

Support for European Membership in the New Candidate Countries

Solidea Formichelli
Università di Siena
formichellis@gmail.com

Is European Membership supported in candidate countries? Up until now a lot has been written on support for European integration and explanations for it within European Union Member States. Considering three candidate countries – Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey – and focusing on the economic calculus of costs and benefits and national-European identity theories, this paper analyses public opinion support for European Membership. The main results, obtained using the Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 dataset, and applying a logistic regression model, shown that the economic model better explains the support for European integration than does the identity model. National identity does not affect the support at all; it is not significant in any of the models elaborated.

Introduction

The interest in investigating public opinion feelings regards European Community^{*}, is evident since early 1970s. Notwithstanding, pioneer explanations for this support have been elaborated only starting from 1990s, when researchers become confident with the idea that, previously, the role of public opinion was underestimated in spite of the development of European Union as political actor (Dalton and Eichenberg 1998). Generally, these researches focus on the member states of the Community, while the principal aim of this paper is to analyze the support in three candidate countries before an eventual accession: Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey.

The support for European Integration, since 1990s, is one of the most important fields of research in European Union studies focusing on the trend of support and on reasons behind some changes. In this work I focus on the support for integration in the pre-accession phase starting from the rejection of the idea that citizens merely provide a “Permissive consensus” that enabled elites to pursue the European ideal unconstrained by pressure from the public. In this way, to study public support among Candidate Countries can be useful not only “to show us to what extent the public is aware of European Politics and to what extent it accepts the European Community’s power” (Janssen 1991: 443), but also to look at the future of the Community and its expansion (Anderson 1998).

The years of reference are the so-called “years of Europeanization” a period similar to the 1950s and 1960s for Western countries (*cfr.* Ammendola and Isernia 2005), and the idea is to see if, in these countries, the reasons to support E.U. are the same moving the member states

* Questions regards the European Community were asked only in the early period of European integration, starting from the 60s, European Community is substituted by European Union.

or not.

Using a Eurobarometer survey on candidate countries in 2003^{*}, the principal aim is to give an answer to the following questions: *Is the European Membership perceived as a good think in these countries? And if yes, can we apply the same models elaborated in overall Europe to explain this support?*

In order to do so, the paper is divided into two main parts: the first one, theoretical, in which I will determine the hypotheses, and the second one, empirical, in which I elaborate and explain the model of analysis in those countries. What emerges from the analysis is that the economic expectations and the identification with Europe affect the support with a similar extent, while, the national identity does not affect the support for Europe in the hypothesized negative way.

1. Framework of analysis

Several explanations on the support for the European Integration, among member states, have been elaborated, but economic explanations have been the most developed.

The utilitarian explanations build on trade theory, conceptualize a calculus of economic costs and benefits, assuming that “individual support for European Integration is determined by expectations of economic gain associated with membership” (Ehin 2001: 34).

Another explanation, the so-called “affective one” (*cf.* Domm 2004), draws on cultural influences, individual values and belief system. This explanation, based on psychology of group membership, focuses on “how social identities including, above all, national identity, constrain support for European Integration” (Hooghe and Marks 2005: 2).

Focusing on these two theories, I analyze the impact of these two sets of explanations on public support for European Integration in candidate countries and which of the two theories can explain better it.

1.1 Utilitarian Explanation of support

The economic or utilitarian model appears in early 1990s, when Eichenberg and Dalton (1993), following the traditional economic voting hypothesis[†], argued that Europeans assess their EC membership based on evaluations of their personal and national economic situations. Afterward, the model was developed (*cf.* Gabel and Palmer 1995; Gabel and Whitten 1997; Gabel 1998a,b,c), focusing “on two sources of support for Integration: economic conditions and economic benefits associated with membership in European Union” (Anderson 1998: 572). The main assumption of the model is that support is the consequence of an evaluation of costs and benefits associated with integration and explained in terms of advantages and sacrifices implied by it.

In this sense, it is argued that the European mass public associates national economic performance with the integration process. So, as well as in a business cycle, national levels of support are higher when domestic economic conditions are favorable (Eichenberg and Dalton

^{*} In the following pages quoted as CCEB 2003.4.

[†] The economic voting theory was elaborated in the field of electoral behaviour but adopted also elsewhere. The main idea is that vote (and in this case support for investigation) is a function of economic variable (inflation, unemployment, GDP growth) (Sánchez-Cuenca 2000).

1993) and individuals who assess economic performance favorably are more inclined to be supportive of integration (Gabel and Whitten 1997).

Another important aspect of the economic model is the distinction between subjective and objective evaluation of economic condition meaning the different impact of national economic condition and the personal one, in fact, as demonstrated by Gabel and Whitten “regardless of how beneficial European Union policy is for its citizens, support will vary with perceptions of the economy” (1997: 92). Hence, notwithstanding the different point of view of these analysis focused on the economic impact on Support for European Union, surely, it is possible to admit that the economic model affects support for integration in a strong way.

The idea to test the economic model in Candidate countries, which economic condition clearly cannot be affected by European Union, is based on Ehin’s suggestion that “individual support for European integration is determined by expectations on economic gain associated with membership” (2001: 34), for this reason, in this work will be considered expectations regards national and personal economic conditions. This is because, on one hand, in the general framework of economic voting there are assumed some differences between sociotropic and egocentric evaluations of economic conditions (*cfr.* Gabel and Whitten 1997). While, on the other hand, there is a controversy regards the operationalisation of this variable with one or both these aspects of the same phenomenon (Carey and Lobo 2000). Hence, assuming that the national economic perception has an impact higher than the personal economic one on support for E.U. membership (Gabel and Whitten (1997) the hypotheses tested in the next pages are the following:

H1: the better the expectation of the national economic condition the greater the support for integration will be;

H2: the better the expectation of the personal financial situation the greater the support for integration will be.

1.2 National identity

Another important body of research focuses on the impact of national identity. Generally, some accusations pointed at European Union are that citizens of European member states have rarely had any direct involvement in the major decisions made in their name, and mostly there is a lack of accountability of its institutions. Therefore, the existence of this democratic deficit is a serious problem for the legitimacy of European Union; hence, the presence (absence) of a European Identity can increase (decrease) support for European Integration (Deflem and Pampel 1996).

In fact, on one hand, the persistence of the nation-states coincides with a persistence of national identity, conceived as the subjective representation of allegiance toward one’s country (*Ibidem*). So, if national identity persists, citizens of industrialized countries of Europe today will favor or disfavor political regimes, national and supranational, on the basis of perceived worth they have for their own countries (Gabel and Palmer 1995). While, on the other hand, the emergence of a cosmopolitan or collective political identity within the European Community would reinforce this general trend toward post-national identity.

Therefore, who has a national identity is less supportive of European Integration than who has a post-national, European or cosmopolitan identity (Deflem and Pampel 1996).

Usually, surveys of European public opinion reveal very little evidence of any European identity showing how Europeans still appear to be attached to their national identity rather than to Europe. Also in my sample, in fact, the percentage of who feels attached to Europe is 67%, while the percentage of who feels him/herself attached to his/her own country is about 94%, as we will see.

Looking at the theories elaborated in this field, one of the earlier formulations of the national identity theory was McLaren's model (2002). Assuming that utilitarian and cost/benefits models miss a large part of the core nature of hostility toward the idea of European Integration, he argues that antipathy toward European Union reflects fear of or hostility toward other cultures, and it can be considered as a powerful explanation of support for European integration. In this sense, not only the economy matters, but, thinking about issue of European Integration, people are concerned also with problems related to the degradation of nation-states. The idea is that people see their nation-state as the appropriate reference point for identity, and the terminal community (Deutch 1966; Petus and Hunals 1999 in Carey 2002), and it is possible that they perceive European Union as undermining their nation-states integrity. In other words, although the utilitarian approach is relevant in predicting attitudes toward European Union, also a high threat perception produces equally strong, but negative effects on support for European Union.

Concluding, also in this field there is a general consensus regarding the fact that National identity affects the support for European Integration in a negative fashion while European Identity affects the support in a positive way. Therefore, it is important to test also these two hypotheses, as they have been accounted for in the literature:

H3: the greater the feeling of national identity, the lower the support for European integration will be;

H4: the greater the feeling of European identity, the greater the support for European Integration will be.

However, I expect to find a different pattern, because of the sample of countries selected. In other words, we cannot forget that the European history in the last years has been characterized by important changes; and the most important one is the last integration phase that changes European Union from a community of 15 member states to a community of 25 members with more differences.

Hence, remembering that the Eurobarometer selected is the last one just before this enlargement and that the countries selected are candidates, it is a little bit hard to assume that in these countries European Union is perceived as a threat for their nation as it was for Western States in the 1950s or 1960s. In other words, it is important to consider that in a period of continuous enlargements, particularly considering candidate countries, national identity may not exercise an impact as it was in the past in other countries.

1.3 More explanatory factors

Apart from the two most important theories, anyway, by the time scholars have proposed other alternative models considering mostly the political cues such as the domestic politics, the support for government and so on, as factors of influence on support. One of those “alternative studies” is Anderson’s research (1998) on domestic attitudes toward European Union and citizens’ lack of information. Starting from the assumption that European mass publics are not particularly well-informed about or aware of the integration process, but more informed and with more crystallized opinions about domestic politics, Anderson develops a model of public opinion that portrays citizens as using the context of domestic politics to form opinions about European Integration process.

The basic line of argument is that, since only “few citizens possess the kinds of cognitive structures required for the level of information that many economic models presume” (Anderson 1998: 574), usually, people fill their knowledge gaps by using proxies when responding to questions about the integration process. In other words, Anderson argues that generally not very well informed citizens view the integration process through the lens of how they feel about their own political system, political parties and, to a lesser extent, their government (system support hypothesis).

For this reason, in my model it will be considered not only the level of education but also some factors regarding the evaluation of the domestic politics, definable as political cues to evaluate and support the process of integration.

Finally, Sánchez-Cuenca (2000) has demonstrated that the system support hypothesis has not captured the right sign of the relationship because it did not control for supranational variables. According to the scholar, it is important to consider the benefits coming from Europe. In other words, since European Union produces some benefits that are not available at the domestic level, for instance peace, economic well-being, political stability and so on, “the greater the benefits associated with European Union, the greater the support for the integration process” (Sánchez-Cuenca 2000: 151). In this sense:

...all other things being equal, the better the opinion citizens’ have of the European institutions, the stronger their support for integration. And the better their opinion of their national institutions, the less the support for integration (*Ibidem*: 152)

Therefore, to conclude and complete the analysis, I am going to introduce in a second step some supranational variables that directly account for the evaluation and feelings of Europe, to see if and in which way they are able to change the relationship between domestic politics and support for Europe.

In this kind of analysis, generally, scholars expect higher support for integration in those countries that have little to lose from transferring national sovereignty to European Union level, such as those countries with problems like corruption, poor performance of the state, low responsiveness of political parties. Countries with low corruption, an efficient democracy,

a highly developed welfare state, instead, might be more reticent with respect to the integration project.

Hence, contrary to Anderson (1998), which demonstrates that domestic variables such as satisfaction with democracy have a positive impact on the support for European integration, Sánchez-Cuenca shows that this findings are not real because he has not controlled for supranational factors. In fact, in his view, controlling for these supranational variables, the sign of the relationship will be inverted, it means that a better opinion of national government produces a decrease in support for integration.

In order to control for all these factors, I am going to consider the following variables: the knowledge of Europe and the level of education in order to see if the level of education and consequently the level of knowledge of Europe affect the support, so I expect that:

H5: the higher the level of education and the higher the knowledge of Europe, the greater the support for European integration will be.

Secondly, to see if really a lack of knowledge is substituted by the evaluation of the institutions' performance I will use the satisfaction with the way democracy works in the own country hypothesizing that:

H6: The higher the satisfaction with democracy in country the higher the support for European integration will be.

Finally, considering Sánchez-Cuenca's argumentation of supranational control, I will introduce in a second step, more variables regarding the level of information on European matters, the level of confidence in Europe and the satisfaction with the way democracy works in Europe, to see if and how the founded relationship varies.

2. The empirical model

2.1 Data, Research Design and Case Selection

Following the current literature elaborated for member countries, the idea is to elaborate a model for the new candidate countries: Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. To do this, I use the Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (October-November 2003) dataset, which includes both economic indicators and national/European identity variables. The choice to consider these three candidate countries is justified by the fact that looking at the pre-accession stage of 5 new candidate countries^{*}, in 2003, the Commission states that Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey have made significant progress towards meeting the accession criteria[†]. In fact, as stated by the official documents, accession negotiations are well advanced with

^{*} Bulgaria, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania and Turkey (http://europa.eu.int/abc/governments/index_en.htm#candidate).

[†] Continuing enlargement: Strategy paper and Report of the European Commission on progress towards accession by Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey (COM (2003) 676 final - Not published in the Official Journal).

Bulgaria and Romania, and will continue on the basis of the same principles that guided the negotiations with the ten countries* that joined Europe in 2004. For this reason, European Union supports Bulgaria and Romania's ambition to become members in 2007[†], while for Turkey is established to make further progress in compliance with the accession criteria.

Looking at the political criteria, it is important to underline that in 2003, both Bulgaria and Romania have continued to comply with the accession criteria even if corruption remains a problem in both countries and some problems regards the living conditions of disadvantaged people still persist in Bulgaria, while in Romania, main problems were related to huge administrative procedures, lack of transparency and inadequate capacity to apply policies (Com. (2003) - 676 final). Turkey, on the other hand, has accelerated legislative reform to comply with the political criteria. However, also in this country further efforts are needed to close the gap between legislation and practice, and in particular, as stated by the European Commission, to solve the Cyprus problem that otherwise, could be a serious obstacle to Turkey joining Europe[‡].

For all these reasons, at the beginning of 2004 the European Commission has presented a three-year financial framework for the accession of Bulgaria and Romania, and financial assistance to Turkey of € 1.050 million for the period 2004-2006.

This is the reason why I will consider all these countries even if the accession has been arranged for Bulgaria and Romania and not yet decided for Turkey.

2.2 Dependent Variable

Generally, the question, in the Eurobarometer survey used as an indicator of the support for the integration process is the following:

“Generally speaking, do you think (our country’s) membership is a good thing, a bad thing, or neither good nor bad?”

Usually, scholars adopted also other measures of the support for integration, and they are:

- *Taking everything into consideration, would you say that (our country) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of European Union?*
- *In general, does European Union conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image?*

In this case, since the countries under study are candidates, the questions were posed in a different but similar way:

- *Generally speaking, do you think that (Country)’s membership of European*

* Estonia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia.

[†] http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/press_corner/newsletter/index_en.htm#a4.

[‡] As we can see also in the political agenda of the European Commission in those days:

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/press_corner/newsletter/index_en.htm#a1

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/press_corner/newsletter/index_en.htm#a2.

- Union would be...? (a good thing, a bad thing, neither good nor bad)*
- *Do you think that becoming a member of European Union would bring (country)...? (many more advantages, more advantages, as many advantages as disadvantages, more disadvantages, much more disadvantages)*
 - *And, in general, do you have a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image of European Union?*

Looking at the correlation (Table 1) between the dependent variable and the other two variables emerges that they are strongly correlated, overall the countries and in each of the three countries. This means that surely the variable selected is a good indicator of the concept I want to analyze. Other scholars, analyzing different data with different techniques, found same correlations and results (*cf.* Deflem and Pampel 1996; Gabel 1998b). So, I use E.U. membership question as dependent variable.

The dependent variable consists of ordered categorical responses^{*}, with an overall distribution of support equals to: 78% in favor, 16% indifferent and only 6% contrary (Tab. 2). Hence, surely there is a difference between these three candidate countries and the members of the Community, in fact within the 10 countries that become members in 2004[†], the percentages of who thinks that E.U. membership is a good thing falls to a level of 56%, and in the 15 previous European Union members it falls to 51%[‡]. However, if it is consider the pre-accession or early accession period of Western European countries, it is possible to see how these percentages are quite similar, in fact in the 1970s the average of support in Europe was 82% (*cf.* Ammendola and Isernia 2005).

According to these elements, hence, I can surely admit that in 2003 the level of support for European Integration is much higher in these three candidate countries than in the members and candidates which membership was arranged for the following year.

Looking instead at the differences between countries, the country whit more supporters of European Integration is Romania, where 87% of respondents are in favor of E.U. membership, while the lower level of support is reached in Turkey (70%), but in any case higher than in member states.

Since I want to know how to explain the probability to support European integration, in order to elaborate my model[§] I have recoded it as a dummy one considering on one hand, the answer *“European Union is a good thing”* and on the other hand the other two possible answers together (*a bad thing and neither good nor bad*).

^{*} 1 = a bad thing ; 2 = neither good nor bad ; 3 = a good think; Details on the variables used in this analysis will be given under request at formichelli@unisi.it

[†] Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latria, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

[‡] Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, United Kingdom, Austria, Sweden, Finland EB60.1 (2003.4).

[§] The model will be a logistic regression.

2.3 Independent Variables

Looking at the independent variables it is possible to see how they differ among these countries. Regarding the economic explanation of public support for European Union, I am going to consider both the national economic perception and the personal financial situation, remembering the distinction between sociotropic and egocentric evaluation of economy (*cf.* Gabel and Whitten 1997). Since for these countries European Union has established a financial assistance since 2004, I am going to consider the expectation for the following year as explanatory factors. The questions are:

What are your expectations for the year to come: will 2004 be better, worse or the same, when it comes to:

- *the economic situation in (country)*
- *the financial situation of your household*

The only country with a positive feeling regarding economy is Turkey. Only in this case, the percentages of who thinks that the general economic condition and his financial situation will be better (respectively 43.1 and 40.4 Tab.3.), is greater than the percentages of who thinks that they will be the same or worse (respectively 39,2 and 20,4 for the economic condition and 28,9 and 28 for the personal financial situation). In Bulgaria the majority thinks that the economic condition (49,8%) and the personal financial situation (54,5%) will be the same, and in Romania 35,8% of the respondents think that the economic condition will be worse while 42,3% think that the personal financial situation will be the same.

To see if, and in which way, these variables have an impact on the general level of support I firstly make a bi-variate analysis, differentiating it by country. What emerges is that in all the countries, increasing the feeling of an improvement of the economic condition of the own country, the percentages of who thinks that the membership in the European Community is a good thing increases. The percentage of who thinks that European Union is a good thing increases in average of about 18 percentage points moving from who thinks that the economic situation will be worse to who has a more positive view (Tab. 4a.b.c). This suggests that there is a relationship between the two variables, and this is confirmed by the Chi-square tests significant at the 0.001 level in each country. Therefore, this preliminary analysis confirms the hypothesis of a positive relationship between the expectation of the national economic condition and the support for the European membership.

Looking at the personal economic condition, it emerges that there is a similar pattern while, as hypothesized, the difference in percentage points is lower than before. The difference between who thinks that European Union is a good thing decreases in average of about 4 percentage points moving from who expects a worse financial situation to who expect a better one for 2004 (Tab.5a.b.c.). Hence, even if also the personal financial situation influences the support for the European integration, the perception of the national economic situation has a greater impact. Also in this case the findings are corroborated by the chi-square tests, all significant at the 0.001 level.

Looking, instead, at the two variables regarding the identity, both National and European, the variables chosen are:

People may feel different degrees of attachment to their town or village, to their region, to their country or to European Union. Please tell me how attached you feel...

- to (our country)?
- To Europe

After recoding them^{*}, first, the level of attachment with the own country is much more greater than the level of attachment with Europe. In fact, considering all the countries together, there is a difference of about 31 percentage points (Tab.6a.b.), but the percentage of who feels attached to Europe is anyway high. In average 66.9% of the overall population feels attached to Europe, even if still candidates and not member countries.

Looking at the differences between countries, while the level of attachment to the own country is similar and higher than 93% in all the countries, the level of attachment to Europe varies much more in fact, Turkey is the less attached (40.7%), and Romania is the most attached one (88.5%), with a percentage almost double than in Turkey. A phenomenon that is quite understandable if we simple think at the state of accession in the three countries considered.

Analyzing, finally, the relationship between identity and E.U. support, in a bi-variate way, contrary to our opinion, it seems that there is no relationship between the attachment to the country and the support for European integration, as suggested by the non-significance of the chi-square (Tab.7a.b.c.). Notwithstanding, moving from who is not attached to who is attached to his own country, the probability to think European Union as a good thing increases of about 9 percentage point. Maybe other factors influence this relationship.

In the second case – that hypothesizes a positive relationship between E.U. membership and the attachment to Europe - the relation is significant and it is, as expected, positive. Among who feels him/herself attached to Europe, in fact, the probability to think that E.U. membership is a good think is 26 percentage points greater than among who does not feel attached to Europe. Also in this case the higher level of chi-square and its significance at the 0,001 level allows as to surely admit that there is a relationship (Tab.8a.b.c.), in all the countries analyzed.

2.4 Analysis and results

Now, a logistic model will be elaborated in order to investigate which factors among those presented earlier, will increase the probability that people support the E.U. membership.

The model will be estimated three times. In the first model our predicting variables are the evaluation of the economic situation, both personal and national, the attachment to the own country and to Europe, and as control variables, the level of education and the democratic satisfaction in the country. In the second one, I will introduce a supranational control, which concerns variables regarding the satisfaction with democracy in Europe, felling of confidence

* Considering together “not attached at all” and “not very attached” on one hand and on the other hand “fairly attached” and “very attached”, cause of the low percentages of the responses.

in Europe and the knowledge and attention to European news. Finally, in the third model, I will add the countries as a final control.

Looking at the overall model, the first thing to see is the goodness of fit (R^2) that tells how well the model predicts the results. Since, as said, the model is a logistic one we have not the R^2 as in a linear regression, but we have several different measures of pseudo R^2 . Considering McFadden's* R^2 , in our case, the first model explains about the 13% of the variation, while adding new variables, firstly the supranational control and secondly the countries, the model explains better the variation which percentage explicated is about 30%. This means that not only the national variables have little explicative power but also that controlling for variables directly linked with Europe, its knowledge and satisfaction, as suggested by Sanchez-Cuenca (2000), the explicative power of the model (Tab. 9), is more than doubled. But, as we know, the pseudo- R^2 simple considers the value supposed to be the R^2 in a linear regression, for this reasons many doubts persists on its validity, so another important measure of goodness of the model, is the probability of cases correctly predicted (CountR). This means how much better is this model despite the no-model (the probability of that event without predicting variables)[†].

Considering, hence, the percentage of cases correctly predicted, the 1st model correctly predicts 80% of cases, while the 2nd and the 3rd improve this percentage of 5 percentage points. This result, actually, does not surprise us because, since the dependent variable is a dichotomous one, it is difficult to improve the percentage of cases correctly predicted when it is high also in the first model. More interestingly is to consider the reduction of error by the model, that is, how much our model can reduce the error of the no-model. In this case I have that from a reduction of error of 7% in the first model (Adj, Count R^2 , tab.9), in the 2nd and in the 3rd models this percentages increases to a level of about 20%. This means that overall the introduction of the supranational control improves the goodness of fit, in the sense that it explains better the support for European integration.

Looking at the coefficients, not all of them are significant as it was in the by-variate analysis. Considering both the *z value*[‡] and the *Wald test*[§], in fact, the results shown how the economic expectation has an influence as hypothesized, while the financial expectation has not significance at all^{**}, as well as the attachment to the country.

On the other hand, attachment to Europe, satisfaction with democracy in the own country, and the level of education have all the hypothesized effect on the support. This means that

* McFadden's R^2 is the likelihood ratio index that compares a model with just the intercept to a model with all parameters so: $R^2_{\text{McF}} = 1 - (\ln\hat{L}(M_{\text{Full}}) / \ln\hat{L}(M_{\text{intercept}}))$. Since this measure of R^2 is the most analogous to the sum of squares for linear regression analysis, it's not sensitive to the base rate and unlike the unadjusted measures of pseudo R^2 , it varies between 0 and 1, I will use this measure of fit as the most appropriate for logistic regression (cfr. Menard 2001 p.27).

[†] For more details on the selection of the Pseudo R^2 ^{see} Menard (2001), Long *et al.* (2003).

[‡] for each value of the variable, Tab.9.

[§] for the variable as a whole, when it has two or more dummies, Tab.10.

^{**} Except for one isolated case in Romania, according to which who thinks his/her personal economic situation will be worse is less supportive of who thinks it will be the same.

the more a person thinks that the economic condition will be better, the more (s)he supports the European membership. Similarly, the more (s)he is attached to Europe, the more (s)he supports the membership of his/her country in Europe. The attachment to the own country, instead, has not the negative hypothesized impact on the support. Hence, differently from member states, these countries do not identify their national government as a cue to evaluate Europe, probably due to their status of “candidates” and so there is not the kind of link between the European government and the national one, evident, instead in the member states.

Secondly, it emerges that they do not perceive European Union as a threat for their nation-state, as it was for the other states in the early years of the community. While, the satisfaction with the way democracy works in the own country exercises the expected impact on the probability to support the European integration. Finally, the level of education exercises an important effect on the support, in fact, both those who has a high (university) and a medium (secondary school) level of education are more supportive of who has a low level of education, as hypothesized. In other words, the probability to support E.U. membership increases increasing the level of education.

Considering the coefficients of the second model elaborated, the only variable that loses its power of explanation despite the first model is the level of education, while all the new variables considered have a significant impact. This suggest us that the previous influence considered is spurious because they are the variables related to Europe that affects the support rather than the education even if it is possible to consider the education as an antecedent variable, in the sense that the education affects the attention and the knowledge of Europe* that than affects the support.

More aspects emerge considering the supranational variables and they are:

- confidence in Europe, as expected, exercises a greater impact on the support as well as the satisfaction with democracy in European Union, meaning that the probability to support European Union is greater among who confidence in Europe.
- the satisfaction with democracy in Europe, quite surprisingly, has an impact different from the one hypothesized, in fact it emerges that the more unsatisfied the people is with democracy in Europe the more they support Europe.

Therefore, our first conclusion is that in these candidate countries, if considered together, the evaluation of Europe rather than the perceived economic condition or the so-called domestic cues affects the support for the process of integration. Finally, in the third model, I introduced the country variables. The empirical results confirm that it really applies in all the countries considered[†]. Now, to conclude, I consider the effect of single variables in some particular conditions, since, as we know, our model - based on probability- changes according to the different situation we are looking at.

* The χ^2 in both cases has significance and from an high value of Kendall's Tau b, it emerges that increasing the level of education increases also the attention or the knowledge of Europe.

[†] The z score of the dummies regarding Bulgaria and Romania and regards the constant (where there is Turkey) have all significance at the 0.05 level.

Regards the economic condition, all the other things being equal^{*}, the probability to support European Union increases of about 9 percentages point (Tab.11) passing from who thinks the economy will be worse to who thinks it will be better. This result confirms that the national economic perception in the model still exercises an impact on E.U. support even if it is not intense as in the first model (13 percentage points of difference). Also the attachment to Europe exercises an impact of about 10 percentage points, while in the first model its influence was of about 26 points, capturing, probably, the effects of the other European variables not considered in that model.

The satisfaction with democracy, as already pointed out, has a positive impact, if it is an evaluation of the democracy in country (+ 8 percentage points) while it has a negative impact if the evaluation regards Europe (- 7 percentage points). Finally, among the variables regards Europe, the less influent is the knowledge of Europe, which increases the probability to support the Europe of only 4 percentage points and which is significant only at the 0.1 level, while the attention to Europe exercises an influence equal to 13 percentage points of variation between who is interested in European news and who is not. In the end it is not surprisingly, in candidate countries confidence in Europe exercises the most important impact equals to more than 40 percentage points of variation.

Concluding, our findings shown how in these countries the economic model works better than the national identity one (*cfr.* 1st model), but, not surprisingly, introducing some consideration regarding Europe and its institution, the democracy and so on, the economic model lost some of its significance, suggesting how in these countries feelings and confidence in Europe are the most influential factors on the support (*cfr.* 3rd Model).

Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to test two of the most popular theories of explanation of public support for European integration: the utilitarian explanation and the identity model, in three Candidate countries - Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. The economic expectation and the European identity have, as expected, a positive impact on the support while the national identity seemed to have no impact on the support. Controlling both these relationship for some domestic and supranational variables, three regression analyses have been made.

The first one includes social and domestic politics controls (level of education and satisfaction with democracy in the own country). It showed how both of them can be considered as cues of explanation, since they have both statistical significance, in fact the satisfaction with the way democracy works in country significantly affects the support as well as the level of education, both in a positive way, meaning that increasing the satisfaction or the level of education the support will increase. In the second model, following the idea that some supranational factors can affect the relationship founded, I have controlled for the level of satisfaction with democracy in Europe, confidence in Europe, knowledge of European matters and the level of attention paid for news regards Europe. This second model explains better the variation in the probability to support European Union. It shows also how, controlling for

* At a medium level.

variables directly related to Europe, the economic model lost some of its power of explanation, and how notwithstanding the level of education, is the attention on news regards Europe and the general knowledge about it that influence the support. Finally, in the third model, considering the countries as dummy variables to see if the model applies in all of them or not, the significance of their *z score* suggest that the model is true for all the three countries considered.

To conclude, what emerges from this analysis is that in these candidate countries – Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey – in 2003, the support for European Integration is affected mostly by confidence and attention to Europe, but, interestingly enough the national identity does not affect the support for Europe in the hypothesized negative way. Finally, the economic expectations and the identification with Europe affect the support with a similar extent.

Tables

Table 1: Correlation[§] between possible dependent variables

	Bulgaria	Romania	Turkey	All
	<i>EU membership good/bad</i>			
<i>EU membership country benefit</i>	0,630**	0,390**	0,626**	0,554**
(N)	(914)	(904)	(894)	(2712)
<i>European Union image Positive/negative</i>	0,558**	0,387**	0,557**	0,519**
(N)	(915)	(931)	(935)	(2781)

[§]Correlation shows the Spearman's-rho.

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Elaboration on CCEB 2003.4

Table 2: Evaluation of the European Membership by Country, 2003

	(%) A good thing	Neither good nor bad	A bad thing	Total (N)
European Union 15	51	29,1	14,8	100,0 (16082)
10 Later members	55,9	31,9	12,2	100,0 (8586)
The three candidates	78,6	15,6	5,9	100,0 (2870)
<i>Bulgaria</i>	78,2	18,6	3,2	100,0 (939)
<i>Romania</i>	87,9	10,6	2,5	100,0 (975)
<i>Turkey</i>	70,4	17,7	11,9	100,0 (956)

Source: Elaboration on CCEB 2003.4, EB60.1

Table 3: Expectations for the Year to come:

	a. The economic situation in...				b. The financial situation of your household			
	(%)				(%)			
	Worse	Same	Better	Total (N)	Worse	Same	Better	Total (N)
Bulgaria	30,5	49,8	19,7	100,0 (885)	29,1	54,5	16,4	100,0 (949)
Romania	35,8	31,6	32,6	100,0 (919)	26,7	42,3	31	100,0 (960)
Turkey	28	28,9	43,1	100,0 (952)	20,4	39,2	40,4	100,0 (962)
Total (N)	31,4	36,5	32,1	100,0 (2756)	25,4	45,3	29,4	100,0 (2871)

Source: Elaboration on CCEB 2003.4

Table 4: E.U. Membership and Economic condition within Country

		a. Bulgaria				b. Romania				c. Turkey			
		Economic condition				Economic condition				Economic condition			
(%)		Worse	Same	Better	Total (N)	Worse	Same	Better	Total (N)	Worse	Same	Better	Total (N)
European Membership	A bad thing	5,9	0,7	1,8	2,5 (21)	4,9	2,2	0	2,4 (21)	20,9	13,1	6	12,1 (111)
	Neither good nor bad	23,9	18,7	10,6	18,6 (159)	17,2	11	3,5	10,7 (93)	19	21,2	14,4	17,6 (161)
	A good thing	70,2	80,6	87,6	78,9 (673)	77,9	86,8	96,5	86,9 (755)	60,1	65,8	79,6	70,3 (643)
	Total (N)	100,0 (428)	100,0 (255)	100,0 (170)	100,0 (853)	100,0 (308)	100,0 (273)	100,0 (288)	100,0 (869)	100,0 (253)	100,0 (260)	100,0 (402)	100,0 (915)
Chi ² (d.f.) (P.)		31,829 (4) (0,000)				46,885 (4) (0,000)				42,891(4) (0,000)			

Source: Elaboration on CCEB 2003.4

Table 5: E.U. Membership and Financial Situation within Country

		a. Bulgaria				b. Romania				c. Turkey			
		Personal Financial Situation				Personal Financial Situation				Personal Financial Situation			
(%)		Worse	Same	Better	Total (N)	Worse	Same	Better	Total (N)	Worse	Same	Better	Total (N)
European Membership	A bad thing	6,1	1,6	0,7	2,8 (25)	3,8	2,1	1,4	2,3 (21)	21,3	11,9	7,1	11,8 (109)
	Neither good nor bad	21,1	19,8	12,4	18,9 (170)	17,4	8,3	7,3	10,4 (94)	18	20,7	14,6	17,7 (163)
	A good thing	72,8	78,6	86,9	78,3 (705)	78,7	89,6	91,3	87,3 (791)	60,7	67,4	78,3	70,5 (651)
	Total (N)	100,0 (261)	100,0 (486)	100,0 (153)	100,0 (900)	100,0 (235)	100,0 (384)	100,0 (287)	100,0 (906)	100,0 (183)	100,0 (362)	100,0 (378)	100,0 (923)
Chi ² (d.f.) (P.)		21,997 (4) (0,000)				21,655 (4) (0,000)				31,238 (4) (0,000)			

Source: Elaboration on CCEB 2003.4

Table 6 : Level of attachment to Country and Europe by Country

	a. Attachment to Country (%)			b. Attachment to Europe (%)		
	<i>Very + fairly</i>	<i>Not very + not at all</i>	<i>Total (N)</i>	<i>Very + fairly</i>	<i>Not very + not at all</i>	<i>Total (N)</i>
<i>Bulgaria</i>	3,84	0,29	100,0 (982)	2,96	1,17	100,0 (904)
<i>Romania</i>	3,92	0,21	100,0 (1.033)	3,67	0,46	100,0 (1.002)
<i>Turkey</i>	3,88	0,25	100,0 (997)	1,67	2,46	100,0 (980)
Total (N)	3,88	0,25	100,0 (3.012)	2,76	1,38	100,0 (2.886)

Source: Elaboration on CCEB 2003.4

Table 7: National Identity and E.U. Membership within Country

		a. Bulgaria			b. Romania			c. Turkey		
		Attachment to Country			Attachment to Country			Attachment to Country		
		Not at all + not very (%)	Fairly + Very	Total (N)	Not at all + not very	Fairly + Very	Total (N)	Not at all + not very	Fairly + Very	Total (N)
European Membership	A bad thing	4.8	3.1	3,2 (30)	3.6	2.4	2.5 (24)	12.9	11.9	12.5 (114)
	Neither good nor bad	27.4	18.0	18,6 (173)	18.2	10.2	10.6 (103)	24.2	17.1	17.5 (167)
	A good thing	67.7	78.9	78,1 (725)	78.2	87.4	86.9 (843)	62.9	71.0	70.5 (672)
	Total (N)	100,0 (62)	100,0 (866)	100,0 (928)	100,0 (55)	100,0 (915)	100,0 (970)	100,0 (62)	100,0 (891)	100,0 (953)
Chi ² (d.f.) (P.)		4,192 (2) (0,123)			3,970 (2) (0,137)			2,277 (2) (0,320)		

Source: Elaboration on CCEB 2003.4

Table 8: European Identity and E.U. Membership within Country

		a. Bulgaria			b. Romania			c. Turkey		
		Attachment to Europe			Attachment to Europe			Attachment to Europe		
		Not at all + not very (%)	Fairly + Very	Total (N)	Not at all + not very	Fairly + Very	Total (N)	Not at all + not very	Fairly + Very	Total (N)
European Membership	A bad thing	8,1	1,3	3,1 (27)	11,3	1,3	2,4 (23)	17,1	4,7	11,9 (112)
	Neither good nor bad	32,2	12,6	18,0 (156)	26,4	8,5	10,5 (99)	22,8	9,7	17,4 (163)
	A good thing	59,7	88,9	78,9 (686)	62,3	90,2	87,1 (824)	60,1	85,6	70,7 (664)
	Total (N)	100,0 (236)	100,0 (633)	100,0 (869)	100,0 (106)	100,0 (840)	100,0 (946)	100,0 (549)	100,0 (390)	100,0 (939)
Chi ² (d.f.) (P.)		77,266 (2) (0,000)			76,276 (2) (0,000)			73,207 (2) (0,000)		

Source: Elaboration on CCEB 2003.4

Table 9: Logistic Regression

		1 st Model		2 nd Model		3 rd Model	
		B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
National economic condition (same = 0)	Better	.634***	.169	.628***	.229	.669***	.233
	Worse	-.320**	.137	-.275	.198	-.292	.200
Personal financial Situation (same = 0)	Better	-.039	.158	-.209	.212	-.195	.215
	Worse	-.198	.143	-.173	.207	-.191	.207
Attachment to country (not attached = 0)	Very	-.118	.197	-.170	.273	-.103	.271
Attachment to Europe (not attached = 0)	Very	1.534***	.110	1.117***	.162	.936***	.173
Satisfaction with Democracy in Country (not satis = 0)	Not very	.526***	.123	.712***	.182	.721***	.182
	Very	.556***	.144	.591***	.205	.639***	.209
Level of education (primary school = 0)	University	.414***	.140	-.187	.204	-.258	.206
	Secondary	.341***	.127	-.010	.194	-.258	.212
Satisfaction with Democracy in European Union (not satis = 0)	Not very			-.596*	.303	-.548*	.296
	Very			-.764***	.294	-.836***	.289
Trust European Union (dummy)				1.925***	.158	1.849***	.162
Attention to European news (not attention=0)	Low			.675***	.216	.703***	.217
	High			1.016***	.237	1.111***	.241
Knowledge about Europe (not at all = 0)	Low			-.362**	.168	-.373**	.168
	High			-.102	.276	-.121	.276
Bulgaria						.424**	.228
Romania						.701***	.240
Constant		-.067		-2.329***		-2.385***	
N		2447		1696		1696	
Chi ² (d.f.) (P)		338.29 (10) (0.000)		474.38 (17) (0.000)		483.11(19)(0.000)	
McFadden's R ²		0.129		0.290		0.295	
Count R ² (adj.)		0.802 (0.076)		0.853 (0.214)		0.848 (0.192)	

***p?0.01; **p?0.05; *p?0.1

Source: Elaboration on CCEB 2003.4

Table 10: Wald Test

Wald Test	1 st Model		2 nd Model		3 rd Model	
	X ²	Prob.	X ²	Prob.	X ²	Prob.
National economic condition	29.11	0.0000	14.88	0.0006	16.49	0.0003
Personal financial situation	1.96	0.3745				
Democracy satisfaction in Country	22.60	0.0000	16.36	0.0003	16.93	0.0002
Level of Education	10.80	0.0045	1.12	0.5700		
Democracy satisfaction in Europe			6.94	0.0312	9.33	0.0094
Attention paid to European Union news			18.28	0.0001	21.29	0.0000
Knowledge of Europe			4.69	0.0959	4.94	0.0846

Source: Elaboration on CCEB 2003.4

**Table 11: Variation in support when only one variable changes
(dependent variable: EU support)**

All other variables set at their mean		Probability to support European Integration		
		1 st Model	2 nd Model	3 rd Model
National	Worse	0.75	0.84	0.83
Economic	The same	0.80	0.87	0.87
Expectations	Better	0.88	0.93	0.93
Attachment to Europe	Not attached at all + not very attached	0.62	0.78	0.81
	Very + Fairly attached	0.88	0.92	0.91
Satisfaction in Country	Not satisfied at all	0.76	0.82	0.82
	Fairly satisfied	0.84	0.90	0.91
Level of Education	Very satisfied	0.85	0.89	0.90
	Primary	0.78		
	Secondary	0.83		
	University	0.84		
Satisfaction in Europe	Not satisfied at all		0.93	0.94
	Fairly satisfied		0.89	0.90
Trust European Union	Very satisfied		0.87	0.87
	Don't trust		0.22	0.24
	Trust		0.65	0.67
Attention to news regards European Union	Not attention		0.78	0.78
	Low attention		0.87	0.87
	High attention		0.91	0.91
Knowledge regards European Union	Low knowledge		0.86	0.86
	Medium knowledge		0.90	0.90
	High knowledge		0.89	0.89
Bulgaria				0.89
Romania				0.92
Turkey				0.85

Source: Elaboration on CCEB 2003.4

References

- Ammendola, T and Isernia, P 2005, 'L'europa vista dagli italiani: I primi vent'anni', in *L'europa in Italia – elite, opinione pubblica e decisioni*, eds M Cotta, P Isernia and L. Verzichelli, Bologna: Il Mulino, pp.117-170.
- Anderson, CJ 1998, 'When in doubt, use proxies – Attitudes toward domestic politics and support for European integration', *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 31, no.5, pp. 569-601.
- Carey, S 2002, 'Undivided Loyalties – Is national identity an obstacle to European integration?', *European Union Politics*, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 387-413.
- Carey, S and Lebo, M 2000, *In Europe, but not Europeans: The impact of National identity on public support for European Union*, in 29th Joint Session of the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR), 6-11 April.
- Dalton, RJ and Eichenberg, RC 1998, 'Citizen Support for Policy integration', in *European integration and supranational governance*, eds W Sandholtz and A Stone Sweet, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Deflem, M and Pampel, FC 1996, 'The Myth of post-national identity: popular support for European unification', *Social Forces*, vol. 75, no. 1, pp. 119-143.
- Domm, R 2004, *Explaining Public Support for European integration in eight member states: the role of National pride, European identity, nationalism and Xenophobia*, European Union working paper SPS No. 2004/19, European University Institute, Florence.
- Ehin, P 2001, 'Determinants of public support for E.U. membership: Data from the Baltic Countries', *European Journal of Political Research*, vol. 40, pp. 31-56.
- Eichenberg, RC and Dalton, RJ 1993, 'European and the European Community: The dynamics of Public Support for European Integration', *International Organization*, vol. 47, no. 4, pp. 507-534.
- Gabel, M 1998a, 'Public Support for European Integration: An Empirical Test of Five Theories', *The journal of politics*, vol. 60, no. 2, pp. 333-354.
- _____ 1998b, 'Economic integration and mass politics: market liberalization and public attitudes in European Union', *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 42, no. 3, pp. 936-953.
- Gabel, M and Palmer, HD 1995, 'Understanding variation in public support for European integration', *European Journal of Political Research*, vol. 27, pp. 3-19.
- Gabel, M and Whitten, GD 1997, 'Economic conditions, economic perceptions, and public support for European integration', *Political Behavior*, vol. 19, no. 1, pp. 81-96.

- Gabel, MJ 1998, *Interests and Integration: Market Liberalization, Public Opinion, and European Union*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Hooghe, L and Marks, G 2005, 'Calculation, Community, and Cues: Public Opinion on European Integration' <www.unc.edu/~hooghe/downloads/hooghe.marks.identity.final%20version.eup.doc> .
- Janssen, JIH 1991, 'Postmaterialism, Cognitive Mobilization and Public support for European integration', *British Journal of Political Science*, vol. 21, pp. 442-468.
- Long, JS and Freese, J 2003, *Regression models for categorical dependent variables using Stata*, Stata Press.
- McLaren, LM 2002, 'Public support for European Union: Cost/benefit analysis or Perceived Cultural Threat?', *The Journal of Politics*, vol. 64, no. 2, pp. 551-566.
- Menard, S 2001, *Applied Logistic Regression Analysis*, Sage University Papers Series on Quantitative Application in the Social Sciences 07-106, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Sánchez-Cuenca, I 2000, 'The political basis of support for European integration', *European Union Politics*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 147-171.
- Strategy Paper and Report of the European Commission on progress towards accession by Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey (COM (2003) 676 final - Not published in the Official Journal).