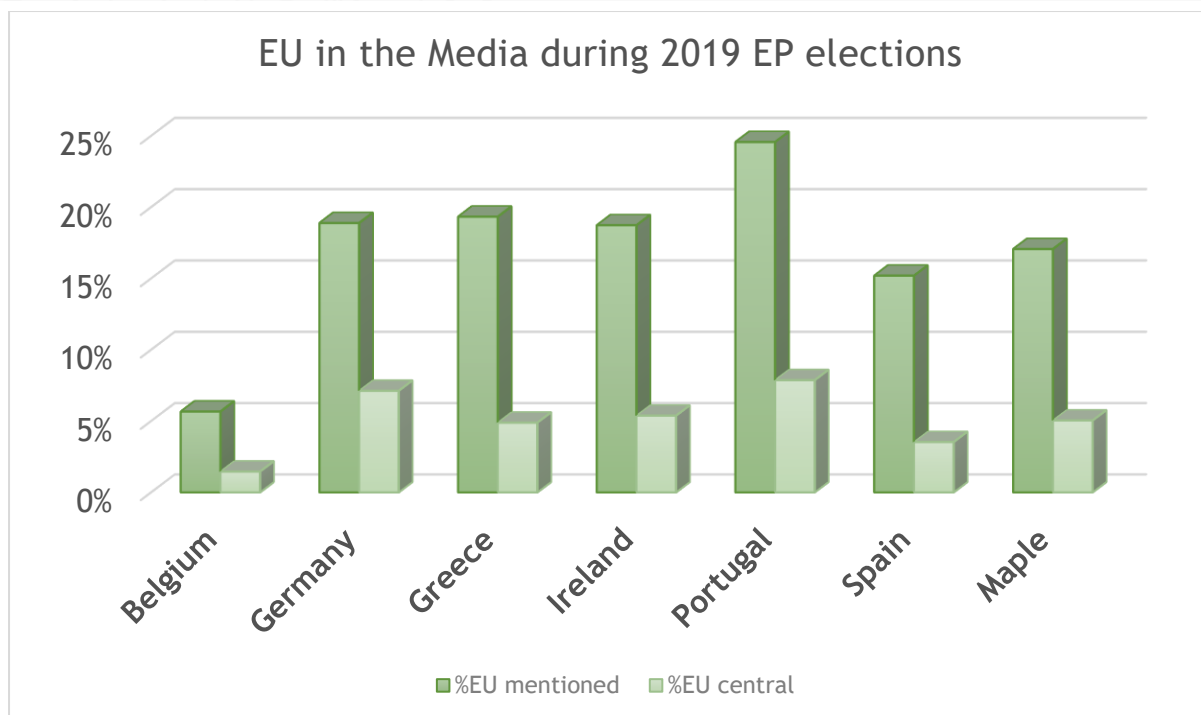


Figure 3.3 - Average proportion of EU mentioned and EU central articles per Country

Overall, as the previous figure indicates, there were considerable differences between countries regarding the proportion of articles that mentioned EU, as well as the proportion of articles that had EU as a central dimension during the four weeks before the 2019 EP election.

Therefore, despite the EP elections being a moment when we would expect high levels of EU visibility in the news media (regardless of them being treated or perceived as secondary elections), the levels of citizens' exposure to the EU and the EP parliament elections actually varied considerable between countries, considering mainstream newspapers.

4. Comparing Salience of the EU in January and May 2019

In order to understand to what extent our results stem mainly from the campaign for the 2019 EP elections, we also compare our results to identical data collected in a different period (from 16 of January to 14 of February, 2019) that complemented Maple’s first wave online survey. The results, as we can see in 4.1 and 4.2 show that the EP election seems to have boosted the salience of the EU in the media in only three of the countries analysed (Portugal, Greece and Spain). From these three countries, it was Ireland that had the highest EU salience during the first wave (28.1%), followed by Germany (18.7%) and, finally, Portugal (18.4%).

The salience that the EU had in Spanish media, in case of both waves, was always lower than the average of the 12 newspapers. This suggests that despite some increase in its visibility during the EP elections, the EU was not very salient in Spain’s two main reference newspapers. In a way, these results are understandable considering the political turmoil’s that this country had been experiencing in this period at its ‘national’ level.

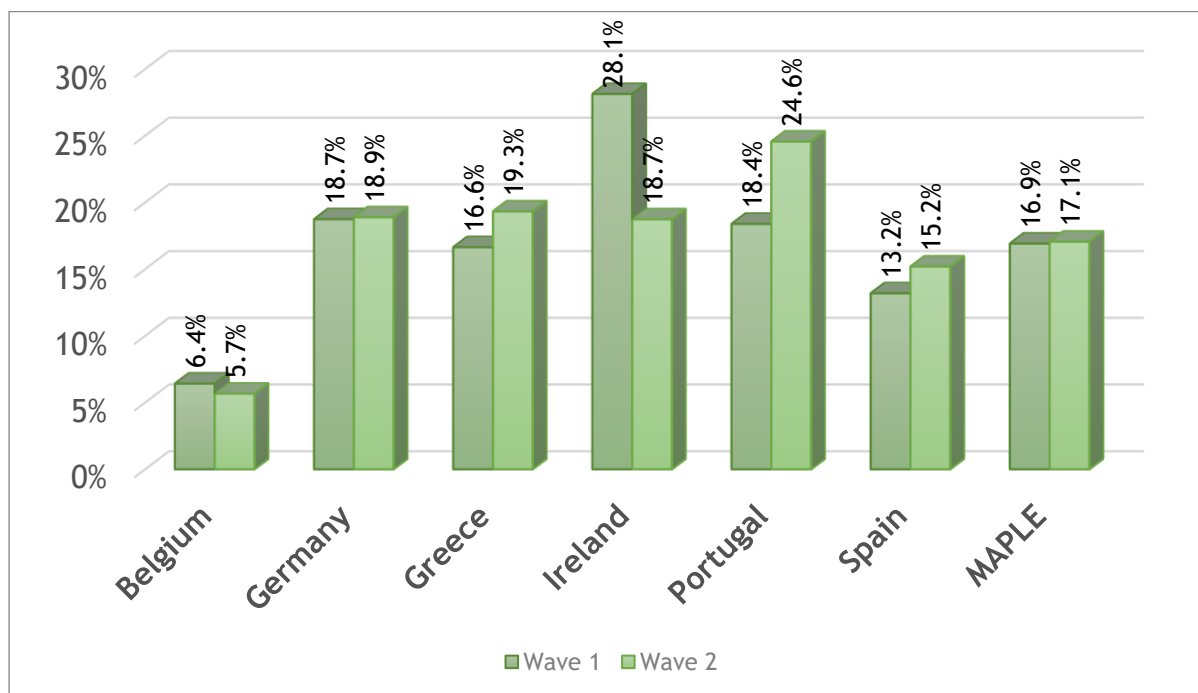


Figure 4.1. Average proportion of articles mentioning EU in wave 1 and wave 2.

The two countries where the salience of the EU increased the most during the second wave were Portugal and Greece, the two EU countries that experienced more intensely the Eurozone crisis and subsequent EU/IMF imposed austerity.

The results of the remaining three countries, though for different reasons, are interesting as well. In the case of Germany, the differences between the two waves are practically non-existent. During the first wave period, 18.7% of the German online media articles mentioned the EU. Nevertheless, differently from countries like Spain or Belgium (where in terms of EU salience between the two waves were less evident), the average salience that the EU had in German media

was comparatively high in both time periods suggesting that the EU has attained ‘news-value’ status among German journalists. In fact, interestingly, the proportion of German EU central articles was even lower during the EP electoral campaign. Belgium was one of the two countries (together with Ireland) where the proportion of EU mentioned articles was lower for the second wave. However, the proportion of EU articles in Belgium media was also extremely low during wave 1. This suggests that low EU salience in Belgium may not simply be a consequence of holding national and European elections at the same day.

Finally, the most peculiar case, when we compare the two waves, was Ireland. In this country, the EU was considerably more salient during the first wave. While in January/February about 28% of the Irish online articles mentioned the EU, in the four weeks before the 2019 EP election only 18.7% of the articles in the same two Irish newspapers mentioned the EU. While we cannot say that the EU was not salient in Ireland during the EP electoral campaign (being above the six country/12 newspapers’ average), that event did not contribute to an increase of the salience that the EU dimension had in the Irish online media.

5. Overtime Trend in Salience of the EU in Apr-May 2019

Regarding the overtime trend in salience of the EU in the media, we can observe a difference between wave 1 and 2. In the case of wave 2, as we can see in Figure 5.1, the average daily proportion of articles mentioning the EU in the online media of the six countries increased the closer it got to the election day. It was in fact May 26th (the EP election day, except for Ireland) that had the highest salience of the EU in the media. With the exception of Germany and Belgium, this incremental trend can be observed, to some extent for each one of the countries (Figure 5.2).

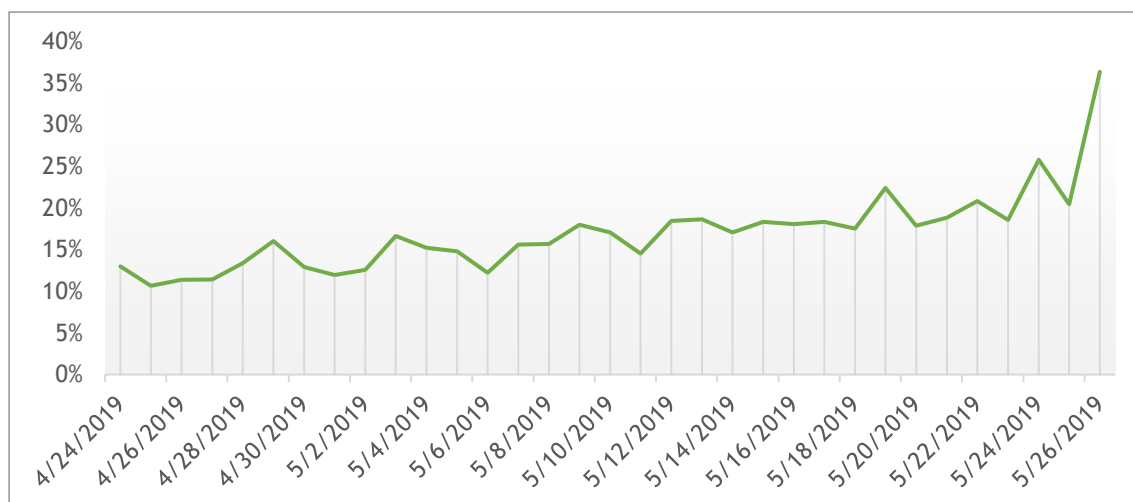


Figure 5.1 - Average proportion of EU mentioned articles overtime (Wave 2)

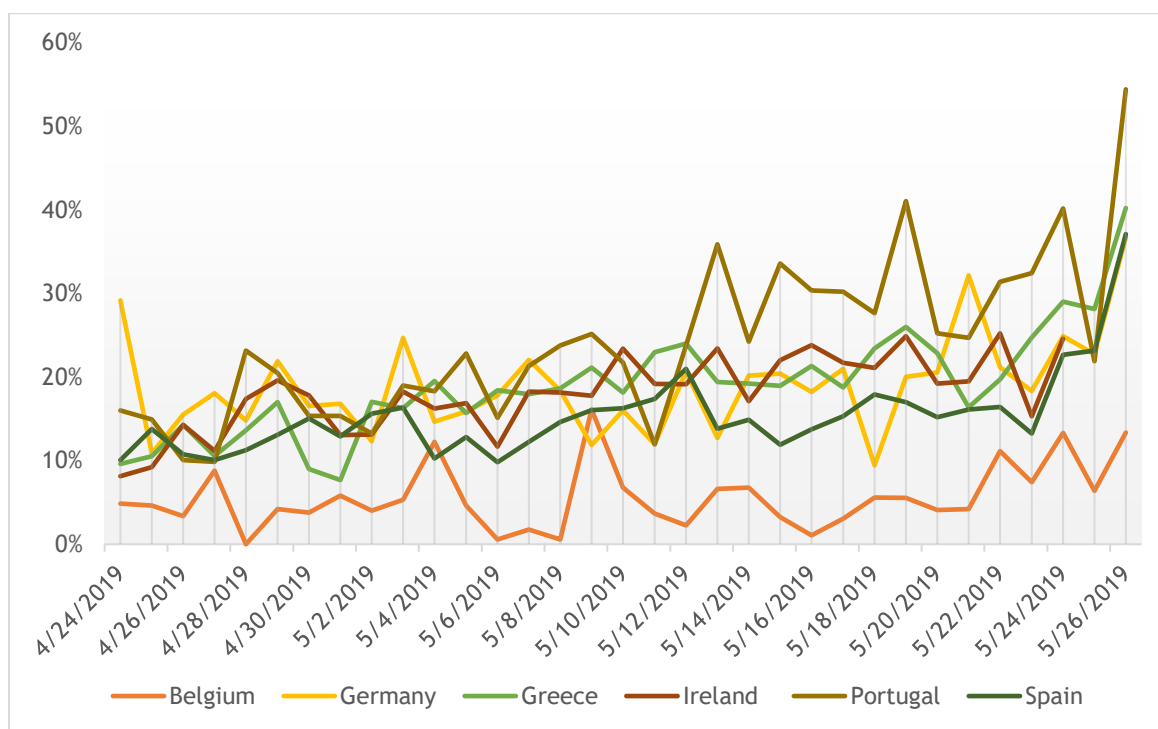


Figure 5.2 - Proportion of EU mentioned articles overtime per country (Wave 2)

6. A brief overview of Content of EU articles in Apr-May 2019

Finally, regarding the content of the articles that mentioned the EU, the table below shows the 30 most frequent words used in those articles. When it comes to this aspect, there weren't major differences between the countries. Expectedly, the EP campaign contributed chiefly to the salience that the EU had in the media. The salience of words such as 'party', 'may' and 'elections' evidence that. In the case of Ireland and Belgium, 'Brexit' was also in the top 10 of most frequently used words suggesting that a significant proportion of the articles published in the media of these two countries dealt with developments in the process of UK leaving the EU. Finally, the salience of words such as 'government' and the country name suggest as well a 'domestication' of the EU dimension in the mainstream media.

Table 6.1 -List of the 30 most frequent words in news articles that mentioned the EU.

	Belgium	Germany	Greece	Ireland	Portugal	Spain
1	europese	mehr	ελλάδα	ireland	eleições	españa
2	parlement	prozent	εε	irish	partido	años
3	plus	schon	ευρώ	brexit	europaia	elecciones
4	partij	deutschland	συριζα	people	governo	gobierno
5	may	europa	νδ	new	sobre	partido
6	europa	seit	κυβέρνηση	european	européu	europa
7	jaar	partei	ευρωεκλογές	one	portugal	dos
8	brexit	jahr	εκλογές	may	anos	europaia
9	wel	europäischen	είπε	year	européias	país
10	volgens	immer	δύο	cent	ainda	presidente
11	procent	europawahl	χώρα	government	europa	millones
12	stemmen	jahren	πολιτική	party	parlamento	política
13	zegt	wurde	τσιπρας	last	união	européu
14	européenne	sagt	κόμμα	can	público	según
15	premier	viele	ευρώπη	€	país	ahora
16	élections	euro	πρόεδρος	years	psd	parte
17	verkiezingen	gibt	χρόνια	time	política	puede
18	selon	menschen	νέα	now	presidente	hace
19	pays	unternehmen	όταν	two	campanha	tras
20	européennes	deutschen	τσιπρα	minister	fazer	países
21	européen	zwei	ευρωπαϊκή	business	melhor	solo
22	moeten	etwa	πολίτες	just	peessoas	ciudadanos
23	ministre	regierung	πρωθυπουργός	first	dia	unión
24	land	vergangenen	γιατί	deal	todos	año
25	mensen	spd	υπάρχει	many	porque	européas
26	partijen	europäische	μαΐου	dublin	acordo	vez
27	parti	may	ευρωπαϊκής	get	dois	parlamento
28	union	land	χώρες	independent	costa	después
29	être	wahl	ποσοστό	elections	partidos	electoral
30	deux	dafür	εκατ	election	vai	así

7. Technical Report- Online Survey

In 2019, an online panel survey was carried out in two waves. The first wave took place in January 2019 and the second wave started just after the 2019 May European Parliament elections. Our partner for this online survey was Qualtrics.

In this report, only post-election data is presented, i.e. from wave 2. Our questionnaire sought to model the political context of political choices in each country, taking into account national and EU attitudes and political behaviour.

The target population was the general voting population aged >18 years old using the Census 2011 data. The sample size in each country was the following:

Table 7.1. Respondents in the pre and post-election Survey

	BE	DE	IE	PT	SP	GR
Wave 1 n	3090	2568	1515	2055	2026	1507
Wave 2 n	1006	1008	1006	1016	1002	1008
Of which:						
Recontacts from w1	605	618	459	572	564	433
Fresh sample	401	390	547	444	438	575

For wave 2, the field work took place in the following period:

Belgium - 31/5/2019 - 29/7/2019

Germany - 30/5/2019 - 26/7/2019

Ireland - 30/5/2019 - 8/8/2019

Portugal - 30/5/2019 - 7/8/2019

Spain - 30/5/2019 - 5/8/2019

Greece - 6/6/2019 - 9/8/2019.

The sample followed and fulfilled a socio demographic matrix which crossed three quotas: gender (male, female); age (18-34; 35-54; 55+); education (less than secondary; secondary; more than secondary). In the next section, we present the survey design in each country.

Quotas were set and nested following the socio-demographic distributions. As confirmed before launching we loosened the education quotas while in the field. This was done as the low education quotas were particularly tough. The report elaborated here relates to the post-electoral wave of the two wave online panel. In wave one the response rate was the following:

Belgium - 52%

Germany - 44%

Ireland - 60%

Portugal - 47%

Spain - 47%

Greece - 45%

In wave 2, we established a target for recontacts. Once this target was met, fresh sample was added to complete the target of 1000 respondents, while matching the original 2011 census matrix. The wave 2 sample is both part of a panel, and a stand-alone representative online survey.

The final sample was weighted using a rim weight.

8. Quotas and the Online Survey Design

Table 8.1. Belgium Quotas and Online Survey Design

			Census	%	Wave 2	%
Male	18-34	Up to secondary	273770	3.5	36	3.6
		Secondary	453305	5.7	53	5.3
		More than Secondary	343923	4.3	42	4.2
	35-54	Up to secondary	454738	5.7	55	5.5
		Secondary	501787	6.3	65	6.5
		More than Secondary	471482	6.0	60	6.0
	55+	Up to secondary	751067	9.5	98	9.7
		Secondary	291278	3.7	38	3.8
		More than Secondary	296905	3.8	39	3.9
Total Male			3838255	48.5	486	48.3
Female	18-34	Up to secondary	179544	2.3	22	2.2
		Secondary	400805	5.1	52	5.2
		More than Secondary	472631	6.0	60	6.0
	35-54	Up to secondary	392206	5.0	50	5.0
		Secondary	474720	6.0	60	6.0
		More than Secondary	555926	7.0	69	6.9
	55+	Up to secondary	1035347	13.1	134	13.3
		Secondary	301949	3.8	39	3.9
		More than Secondary	264702	3.3	34	3.4
Total FEMALE			4077830	51.5	520	51.7
Total population			7916085			
Sample					1006	
Recontacts wave 1					605	
Fresh sample wave 2					401	

Incumbent party/leader during fieldwork: MR/Charles Michel, CD&V/Wouter Beke, OPEN VLD/Gwendolyn Rutten
 (Caretaker minority government since December 2018, still in power after the elections of May 2019)
 Electoral System: Party-list proportional representation (Flexible lists, D'Hondts method)

Table 8.2. Germany Quotas and Online Survey Design

			Census	%	Wave 2	%
Male	18-34	Up to secondary	1951430	2.9	28	2.8
		Secondary	3955620	5.9	57	5.7
		More than Secondary	2137740	3.2	31	3.1
	35-55	Up to secondary	1438080	2.2	22	2.2
		Secondary	5893800	8.9	91	9.0
		More than Secondary	4813930	7.2	72	7.1
	55+	Up to secondary	1707630	2.6	26	2.6
		Secondary	6136850	9.2	95	9.4
		More than Secondary	4077830	6.1	63	6.3
Total Male			32112910	48.2	485	48.1
Female	18-34	Up to secondary	1802230	2.7	26	2.6
		Secondary	3418450	5.1	49	4.9
		More than Secondary	2703730	4.1	39	3.9
	35-55	Up to secondary	1843310	2.8	29	2.9
		Secondary	5662170	8.5	88	8.7
		More than Secondary	4477300	6.7	67	6.7
	55+	Up to secondary	5169210	7.8	80	7.9
		Secondary	6752680	10.1	104	10.3
		More than Secondary	2620900	3.9	41	4.1
Total FEMALE			34449980	51.8	523	51.9
Total population			66562890			
Sample					1008	
Recontacts wave 1					618	
Fresh sample wave 2					390	

Incumbent party/leader during fieldwork: CDU/Angela Merkel, CSU/Markus Söder, SPD/Andrea Nahles

However, the CDU changed leader just before fieldwork and we included both, the previous leader (Angela Merkel) and the new leader (Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer) in Q37
 Electoral System: Mixed-member proportional representation (Sainte-Laguë using regional fixed lists/First past the post)

Table 8.3. Ireland quotas and online survey design

			Census 2011	%	Wave 2	%
Male	18-34	Up to secondary	101055	3.1	29	2.9
		Secondary	214623	6.6	67	6.7
		More than Secondary	221888	6.9	68	6.8
	35-54	Up to secondary	191556	5.9	61	6.1
		Secondary	170189	5.3	54	5.4
		More than Secondary	244704	7.6	77	7.7
	55+	Up to secondary	255471	7.9	49	4.9
		Secondary	92040	2.8	39	3.9
		More than Secondary	93028	2.9	50	5.0
Total Male			1584554	49.1	494	49.1
Female	18-34	Up to secondary	67333	2.1	21	2.1
		Secondary	219045	6.8	68	6.8
		More than Secondary	270804	8.4	84	8.4
	35-54	Up to secondary	144524	4.5	46	4.6
		Secondary	211356	6.5	67	6.7
		More than Secondary	254730	7.9	86	8.6
	55+	Up to secondary	274550	8.5	39	3.9
		Secondary	121053	3.7	37	3.7
		More than Secondary	82159	2.5	64	6.4
Total Female			1645554	50.9	512	50.9
Total population			3230108			
Sample					1006	
Recontacts wave 1					459	
Fresh sample wave 2					547	

Incumbent party/leader during fieldwork: Fine Gael/Leo Varadkar
 Electoral System: Single transferable vote

Table 8.4. Greece quotas and online survey design

			Census	%	Wave 2	%
Male	18-34	Up to secondary	290338	3.3	29	2.9
		Secondary	583185	6.5	66	6.6
		More than Secondary	362127	4.1	41	4.1
	35-55	Up to secondary	499254	5.6	57	5.7
		Secondary	578791	6.5	67	6.7
		More than Secondary	468300	5.2	54	5.4
	55+	Up to secondary	981906	11.0	112	11.1
		Secondary	282714	3.2	31	3.1
		More than Secondary	288260	3.2	33	3.3
Total Male			4334875	48.6	490	48.6
Female	18-34	Up to secondary	192698	2.2	21	2.1
		Secondary	495561	5.6	56	5.6
		More than Secondary	481853	5.4	56	5.6
	35-55	Up to secondary	494270	5.5	56	5.6
		Secondary	562368	6.3	63	6.3
		More than Secondary	522427	5.9	57	5.7
	55+	Up to secondary	1370766	15.4	64	6.4
		Secondary	283144	3.2	64	6.4
		More than Secondary	188199	2.1	81	8.0
Total FEMALE			4591286	51.4	518	51.4%
Total population			8926161			
Sample					1008	
Recontacts wave 1					433	
Fresh sample wave 2					575	

Incumbent party/leader during fieldwork: Syriza/Alexis Tsipras

Electoral System: Semi-proportional representation with majority bonus system (supposed to be changed to a Party-list proportional representation system in 2019, but not yet in place)

Table 8.5. Portugal quotas and online survey design

			Census	%	Wave 2	%
Male	18-34	Up to secondary	566849	6.5	66	6.5
		Secondary	335146	3.9	38	3.7
		More than Secondary	212656	2.5	25	2.5
	35-54	Up to secondary	1025566	11.8	122	12.0
		Secondary	249954	2.9	30	3.0
		More than Secondary	218986	2.5	26	2.6
	55+	Up to secondary	1262863	14.6	132	13.0
		Secondary	92609	1.1	20	2.0
		More than Secondary	107493	1.2	21	2.1
Total Male			4072122	47.0	480	47.2
Female	18-34	Up to secondary	417425	4.8	48	4.7
		Secondary	370257	4.3	43	4.2
		More than Secondary	342016	4.0	39	3.8
	35-54	Up to secondary	977844	11.3	116	11.4
		Secondary	286138	3.3	34	3.4
		More than Secondary	331947	3.8	38	3.7
	55+	Up to secondary	1662035	19.2	110	10.8
		Secondary	76911	0.9	41	4.0
		More than Secondary	120545	1.4	67	6.6
Total FEMALE			4585118	53.0	536	52.8
Total population			8657240			
Sample					1016	
Recontacts wave 1					572	
Fresh sample wave 2					444	

Incumbent party/leader during fieldwork: PS/Antonio Costa

Electoral System: Party-list proportional representation (Closed lists, D'Hondts method)

Table 8.6. Spain quotas and online survey design

			Census	%	Wave 2	%
Male	18-34	Up to secondary	2254865	5.9	58	5.8
		Secondary	1532030	4.0	35	3.5
		More than Secondary	1514575	3.9	39	3.9
	35-54	Up to secondary	3480845	9.1	93	9.3
		Secondary	1680540	4.4	42	4.2
		More than Secondary	2333220	6.1	62	6.2
	55+	Up to secondary	4305605	11.2	114	11.4
		Secondary	687625	1.8	18	1.8
		More than Secondary	1007325	2.6	27	2.7
Total Male			18796630	48.9	488	48.7
Female	18-34	Up to secondary	1567065	4.1	42	4.2
		Secondary	1515310	3.9	39	3.9
		More than Secondary	2028885	5.3	52	5.2
	35-54	Up to secondary	3131405	8.1	84	8.4
		Secondary	1619515	4.2	39	3.9
		More than Secondary	2514960	6.5	66	6.6
	65+	Up to secondary	5997410	15.6	157	15.7
		Secondary	628210	1.6	17	1.7
		More than Secondary	681965	1.8	18	1.8
Total FEMALE			19684725	51.2	514	51.3
Total population			38458355			
Sample					1002	
Recontacts wave 1					564	
Fresh sample wave 2					438	

Incumbent party/leader during fieldwork: PSOE/Pedro Sanchez

Electoral System: Party-list proportional representation (Closed lists, D'Hondts method)

9. The Quality of the Online Panel Data

To assess the quality of the online data, a number of tests were performed. Namely, we compare MAPLE Wave 2, an online nonprobability survey, to the “gold standard”, face-to-face probability surveys. For this purpose, we chose the European Social Survey (ESS) Round 8 from 2016 because it is widely considered as the highest quality survey in Europe, as well as the Eurobarometer (EB) from 2019, because it has been fielded in exactly the same time period as MAPLE (Spring 2019), and it also covers Greece, which the ESS 2016 does not.

Results

When it comes to socioeconomic benchmarks, we can see that MAPLE data is not generally less representative than the face-to-face surveys: To the contrary, in all countries the MAPLE Wave 2 sample is closer to the benchmarks for gender, age and education than the ESS and especially the EB. While MAPLE data slightly misses the benchmarks for education in Portugal, Ireland and most strongly in Greece, the two face-to-face surveys are even less representative. Generally, the ESS and the EB have similar problems as MAPLE with oversampling high education and undersampling low education. They also tend to oversample old and undersample young people, a problem which MAPLE does not have - if anything, MAPLE oversamples young people. Here we see the differences between face-to-face surveys, reaching older people more easily, and online surveys, reaching younger people more easily.

The results concerning political attitudes are similar: While MAPLE data does sometimes diverge substantially from the estimates in the ESS and EB, they are often similar, too: Left-right placement, religiosity, satisfaction with democracy and the opinion on leaving the EU and on EU integration are very comparable in most countries. The opinions on EU membership and influence in the EU differ more substantially, but this is very likely due to different scales and wording in the surveys.

Overall, the results imply that there are no strong differences in the conclusions one would draw when using face-to-face as compared to online survey data, which speaks to the quality of MAPLE Wave 2. Especially given the fact that also the two face-face-surveys (ESS and EB) have some substantial shortcomings, and even differ from each other, the MAPLE online survey data fulfils the standards of representativeness in comparison to established sampling methods. In a first step, we compare the raw unweighted data of the three surveys to population benchmarks - gender, age, and education - to see how representative the samples are. Next, we compare weighted data and look at the distributions of several political attitude variables that are measured in all three surveys (or at least two of them), to see if they differ.

10. Comparing the survey samples with sociodemographic benchmarks- figures

Notes: % of difference between sample means and population benchmarks, with 95% confidence intervals. Benchmarks (Census 2011) are set to 0, positive differences mean oversampling, negative differences mean undersampling. Estimates are based on raw (unweighted) data.

Figure 10.1. Belgium- Comparing MAPLEW2 on Socio-Demographic Variables (% of difference between sample means and population benchmarks, with 95% confidence interval)

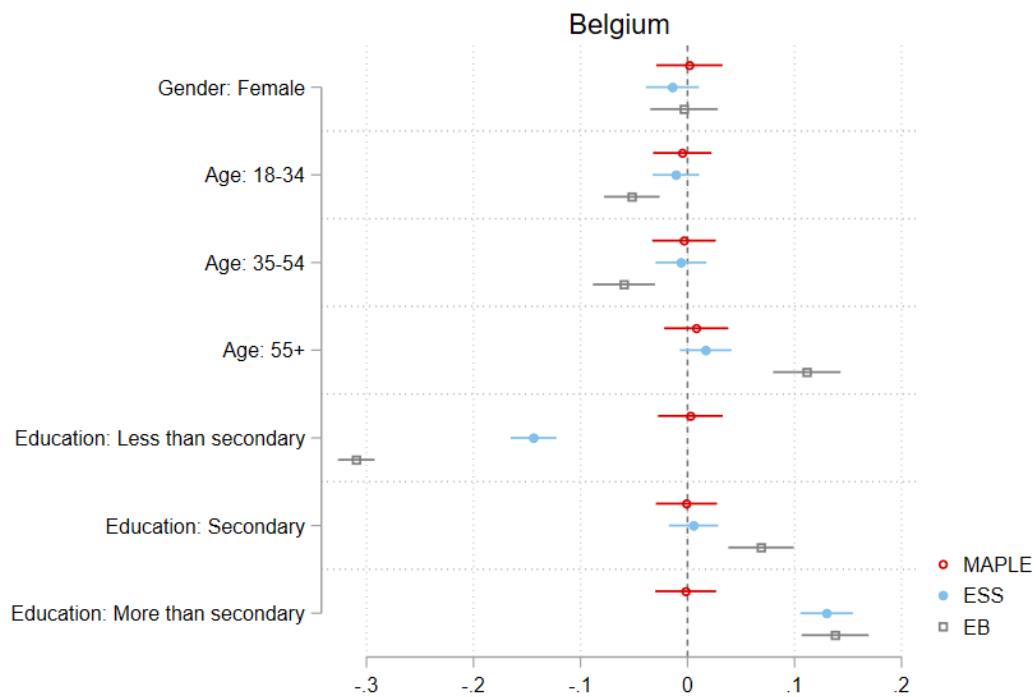


Figure 10.2. Germany- Comparing MAPLEW2 on Socio-Demographic Variables (% of difference between sample means and population benchmarks, with 95% confidence interval)

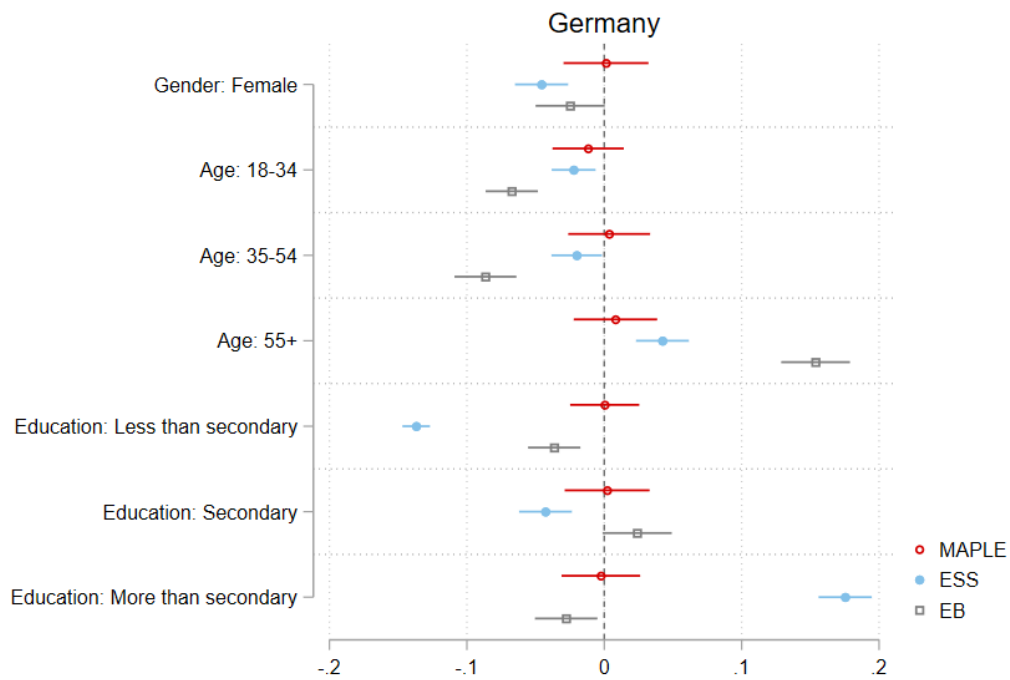


Figure 10.3. Greece- Comparing MAPLEW2 on Socio-Demographic Variables (% of difference between sample means and population benchmarks, with 95% confidence interval)

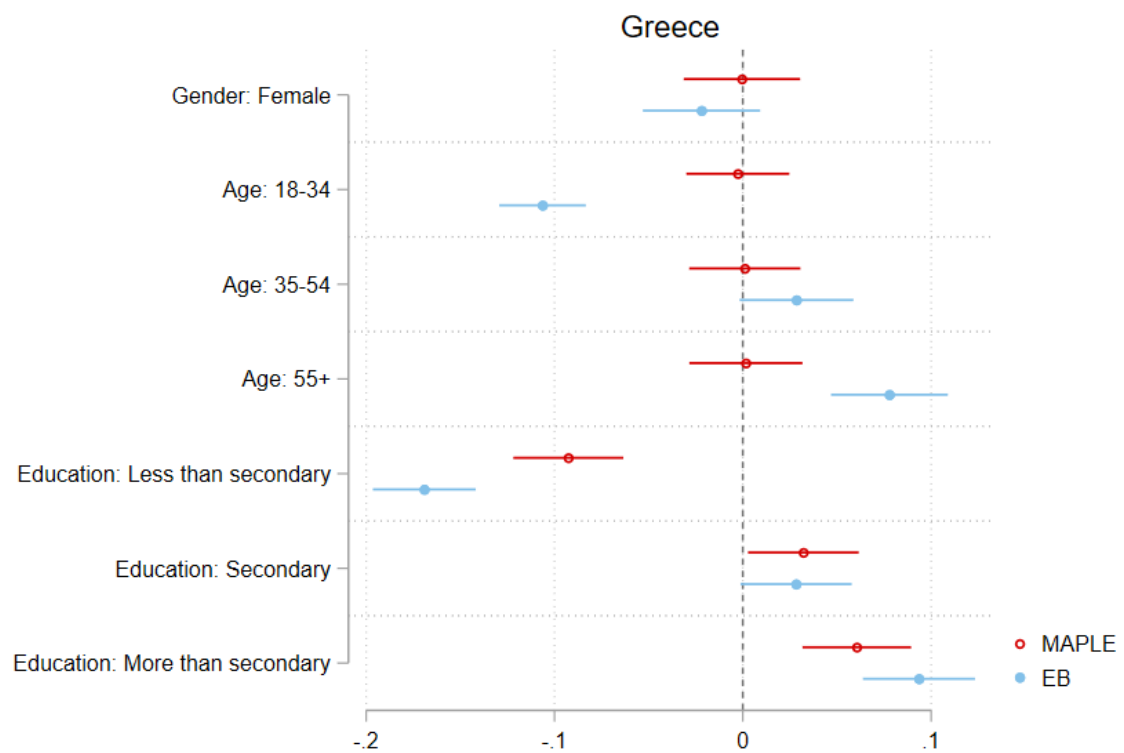


Figure 10.4. Ireland- Comparing MAPLEW2 on Socio-Demographic Variables (% of difference between sample means and population benchmarks, with 95% confidence interval)

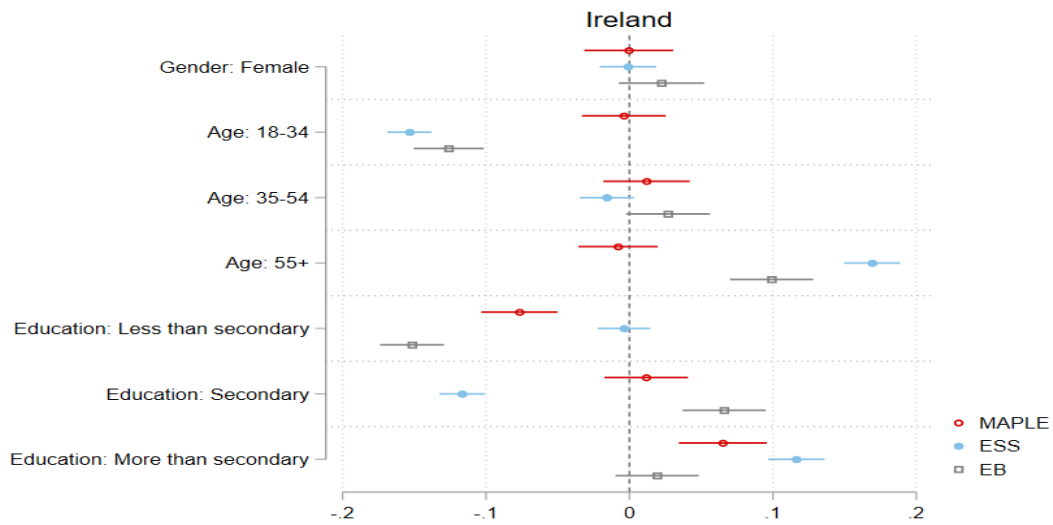


Figure 10.5. Portugal- Comparing MAPLEW2 on Socio-Demographic Variables (% of difference between sample means and population benchmarks, with 95% confidence interval)

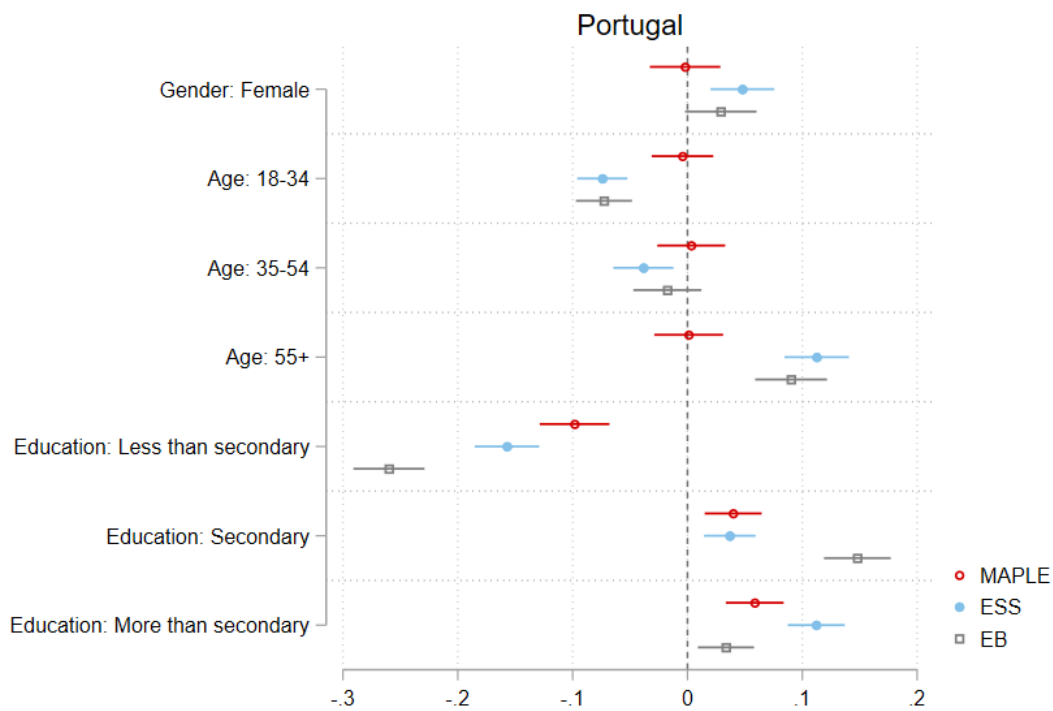
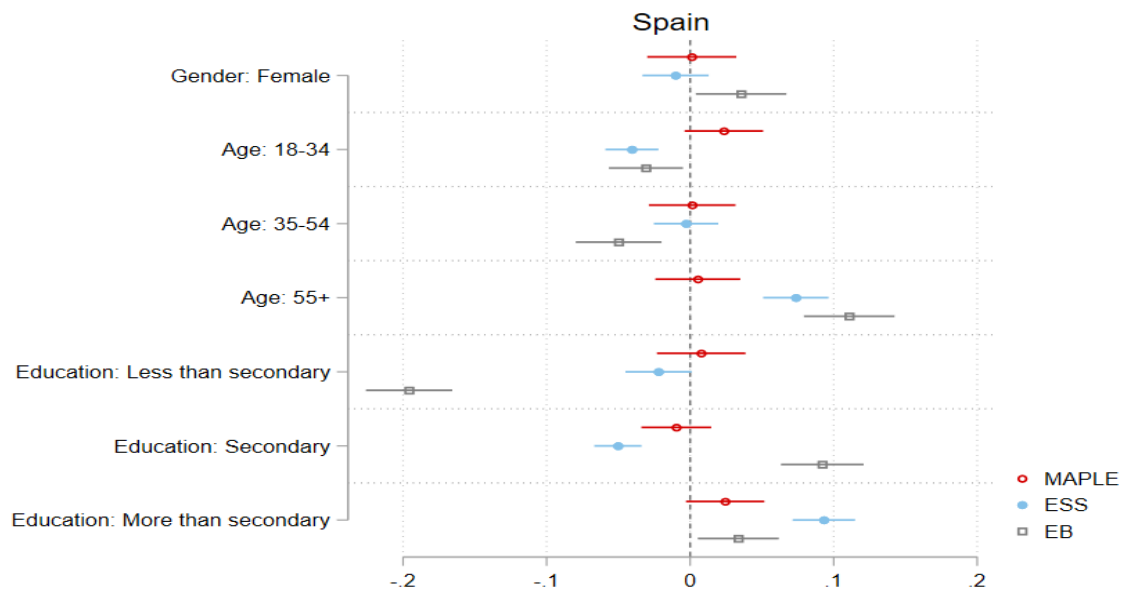


Figure 10.6. Spain- Comparing MAPLEW2 on Socio-Demographic Variables
 (% of difference between sample means and population benchmarks, with 95% confidence interval)



11. Comparing survey samples with sociodemographic benchmarks: tables

Notes: Means and 95% confidence intervals are reported, based on raw (unweighted) data. Estimates in bold have confidence intervals that do not include the benchmarks. Benchmarks are from the 2011 census. MSE=mean standard error. All numbers are percentages.

Table 11.1 - Belgium: comparing MAPLEW2, ESS and EB

Variable	Response	MAPLE W2	ESS	EB	Benchmark
Gender	Female	0.517 (0.486;0.547)	0.501 (0.476;0.526)	0.512 (0.480;0.543)	0.515
Age	18-34	0.263 (0.236;0.291)	0.258 (0.236;0.279)	0.216 (0.190;0.242)	0.268
	35-54	0.357 (0.328;0.387)	0.354 (0.330;0.378)	0.301 (0.272;0.330)	0.360
	55+	0.380 (0.350;0.410)	0.388 (0.364;0.413)	0.483 (0.452;0.514)	0.372
Education	up to secondary	0.393 (0.362;0.423)	0.246 (0.225;0.267)	0.080 (0.063;0.097)	0.390
	secondary	0.305 (0.277;0.334)	0.312 (0.289;0.335)	0.375 (0.344;0.405)	0.306
	more than secondary	0.302 (0.274;0.331)	0.434 (0.409;0.458)	0.442 (0.411;0.473)	0.304
Average difference		0.032	0.003	0.106	
MSE		0.000	0.005	0.020	

Table 11.2 - Germany, comparing MAPLEW2, ESS and EB

Variable	Response	MAPLE W2	ESS	EB	Benchmark
Gender	Female	0.519 (0.488;0.549)	0.472 (0.453;0.491)	0.493 (0.468;0.518)	0.518
Age	18-34	0.228 (0.202;0.254)	0.218 (0.202;0.234)	0.173 (0.154;0.192)	0.240
	35-54	0.366 (0.336;0.395)	0.342 (0.324;0.362)	0.276 (0.254;0.299)	0.362
	55+	0.406 (0.375;0.436)	0.440 (0.421;0.459)	0.551 (0.526;0.576)	0.398
Education	up to secondary	0.209 (0.184;0.234)	0.072 (0.062;0.082)	0.173 (0.154;0.192)	0.209
	secondary	0.480 (0.449;0.511)	0.435 (0.416;0.454)	0.502 (0.477;0.527)	0.478
	more than secondary	0.311 (0.281;0.339)	0.488 (0.469;0.508)	0.285 (0.263;0.308)	0.313
Average difference		0.004	0.069	0.060	
MSE		0.000	0.008	0.006	

Table 11.3 - Greece, comparing MAPLEW2 and EB

Variable	Response	MAPLE W2	EB	Benchmark
Gender	Female	0.514 (0.482;0.544)	0.492 (0.461;0.524)	0.514
Age	18-34	0.267 (0.239;0.294)	0.163 (0.14;0.186)	0.270
	35-54	0.351 (0.321;0.380)	0.379 (0.348;0.409)	0.350
	55+	0.382 (0.351;0.411)	0.458 (0.427;0.489)	0.380
Education	up to secondary	0.336 (0.307;0.365)	0.260 (0.232;0.287)	0.429
	secondary	0.344 (0.314;0.373)	0.340 (0.311;0.37)	0.312
	more than secondary	0.319 (0.290;0.348)	0.352 (0.323;0.382)	0.259
Average difference		0.027	0.075	
MSE		0.002	0.008	

Table 11.4 - Ireland, comparing MAPLEW2, ESS and EB

Variable	Response	MAPLE	ESS	EB	Benchmark
Gender	Female	0.509 (0.478;0.539)	0.508 (0.489;0.528)	0.532 (0.502;0.562)	0.509
Age	18-34	0.335 (0.305;0.364)	0.186 (0.17;0.201)	0.213 (0.189;0.237)	0.339
	35-54	0.389 (0.358;0.418)	0.361 (0.342;0.38)	0.404 (0.374;0.433)	0.377
	55+	0.276 (0.248;0.304)	0.454 (0.434;0.473)	0.383 (0.354;0.412)	0.284
Education	up to secondary	0.244 (0.216;0.27)	0.316 (0.298;0.335)	0.169 (0.146;0.191)	0.320
	secondary	0.330 (0.300;0.359)	0.202 (0.186;0.218)	0.384 (0.355;0.413)	0.318
	more than secondary	0.426 (0.395;0.457)	0.478 (0.458;0.497)	0.381 (0.352;0.41)	0.361
Average difference		0.025	0.082	0.073	
MSE		0.001	0.011	0.008	

Table 11.5 - Portugal, comparing MAPLEW2, ESS and EB

Variable	Response	MAPLE	ESS	EB	Benchmark
Gender	Female	0.528 (0.496;0.558)	0.577 (0.55;0.605)	0.559 (0.527;0.59)	0.530
Age	18-34	0.255 (0.228;0.281)	0.185 (0.163;0.207)	0.187 (0.162;0.211)	0.259
	35-54	0.360 (0.330;0.389)	0.319 (0.292;0.345)	0.339 (0.31;0.369)	0.357
	55+	0.385 (0.354;0.414)	0.496 (0.468;0.524)	0.474 (0.443;0.505)	0.384
Education	up to secondary	0.585 (0.554;0.614)	0.526 (0.498;0.554)	0.423 (0.392;0.454)	0.683
	secondary	0.203 (0.177;0.227)	0.200 (0.177;0.222)	0.311 (0.282;0.34)	0.163
	more than secondary	0.213 (0.187;0.237)	0.266 (0.241;0.291)	0.188 (0.163;0.212)	0.154
Average difference		0.030	0.083	0.093	
MSE		0.002	0.009	0.015	

Table 11.6 - Spain, comparing MAPLEW2, ESS and EB

Variable	Response	MAPLE	ESS	EB	Benchmark
Gender	Female	0.513 (0.481;0.543)	0.502 (0.479;0.525)	0.547 (0.516;0.579)	0.512
Age	18-34	0.264 (0.237;0.291)	0.200 (0.182;0.219)	0.210 (0.184;0.236)	0.241
	35-54	0.385 (0.355;0.415)	0.381 (0.359;0.403)	0.334 (0.304;0.364)	0.384
	55+	0.350 (0.320;0.379)	0.419 (0.396;0.441)	0.456 (0.424;0.487)	0.345
Education	up to secondary	0.547 (0.516;0.577)	0.517 (0.494;0.54)	0.343 (0.313;0.373)	0.539
	secondary	0.190 (0.165;0.213)	0.149 (0.133;0.165)	0.291 (0.263;0.32)	0.199
	more than secondary	0.263 (0.236;0.290)	0.332 (0.31;0.354)	0.273 (0.244;0.301)	0.239
Average difference		0.010	0.042	0.078	
MSE		0.0002	0.003	0.009	

12. Comparing attitudes across survey samples: figures

Notes: Normalized sample means and 95% confidence intervals are reported, data is weighted with socio-demographic weights.

Figure 12.1. Belgium- Comparing MAPLEW2 on Political Attitudes Variables (Normalized sample means and 95% confidence intervals, data is weighted with socio-demographic weights)

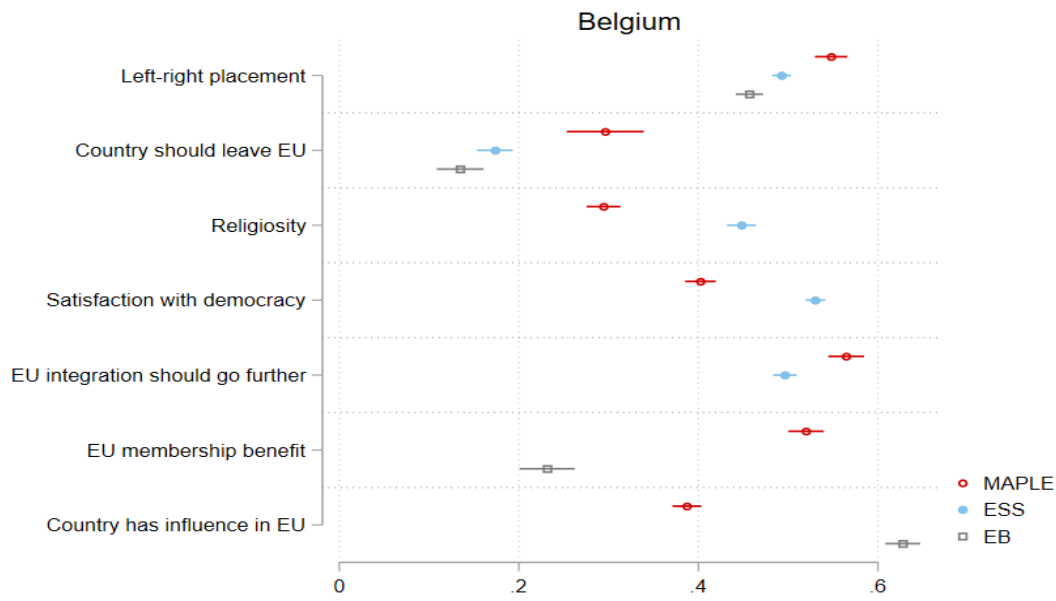


Figure 12.2. Germany- Comparing MAPLEW2 on Political Attitudes Variables (Normalized sample means and 95% confidence intervals, data is weighted with socio-demographic weights)

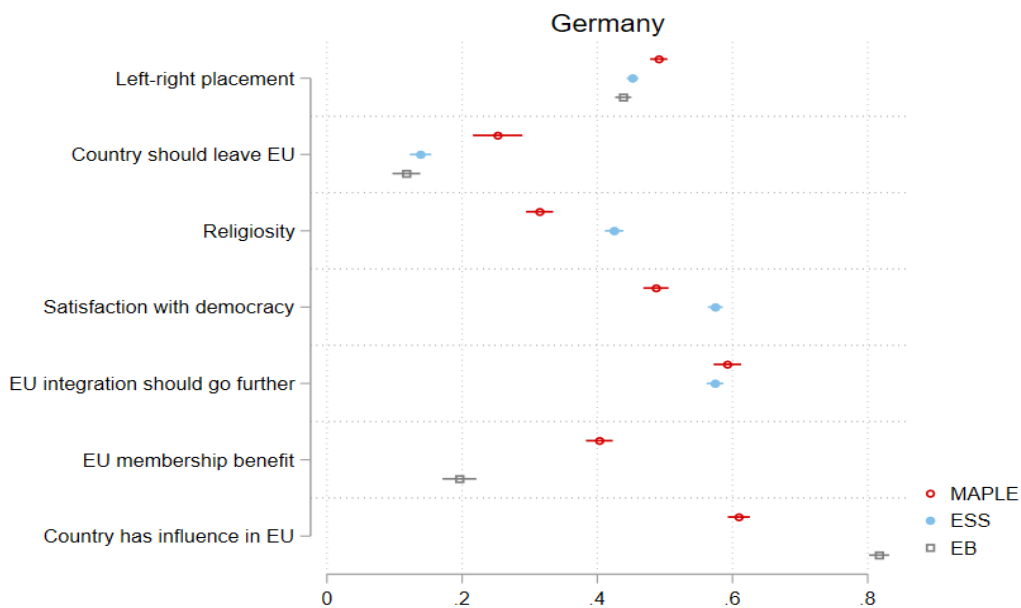


Figure 12.3. Greece- Comparing MAPLEW2 on Political Attitudes Variables (Normalized sample means and 95% confidence intervals, data is weighted with socio-demographic weights)

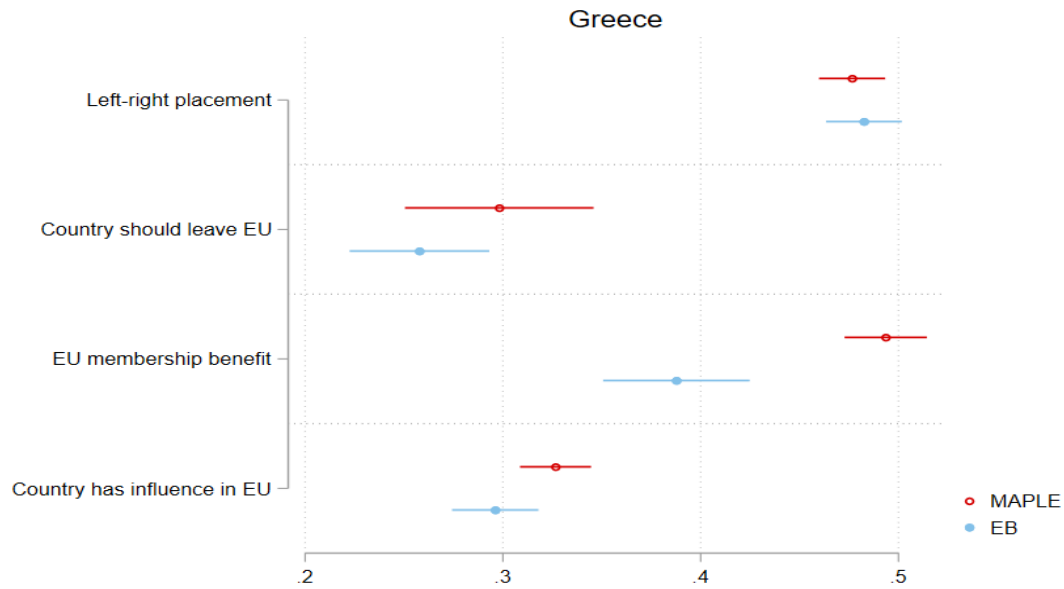


Figure 12.4. Ireland- Comparing MAPLEW2 on Political Attitudes Variables (Normalized sample means and 95% confidence intervals, data is weighted with socio-demographic weights)

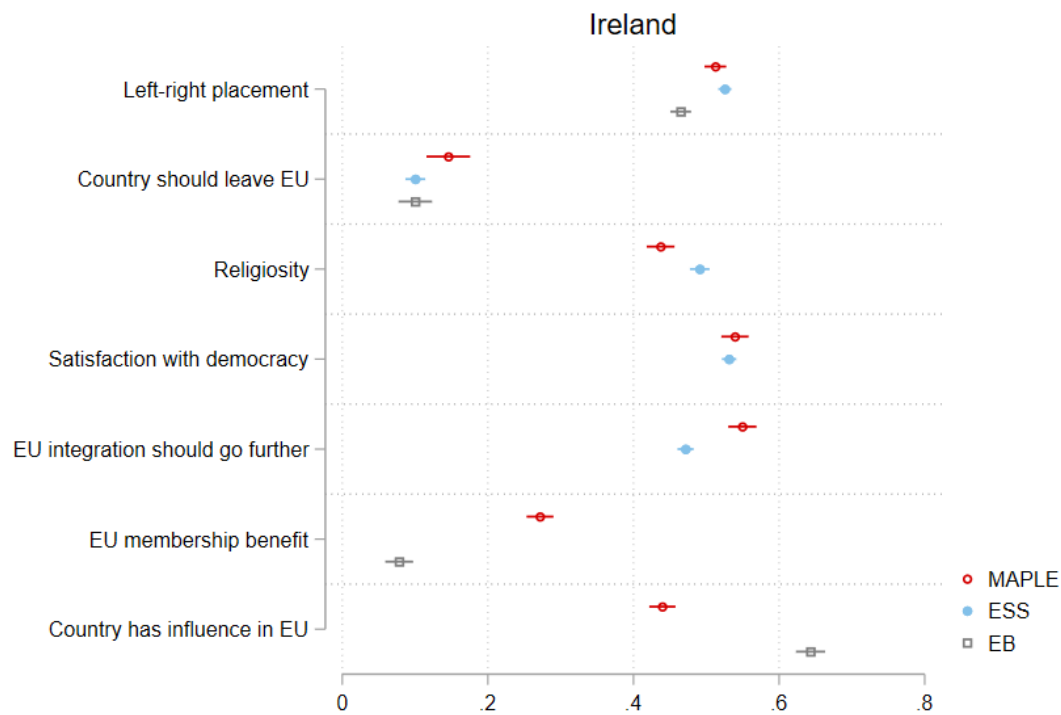


Figure 12.5. Portugal- Comparing MAPLEW2 on Political Attitudes Variables (Normalized sample means and 95% confidence intervals, data is weighted with socio-demographic weights)

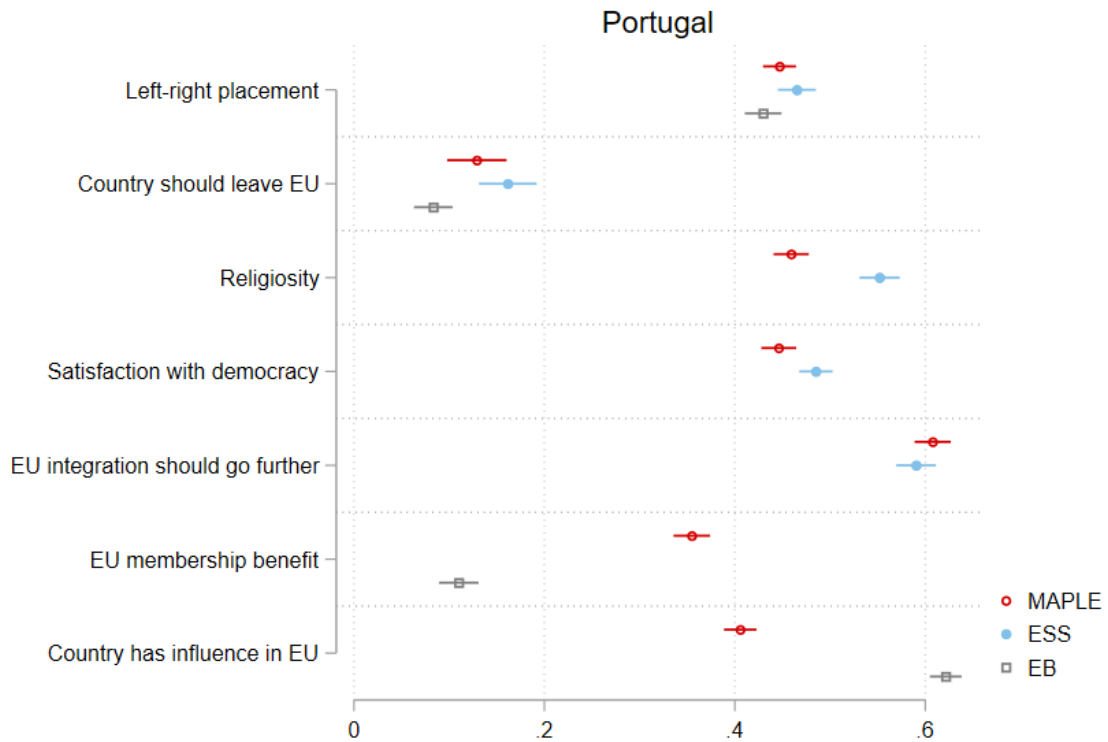
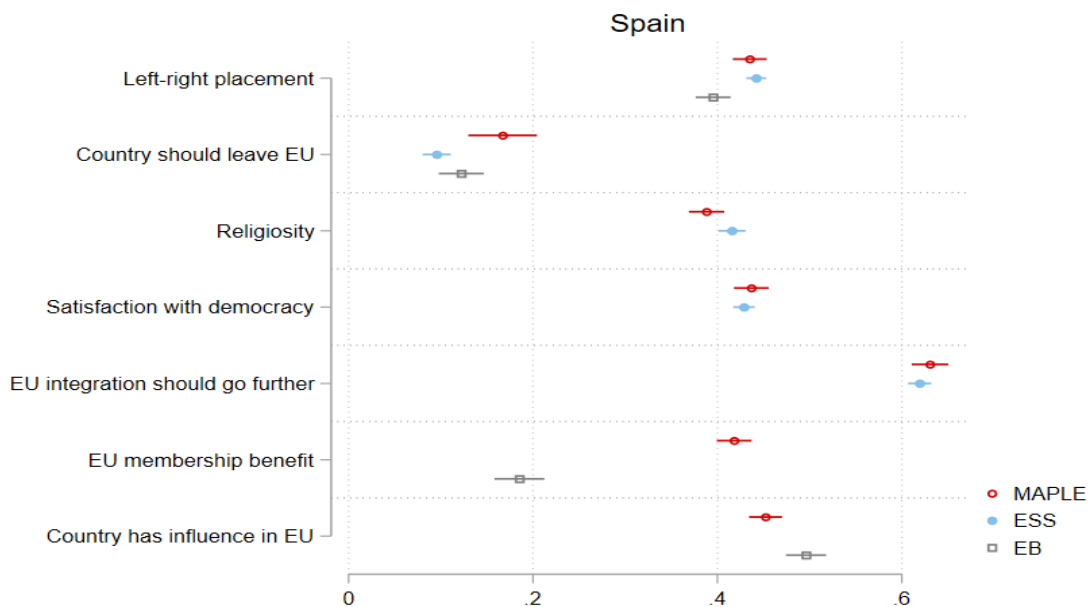


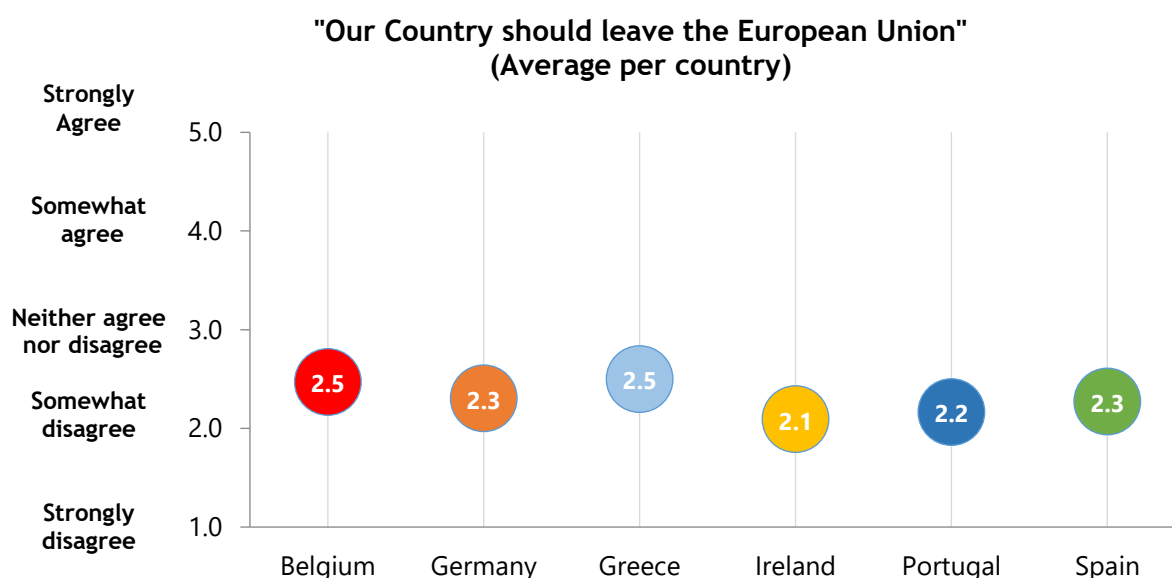
Figure 12.6. Spain- Comparing MAPLEW2 on Political Attitudes Variables (Normalized sample means and 95% confidence intervals, data is weighted with socio-demographic weights)



The last section of this report presents some results of the descriptive variables, as they relate to the key questions posed by MAPLE. The project focuses on the way in which the EU has been politicized in different countries and how these different frames are linked to different political attitudes and electoral behaviour. In order to study the way in which European may have become more relevant to domestic politics, it is crucial to start from the premise of the EU's multidimensionality. The EU can be conceptualized in terms of constitutive issues - on the scope of policy, membership, and institutional design that Europe has been taking over the years. The EU has the potential to become more politicized to the extent that it combines several of these dimensions.

Our analysis of attitudes towards the EU seeks to tap these different dimensions of attitudes towards the EU, by considering in this report attitudes towards membership, institutional design and scope of policy. In what follows we briefly present some indicators which refer to each of the dimensions identified above.

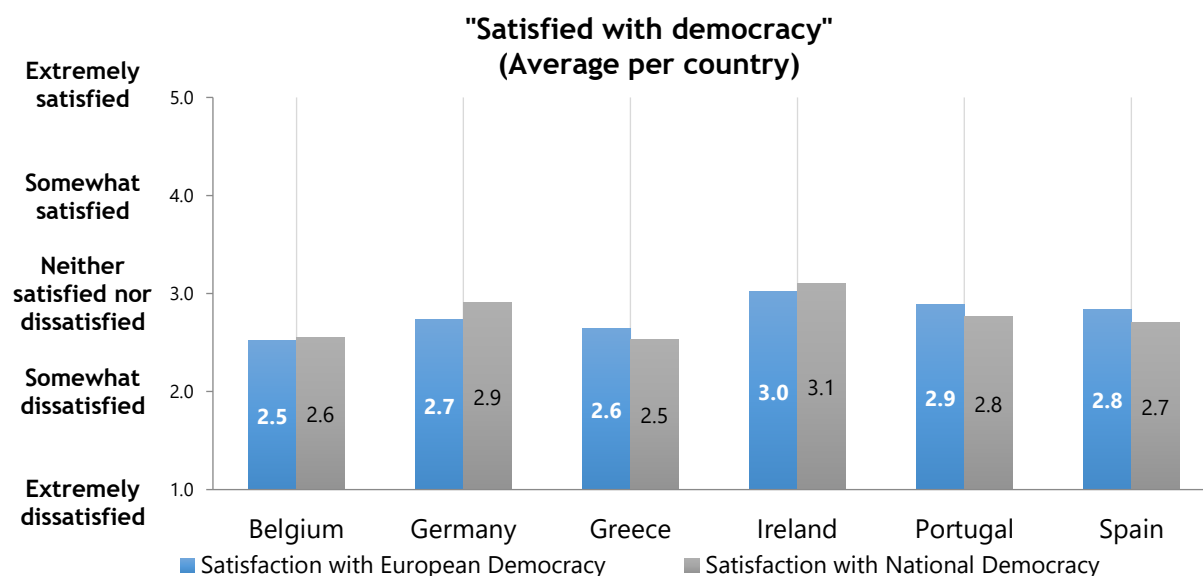
13. EU membership: Our Country Should leave the EU



Source: MAPLE ONLINE SURVEY May-August 2019

According to our survey, on average, citizens tend to disagree that their country should leave the EU. Irish, Portuguese, Germans and Spanish are those most in disagreement with exiting the EU. Indeed, 63% of Irish citizens are against leaving the EU, followed by 62% of Portuguese. The country with lowest level of disagreement is Belgium. Therefore, this indicator concerning “membership” issues indicates large support for membership in the countries’ surveyed.

14. EU Institutional Framework: Satisfaction with Democracy



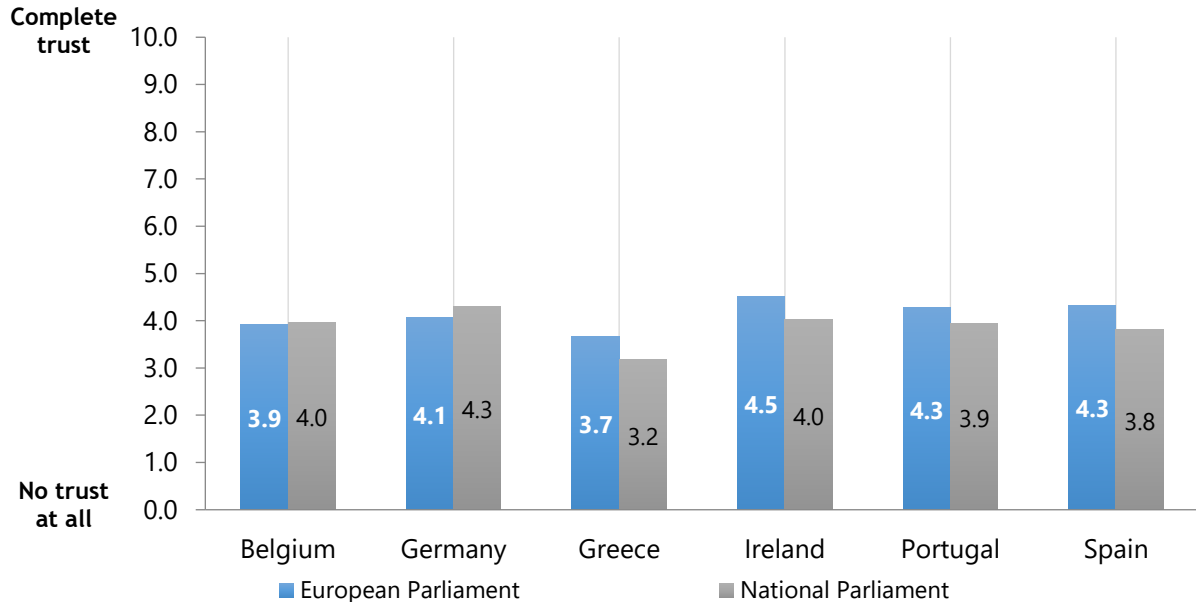
Source: MAPLE ONLINE SURVEY May-August 2019

Concerning satisfaction with democracy, we present in the graph above the average levels of satisfaction with European as well as national democracy. In all countries, the average satisfaction with the EU and national democracy relatively low. Indeed, the lowest level of satisfaction with democracy in the EU is Belgium, with only 20% say they are satisfied with democracy in the EU, whereas 40% of Irish respondents answered in the same way.

All other countries fall in between these two averages, which denotes relatively low levels of satisfaction in the countries surveyed. It is noteworthy that satisfaction with EU democracy is higher than national democracy, on average, in Greece, Portugal and Spain.

15. EU Framework: Trust in Parliament

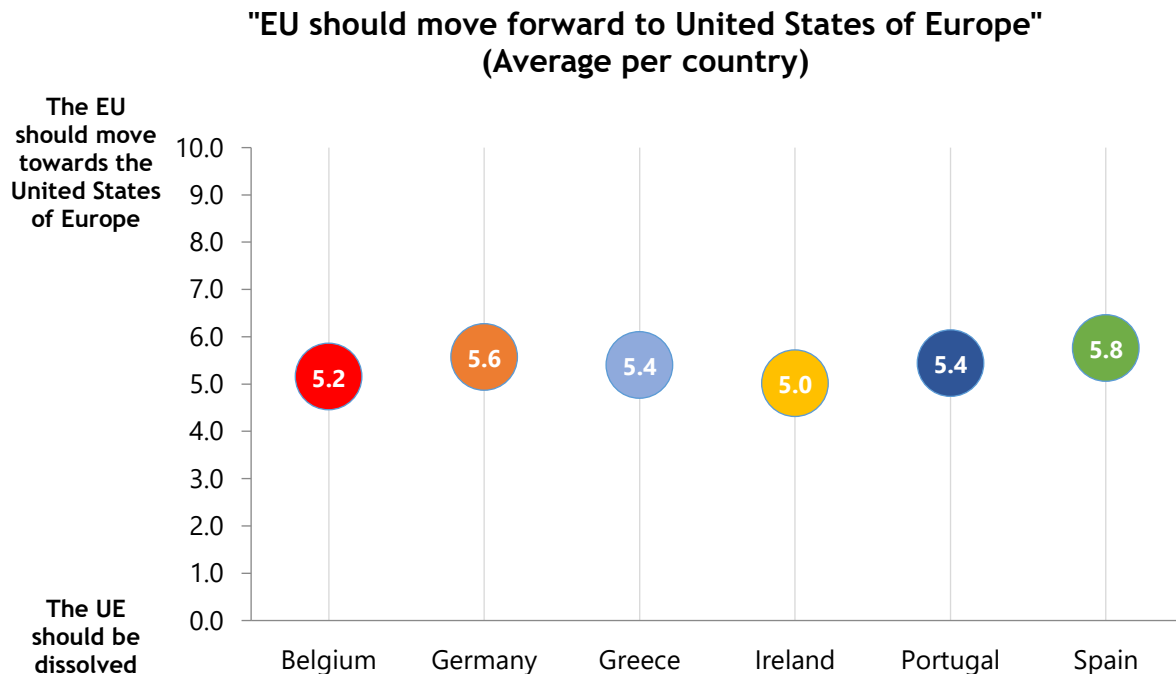
"Trust in Parliament"
(Average per country)



Source: MAPLE ONLINE SURVEY May-August 2019

Still on the issue of institutional framework, we consider trust in the European Parliament. Just after the 2019 European Parliament elections, we find that on average, trust in the EP is higher, on average, than in the respective national parliaments in Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain. Yet, like with satisfaction with democracy, levels of trust tend to be low both at the EP and national level. The highest level of trust occurs in Ireland (40% placing themselves between 6 and 10 on the scale above), with Greeks the least trustful (only 28% similarly placed on the scale above).

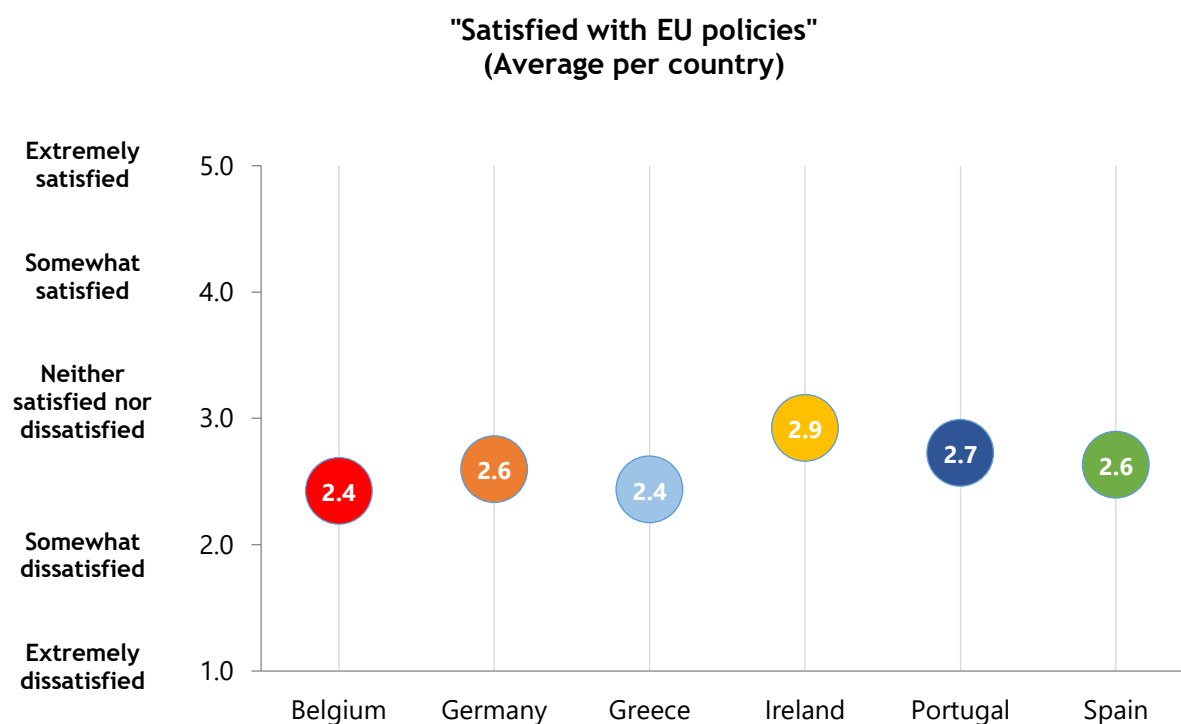
16. EU Institutional Framework: EU Should move forward to the United States of Europe



Source: MAPLE ONLINE SURVEY May-August 2019

When confronted with two alternative scenarios, one positing a future united states of Europe, another the dissolution of the EU, all countries' respondents tend on average to place themselves on the "more integration" side of the spectrum. Spain and Germany are the countries where on average, most respondents agree with moving forward to a scenario of an "United States of Europe", 57% and 54% respectively.

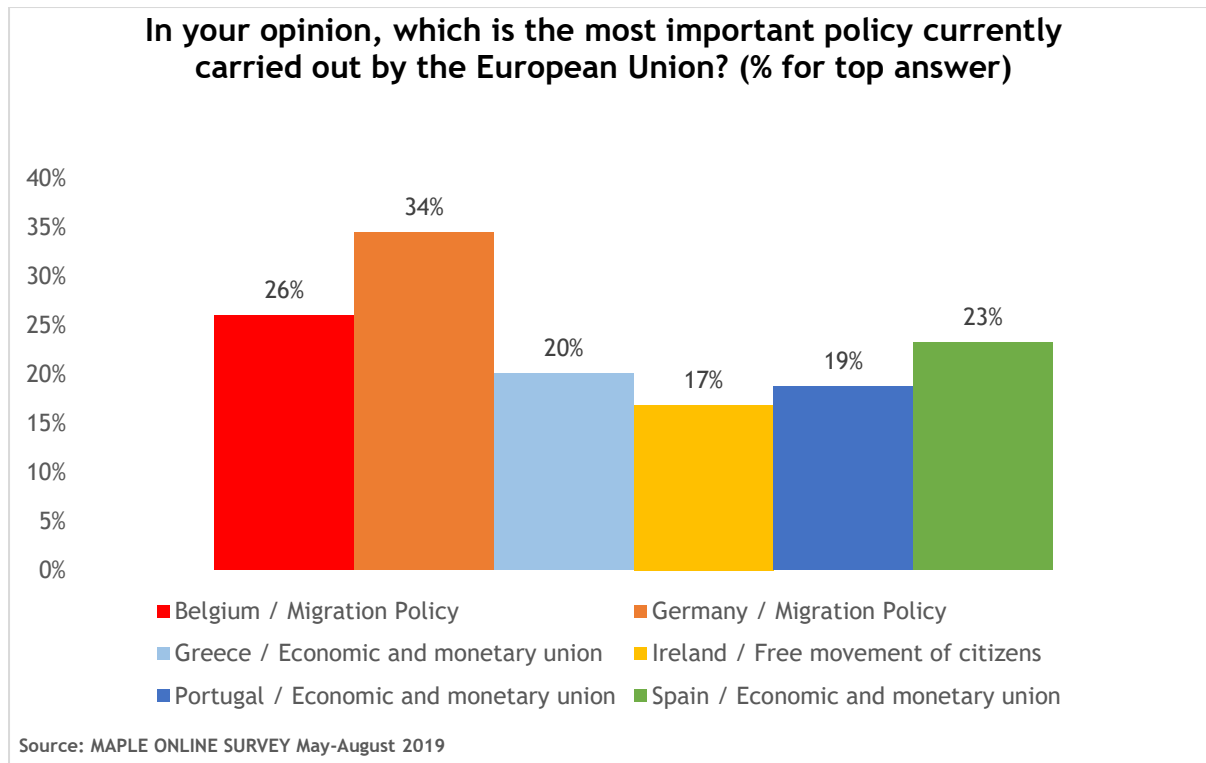
17. EU Policies: Satisfied with EU Policies



Source: MAPLE ONLINE SURVEY May-August 2019

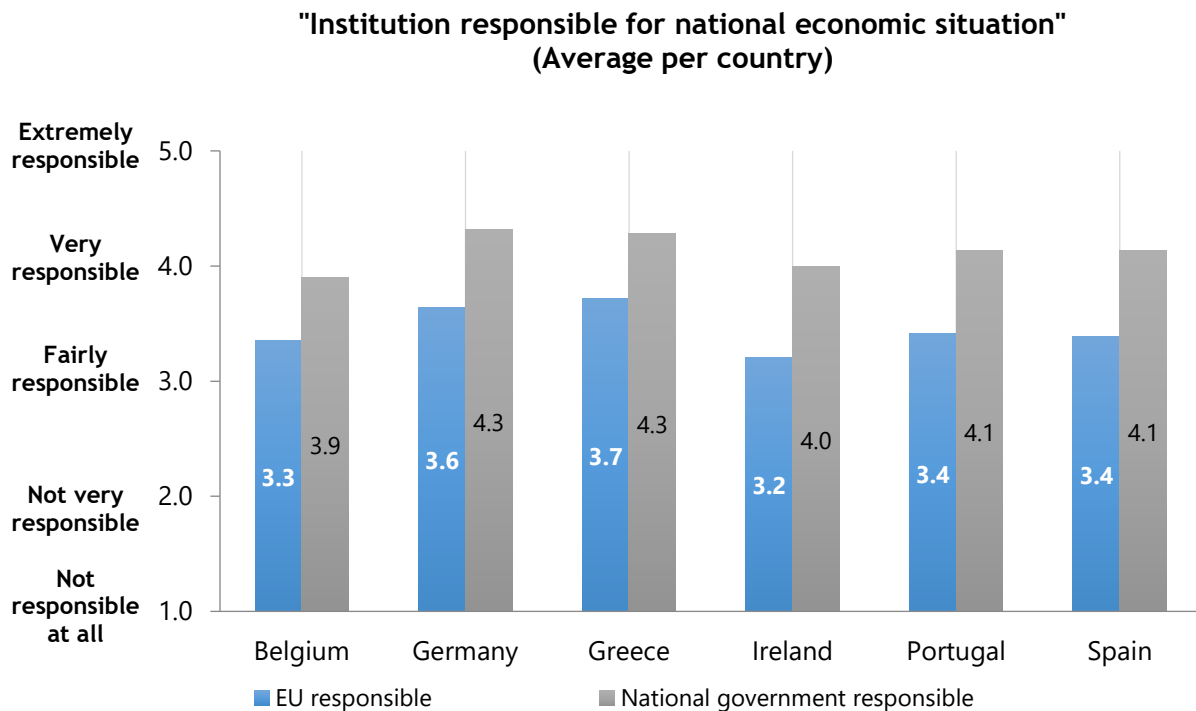
We turn now to the analysis of attitudes towards EU policies. We find that on average, citizens' level of satisfaction with policies is relatively low. A substantial number of citizens place themselves in the middle category. Those who actually state that they are satisfied (either somewhat or extremely satisfied) range from only 11% in Greece to 33% in Ireland.

18. EU Policies: Most Important Policy Carried out by the EU?



The graph above makes clear that the citizens differ in which is the most important policy carried out by the EU. In Belgium and Germany, the most important policy is migration. In Greece, Portugal and Spain, it is economic and monetary union, whereas in Ireland it is the free movement of citizens. In the case of Germany and Belgium, despite the higher prominence of Migration issues, economic and monetary union was, nonetheless, perceived as the second most salient issue.

19. EU Policies: Institution Responsible for national economic situation

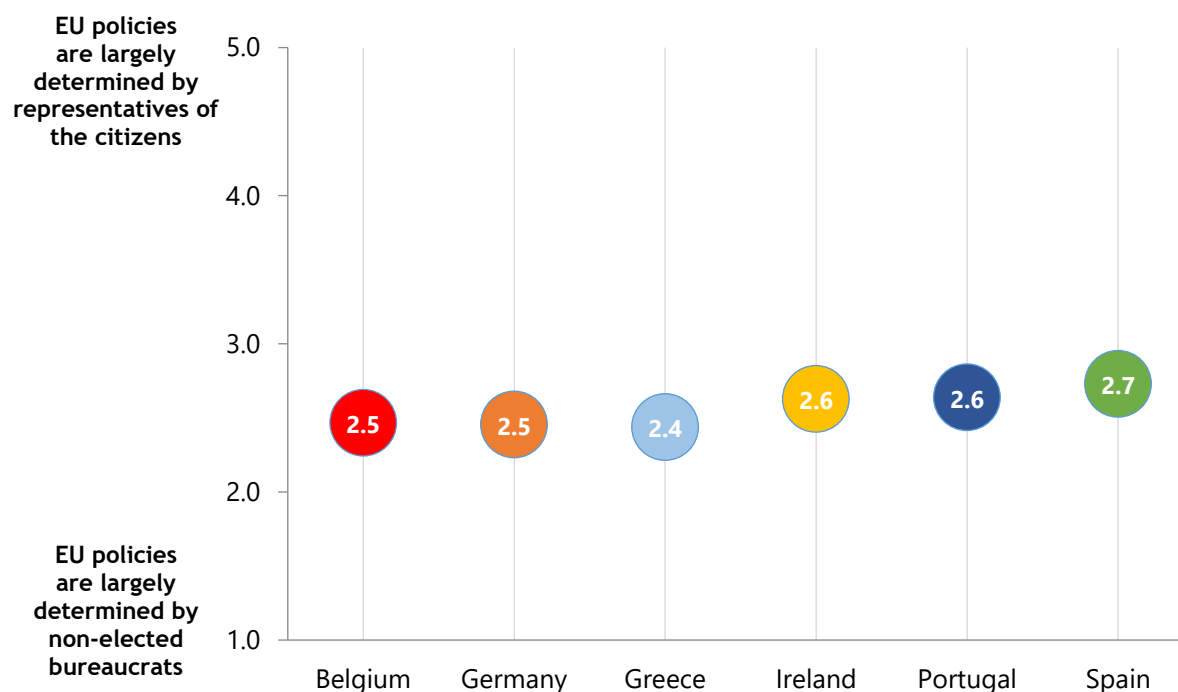


Source: MAPLE ONLINE SURVEY May-August 2019

Given the increasing supranationalisation of economic and monetary policy since the launch of the euro, the survey enquired about perceptions of responsibility of different institutions for the national economic situations. We can see that in all cases, the national government is considered more responsible than the European Union. Germany and Greece stand out as the two countries where citizens consider the EU, on average, is more responsible. Indeed, in both countries 60% of citizens consider the EU responsible, to some degree, for domestic economic policy.

20. EU Policies: EU Policies are determined by its citizens

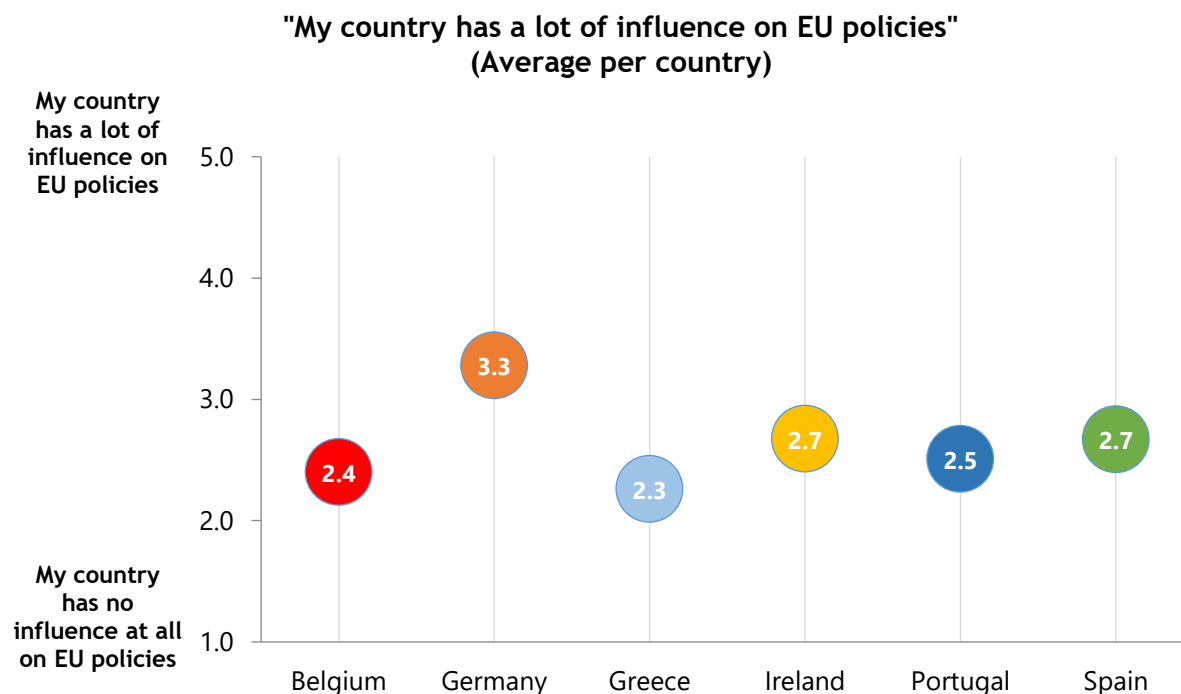
"EU policies are determined by representatives of the citizens"
(Average per country)



Source: MAPLE ONLINE SURVEY May-August 2019

When asked to place themselves on a scale of “1” to “5”, where one means that EU policies are largely determined by non-elected bureaucrats, and “5” that they are decided by representatives of the citizens, on average, citizens place themselves closer to the “non-elected” bureaucrats pole. The percentage of respondents that place themselves on the “non-elected bureaucrats” side ranges from 32%, in the case of Spain, to 44% in Greece. Greece is the country in our sample where the largest minority tend to agree that policies are largely determined by non-elected bureaucrats.

21. EU Policies: My country has a lot of influence on EU policies?



Source: MAPLE ONLINE SURVEY May-August 2019

Lastly, and still on the topic of EU policies, citizens were asked to state the degree of influence their country had on EU policies. They had to place themselves on a scale of “1” to “5”, where “1” meant that “my country has no influence at all on EU policies”, and “5” meant that “my country has a lot of influence on EU policies”. We can see interesting differences between countries. Namely, Germans on average are more likely to believe their country has influence in EU policies, whereas Greeks on average tend to believe the opposite. All other countries are on average closer to Greece than Germany in this respect. Indeed, 57% of Greeks placed themselves either on values “1” or “2” of the scale above, whereas in Germany, only 14% of respondents chose those same values on the scale.

Appendix 1- Media Sections which were excluded from the analysis

Belgium:

De Standaard – Cultuur, Sport, Life&Style, Beroemd&Bizar, meer (except for "Columns")

Le Soir – Sports, Culture

Germany:

SZ – Sport, München, Bayern, Kultur, Digital, Karriere, Reise, Auto, Stil, mehr

FAZ – SPORT, STIL, RHEIN-MAIN, WISSEN, REISE, KARRIERE

Greece:

Ta Nea – sports, lifearts, health, woman, kid, autonea, skitsa, infographics, media

Kathimerini – aytokinhsh, k-blogs, gastrónomos, ta3idia, multimédia, vídeo, photo, periodiko-k, politismos, culture, disney-magazines, me-tin-k, womans-must, a8lhtismos

Ireland:

The Irish Independent – SPORT, LIFE, STYLE, ENTERTAINMENT, TRAVEL, VIDEO, PODCASTS

The Irish Times – SPORT, BUSINESS, LIFE & STYLE, CULTURE, MORE

Portugal:

Publico – LOCAL, CULTURA, DESPORTO, CIÊNCIA, TECNOLOGIA

DN – Cidades, Cultura, Desportos, Ócio, Life, Edição do dia

Spain:

El Pais – CIENCIA, TECNOLOGÍA, CULTURA, GENTE, DEPORTES, TELEVISIÓN, VÍDEO

El Mundo – Deportes, Cultura, Tv, Papel, Más

Appendix 2- List of Words used to Code for EU Salience

Words
Eurozone
European Union
European Parliament
European Council
European Commission
Council of the European Union
European Central Bank
European Investment Bank
European Stability Mechanism
European Financial Stability Facility
European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism
European Constitution
Court of Justice of the European Union
European Court of Justice
European Court of Auditors
The European External Action Service
European Economic and Social Committee
The European Investment Fund
European Ombudsman
European Data Protection Supervisor
Economic and Monetary Union of the European Union
European common
(European)(Policy Policies)
(European) (Policy Policies)
European Elections
EP elections
EU elections
European Integration
Troika
FRONTEX
Constitutional Treaty
Treaty of Lisbon
Lisbon Treaty
Eurogroup
Common Market
European Economic Community
Single Market
Customs Union
Brexit

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