

**Marc Friedli**

Science Po Paris



## **The Public Opinion of EU-Movers – Comparing Evaluations of EU Membership for Countries of Residence and Countries of Origin**

### **Abstract**

In the literature on public attitudes towards European integration, only a few studies have focused on EU citizens living in a different Member State than they were born in. While data on this specific group is rare, the pro-Europeanness of EU-movers has been taken for granted, given that they make active use of and, thus, profit from the right of free movement stemming from EU citizenship. This paper aims to fill this gap in the literature in two ways. On the one hand, it investigates how EU-movers evaluate the benefits of EU membership of their country of origin as well as their country of residence. On the other hand, this paper compares movers' attitudes to those of natives in their country of residence as well as stayers in their country of origin and asks whether EU-movers trust the EU more and evaluate EU membership as more beneficial. Drawing on Eurobarometer data, the conducted logistic regressions reveal that EU-movers are more likely to trust the EU than stayers as well as natives. However, movers are less likely to positively evaluate EU membership of their country of origin than stayers.

*Keywords:* European integration, EU support, free movement, migration, public opinion

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#### **Corresponding author (✉):**

Marc Friedli, MA European Affairs, Science Po Paris, France

E-Mail: [marc.friedli@sciencespo.fr](mailto:marc.friedli@sciencespo.fr)

## Introduction

For more than a decade, the item most often selected by Europeans when answering the Eurobarometer survey question "What does the EU mean to you?" was "the Freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the EU" (Recchi, 2015, p. 159). As asserted by citizens and scholars alike, free movement of people is considered as the cornerstone of EU citizenship that equipped European citizens with an indispensable set of rights, particularly with respect to work-related migration. While the share of EU-movers is marginal compared to the overall population – estimates assume around 3 to 4 % – they are symbolically referred to as "pioneers of European integration", as their life and experiences are "Europeanized" and, thus, contribute to the formation of a shared European public space (Favell and Recchi, 2009, p. 3).

However, compared to the burgeoning literature on public opinion towards European integration (Hobolt and de Vries, 2016), only very little is so far known about the attitudes those "pioneers of European integration" hold towards the EU. The few studies that have shed light on this subpopulation indeed find that intra-EU migrants tend to hold more pro-European views than stayers across different dimensions of "Europeanness", for example, regarding European identity (Rother and Nebe, 2009), support for EU membership (Kuhn, 2015) and further EU unification (Roeder, 2011).

Moreover, research has so far neither explicitly addressed the nexus between EU-movers and their actual evaluation of EU membership nor closely examined how movers diverge in comparison to their co-nationals in their country of origin as well as to natives in their country of residence. In this sense, this article contributes to the literature by, on the one hand, introducing a variable that captures movers' cost-benefit status in relation to their country of origin and residence's EU membership, and, on the other hand, by comparing not only movers to stayers but also movers to natives in their country of residence. Finally, to account for the different dimensions of EU support, this article compares citizens' evaluation of EU membership with a variable that captures respondents' trust in the EU.

By doing so, this paper argues that EU-movers, given that they tangibly benefit from EU citizen rights, should display more pro-European attitudes than stayers and natives. It is therefore expected that EU-movers are more likely to positively evaluate EU membership of their country of origin and country of residence, as well as to trust the EU. In addition, it is argued that commonly used socio-economic determinants, such as length of education, should matter less for movers' attitudes towards the EU, as migrating allows one to benefit from the EU independent of one's skill-levels. Whether these arguments can empirically be validated is relevant, both from a conceptual as well as a public policy perspective. Conceptually, the comparison of movers' attitudes towards different items of EU support speaks to the ongoing debate about the one- or multidimensionality of public opinion in the EU. As a result of the complex environment of EU politics and citizens' lack of information thereof, people's attitudes towards the EU are not well structured but reliant on broad heuristics (Anderson and Hecht, 2018; Pannico, 2017). However, as movers generally display greater knowledge about the EU,

they are expected to be more capable to specifically evaluate the EU in its own terms, which not only highlights the need to consider attitudes of different subgroups more systematically but also to scrutinise in greater detail the validity of commonly used survey items in EU-related public opinion research (Rother and Nebe 2009). Bringing more nuance into this debate also informs EU decision-makers about whether and to what extent the free movement of people regime is able to generate public support for the EU across these different dimensions (Schmidt 2013).

Starting with a two-part overview of the theoretical literature on movers' attitudes towards European integration and its key factors, this article enumerates different hypotheses on the questions at hand in chapter three. In the fourth part, the methodological choice of logistic regression models and some model specifications are elaborated upon. Additionally, various descriptive statistics are inspected, and the hypotheses empirically tested. Finally, this article is concluded by a discussion of the findings and their implications for future research on attitudes of EU-movers towards European integration.

## **Explaining Attitudes towards EU Integration**

To explain individuals' attitudes towards European integration, the literature has largely focused on three sets of explanations, namely identity-driven, cue-taking and utilitarian approaches. The approach that gained most scholarly attention in recent years is the identity-driven approach. It is based on the assumption that people's views on European integration largely depend on their identities, since the EU not only revolves around the creation of a common single market, but also reinforces multiculturalism, diffuses norms of "us" and "them", and erodes national sovereignty (Hooghe and Marks, 2005, p. 423). Taken together, those studies show that people with multiple identities are more likely to endorse the process of European integration, whereas people with strong and excluding national identities consider further EU integration as a threat to them and, thus, hold negative attitudes towards the EU (Carey, 2002).

The cue-taking attempt assumes that European integration and institutions are too complex for most citizens to directly evaluate and emotionally attach themselves to. Therefore, they rely on heuristics in order to bridge information gaps (Hobolt and de Vries, 2016, p. 422). Cue-taking studies have focused on national proxies and intermediaries such as government performance, parties, and media coverage which shape people's attitudes towards the EU. For example, Anderson's (1998) national proxies model shows that as citizens' trust in their national governments increases, the more likely they are to take a positive stance towards the EU. Moreover, empirical evidence indicates that, when compared to uninformed citizens, citizens with distinct political knowledge rely less on cue-taking strategies (Karp et al., 2003).

Lastly, the utilitarian approach follows an economic cost-benefit logic of EU support that has for a long time dominated research, since, for the first forty years, the process of

European integration has mainly consisted of deeper economic cooperation and market integration (Hobolt and de Vries, 2016, p. 420). It views the formation of political attitudes as an outcome of rational calculations based on self-interests that are related to individual economic gains as well as to a more general feeling of social well-being (De Vries and Van Kersbergen, 2007, p. 312). The utilitarian approach is rooted in the literature on the "winners" and "losers" of globalisation, coined by the works of scholars such as Kriesi et al. (2008) and Hooghe and Marks (2009). Applied to the field of EU integration, the argument goes that the globalisation-cleavage is essentially underpinning attitudes towards the EU (Teney, Laceywell and De Wilde, 2013).

This means that particularly socio-economic factors, such as one's marketability skills and level of education, influence public support (Hooghe and Marks, 2005, p. 422). It is argued that, on an individual level, citizens with higher levels of education and income are more supportive of European integration as they have profited from European trade liberalisation (Gabel, 1998, p. 336). By contrast, the literature suggests that low-skilled workers and less educated people are less likely to benefit from the EU's market liberalisation, as it has led to higher competition in the labour market, pressures on the welfare state, and decreasing job security due to the relocation of production to low-wage countries (Ejrnæs and Jensen, 2019, p. 1393).

While the three approaches have proven very powerful in explaining public attitudes towards the EU, mainly due to a lack of data, only a few studies have looked at how they can explain the perceptions held by Europeans whose lives have been significantly influenced by the policies of the EU – namely those of EU-movers. Given the relatedness of free movement with the economic opportunities it opens, the utilitarian approach appears to be especially promising, as argued in the next section.

## **Free movement of People and Transnationalism in the EU**

Before examining and comparing the attitudes of movers towards the EU, it is important to outline what differentiates free movers from the "normal" EU population, hereafter referred to as "stayers" in the movers' country of origin and "natives" in their country of residence. According to the Treaty of the EU, Article 45 grants EU citizens "the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States", including the right to work, access to work, as well as equal treatment at the workplace. Until today, millions of Europeans have made use of this right to work, live and study in another Member State. It is a core right of EU citizenship, with certain scholars going as far as stating that "free movement can be seen as the bedrock upon which the entire construction of European rights has been built" (Maas, 2008, p. 583). Next to achieving economic objectives, the free movement regime has given rise to the emergence of a European political community, in which Europeans are united beyond a single market but through a common status and common rights (Maas, 2007, p. 5).

How can the formation of a European community through the free movement of people regime be explained? In general, the literature distinguishes between two main

theoretical models: the culturalist research tradition and the transactionalist approach coined by Karl W. Deutsch. While the former emphasises the importance of early political socialisation and the exposure to symbols and discourses that convey an identitarian meaning, the latter focuses on the building of infrastructures that amplify "spatially connoted social interactions", which in turn will lead to the emergence of a collective identity (Recchi, 2014, p. 143). The transactionalist approach is considered to be more "bottom-up", as it puts the intensifying interaction between individuals within an emerging political community at the very heart of the formation process of the community's underlying identity. Deutsch's theory of transactionalism defines a nation as a "community of social communication" that is held together by a collective identity that is forged through intensifying social, political and economic transactions between its members (Deutsch, 1953, p. 70). In later years, Deutsch (1969) applied his theory of nationalism to the process of European integration, arguing that the same mechanism that built collective identities within nations can also lead to a common identification and shared trust across nations.

In her book "Experiencing European integration", Theresa Kuhn (2015), by drawing on Deutsch's transactionalist approach, identifies two mechanisms that link transnational activity to attitudinal change towards Europe, with one referring to group identities and the other to the evocation of utilitarian considerations. The first is based on the notion of intergroup contact, which assumes that a higher level of interaction "breeds familiarity, which in turn promotes the 'we-feeling' or attitudinal sympathy that Deutsch believed to be a key to success" (Jones and Van der Bjiil, 2003, p. 1). The link between migration and the emergence of a European identity has received considerable scholarly attention, but its validity has also been questioned. Taking an ethnographic approach, Favell (2008) finds that although European identifications are more prevalent among intra-EU migrants than others, the identities they develop are primarily defined by the absence of an attachment to existing territorial ties. Rather than subsuming themselves within a European collective, identities of movers take "de-nationalised" forms of individualism. Methodologically, quantitative survey analysis on EU identity has been criticised for bearing the risk that "one forces opinions to be expressed on highly abstract matters which respondents have rarely engaged with and infers attitudes and beliefs which have barely formed" (White 2009, p. 699). Moreover, identity-driven approaches tend to encounter the problem of endogeneity, as the explanans (European identity) may either be influenced by the explanandum (EU support) or, in the case of movers, both may be jointly affected by the act of migrating to another EU Member State (Hobolt and de Vries, 2016, p. 421).

The second utilitarian argument deploys a narrower focus on the EU itself rather than on the more abstract concept of European identity. It states that transnational activity is a direct way to benefit from the EU, as the process of European integration has considerably reduced the transaction costs usually arising from cross-border interactions. Such transnational actions can, of course, vary in their degree of salience. They can range from border-free travelling and the cheaper purchase or tariff-free import of products to transactions that have a great impact on people's everyday life and

their biographies, such as the pursuit of an academic degree, the commencement of work or the set-up of a business in another Member State.

In addition, it is argued that the attitudes of those who are directly benefiting are also influenced indirectly, as the mere experience of benefiting will trigger a "learning process" that raises further awareness about the opportunities and goods provided by the EU. While those who engage in transactional activities are more likely to become more "Europeanised", those who abstain will remain "nationalised", as they do not benefit materially and are hence not seized by a learning process (Kuhn, 2015, p. 48). This also speaks to White's (2011) critique that European integration does not necessarily constitute European social spaces and forge political allegiances to the EU, as the EU faces difficulties in addressing the substantive concerns and views from its citizenry. In the case of EU-movers, the contrast between elites' discourse on the EU's usefulness for citizens' daily lives and its perceived lack of impact should be weaker. To summarise, citizens who engage in transnational interaction are expected to be more in favour of the EU, while those who do not are expected to be less in favour of the Union. This should be even more the case when comparing EU-movers with stayers, as migration can be considered as the most engaging and salient form of transnational action (Recchi, 2014, p. 124).

Accordingly, the few quantitative studies that tackled the issue confirm the notion that intra-EU migration and intensified transactional activity go hand in hand with a higher degree of European identification: In a comparative multivariate analysis measuring respondents attachment to Europe conducted by Recchi (2015, p. 133), the variable intra-EU mobility – coded as binary to distinguish between movers and stayers – turns out to be the most important predictor for a respondent's attachment to Europe. Moreover, the share of citizens expressing a strong attachment to Europe is higher than that of natives across all Member States, without any exception. Other studies have corroborated these findings. Rother and Nebe (2009) find that EU movers are generally more Europeanised than stayers, as they tend to have a better knowledge about the EU, hold a more positive image of the EU and also feel more attached to it.

Kuhn (2015, p. 68-72) tests the impact of individual transactional activities on two dependent variables, including, next to an item measuring European identity, a question which asks respondents to evaluate their countries EU membership as a "good" or a "bad thing". Her analysis shows that individual transnationalism, particularly those practices that involve long-term stays, has a substantively positive effect on EU identity and significantly increases the likelihood of an individual to endorse their country's EU membership. Except for Kuhn's (2015) study, most analyses have relied on items measuring the European identity of movers compared to those of stayers in their country of origin. This article aims to contribute to the mosaic of movers' attitudes towards European integration by introducing a dependent variable that captures movers' utilitarian cost-benefit calculations for the EU membership of both their country of origin as well as their country of residence. How the act of migrating possibly influences movers' EU membership evaluations is hypothesised in the following chapter.

## **Movers' Evaluation of EU Membership and Trust in the EU**

The question of whether a country has benefited from EU membership asks respondents to concretely evaluate the costs and benefits of EU membership. It is used as an indicator capturing a crucial dimension of support for EU integration (Hooghe and Marks, 2005). As the considerations behind citizens' evaluation of EU membership can be manifold and nested in contexts specific to the different countries of origin and residence, it is a well-suited variable for the task of examining movers' multidimensional attitudes towards the EU.

While it is plausible that movers evaluate the consequences of EU membership as personally beneficial, but as non-beneficial for their country as a whole, a utilitarian approach would assume that the former outweighs the latter for the following two reasons: One the one hand, because the opportunities EU movers' benefit from can only be seized as a result of the country of origin's membership in the EU in the first place. On the other hand, because movers have actively made use of and therefore directly benefited from a right exclusively provided by the EU. The close linkage between personal and national benefit stemming from EU membership has been found in various public opinion studies on former as well as current accession countries: the prospect of working in another EU Member State and thus profiting personally from European integration is a key factor driving support for their country's EU membership (Arikan 2012; Doyle and Fidrmuc 2005; Guerra 2013). In this sense, the subpopulation which seized the opportunities that were a driving force behind their country's accession to the EU should also positively evaluate their country's EU membership in the aftermath.

As the data does not allow to control for stayers' transnational activities – such as past long-term stays in another EU country, participation in Erasmus or maintaining friendships across borders – the binary distinction between movers and stayers is suboptimal, especially for countries that are characterised by high in- and outward migration. However, given that free movement is still a rather recent and rarely practised phenomenon and represents a more salient experience than other transnational activities, the impact of these missing control variables should be negligible in a large sample as used in this study. Taken together, this article hypothesises that movers are expected to evaluate EU membership more positively than stayers:

*H1a: Movers are more likely to respond that their country of origin has benefited from EU membership than stayers in the respective country of origin.*

Against the backdrop of the ongoing debate about the one- or multidimensionality of public attitudes towards the EU, this study introduces trust in the EU as another dependent variable to better understand the extent to which attitudes between movers and stayers diverge. Examining Eurobarometer data across several decades, Anderson and Hecht (2018) find that, over time, Europeans' attitudes form consistently around

one dominant, underlying dimension of EU support. If this applies to movers too, membership evaluation and trust in the EU are assumed to be highly correlated. But a growing literature highlights that citizens hold multidimensional, at times ambivalent preferences towards the EU, which systematically vary according to the specific question that is asked (Boomgaarden et al. 2011). Given that trust in the EU is a measure that captures diffuse EU support without any reference to the national level, it may well be that the divergence between movers and stayers is more pronounced than in the case of EU membership evaluation. Hence, for the reasons elaborated upon in the previous chapter, EU-movers are expected to trust the EU more than stayers do:

*H1b: Movers are more likely to trust the EU than stayers in the respective country of origin.*

Next to countries of origin, the same argument should also apply to countries of residence, as natives in host societies, unlike EU-movers, are expected to be more "nationalised" too. This argument is reinforced by how EU-movers themselves perceive the benefits of their migration. Most likely, EU-movers view themselves as trained workers who contribute to the benefit of the country of residence, for example, by paying taxes rather than being a burden. Whether this view is reciprocally shared by natives, however, is more difficult to assess. While transactionalist intergroup theory would assume that interaction between movers and stayers would trigger learning effects among both groups, host societies tend to react in a more polarised way to higher levels of intra-EU migration.

As outlined above, certain segments of a host society can perceive EU integration and free movement of people as a cultural threat and more competition on the labour market, as well as for public services and social benefits. Even though studies on the nexus of high levels of migration and Euroscepticism display mixed results, there is strong evidence that high EU net migration has led to public backlashes against the EU in certain countries, such as in the United Kingdom or Switzerland (Goodwin and Milazzo, 2017; Sarrasin, Kuhn and Lancee, 2018). Although this study does not aim to make any claims on this complex linkage, as it does not control for the differences in the amount of intra-EU migrants living in recipient states, it can still be concluded from the arguments discussed above that movers are more likely to appraise their country of residence's EU membership as beneficial, while natives are less likely to do so:

*H2a: Movers are more likely to respond that their country of residence has benefited from EU membership than natives in the respective country of residence.*

To compare movers' EU membership evaluation with diffuse EU support, the trust variable is also tested for countries of residence, with the same effect as hypothesised above:



*H2b: Movers are more likely to trust the EU than natives in the respective country of residence.*

Lastly, this paper further examines the effect of a person's educational attainment, which is generally considered to be positively related to attitudes towards the EU. The reason why is that well-educated people often experience a longer exposure to cosmopolitan ideas and tolerant worldviews and, due to their "human capital" and "transnational competencies", can better use the freedoms as well as job and investment opportunities provided by the European single market (Hainmueller and Hiscox, 2006, p. 472-474). Concerning free movers, however, the effect of education may be mitigated for mainly two reasons.

First, while it is true that in the early years, the right to free movement was mainly used by well-educated Europeans (Favell 2008), Eastern enlargement has altered this pattern, as the population of movers did not only significantly grow but became socioeconomically also more diverse, with the share of low- and medium-educated EU-movers increasing (Recchi, 2015, p. 58). Even though movers from Central and Eastern Europe are often over-qualified for the jobs they take up and therefore witness social downward in parallel to upward economic mobility (Recchi, 2015, p. 70), they profit from mobility regardless of their educational or occupational status. The argument goes that the dividing cleavage between "winners" and "losers" of EU integration has become more blurred among movers, as the effect of the socio-economic class is moderated by the fact that mobile individuals "benefit from (European) unification regardless of their skill level" (Roeder, 2011, p. 462).

Second, it is argued that for well-educated Europeans, moving to another country does not have a significant impact on their identification with Europe because they tend to already hold a pronounced pro-European outlook. In a longitudinal analysis on EU attitudes of Erasmus students conducted by Kuhn (2012), it is shown that studying abroad barely changes students' European identity, as they are already likely to feel European before starting an Erasmus semester. In turn, Kuhn concludes that transactionalist practices exert a stronger impact in fostering European identity among less-educated Europeans. This article tests whether intra-EU migrations can serve as "a substitute for education in producing a sense of proximity" to Europe (Recchi, 2015, p. 142) when accounting for utilitarian considerations, arguing that the effect of education is weaker among movers than among stayers and natives:

*H3: The interaction effect of length of education and being a mover on the evaluation of EU membership is negative.*

## **Data and Method**

The analysis is based on the data from the Post-Electoral Survey Among European Expatriates, carried out between 12 June and 2 July 2019. This special survey was

conducted at the request of the European Parliament, after a study has revealed that in the European Elections of 2014, around 95 % of EU expatriates did not vote in their country of residence and that participation has, depending to a large extent on the voting laws in the country of origin (Ferrari, Pavone and Gjergji 2019). To better assess the attitudes movers hold towards the EU as well as their voting behaviour, the survey targeted the twelve nationalities with the highest number of expatriates, which are Romanian, Portuguese, Polish, Dutch, Hungarians, Croatian, Italian, French, Spanish, Greek, German and Bulgarian nationals, living in eleven countries of residence.

The poll contains only data of movers, yielding a total of 8,617 respondents who completed the survey. Despite the large differences between the numbers of respondents for each target nationality, the composition largely reflects the actual size of the expatriate population. The greatest number of completed questionnaires were received from Romanian (2,703), Polish (1,327) and Bulgarian (1,012) respondents, and the least number from respondents of Spanish (220) and Dutch (168) origin. For reasons of representativeness and comparability with stayers, this study considered only expat-populations with a sample size above 300, which in this survey counts for movers from Romania, Poland, France, Germany, Italy, and Portugal, leading to a total sample size of 7,537 respondents.

One remark on how the sample was collected. Respondents were targeted through Facebook adverts that linked interested users directly to the survey. These adverts were based on the country of residence indicated on a person's Facebook profile, for example, Germany, as well as on the language the person is using on Facebook, for example, Romanian or French.

To compare the attitudes of movers with those of stayers and because the survey items used were not identical, the expat survey was combined with data of two other Eurobarometer surveys that were conducted in the same period. The first is the Standard Eurobarometer Survey 91.2, which was carried out between 7 June and 1 July 2019 in 34 European countries, containing a sample size of 34,011 respondents aged 15 and older. The second is the general Post-Electoral Survey of the European Parliament, with the fieldwork carried out from 7 to 26 June 2019, containing 27,464 Europeans aged 15 from all 28 Member States. Each of the two surveys was subset into two new data sets, one containing only respondents from movers' country of origin and the other respondents from their country of residence.

The dependent variables of interest are two survey questions. The first question asks respondents if they "tend to trust or tend not to trust these institutions", listing, inter alia, the EU. Answers indicating "tend not to trust" are coded as "0", while the value "1" is assigned to respondents who "tend to trust" the EU. The second set of questions asks whether their country of origin, as well as the country of residence, has "benefited" or "not benefited" from "being a member of the EU". The question is coded "0" if respondents consider their country of origin or residence has not benefited and "1" if it is considered to have benefited. Due to the binary nature of the dependent variables, logistic regressions are chosen to model the predicted probabilities. It should be noted that the two dependent variables of the expat survey are spread across two different

surveys: while the EU-benefit question is only included in the general post-electoral survey, the EU-trust variable was only featured in the Standard Eurobarometer Survey 91.2.

Regarding the explanatory variables, a binary mover-variable differentiates movers from stayers, taking the value "1" for all the respondents from the expat survey and "0" for the other two surveys. The duration of a mover's stay in the country of residence is measured on a four-point scale, with the value "1" corresponding to two years or less, "2" to three to five years, "3" to six to ten years, and "4", corresponding to eleven years or more. To account for the influence of socio-economic characteristics, length of education is measured by a respondent's age until he or she remained in education, coded in a five-point scale, ranging from "no full-time education" (1), less than 15 years (2), to 16-19 years (3), "still studying" (4) and more than 20 years (5). Finally, respondents' age and gender are included as control variables.

## Results

The results of this study are presented in two steps and start with the inspection of descriptive statistics. Looking first at trust in the EU, Table 1 illustrates that in five out of seven countries, movers show higher levels of trust than stayers do in their country of origin. For the countries of residence, the pattern is similar but with more pronounced differences between movers and natives. The only country where natives show a higher level of trust than movers is Belgium. Trust in the EU is highest among movers who live in countries where natives show particularly very low levels of trust, namely in Italy (60% compared to 37%) and the UK (62% to 29%).

The results for evaluation of EU membership are displayed in Figure 2 and are surprising for the countries of origin. Apart from Italy, the share of movers who indicate that their country of origin has benefited from EU membership is consistently lower than the respective share of stayers. An opposite picture emerges for the countries of residence, where the proportion of movers claiming that their country of residence has benefitted is on a high level. In Italy and the UK, the attitudes of movers and natives are again furthest apart, with 70% of movers compared to 42% of natives in Italy and 79% to 58% in the UK responding that their country has benefited from EU membership. On average, the share of movers' positive membership evaluations for their country of origin is 64% compared to 74% for their country of residence.

Figure 2: Share of EU-Movers and Stayers/Natives trusting the EU, grouped by Country of Origin/Residence.

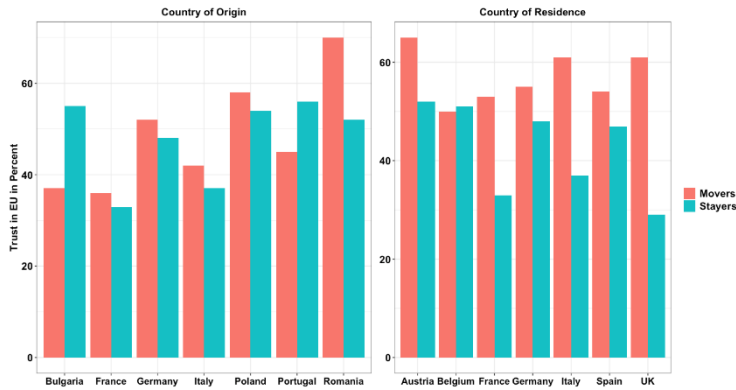
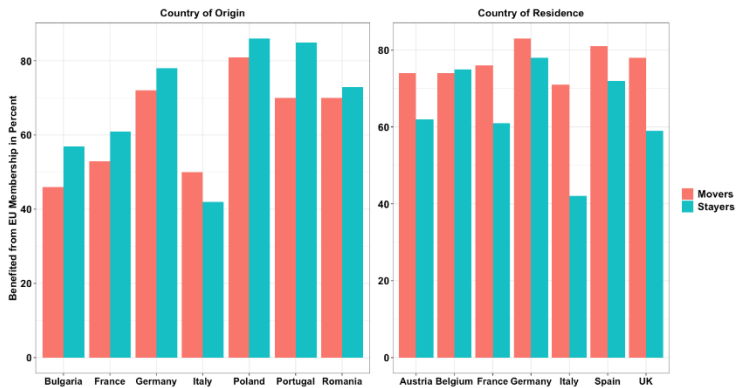


Figure 1: Share of EU-Movers and Stayers/Natives who say their Country of Origin/Residence has benefitted from EU Membership, grouped by Country of Origin/Residence.



Coming to the statistical analysis, the results for movers only are displayed in Table 1. In line with the utilitarian theory, the effect of length of education is significantly positive across all three dependent variables, meaning that among movers, those with a higher level of education are still more likely to trust the EU, as well as to positively evaluate EU membership of their country of origin and residence. About the length of stay, there is a statistically significant negative effect on whether a country of residence has benefitted from EU membership or not: the longer movers stay in their country of residence, the more likely they become to negatively evaluate the benefits of EU membership. One explanation for this effect could be the feeling of a "EUphoria" among movers, which is strong at the time of arrival but fades as times passes and certain expectations about the benefits of migrating may have given way to reality. Another explanation could be that attitudes of movers simply adapt to the views held by the majority of natives, which, as seen below, tend to be less positive than those of movers. Favell (2008, p. 182) finds this phenomenon to be particularly common among EU-movers living in the UK.

The odds ratios in Table 2 also show that the effect of education is slightly stronger for countries of residence, which indicates that differences among movers' length of education matter more for their evaluation of the benefits for countries of residence than for countries of origin.

Table 1: Results of Logistic Regressions of EU-Movers.

<b>Model 1:</b>	<b>Country of Residence benefited</b>	<b>Country of Origin benefited</b>	<b>Trust in EU</b>
Intercept	2.194 <sup>***</sup> (0.190)	0.422 <sup>**</sup> (0.147)	0.451 <sup>**</sup> (0.140)
Length of Stay	-0.214 <sup>***</sup> (0.038)	0.023 (0.029)	-0.047 (0.027)
Length of Education	0.110 <sup>***</sup> (0.030)	0.141 <sup>***</sup> (0.024)	0.106 <sup>***</sup> (0.023)
Gender	-0.152 <sup>*</sup> (0.073)	0.292 <sup>***</sup> (0.061)	0.284 <sup>***</sup> (0.057)
Age	-0.044 (0.040)	-0.051 (0.032)	-0.084 <sup>**</sup> (0.030)
AIC	5029.635	6823.329	7381.375
BIC	5063.068	6856.703	7414.577
Log Likelihood	-2509.817	-3406.664	-3685.688
Deviance	5019.635	6813.329	7371.375
Num. obs.	5924	5854	5656

\*\*\* p < 0.001, \*\* p < 0.01, \* p < 0.05

Table 2: Odds Ratios of Model 1 Logistic Regressions of EU Movers

<b>Model 1:</b>	<b>Odds: Country of Origin benefited</b>	<b>Odds: Country of Residence benefited</b>	<b>Odds: Trust in EU</b>
Length of Stay	1.02	0.81	0.95
Length of Education	1.15	1.11	1.11
Gender	1.34	0.86	1.34
Age	0.95	0.96	0.92

Turning to the logistic regression analysis of movers and stayers and their evaluation of EU membership of their countries of origin, the results offer a puzzling picture. In the model without the interaction term (Table 7, Annex), the statistically significant negative effect of being a mover implies that movers, on average, are less likely to

positively evaluate the consequences of EU membership for their country of origin compared to those who live in the respective country. This falsifies *H1a*, which assumes the effect of being a mover to be positive.

However, when the effect of being a mover is interacted with the effect of length of education (Table 5), the effect of being a mover fades, meaning that they do not significantly differ in their evaluation compared to those of stayers. By contrast, the marginal effect of a higher level of education becomes smaller for movers compared to the effect of the variable for stayers. This confirms the third hypothesis, which states that the effect of length of education on the evaluation of EU membership is mitigated when individuals have made use of their right of free movement: the gap between the high-educated and low-educated regarding the evaluation of benefits is lower among movers than among stayers.

Looking at the results for the countries of residence (Table 4), we find clear support for hypothesis *H2a*, which states that EU-movers are more likely to evaluate their country of residence' EU membership more positively than natives. In substantive terms, the odds ratio shows that when switching from stayers to movers, the odds of evaluating EU membership positively increases by a factor of 2.96. The effect of length of education is, again, statistically significant and positive. The analysis also confirms *H3*, as the marginal effect of education on the dependent variable decreases for movers compared to stayers. In fact, the interaction effect turns out to be even stronger for the countries of residence compared to the countries of origin.

Table 3: Results of Logistic Regressions and Odds Ratios of EU-Movers and Stayers.

<b>Model 2:</b>	<b>Country of Origin benefited</b>	<b>Odds Ratios</b>
Intercept	0.403 <sup>**</sup> (0.125)	1.50
Mover	0.114 (0.137)	1.12
Length of Education	0.269 <sup>***</sup> (0.027)	1.31
Education*Mover	-0.100 <sup>**</sup> (0.037)	0.91
Gender	0.142 <sup>***</sup> (0.042)	0.94
Age	-0.061 <sup>**</sup> (0.019)	1.15
AIC	13669.872	
BIC	13714.411	

Log-Likelihood	-6828.936
Deviance	13657.872
Num. obs.	12371

\*\*\* p < 0.001, \*\* p < 0.01, \* p < 0.05

*Table 4:* Results of Logistic Regressions and Odds Ratios of EU-Movers and Natives.

<b>Model 3:</b>	<b>Country of Residence benefited</b>	<b>Odds Ratios</b>
Intercept	0.210** (0.073)	1.50
Mover	1.084*** (0.120)	2.96
Length of Education	0.318*** (0.014)	1.37
Education*Mover	-0.200*** (0.031)	0.82
Gender	0.023 (0.029)	1.02
Age	-0.018 (0.012)	0.98
AIC	30774.378	
BIC	30824.429	
Log-Likelihood	-15381.189	
Deviance	30762.378	
Num. obs.	31004	

\*\*\* p < 0.001, \*\* p < 0.01, \* p < 0.05

Table 5: Results of Logistic Regressions of EU-Movers, Stayers and Natives for Trust in EU.

<b>Model 4:</b>	<b>Country of Origin Trust in EU</b>	<b>Country of Residence Trust in EU</b>
Intercept	-0.462** (0.144)	-1.206*** (0.124)
Mover	1.094*** (0.129)	1.726*** (0.121)
Length of Education	0.207*** (0.023)	0.309*** (0.018)
Education*Mover	0.100** (0.038)	0.045 (0.034)
Gender	-0.104*** (0.016)	-0.069*** (0.014)
Age	-0.098** (0.034)	-0.199*** (0.031)
AIC	15641.984	19921.155
BIC	15686.230	19966.949
Log-Likelihood	-7814.992	-9954.577
Deviance	15629.984	19909.155
Num. obs.	11781	15252

\*\*\*p < 0.001; \*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05

Table 6: Odds Ratios of Model 4 Logistic Regressions of EU Movers, Stayers and Natives.

<b>Model 4:</b>	<b>Odds: Country of Origin Trust in EU</b>	<b>Odds: Country of Residence Trust in EU</b>
Mover	2.98	5.61
Length of Education	1.23	1.36
Education*Mover	0.91	0.82
Gender	1.10	1.04
Age	0.90	0.93

Turning to the variable on trust in the EU, Model 4 confirms *H1b* as well as *H2b*: movers are significantly more likely to trust the EU than stayers and natives. The effect is considerable, as the odds of trusting the EU increase by a factor of nearly 3 when comparing movers to stayers and over 5 in comparison to natives (Table 6). The substantial difference supports the assumption that EU-movers are more Europeanised as a result of their salient transnational experiences. Length of education remains a strong predictor, while the interaction effect does not seem to close the "education-gap" among movers but rather widen it marginally.

Overall, the results only partially confirm the hypotheses developed in the theory part. For hypotheses *H1a* and *H2a*, the evidence is mixed, as movers are indeed more likely to positively evaluate the benefits coming with EU membership for their country of residence but less likely to do so when it comes to their country of origin. How can this



supposedly paradoxical result be explained? Firstly, as shown by the summary statistics, movers tend to make a clear difference between their country of residence and origin when evaluating the benefits of EU membership, with positive evaluations of the latter being on average ten percentage points lower compared to those of the former. This finding alone deserves more extensive research.

Secondly, when taking into account the two interaction effects, the picture becomes even more complex. While in both cases, the marginal effect of the length of education is weaker for movers than for natives and stayers – confirming  $H3$  – it is even weaker for movers' evaluation of their country of residence. The same accounts for the first model, where the factor of length of education shows lower odds for countries of residence than for countries of origin. Thus, the results indicate that the "education gap" becomes smaller when movers evaluate the benefits of EU membership for their country of residence compared to their country of origin. By contrast, with regard to trust in the EU, the education effect does not seem to vary for movers.

Thirdly, the statistically significant and substantial difference in the trust that movers display in comparison to stayers and natives indicates that movers do not conflate different dimensions of EU support. This speaks to the findings by Roder and Nebe (2009), who argue that EU-movers have a better knowledge about the EU and thus, also display more informed and fine-grained attitudes. It also shows that movers' attitudes towards the EU clearly stand out from those held by a majority of stayers and especially those by natives. Unlike the general population, movers tend to show relative rather than absolute preferences for the EU.

Finally, how can a utilitarian approach accommodate these results? A straightforward explanation appears to be that movers consider the usually higher standards of living and the greater economic opportunities in their country of residence as a consequence of the country's EU membership. Furthermore, as outlined in the theoretical part, movers may perceive the benefits for their country of residence as a result of their (and others) migration, as they view themselves as an educated workforce that contributes to the growth of the economy and pays taxes. For the very same reasons, movers may conclude that their country of origin, being deprived by the same talented workforce and taxpayers in whose education it invested, has been disadvantaged from EU membership. Following this line of argument, the first two points account for why movers believe that their country of residence has benefitted from EU membership, while the third point hints to an explanation for why movers respond that their country of origin has not benefitted from EU membership.

## Conclusion

This study has contributed to the literature on EU public opinion by, on the one hand, investigating the attitudes of EU-movers towards the benefits of EU membership for their country of residence and origin and, on the other hand, by comparing movers'

attitudes to those of natives in their country of residence as well as stayers in their country of origin.

The logistic regressions conducted reveal that even though movers are more likely to positively evaluate EU membership of their country of residence than natives, they are less likely to do so for their country of origin when compared to stayers. Moreover, the logistic regressions ran on the question of trust in the EU reveal that movers are clearly more likely to trust the EU than stayers and, particularly, natives. This finding is in line with previous research and confirms the notion that movers hold more pro-European attitudes than stayers and/or natives, at least as long as the dependent variable of interest touches upon more individual and diffuse dimensions of Europeanness. Clearly, EU-movers also differentiate between different dimensions of EU support and disentangle the national benefits of EU membership benefits from their own benefits, as well as from their general view of the EU.

Hence, the observed yet unexpected difference between movers and stayers can be attributed to the particular dimension of Europeanness that the dependent variable captures, namely that it asks respondents to concretely evaluate whether their country – and not themselves – has benefitted from EU membership. While it has been argued in this article that, from a utilitarian perspective, this difference could be bridged as movers transpose their personal benefits to the country-level, this does not seem to be the case.

By contrast, the results show the explanatory limits of the utilitarian approach, which finds it hard to account for the finding that movers are less likely to say that their country of origin has benefitted from EU membership than stayers, while it is arguably mainly the movers themselves who have benefitted from their country's EU membership. Instead, movers seem to evaluate the benefits of EU membership also beyond their personal benefits, by including other, context-specific indicators which are relatable to the effects of EU membership in their country of origin, such as the state of the economy and the labour market, but also the quality of living, into their assessment. Another aspect that could influence movers' answers more negatively is that they compare these indicators with the situation in their country of residence, which they tend to evaluate more positively.

This links to one of the main shortcomings of this study, which is that it did not examine the interplay between individual and contextual variables, although the dependent variable clearly evokes considerations among respondents that are nested in specific national contexts. Conclusively, for future research, this implies focusing on both the differences in attitudes between movers, stayers and natives, as well as how these differences diverge across the Member States and their diverse macro-economic and political contexts. In particular, more research ought to be done on the empirical puzzle posed by movers diverging views on the benefits of EU membership for their country of origin and residence: What motivates the more negative evaluations of the former, and a more positive assessment in case of the latter?

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