

The value of human values for  
understanding attitudes towards the EU:  
A multi-country and longitudinal study

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## **Abstract**

This thesis explores variation in attitudes towards the EU among Scandinavians' through a value-theoretical lens. Using Norwegian, Swedish and Danish data from eight rounds of the European Social Survey, a set of linear regression analyses were performed to examine the effects of 1) Conservation, 2) Openness to change, 3) Self-transcendence and 4) Self-enhancement values on support for European integration and trust in the European Parliament. In addition to providing a thorough review of the current state of research on political and psychological concepts such as attitudes, the link between attitudes and values and key determinants attitudes towards the EU, the overarching goal of this thesis has been to apply the insights provided by social and political psychology to the domain of EU-attitude studies. Controlling for sociodemographic factors (age, gender and education) and commonly proposed determinants of euroscepticism and support for further integration (economic rationality, culture/identity and domestic political context), I find that value prioritisations have a limited, but significant explanatory power on the observed variation. I compare both the main and the interactive effects of values and attitudes, both between European Social Survey (ESS) rounds and between the three countries, and provide some tentative explanations for the observed variation. Particularly strong are the positive effects of "conservation" values (characterised by an emphasis on security, conformity and tradition) on support and trust in the EU, and the negative effects of "openness to change" values. I conclude that, while human values as measured in the ESS portrait value questionnaire contribute positively to explaining EU attitudes, future exploration of this relationship should be further specified in various ways.

## **Abbreviations**

ANOVA – Analysis of Variance

BHV – Basic Human Values

DV – Dependent Variable

EP – European Parliament

EU – European Union

EC – European Community

ECSC – European Coal and Steel Community

ESS – European Social Survey

IV – Independent Variable

PCA – Principal Component Analysis

PVQ – Portrait Values Questionnaire

RWA – Right Wing Authoritarianism

SDO – Social Dominance Orientation

SVS - Schwartz Values Survey

TEU – Treaty on European Union

VIF – Variance Inflation Factor

# 1 Introduction

Attitudes towards the European Union have been studied since the inception of the so-called “European Project”. Following the developing nature of the EU, its institutional framework and the widening and deepening of its jurisdiction, the research has evolved from being largely focused on economic utility to also exploring regional and national identities, party-political considerations and even psychological traits as determinants of EU attitudes. The scholarship on the EU, and people’s perceptions of it, has identified that Europeans increasingly think that the EU and its constituent institutions have a considerable “democratic deficit”. The democratic deficit of the EU, if left unmitigated, is detrimental to the future prospects of further integration and a potential threat to the Union’s continued existence and functioning in its current form. Research on the specific evaluations and considerations that determine peoples support for, or opposition to the EU, can be of great value for both national and EU-level politicians by providing insights into what people care about, the more popular and unpopular aspects of the EU, its institutions and policies, and can help policy-makers identify and thereby potentially counteract any obstacles or threats.

Human values, defined as desirable trans-situational goals that determine the considerations and motivations that guide people’s actions and attitudes, are a well-researched concept from the discipline of social psychology. Since the early 1990’s, researchers have developed ever-more integrated, universally applicable theories regarding the specific ways in which values inform and determine people’s attitudes, behaviour and choices. These insights have increasingly been applied to the domain of political science; left/right party preferences, support for environmentalist policies and trust in institutions are among many political attitudes that can reliably be predicted through a value-theoretical approach.

Relying on data from eight rounds of the biannual European social survey, which have been analysed through a series of linear regression analyses, I explore the relationship between values and attitudes towards the EU in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. Specifically, I seek to answer the following question: Do basic human values, as conceptualised by Schwartz (e.g. 1992; 1994) serve to explain the variance of attitudes towards the European Union? And if so, which of the values contribute to structure and inform opposition to, or support for, the EU and European integration?

This thesis is structured in the following manner: First, I review and discuss the literature on the concept of attitudes, research on political attitudes and specifically on attitudes towards the

EU. Next, I present the scholarship on human values, Schwartz's value theory and the ways in which the theory of basic human values has been applied in order to explain different kinds of political attitudes. Then I present the key causal mechanism – *value activation* - by which values influence attitudes, before using the insights provided by previous studies in order to derive some hypotheses regarding the effect of human value prioritisations on attitudes towards the EU among Scandinavians. I then describe the data which form the basis of my analyses, the dependent and independent variables that are explored, and the key methodological approaches that I have taken to test my hypotheses. Then I present the results of all the analyses, the main effects of all explanatory variables on attitudes towards the EU, and some interaction effects of both EU membership status and differential value-attitude relations at different points in time. Next, I discuss the degree to which my hypotheses are supported or unsupported, explain the mechanisms that underlie the findings, present some alternative explanations for any unexpected or inconsistent results, and specify the ways in which the results serve to elucidate the central questions of the thesis. Finally, I conclude by discussing some limitations of the study, and propose some directions for how the study of the value-EU attitude relations may be improved in the future.

## **2 Theoretical background and motivations**

In this section of the thesis I will present the prevailing scholarly debates, the basic consensuses and disagreements and the empirical trends that I have identified and become familiar with through the process of gathering theoretical background material and empirical data that is useful and relevant to answering my research questions. A comprehensive literature review serves several functions in the earlier stages of developing a research project. There are numerous benefits to be gained by thoroughly exploring, analysing and systematically presenting the status of the scholarship on a given subject before attempting to make contributions to it. A comprehensive literature review allows researchers to establish the fundamental logic and mechanisms that underpin the hypothesized relations between variables. I seek to gain a more thorough understanding, potentially even establishing reliable answers, to the following questions:

What is the apparent scholarly consensus on what is actually known or indicated by previous research? Are there fundamental gaps in our collective knowledge that allows for valuable or original contributions to be made? What are the types of empirical evidence and theoretical approaches that are most commonly applied in studies within this field (i.e. attitudes towards the EU), and what are their strengths and limitations? Are there clear trends in the methodological approaches that have previously been applied, and what are the most significant strengths and limitations to these approaches? Have previous findings in the literature been consistent or inconsistent, and if so, what can we deduce from this?

Literature reviews may be structured in various ways. The presentation of the scholarship may be structured on the basis of authors' ideological approach and key assumptions about human nature or socio-political development, on the geographical scope of studies, on conceptualization and measurement strategies, or based on the different explanatory approaches that are applied by different scholars. I have chosen to present the existing literature on attitudes towards the EU by grouping prominent studies according to the independent variables that researchers analyse as potential determinants of these attitudes. This review chapter includes sections dedicated to several of the academic topics, concepts, explanatory perspectives and empirical findings that are central to understanding attitudes towards the EU, and includes subchapters dedicated to the concept of attitudes, the concept of human values, Shalom Schwartz's theory of basic human values and its inclusion in the European social survey, and on the relationship between basic human values and political attitudes. A comprehensive

overview of the predominant explanatory approaches to attitudes towards the EU is a core part of the review. The primary objectives of the literature review are twofold: First, an in-depth, structured review and presentation of the most important, intriguing and original contributions to the scholarship on the key concepts that are explored in this thesis serves as a stepping-stone towards hypothesising the relationships between key variables of interest, and towards answering the research questions. Secondly, the literature review provides the reader with the necessary background information and helps contextualise the choices that I have made in regard to research design, methods, data selection, variables of interest and so on.

The literature review is structured as follows: First, I clarify the key concept of *attitudes*, describe some ways in which it is typically conceptualised and applied within social psychology and other social scientific research, and present some important attributes that are identified in the literature. Then I give an overview of the relationship between attitudes and behaviour and make the case for why the study of individual-level attitudes and their antecedents is relevant for scholars and policy-makers alike. Next, I give an overview of the literature on political attitudes, with a particular focus on *political support*. Then I move on to give a brief description of historical and contemporary research on attitudes towards the EU. Finally, I present a thorough exploration of the three predominant explanatory perspectives found in the research literature on EU attitudes.

## **2.1 Attitudes and attitude change**

This section of my theoretical overview of research and theoretical contributions on the subject of attitudes encompasses common definitions, different conceptualisations depending on subdiscipline and context, examples of *attitude objects*, and scholarship on attitude formation, strength and change. This section will primarily draw on literature from the discipline of social psychology, some of it stretching back almost one hundred years. For such a deep-dive into the concept of attitudes to be relevant or fruitful for the purposes of answering my research questions, I give attention to two distinct dimensions of attitudes and attitude research that may have significance in the context of the relationship between values and attitudes towards the EU. The concept of attitudes is central to my research question, so it is necessary to become familiar with what the literature on the concept and its causes, implications and so on, agrees or disagrees on.

In common parlance, *attitudes* and *values* are often used interchangeably. In scientific usage however, they are distinct in many ways. Due to this, in addition to the fact that values have a

special role in my research design, I will describe both concepts separately, as well as presenting an overview of the literature on the relationship between values and attitudes. The attitudes that I seek to explore and explain in this thesis are support for, or opposition to, the European Union.

An early, commonly agreed upon definition of attitudes was given by psychologist Milton Rokeach (Rokeach 1968) as: “an *enduring organization* of several beliefs focused on a specific *object* or situation, predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner”. As I understand Rokeach’s definition, particularly his conception of an “enduring organisation” of beliefs, attitudes may be regarded as the tendencies or general dispositions of individuals to evaluate a particular object positively or negatively. The evaluations that form the basis of attitudes may be based on emotions, beliefs or past behaviours and experiences. Additionally, they may be internally consistent (e.g. being primarily associated with positive or with negative feelings or attributes) or ambivalent (e.g. being composed of a combination of positive and negative attributes). Early contributions to the literature on attitudes in social psychology proposed that the bipolarity in the direction of an attitude (favourable vs. unfavourable) was the most distinctive feature of the concept.

Attitude *objects* are any objects that could be evaluated by an individual (Davidov 2008). As the term is used in psychology, an object may be literally anything that an individual can perceive and evaluate: it may be an event, a political entity, a company, a group of people, an ideology, a musical genre or any other observable or conceivable aspect of reality. Objects which are perceived to have mostly favourable attributes will tend to generate favourable attitudes towards them. This mechanism also applies to the inverse, i.e. objects which are evaluated to consist of or represent attributes that are regarded as being primarily negative or unfavourable. These objects tend to produce negative attitudes when its components are evaluated by individuals. However, unfavourable attributes are likely to contribute disproportionately to the corresponding attitudes due to what psychologists have called the *negativity bias* (Rozin & Royzman 2001). In this paper, *the attitude object* in focus is the European Union and the various processes and policies encompassed in the term “European integration”.

Attitudes are comprised of conscious or subconscious evaluations of any number of characteristics of the attitude object. For individuals’ attitudes to change, one of two instances must take place. Either the underlying beliefs and *values*, their predispositions to evaluate certain things in a certain way, must change or evolve within the person due to new perspectives, “personal growth” or other psychological processes. More likely, attitude changes

can occur due to changes in external factors or characteristics of the attitude object in question. (Achen 1975; Fishbein 1963). This also appears to apply to political attitudes, which are discussed in more detail below.

The attitudes that individuals hold, possibly also regarding European integration and the EU, are quite complex in additional ways. People's attitudes tend to vary in strength depending on contextual factors. This variation may occur over time, from one social or economic context to another, and so on. Additionally, attitude strength has been found to follow certain patterns over people's life cycles. Furthermore, the evaluations that constitute an individual's attitudes are made with or without intention or focus, i.e. actively or passively, consciously or subconsciously.

For these reasons, people's attitudes are subject to revision and adjustment, i.e. attitude change, when the underlying beliefs and evaluations that comprise them change in significant ways. However, they tend to persist over time (Ajzen and Fishbein 2000). I regard attitude theory, and understanding attitude change in particular, as relevant to my thesis. To reiterate, attitudes are made up of generalised evaluations of any aspect of any object, at any time, which in turn produce or determine a predisposition to hold generally positive, neutral or negative beliefs about an object. My motivation is to contribute to the research-based pool of knowledge about people's attitudes towards the EU, and the social psychological literature seems to indicate that EU attitudes are in sum made up of individual evaluations of any of its characteristics. This opens up for beneficial and useful new knowledge, of significance to scholars and policy-makers alike, to be generated by examining EU attitudes through a multitude of different approaches.

Since attitudes are often multidimensional (i.e. based on evaluations of more than one attribute of the object) and highly context-dependent, researchers may encounter several obstacles when exploring and explaining them. As is generally the norm for studies with research designs somewhat similar to this thesis, measurement of attitudes can be difficult and is approached differently by scholars. Attitudes can be measured simply by a researcher asking respondents to report their attitudes, or by inferring attitudes from respondents' spontaneous evaluative reactions to encountering or being prompted with the attitude object (Albarraçín and Shavitt 2018). The introduction of implicitly measuring attitudes, as opposed to traditional methods of relying primarily on self-reported survey data, has been a notable development in the scholarship on political and social attitudes.

The two previous paragraphs and the characteristics of people's attitudes that I present, seem to intersect in a consequential matter. According to Albarracín and Shavitt (2018), understanding attitude change depends on measurement and conceptualisation: our understanding of the degree and nature of the change which occurs in a given attitude depends on our conceptualisation and our measurement methods and framework. According to Albarracín and Shavitt's review of the literature (2018), understanding attitude change depends on whether scholars apply a "... theoretical conceptualisation of attitudes as being crystallised in memory, as in-the-moment evaluations, or as hybrid structures". Here, the authors conclude that attitudes in most cases are partly based on memory and experience, and partly constructed on the fly or ad-hoc (Albarracin and Shavitt 2018; Albarracín et al. 2005). In other words, they argue that a hybrid-structure conceptualisation of attitudes is most useful for understanding attitude change. Furthermore, attitudes can be interdependent; an individual is likely to evaluate two separate but similar objects in a similar manner. As I have noted, an attitude is comprised of a number of evaluations about various attributes of an *attitude object*. The total number of attributes that are assessed, and the relative importance that is given to each of them, will vary depending on the individual's interest in, and familiarity with the object in question. All of these factors should be taken into account when drawing conclusions about the relationship between explanatory variables and attitudes towards the EU.

## **2.2 The relationship between attitudes and behaviour**

I will now move on to the next theoretical step: understanding the ways in which attitudes can determine or predict people's actions. The relationship between attitudes and actions has been of interest to scholars, particularly social psychologists, for nearly a century. Certain debates are still unsettled, however there appears to be a certain degree of consensus on some of the manners in which attitudes (understood as generally positive, neutral or negative evaluative orientations by individuals) directly or indirectly shape the behaviour of individuals.

Attitudinal measures are commonly explored as predictors of behaviour, building on the assumption that the attitudes that people hold can directly or indirectly cause, reflect or at the very minimum correlate substantially with specific behaviours. This is especially true for pre-election polling, which overall tends to provide quite reliable predictions of voting behaviour on the basis of attitudes expressed through survey responses that are either explicitly or implicitly measured. The same is true for consumers' attitudes towards products or brands as predictors of the likelihood of future purchases. However, much of the research on attitudes published in the 20<sup>th</sup> century has tended to dismiss, or at least strongly question the validity of

attitudinal measures as reliable predictors of future behaviour (Ajzen and Fishbein 1977; Rokeach 1967; Ehrlich 1969). In the last few decades, however, social psychology has witnessed a renewed interest in the attitude-behaviour relationship, and new insights and near-consensuses have become established.

Ajzen and Fishbein (1977) posit that the emerging view of attitude theorists is that attitudes are only one of many factors that determine people's behaviour. This position reaffirms the relevance and importance of attitudes, while simultaneously indicating that attitudes will often be largely unrelated to behaviour. In a series of studies on the topic of attitudes and attitude-behavioural linkages, Ajzen and Fishbein (Ajzen and Fishbein 1973; 1977; Fishbein 1963; 1973; Fishbein and Ajzen 1972; 1974; 1975) have developed the following argument: an individual's attitudes towards an object likely influences the general pattern of her responses to encountering the object, but does not necessarily predict any given action. A core assumption is that a specific behaviour is determined by the person's *intention* to perform the behaviour. This intention is in turn a function of the person's attitudes towards performing the action in question, in addition to the individual's subjective norms and preferred modes of conduct. Consequently, a single action may be predicted by the attitudes towards performing the act, provided that there is a significant correlation between a person's intention and the behaviour in question (Ajzen and Fishbein 1977).

A key concept in the scholarship on the attitude-behavioural linkages is called the principle of consistency. This refers to the common assumption that we can generally expect a person's behaviours (e.g. voting, activism or consumer preferences) to be consistent with the attitudes that they hold. The strength with which an attitude is held and/or expressed tends to be a good predictor of behaviour. The greater the attitude strength, the more likely it is to directly affect or inform an individual's behaviour. In a similar vein, the relative importance or personal relevance of the attitude is quite consequential. If an attitude has a high self-interest for a person (i.e. it is commonly held and promoted by a group or community that the person either is a member of, or wishes to become a member of), these attitudes will tend to be regarded as particularly important and thus are likely to determine their behaviour. Consequently, these attitudes will likely have a very strong influence on an individual's behaviour, as opposed to attitudes that are generated on the basis of poor knowledge, limited interest or spontaneous and intuitive evaluations of the object in question.

Following the logic presented above, European citizens' attitudes towards the EU can generate different behaviours. It is reasonable to assume that people who hold positive, preferable

attitudes towards the EU and European **integration** are likely to act in ways that facilitate further political and economic integration, for example by voting for eurosupportive parties and candidates, by engaging in pro-European lobbying, formal or informal activism, or by participating in intra-EU collaborative arrangements (e.g. business ventures or research projects)

### **2.3 Political attitudes, support and opposition to political systems**

This section of the literature review covers what social psychologists and political scientists sometimes refer to as “political attitude theory”. The insights provided by theories of individual-level attitude formation and change towards objects of a political nature can contribute to a better understanding of the mechanisms by which identity, economy and domestic politics affect the attitudes that in turn facilitate or constrain processes of European integration. As mentioned in my introduction, the concept of attitudes with all its possible antecedents, consequences, characteristics and perceived meanings is of great interest to social scientists and policy-makers alike. This point is especially true regarding political attitudes. These attitudes can be defined as ones where the *object* is political in some sense. In this context, the attitude object may be a party, an ideology, a regulatory economic policy, overall governmental performance, perceived injustices or any other conceivable entity, issue or object which is generally understood as being “political”.

Most individual-level attitudes are a private matter, with potential implications for a low number of people and of minimal interest to scholars or policy-makers. Political attitudes are quite different. Through the processes of electoral contestation and civil society organisation and discourse, people’s political attitudes carry with them implications for societal development (Achen 1975). People’s political attitudes are most often “tapped” or measured through various forms of surveys which are carried out either by governmental agencies or academic research teams. The *direct* effects of political attitudes on society are probably most apparent to casual observers and researchers when countries perform national referenda on specific issues. In these instances, the outcome of a referendum can likely be assumed to reflect the attitudes of the electorate towards a certain policy. An individual vote may be presumed to constitute an expression of an individual’s attitudes, while the sum of the votes that are cast in one direction or the other can indicate the collective attitudes of the citizenry (i.e. *national* or *mass public attitudes*). However, the sum of evaluations about political objects such as policy proposals, individual cabinet members or government performance also constitute much of the basis on which party preferences and organisational commitments (political or civic) are determined.

Therefore, political attitudes can be expected to have relevant implications that far exceed the limited scope of referenda and single-issue contestation.

In the context of the European Union, political attitudes and their implications are also highly relevant and have been studied extensively. In their 2016 review article, Sara Hobolt and Catherine de Vries (Hobolt and De Vries 2016) state a salient, paradoxical example of the relationship between citizens' EU attitudes and the EU itself, and how this relationship increasingly determines outcomes of European integration: "... *The unprecedented development in supranational governance has led to greater public contestation of the European Union, but at the same time the Union is increasingly reliant on public support for its continued legitimacy*". This quote is particularly indicative of the motivations behind the entirety of this thesis. In the following sections, I proceed to give a brief but thorough review of the current state of the research literature on EU attitudes.

The political attitude object that I focus on in this thesis is the EU, its institutions and and more broadly the process of European integration. The specific attitudes that I wish to explore are those representing support for, or opposition to, this political object. While scholarly focus has shifted from explaining *support* for the EU towards explaining *Euroscepticism* and opposition to integration, I regard support and opposition as two opposing sides of an attitude continuum, and not as separate attitudes.

## **2.4 Research on attitudes towards the EU**

In the research literature on EU attitudes, the concept is variously referred to as attitudes towards the EU, attitudes towards European integration (a process led mainly by the EU and its related institutions), support for/opposition to the EU, attitudes towards European unification, and so on. While there is considerable variation in the specific terminology that scholars use, I find studies broadly referring to "EU attitudes" as well as the somewhat more common treatment of attitudes towards European integration (including related processes, institutions, actors and treaties) to encompass the same dimensions and likely measure the same sentiments regardless of the labels that are applied to the processes which are studied.

Attitudes towards the European Union have been systematically studied since the earliest stages of European integration, but most of the literature has emerged since the early 1990's. At its inception, the intergovernmental collaboration and arrangements that would become the EU of today were primarily economic in scope. Depending on the degree to which citizens were even modestly interested or knowledgeable about the EU, they were likely to couch their attitudes

towards it in terms of the subjective or objective benefits it afforded themselves and their local, regional, ethnic or cultural communities. This was reflected in early studies on attitudes towards the EU, which focused almost exclusively on individuals' assessments of the economic utility of the EU for themselves and for the various groups and communities (e.g. ethnic, religious, regional or national) that they belong to and identify with. As the EU gained increasing decision-making powers and steadily expanded the range of policy areas under its jurisdiction, this limited focus on rational evaluations of perceived utility proved insufficient. This development has given way to the development of new and complimentary theoretical perspectives on EU attitudes.

Hooghe and Marks (2015) and Hobolt and De Vries (2016) argue that the European Union is currently more dependent on citizens' support than ever before. This argument echoes Hooghe and Marks's (2009) previous claim that the conditions determining the perceived legitimacy and authority, future outlook and policy-making capabilities of the European Union have gradually developed from a state of "permissive consensus" into what they term a "constraining dissensus". To put it simply, the European Union and the representatives that constitute it are increasingly constrained, checked and held accountable by the mass public of its member states. There are several factors that contribute to the growth of this constraining dissensus among European citizens. First off, the fact that European integration has had numerous tangible implications for both politics, economic activity and sovereignty for the member states which have come into the fold of the EU. As the EU has begun generating legislation on diverse, often contentious topics, some Europeans increasingly view the EU as overstepping its bounds and democratic mandate. Only one of the Union's three main institutions is directly elected, and the Parliament is arguably the one with the least authority. Secondly, the EU and matters relating to it has become increasingly politicised. The increasing proliferation of referendums on EU matters is both a symptom or side-effect, and a key driver of the increasing contestation that faces the EU. The rise of eurosceptic parties and the politicisation of EU issues which had previously been decided outside of the realm of domestic party contestation are also important factors that contribute to the mounting challenge the Union faces. These factors, as well as other developments and trends, are explored in detail below.

Following these aforementioned developments, research on public attitudes towards European integration has shifted from focusing on support for the EU to an increasing focus on opposition to it, i.e. euroscepticism. Most studies tend to focus on the determinants or causes of these attitudes. However, there is also a growing literature on the consequences of these attitudes,

and the mechanisms by which they influence and structure outcomes of the integration process at the European level. This second angle is perhaps best exemplified by Hooghe and Marks's proposal of a *postfunctionalist* theory of integration which diverges from the well-known liberal intergovernmental, functionalist and neofunctionalist "grand theories" by directly factoring public opinion into the equation. Regardless of the angle, the core question remains the same: What explains variation in attitudes toward European integration?

## **2.5 The reaction to the Maastricht and Lisbon Treaties as indicators of growing Euroscepticism**

The Maastricht and Lisbon Treaties (1992 and 2007, respectively) are regarded as critical junctures in the course of European integration. Both of these contentious treaties included several "democratizing" measures aimed at increasing the legitimacy of the EU, while also being highly controversial and strongly opposed by many Europeans due to perceptions of jurisdictional overreach and challenges or threats to national sovereignty. The (un)popular responses to the two Treaties were largely unexpected and sparked a new wave of scholarly interest in the subject of popular opposition to the European project. To once again invoke the brilliant formulation by Hobolt and DeVries (2016): together, the Maastricht and Lisbon Treaties mark the transition from permissive consensus to constraining dissensus.

The Treaty on European Union (TEU), commonly known as the Maastricht Treaty, was initiated with the intention of complementing the successfully established *economic* union (1991) by opening the way and taking steps towards establishing a *political* union among the member states. The EU politicians who pushed for the creation and ratification of the TEU argued that, amongst other things, the newly consolidated economic union could not advance any further and would stagnate, and fail to reach its potential, without some form of political union surrounding and supporting it. This argument was entirely consistent with Haas's logic of jurisdictional spillover in the integrational processes. True completion of the Single European Market would require a single currency. This, in turn, would require a European central bank. Moreover, a single central bank requires a single monetary policy for all members. Common monetary policy of this magnitude in turn required coherent, coordinated policy-making in many areas (including foreign and defence policy) that had previously been far beyond the scope of European Community decision-making.

In some ways, the TEU was a natural follow-up to the Single European Market project. While the governments and EU representatives of EC member states were arguably the most enthusiastic proponents of the perceived benefits of pursuing additional integrative measures,

the TEU received broad support by a majority of organized political actors throughout the EC. Most political parties in EC countries supported the proposed treaty, and therefore politicians and scholars alike envisioned few difficulties or potential threats to obtaining ratification and implementation of the TEU agenda. However, some member states had formal requirements postulating that the people needed to be consulted (primarily through referendum) before such a consequential treaty could be signed.

What emerged through this process was an apparent wave of popular opposition to further integration that was much larger than expected, and which raised certain doubts about the underpinnings of the Union itself (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993). This became apparent not only in those countries which held a referendum on the ratification of the treaty. In 1992, the Danes famously voted “no”, and the French referendum ended in a very narrow “yes” followed by fierce debates among academics, politicians and the public at large. After negotiating a series of concessions and exclusive amendments known as the Treaty of Denmark, the Danes eventually voted in favour of the Treaty. However, a feeling remained among observers that politicians and commentators (journalists, pundits and activists) had seriously underestimated or misperceived the public’s attitudes towards Europe. It is still unclear whether this was mainly due to willful ignorance, hubris or the elites’ disconnection and inability to adequately gauge the sentiments and political preferences of their constituents.

Franklin, Marsh and McLaren (1994) provided a ground-breaking contribution to the study of the underlying reasons for why the referenda turned out the way they did, and how the Maastricht (and to a lesser extent Lisbon) treaties became so contentious with very limited forewarning. The authors explore public responses to the proposed treaty in Denmark and France, and compare them to Ireland – the third of the EC countries in which a referendum on the Maastricht Treaty/TEU was held. Interestingly, the Irish voters passed the ratification of the treaty with a handsome margin. This begs a series of questions regarding the contextual factors, whether cultural, domestic-political or economic, that influenced individual-level evaluations and support for/opposition to European integration.

Franklin, Marsh and McLaren present three possible explanations for the contentious nature of the Maastricht Treaty that they go on to explore in further detail:

- 1) Popular sentiment regarding Europe (incl. the EU, its institutions, its political actors and decision-making procedures, its self-professed and perceived ambitions and goals, etc.) was by no means as positive as had been believed, and people were never really in favour of the Maastricht Treaty and remained sceptical about the EU in general. In other words,

had the EC gone to greater lengths to accurately gauge the levels of support for further integration among the populations of its member states, the surprising outcomes could likely have been avoided.

- 2) The second possibility is also apparently straightforward: that voters changed their minds during the (somewhat restricted) campaigns, because they did not like what they heard about the Maastricht Treaty – and the votes against the treaty reflected this new public awareness. If this explanation is true, then it could clearly be seen as a sign that European integration has gone far enough, and that future attempts to blatantly expand the EU's jurisdiction and authority will likely be met with similarly strong opposition, if not even more pronounced.
- 3) The third possible explanation presented by Franklin, Marsh and McLaren (1994) carries quite different implications if it is to be accepted: that the Maastricht results can best be understood in terms of domestic party competition (Cue-taking and benchmarking approach; Hobolt and De Vries 2016).

The authors find that prior to the Maastricht conference (when people must have been largely in the dark regarding the actual contents and implications of the treaty as it was still under negotiation behind closed doors), Europeans apparently expressed broad support for “Europe” and the idea of *unification*. Large majorities of Eurobarometer respondents from the three countries (Denmark, France and Ireland) reported that they regarded the “European experience” as having been a good thing, possibly contributing to the incorrect notions that these apparently supportive sentiments would persist into the future. The authors’ two-question index measuring these opinions showed significant ignorance or ambivalence about the European project. Generally, respondents showed limited familiarity with the EU’s institutional arrangement. Some of this apparent ignorance or disinterest could be explained by the relative complexity of the functioning of the EU and its institutions. Furthermore, limited media coverage of intra-EU affairs and procedures likely contributed to the ignorance or disinterest expressed by citizens. These and related factors are discussed in more detail in below. Nevertheless, they also identified significant majorities that expressed largely supportive attitudes towards European integration.

The authors identify three significant features of the opinion distribution within the pool of answers given to the 1992 Eurobarometer survey, which included questions related to respondents’ perceptions of the Maastricht treaty, its contents and assessments of the treaty’s potential implications at the individual as well as national levels. Measurements of pro-and anti-

EU attitudes immediately after the conflicts surrounding ratification showed that there had been little change with respect to European citizens' views about integration and the EU, although support was measured to have fallen slightly in Denmark and France. Secondly, specific support for the Treaty itself was considerably weaker than that for "Europe" in general. This illustrates the differential nature of specific and diffuse support (which are explained in greater detail below) in the context of the EU: negative or unpreferable evaluations of a specific political outcome (i.e. low specific support) do not translate to similarly negative evaluations of the regime or socio-political order in which the unfavourable outcomes are generated. Lastly, one-third of European voters still reported having no discernible opinion or preferences regarding the treaty even three months after the Maastricht conference. This final point illustrates the persistence of disinterest in, and ignorance of, the EU and European-level politics among Europeans.

Studies on EU-attitudes generally have the following in common: to some varying extent, the factors that are of particular relevance for research on EU attitudes revolve around the causes or predeterminants, contextually dependent variation, and also the *consequences* of varying public support for European integration and EU attitudes in general.

## **2. 6 Three predominant explanatory approaches**

A thorough review of the literature indicates that there are three predominant theoretical approaches to explaining variation in attitudes towards the European Union: the utilitarian (or rational economic) approach focusing on the individual and national-level benefits, perceived or objective, of membership and integration; the identity-driven (or broadly cultural) approach stressing nationalist and identitarian motivations or determinants; and the domestic-political perspective that focuses on the effects of cue-taking and/or benchmarking with reference to the domestic political context.

Additionally, there is a small but growing literature that applies concepts and theoretical perspectives from other disciplines such as social psychology and sociology. Notably, Julie Hassing-Nielsen (2016) has explored EU attitudes, specifically the responsiveness to positive or negative media framing of EU issues, in relation to people's placement in the Big 5 personality typology. The aforementioned studies, despite their theoretical and methodological differences, all treat public support for European integration as their dependent variable. There has been far less research on the effects of public opinion towards the EU on European integration, i.e. treating levels of support as an explanatory variable. One exception to this trend

in the scholarship is Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks's so-called Postfunctionalist theory of European integration, which complements the traditional *neofunctionalist* and *liberal intergovernmentalist* "grand theories" by exploring the differential effects and challenges caused by increasing anti-EU sentiments in conjunction with national and supranational politicians' diminishing discretionary powers and increasing responsiveness to eurosceptic publics.

An overview of the literature suggests that attitudes towards the EU vary significantly, likely reflecting different degrees of certainty or ambivalence among individuals. This variation may be determined by factors such as an individual's political sophistication or cognitive skills, their consumption of political news, their educational and occupational skills and so on. This one-dimensional conceptualization of support is increasingly challenged by scholars taking new, multi-dimensional approaches to understanding the concept of support for European integration. Some of the explanatory factors that are growing in relevance within the study of support are satisfaction with government performance, differential conceptions of national and regional identities, rational assessments of economic utility, prejudice, emergence of right- and left-wing populist "entrepreneurs" and so on (Hobolt and De Vries 2016). All of these dimensions are in some way linked to the main explanatory perspectives that are explored in depth in the forthcoming chapters.

Studies that explore the topic of *support* for European integration, and for the EU in general, often base their conceptualization of support on David Easton's seminal theory of support for political systems (Easton 1965; 1975). Easton defined political support as "*the way in which a person evaluatively orients himself to some [political] objects through either his attitudes or behaviour*". In common usage, support generally refers to actions and behaviours that may serve as indicators of support for some *object*. These behavioural indicators include supportive acts such as activism or advocacy (Easton 1965). In the context of political science research, however, *support* is more complex and difficult to measure than by merely observing people's explicit behaviours. It is useful to view political support as a predeterminant, or perhaps even as a consequence, of these actions, as political support or lack thereof does not necessarily predict actions in a reliable manner. Therefore, research on support for political actors, entities and policies instead tends to focus on the attitudes that serve as expressions of support or opposition.

Easton (1965; 1975) distinguishes between diffuse and specific political support, which he refers to as different "modes" with separate causes and consequences. The distinction between

regime-oriented and policy-specific support for political systems is also applicable to the context of support for European integration. Regime support (i.e. diffuse support) encompasses the evaluative orientations that are directed towards the constitutional and institutional foundation and arrangement of the European Union. Specific support, on the other hand, is contingent on evaluations of specific policies and outcomes produced by the EU. Diffuse support is determined by evaluations of basic characteristics of the regime itself, such as its democratic legitimacy, its utility and the degree to which the regime is preferable to alternative arrangements. The characteristics that serve as the objects of regime support primarily have a constitutional foundation, thus being quite consistent and less vulnerable to short-term evaluations.

In contrast to regime support for the established democracies that comprise it, diffuse support for the European Union is inherently fragile (Hobolt and De Vries 2016). This is due to the institutional uniqueness of the European Union: it is a hybrid multilevel political system that is far more integrated and has a much larger jurisdiction and policy-making capabilities/authority than any other international organization in which sovereign nations collaborate. However, it does not meet the definitional criteria of a state. Additionally, scholars and European citizens alike see the EU as having a substantial democratic deficit. The democratic deficit of the EU refers to its perceived lack of accessibility to ordinary citizens, lack of representation for common people and minority opinions, and the absence or insufficiency of direct accountability. The establishment of the European Parliament in 1979 was the first of numerous measures that have been implemented specifically to increase the democratic legitimacy of the European Union, but scholarly consensus appears to indicate that these measures have done little to diminish perceptions of democratic deficits within the EU.

In the following three sections of the thesis, I will present key contributions and seminal studies pertaining to each of the three predominant approaches to explaining variance in attitudes towards the EU, including the different explanatory variables that scholars have examined, the proposed mechanisms by which they influence attitudes, and some strengths and weaknesses of each perspective.

### ***2.6.1 The economic-utilitarian approach to explaining variation in EU attitudes***

The first of the three predominant explanatory approaches found in the literature is the economic-utilitarian approach. Studies that belong to this explanatory perspective tend to focus on attitudes toward European integration as a function of individuals' rational evaluations,

however well-informed these may be, of the perceived benefits and disadvantages of EU membership and increased economic coordination and cooperation between Member States. This perspective is applied to several different, often overlapping dimensions, and economic-utilitarian explanations to EU support exist at both the national and individual levels. Cost-benefits analyses (alternatively referred to as rational economic calculations or utilitarian evaluations) are sometimes called the “instrumentalist approach”. Herein, support or opposition is explained in terms of the perceived advantages and disadvantages of integration, unification and coordination at the European level. These evaluations of costs and benefits may be egocentric (i.e. based on subjective self-interest) or sociotropic (i.e. based on assessments of perceived overall costs and benefits for local, regional or national communities).

The European Union of today is the descendant of the European Coal and Steel Community, which was established by the Treaty of Paris in 1951 and included six member states: France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) is largely attributed to the initiative taken by French foreign minister Robert Schuman. The motivations behind the establishment of the ECSC are clearly stated in what is referred to as the Schuman Declaration of 1950: to “... make war not only unthinkable but materially impossible”. By organizing certain specific sectors of these countries’ economies under a centralized authority, cooperating countries would ensure common oversight and the ability to enforce swift and effective countermeasures in the case of a participating member showing signs of militarization (indicated by patterns of resource allocation, investment and transparency surrounding production and imports of coal and steel). Additionally, the creation of a common market of these valuable resources would remove or neutralise competition between the countries, further decreasing the likelihood of animosity and possible confrontation. The establishment of the ECSC was the world’s first instance of a system of *supranational* governance, even if its jurisdiction and the scope of its activities was limited at first. However, the ECSC was composed of four separate institutions: a High Authority of independent appointees, a Common Assembly of national members of parliament, a Special Council of national ministers, and a Court of Justice. These four bodies are the progenitors of today’s European Commission, European Parliament, Council of the EU and the European Court of Justice, respectively.

The institutional blueprint for the eventual integration and pooling of decision-making powers and jurisdiction on political as well as economic matters was determined as early as 1951, . However, the ECSC and the European Economic Community into which it transformed was

long regarded, and rightfully so, as a primarily economic project. Consequently, research on attitudes towards European integration focused largely on perceptions of economic factors, and citizens' rational evaluations of economic utility. Economic growth and development are indeed both central motivations for European integration as well as being among the EU's predominant responsibilities.

However, purely economic calculations were not the only determinants of support for integration in the earliest stages of research on the subject. Ronald Inglehart (1977) famously theorized that the post-war generations would increasingly develop so-called postmaterialist values due to the unprecedented affluence, freedom of choice and expression and security (i.e. sustained peace on the continent and the absence of physical threats) that many of them experienced. While older generations tended to be more concerned with material and economic security, the post-war generations largely took this security and prosperity for granted and instead placed greater importance on immaterial goals. Environmentalism, racial and gender equality, self-expression and individual autonomy are some examples of postmaterialist values highlighted by Inglehart (1977). Inglehart's argument, while at one time being both relevant and empirically supported, has since been quite fiercely contested (e.g. Janssen 1991; Anderson and Reichert 1995; Gabel 1998a).

Dalton and Eichenberg (1991) performed a cross-national study of support for European integration, and argued that in general, Europeans assess and form their opinions on and attitudes towards EC (European Community, the predecessor of the EU) membership based on evaluations of their personal and national economic situation. In a seminal article on attitudes toward European integration, Gabel and Palmer (1995) challenge Dalton and Eichenberg's view of the relationship between economic interests, both national and individual ones, and European integration. Dalton and Eichenberg argue that Europeans evaluate EC membership on the basis of perceptions about the general economic situation in their country, at present. In other words, any and all economic considerations may influence attitudes towards the usefulness of European integration, even if their specific causes are exogenous to the EC.

Gabel and Palmer oppose Eichenberg and Dalton's (Dalton and Eichenberg 1991; Eichenberg and Dalton 1993) theory, arguing that EC policies and integrative measures by national governments, are only some of several factors influencing personal and national economic welfare. They view the impact of EC policies as secondary to exogenous changes in the global economy, and to domestic politics and economic management. Thus, they contest Dalton and Eichenberg's proposal that European citizens primarily hold the EC accountable for their

economic well-being and prospects. Gabel and Palmer's analysis of Eurobarometer data supports their contention, showing that only 12.3 percent of respondents named EC economic politics as the primary source of their country's economic problems. These results subsequently lead them to several hypotheses about the relationship between attitudes towards European integration, and economic conditions (past, present and future) at the national and individual levels.

As I have previously noted, the vast majority of existing studies on public support for the EU have offered economically oriented explanations for the variation in people's attitudes within and between European countries. Some recurring variables that are explored in these studies are satisfaction with one's own income, job security, occupational skills, educational level and degrees of intra-EU trade. For instance, Gabel (1998a) and Gabel and Palmer (1995) have made the argument that citizens are differently affected by the liberalization of the EU market: an increasingly liberal labour market will prove more threatening for people with low levels of education and less marketable skills. As employers become able to draw manpower from across the entirety of the EU, as opposed to relying on exclusively domestic labour, low-skilled jobs may be filled and appear to be "taken" by citizens of poorer member states who are willing to work for less. This liberalization of the labour market can also have an adverse effect on the wages of low-skilled workers. These two factors lead Gabel and Palmer (1995) to argue that low-skilled workers are more likely to oppose European integration. Conversely, they argue that the more educated segments of the population are not only less affected by such job insecurity, but educated or high-skilled individuals also have greater possibilities of getting jobs in other member states. Furthermore, individuals with relatively high levels of education may be better capable of understanding and thus accurately evaluating the EU's performance, obstacles or benefits. Thus, they argue that individuals with higher levels of education and occupational skills will be more likely to hold favourable attitudes towards the EU.

The liberalization of *capital* markets is also said to produce similar effects. The increasing opportunities for investment and economic engagements provided by EU membership are theorized to favour citizens with higher income levels and more capital. International economic openness pressurizes welfare systems and shifts the burden of taxation from mobile factors of production (e.g. capital) to immobile factors (e.g. labour). Additionally, economic internationalization and expanding intra-EU trade affects the relative scarcity of assets. The Stolper-Samuelson theorem posits that trade benefits individuals who own factors with which the national economy is well endowed and hurts those who own relatively scarce factors

(Mayda and Rodrik 2002; Hooghe and Marks 2004, 415). Hooghe and Marks (2004) theorize that in wealthier, capital-rich member states, unskilled workers would be more likely to hold Eurosceptic attitudes, and managers and professionals would be more Euro-supportive. In poorer, more labour-rich member states, they expect the inverse to be the case.

It is apparent that most existing, especially earlier research on popular support for EU integration assumes support to largely be a function of economic calculations. Sánchez-Cuenca (2000) sees the dynamics of EU attitudes and cost/benefit-calculations quite differently. He argues that support (i.e. pro-integration or pro-EU attitudes) is the consequence of the interplay between supranational and national politics; Favourable opinions of the functioning and advantageousness of supranational institutions and politicians, when combined with less favourable assessments of national institutions, likely contributes positively to support for the EU and by extension the processes of European integration. His core assumption is as follows: the worse the opinion of the national political system and its actors, the lower the opportunity cost of transferring sovereignty or jurisdictional authority to Europe. Sánchez-Cuenca (2000) illustrates this point by showing that levels of support for integration are higher in countries with greater corruption and less extensive welfare systems.

In addition to these individual-level effects of economic concerns and consequences, people may also be sensitive to *collective* economic circumstances, i.e. the effects of EU membership and integration on the whole of society or the various groups and communities with which they identify and wherein they are embedded. These concerns for collective, in-group-specific benefits or costs are generally referred to as “sociotropic concerns”. Conversely, scholars have dubbed the private or individual concerns and perceptions of costs and benefits “egocentric”.

Following several rounds of enlargement towards the post-Soviet Central and Eastern European states and poorer Southern European countries, the EU now encompasses states with very different levels of wealth, and economies of different sizes with distinct characteristics. A handful of member states, primarily the older Western European ones, are net contributors to the EU’s budgets. The relatively poorer member states, which make up the majority of members of the EU, are net beneficiaries of EU spending. According to several studies, citizens of countries that are net beneficiaries of EU spending should be more inclined to support European integration, while citizens of net benefactor states will more likely oppose it (e.g. Gabel 1998a). This logic is often present in federalized states as well, where the poorer regions tend to favour centralization while richer regions favour decentralization.

Furthermore, the economic factors that may influence attitudes towards the EU can be either subjective or objective (Dalton and Eichenberg 1991). Citizens who feel hopeful or confident in their economic future, both personally and for their country, are likely to regard European integration as a positive thing. Conversely, those who are fearful or insecure about their economic future will be more likely to oppose the EU. European integration creates “winners and losers” in several additional ways. Occupational skills, cognitive mobilizational capacity, job security and relative wealth have all been found to affect EU attitudes, albeit with different strength and high contextual dependency (i.e. from one stage in life to another, in economic booms or recessions, etc.).

The final recurring factor that is studied through the rational economic approach is how a country’s institutional makeup influences its citizens’ attitudes towards the EU, by way of differential market dynamics, economic conditions and welfare systems. The EU encompasses member states with quite distinct institutional arrangements based on different political traditions. This is especially true regarding three key aspects of a country’s political economy: labour coordination, business coordination and redistribution of wealth. The further a country lies from the EU median of labour coordination, business coordination and redistributive arrangements, the greater the costs imposed on citizens by integrational measures and EU legislation (Eichenberg and Dalton 1991; 1993). European integration tends to converge on a mixed-market model, which has different subjective and objective implications for citizens of different member states. Residents of social democratic Scandinavian states can likely expect to see their welfare systems diluted as European integration carries on, and citizens of liberal market economies can expect increasing redistribution over time. In social democratic systems, the left is expected to oppose integration, while the right will likely be supportive. In liberal market systems, the left will support integration while the right is likely to be opposed. However, there is broad scholarly consensus on the fact that supportive or oppositional attitudes towards the EU, and domestic political initiatives regarding Europe do not easily map onto traditional left/right cleavages of competition. This point will be elaborated further in the section of domestic political context-oriented explanatory approaches.

Economic theories of citizens’ attitude formation are most useful when economic consequences can be perceived with a certain degree of accuracy, are large or significant enough to matter for ordinary citizens, and when an individual’s choice of preferred integrational outcomes are perceived to have an actual effect on policies, either by way of referenda or conventional elections. While it is true that the economic-utilitarian approach is increasingly being

supplemented and to some extent challenged by other explanatory approaches, and that the insights provided by this strand of research seem to be proving less valuable and robust on their own, there is still plenty of research interest in public attitudes to European integration in relation to economic factors. Economic conditions and evaluations of utility will likely always be an important determinant of EU-attitudes, but developments in the scholarship (notably ones presented and discussed in the two upcoming subchapters) seem to indicate that purely economic explanatory models are obsolete.

### ***2.6.2 National identity and culture-based approaches to explaining attitudes towards the EU***

More recently, the literature has been expanded by a growing focus on what we may summarily call cultural and identity-related determinants of EU attitudes. This second explanatory perspective encompasses considerations of national pride and territorial identity, degrees of national attachment or patriotism, inclusive versus exclusive conceptions of national and regional identity, and perceived cultural threats emanating from the processes of European integration and its consequences. Studies pertaining to the identity-based perspective typically conceive of the European Union as a polity that overarches established territorial communities, and consider how public opinion (namely support or opposition) and attitudes towards the EU are constrained by the ways citizens conceive and conceptualize their identities. Among the various cultural and territorial identities that individuals hold and seek to preserve, and that inform their political attitudes, the strongest ones are national identities. However, regional, ethnic and religious identities can also be mobilized in ways that determine support for the EU. It is important to note that most scholars do not regard the economic-utilitarian and identitarian perspectives as competing or mutually exclusive. Rather, the increasing scholarly focus on identity-based and cultural factors has come to complement and refine, and thus improve the explanatory power of the earlier theories.

In the early days of the European project, it was commonly assumed and theorized that the processes of economic integration and increasing trade would eventually lead to the development and strengthening of shared political attitudes and a European identity among the people of Europe. Ernst Haas, a pioneering scholar of European integration, formulated this process into his theory of regional integration which focused on jurisdictional “spillover effects” as the main drivers of EU integration (Haas 1958). Economic coordination and pooling of decision-making powers would eventually come to necessitate a certain degree of socio-political integration, but Haas expected this development to be slow-paced and largely

uncontentious. However, these spillover effects have failed to generate the expected pan-European identities and loyalties that Haas imagined, and this conceptualization of support for the EU has increasingly become challenged (Hooghe and Marks 2004). While pioneers such as Haas (1958) and Inglehart (1970) were mostly concerned with the ways in which European integration affects and determines people's conceptions of identity, recent research flips the causal arrow (Hooghe and Marks 2004).

National identities and cultural concerns have been found to restrict and influence people's support for the EU in several ways. In an influential study that pioneered the national-identitarian approach to explaining EU attitudes, Lauren McLaren (2002) argues that most of the literature either willingly or unwillingly disregards "the heart of the nature of opposition..." by ignoring notions or perceptions of perceived cultural threats. Essentially, she argues that that citizens' hostility toward foreigners and their wish to protect their culture from external influences could not be ignored. The primary challenges to the permissive consensus and elite-driven integrational policies were posed by nationalist parties that mobilized people's identities in their opposition to the EU.

Notably, McLaren (2002) found that anti-immigration attitudes and concerns about the perceived threats posed by foreigners and the EU's policy of free movement of people appear to correlate quite strongly with opposition to European integration. McLaren argues that the degree to which a person supports or opposes the EU is determined not only by their rational evaluations of perceived costs and benefits of membership and continuing integration, but also by the degree to which they oppose immigration and feel threatened by globalization and ever-growing immigration from both within and outside of the EU. She notes that for these anti-immigrant sentiments to translate into opposition to European integration, individuals must (correctly or incorrectly) identify the EU and European-level policies as the primary source or the main driver of increasing immigration to their country. This argument is contingent on the previously theorized relationship between moderate-to high capabilities for cognitive mobilization, on the one hand, and EU support on the other (i.e. Inglehart 1977; Gabel 1998b). People's educational levels have been found to strongly influence attitudes towards immigrants: Europeans that have completed a higher number of years of full-time education and achieved higher-than-average levels of educational attainment (vis-à-vis the national average), are on average more likely to express pro-immigrant attitudes than their less educated compatriots (Mayda 2006). Additionally, McLaren found that the strength of a person's attachment and loyalty to their nation also had a significant effect: Europeans who expressed having a strong

loyalty and devotion to their country, and who identified strongly with their national community, were less likely to be supportive of the EU and continued European integration. One of the few drawbacks of McLaren's pioneering study on EU support in relation to anti-immigrant sentiments and prejudices, is that she fails to adequately explain the mechanisms that underpin this relationship. McLaren identifies a robust relationship between pro-immigrant stances and Euroscepticism, and conversely between anti-immigrant attitudes and Euroscepticism. However, she does not discuss the potential antecedents of these attitudes, and as a result fails to prescribe any potential remedies.

In a similar vein, Toshkov and Kortenska (2015) found that, among citizens of Spain, the Netherlands, Ireland and France, the growing numbers of immigrants to their country from newer Central and Eastern European member states has negatively impacted support for European integration. However, the relationship between anti-immigrant attitudes and attitudes towards European integration is not necessarily as straightforward as these studies seem to indicate. As I have previously noted, anti-immigrant attitudes translate to eurosceptic attitudes only insofar as people regard immigration as a direct consequence of EU-level policies and European integration.

De Vreese and Boomgaarden (2005) argue that individuals who define immigrants to their country as the "out-group" will likely have a tendency to regard anyone with different a nationality, ethnicity or religious adherence from themselves as members of an out-group. Europeans who are negatively biased or prejudiced against immigrants are likely to be equally hostile towards other out-groups, such as citizens of fellow Member States. Therefore, they argue that since the EU removes borders, promotes socio-political coordination and reinforces multiculturalism, people that hold these attitudes towards "others" in general will also likely oppose European integration (De Vreese and Boomgaarden 2005).

One of the main challenges of examining anti-immigrant attitudes in relation to EU attitudes, is developing relevant, accurate measures of anti-immigrant attitudes in Europe. One of the most widely used measures of anti-immigrant attitudes, so called item indices, are argued by Kentmen-Cin and Erisen to be lacklustre. Such indices are constructed from survey questions that gauge respondents' evaluations of how immigration can directly or indirectly affect their personal and collective (i.e. national) economic costs and benefits, the security of their community, and the safeguarding of their customary ways of life. Kentmen-Cin and Erisen (2017) argue that such indices do not allow for accurate identification of the relative explanatory power of the different components that make up prejudice toward immigrants. They propose

that there is a salient need to address how a diverse range of perceived cultural, security-related, individual and national economic and religious threats posed by immigrants independently affects opposition to European integration, the EU and its institutions, and the specific policies that emanate from the European level.

Moreover, they challenge the studies which attempt to measure anti-immigrant attitudes by using the percentage of immigrants in EU member states based on the assumption that "... the larger the number of of immigrants, the greater the level of anti-immigrant sentiments will be" (Kentmen-Cin and Erisen 2017, 5). These measures are inadequate and of limited value, as the mere number of immigrants in a country is unlikely to adequately capture the multidimensional complexities of the perceived threats. McLaren and others have identified two distinct categories of perceived threats that motivate anti-immigrant attitudes. *Realistic threats* are those that people perceive that immigrants pose to the in-groups economic welfare and relative access to group resources (i.e. immigrants abusing or straining social benefit systems). *Symbolic threats* refer to the perceived threats that immigrants pose to the in-group's traditional way of life, religious practices and so on.

Citizens' national identity can influence their attitudes towards the EU in some additional ways. While many citizens of EU member states do in fact identify as "European" alongside their national, local or regional identities, this does not necessarily translate to supportive attitudes towards the EU. The fact that many Europeans identify as such may have come about despite, and not because of, the spillover dynamics that were proposed by Haas (1958). Several recent studies have indicated a quite counterintuitive relationship between European and national identities among the citizens of EU member states. As I have previously noted, support for the EU and European integration seems to be decreasing all over the continent, and across different segments of the population. At the same time, however, the degree to which EU citizens self-identify as being "European" alongside their national identity has been found to be increasing. Sides and Citrin (2007) argue that even as the European project is declining in popularity, people's tendency to identify with both their nation and Europe has increased. For example, Klandermans (2003) has illustrated the presence a cumulative pattern of territorial identities among European farmers. Those who self-report as identifying with Europe to some extent, also tend to consistently identify with their national community. The more inclusive their conception of identity, the less strongly they identify with their community (regional, national and supranational/European); the stronger they identify with one of these communities, the less inclusive their conception of identity.

However, it is also well-established that opposition to European integration is often conceived as a defense of the national community, culture and identity against control and perceived infringement on national sovereignty from Brussels. Right-wing populist parties such as those that have recently been making electoral strides in France, Italy and Austria, increasingly promote nationalism and cultural concerns as being directly opposed to the processes of European integration. The opposition to European integration that is promoted by right-wing populist parties differs substantially from the Euroscepticism of left-wing parties: while the former opposes integration on the basis of culture, identity and national sovereignty, the latter does so primarily on the basis of economic, welfare-driven concerns.

As I have previously mentioned, national attachment alone does not necessarily translate into anti-EU attitudes. Christin and Trechsel (2002) and Carey (2002) have shown that strong national attachments, when combined with moderate- to high levels of national pride, produce a significant negative effect on support for European integration and attitudes towards the EU. Once again, this effect may be mediated (i.e. strengthened or weakened) by a number of different factors such as consumption of news, educational and occupational skills, and what is known as Social Dominance Orientation.

These complex and conflicting dynamics of European and National identities may only be resolved by properly theorizing how national identity can both reinforce and undermine the supportive or opposing attitudes held by European citizens. Scholars such as Diez Medrano (e.g. Diez Medrano 2003) have argued for the importance of countries' national historical contexts and legacies when examining variation in Eurosupport between countries. Applying a sociological framework, relying on both ethnographic, interpretive, historical and statistical methods, he argues that nationalism, national identity and support for EU integration takes various forms from one country to the next depending on historical contexts and "cultural consciousness". For example, he argues that British national identity is strongly influenced by their imperial legacy, and that contemporary German nationalism is characterised by a substantial degree of post-WWII guilt. He argues that a country's unique historical legacy tends to inform and determine the supranational ambitions and cooperative willingness of ordinary citizens and politicians alike. Perceptions of uniqueness or exceptionalism, as well as historical grievances, can foster a cultural consciousness that is uncondusive to integration and collaboration with neighbouring European states. Colonial (i.e. United Kingdom or Belgium) or WWII-related (i.e. Germany or Italy) guilt, as well as material and economic wealth relative

to neighbouring states and the European average, can foster an increased willingness for intra-European cooperation and the pursuit of shared objectives (Diez Medrano 2003).

Finally, the ways in which an individual conceives their identity appears to be decisive for whether strong national attachment contributes to anti-EU attitudes. Hooghe and Marks (2004) make a useful distinction between *inclusive* and *exclusive* national identity. They argue that citizens who conceive of their national identity as exclusive, i.e. incompatible with other territorial attachments and identities, will likely be more euroskeptical than those who conceive of their national identity as inclusive. They exemplify this by referring to Belgian data: Belgians who state that they identify exclusively as either Belgian or Flemish are found to oppose multi-level national governance. Citizens who identify themselves as being both Belgian and Flemish, on the other hand, tend to support it.

Research on national identity indicates that a person's national identity, in terms of the strength of attachment to one's nation and the degree to which identity informs decisions and preferences in a person's daily life, is normally formed pre-adolescence. The consequences of identity for political attitudes and preferences, however, appear to be contingent on both socialization and political conflict or politicization. Hooghe and Marks therefore argue that identity may determine a person's attitudes towards the EU when the domestic political context is conducive to the mobilization of nationalist, identitarian and cultural concerns. Some of the ways in which a country's domestic political context can shape its citizens' attitudes towards Europe are discussed in the forthcoming subchapter.

### ***2.6.3 Domestic political context, cues and benchmarks as determinants of attitudes towards the EU***

The final explanatory perspective on attitudes toward the EU and European integration can be referred to as the domestic political perspective. Studies that employ this explanatory approach seek to explain individual-level variance of attitudes towards the EU based on political factors such as the competitive structures and party cleavages within the domestic political sphere, as well as the degree to which politicians have the will and motivation to politicize EU-related issues. Some of the recurring themes and explanatory variables within this perspective are satisfaction with governmental performance and representation, the degree of politicization of EU issues in the domestic arena, the success of emerging populist challenger parties, and what has been broadly known as cue-taking or benchmarking theory. It is important to note that similarly to the identity-oriented perspective, factors pertaining to the domestic political arena are assumed to compliment or mediate the effects of evaluations of perceived economic utility,

rather than opposing them: “... *a new line of research, drawing on cognitive and social psychology, challenges this either/or thinking by examining how political cues – grounded in ideology or in elite communication – mediate the effects of economic calculations of perceived economic utility and community membership and cultural concerns*” (Hooghe and Marks 2005, 420).

Political sophistication (alternatively known as political awareness, expertise or knowledge) is another one of the most important individual-level factors that affect public opinion, political attitudes and political behavior (Highton 2009). Many of the studies that employ the domestic-political approach rely on one or several of the following assumptions about people’s perceptions and evaluations of the European Union: The EU is widely regarded as too institutionally complex and confusing; too philosophically and geographically remote; too technocratic and undemocratic; and of limited practical or emotional consequence in the eyes of ordinary citizens.

The aforementioned notion of insufficient familiarity with the EU among Europeans has empirical support. Subjective and objective measures of European citizens’ knowledge about European-level politics indicate that people tend to be quite unaware of, and uninterested in, the ways in which the EU is structured and how its policies are deliberated and decided within its institutions. Studies indicate that European integration is too complex or cognitively demanding for most citizens to grasp entirely (Hooghe and Marks 2005). The complexity and remoteness of the mechanisms and entities (i.e. EU institutions and their relationship with the EU’s constituent national governments) that drive European integration provide a poor or insufficient basis for individual citizens to evaluate whether they support or oppose it. This unfamiliarity with the EU has several potential consequences. Unknowledgeable or ill-informed citizens may fail to recognize the implications, both positive and negative, of decisions taken at the supranational level. Furthermore, unfamiliarity with the EU’s institutions, its decision-making and power-sharing procedures, and the policy areas over which the Union does and does not have jurisdiction, can lead citizens to oppose the EU based on their unfavorable evaluations of domestic policies. In other words, conditions and outcomes at the national level serve as proxies for evaluating those that occur at the supranational level. Moreover, familiarity and in-depth knowledge about the institutional framework and functioning of the EU are, as Habermas (2011) and the EU itself (Directorate-General for Communication 2011) argues, necessary preconditions for the establishment and nurturing of a shared European identity, and therefore consequential for the future prospects of European integration.

Additionally, EU-level politics are covered much less extensively in national media across Europe than domestic politics. Since people tend to be more knowledgeable about and more interested in politics at the domestic level, it is likely that many evaluate international or supranational politics and policies based on their assessment of domestic politics. In other words, citizens with insufficient knowledge about the EU's institutions and the implications and consequences of European integration rely on *cues* and *benchmarks* from domestic political actors and elites when they evaluate and determine their support for the EU. An important type of such cues is provided by national political parties, and the competition among them.

It is well-established that national political elites shape public support for European integration. Namely, citizens who support pro-European parties tend to express more supportive attitudes towards integration. Conversely, supporters of parties that are expressly Eurosceptical are likely to express more unfavorable attitudes. Furthermore, since most consequential decisions within the EU are made by national representatives working in conjunction, an individual's degree of support for the incumbent government may translate to the European level. Research on this relationship indicates that supporters of incumbent government parties tend to express support for the EU, while those who are dissatisfied with their government will more likely oppose European integration and EU-level politics in general. However, mainstream parties across Europe have been very reluctant to introduce EU-related issues in the domestic arena. Mainstream parties on the centre-left and centre-right of the conventional left/right spectrum of electoral competition have generally been very Euro-supportive, to a much larger extent than both the general public and smaller parties from the fringes of the political arena. Additionally, European integration is multifaceted and support or opposition to it does not reliably map onto left/right divides. While right-wing challengers generally oppose European integration based on nationalism, perceived cultural and socio-political threats and broader cultural concerns, left-wing parties have traditionally opposed the EU due to fears of it undermining workers' rights, minority protections and the welfare system.

Regarding voters or supporters of the emerging, explicitly eurosceptical or even anti-EU parties, these citizens tend to be consistently opposed to European integration whether or not they make electoral gains and achieve governmental offices. While the parties themselves may have to moderate some of their more extreme positions for pragmatic concerns when entering into government, their supporters are likely to remain as eurosceptical as before, if not even more so. When these parties end up as losers, however, the eurosceptic attitudes of their supporters are likely to increase in strength.

### Politicization of European integration in national political arenas

Hooghe and Marks (2009) have identified an increase in competition and conflicts over Europe among parties in almost all EU countries. They find that on average, European integration and EU-related issues have become the third most salient issue in domestic politics, behind taxes/redistribution and deregulation/privatization. They claim that this growing politicization of European integration has changed both the content and the scope of decision-making on European matters within member states. This development is mainly driven by elites having to accommodate and become more responsive towards the public's growing Euroscepticism. Additionally, emerging eurosceptical parties can force the mainstream parties to reassess and redefine their stances on Europe so as not to lose voters to their challengers. Kriesi (2016) makes the argument that politicization of European integration is both time-dependent and dependent on national political conflict structures (i.e. cleavages). These conflict structures, he argues, vary systematically between three regions of Europe: Northwestern, Southern and Eastern Europe.

Hooghe and Marks (2018) reiterate an earlier point of theirs; the permissive consensus that once facilitated a mostly elite-driven authority over integrative measures is broken. In recent times, European integration has increasingly become contingent on a "constraining dissensus" where politicization, perceived threats to national identity and sovereignty, and anti-EU populist mobilization all constitute constraints on the direction and scope of future integration. In their view, European integration has been caught in a cultural cleavage that is currently reshaping the structure of political conflict across European democracies. In this new reality of domestic contestation over Europe, questions of identity and culture are far more important cleavages than what Neofunctionalists and liberal Intergovernmentalists have theorized for several decades.

While the EU has previously faced substantial challenges and crises, it is currently experiencing an unprecedented level of tensions among its citizens due to both exogenous geopolitical factors and unexpected developments in the national political arenas of certain Member States. The Eurozone crisis, the 2015 refugee crisis, Islamic terrorist attacks on European targets, Putin's "imperialist" aspirations and Brexit are all examples of developments that would pose a challenge individually, but the fact that they have all emerged in parallel within the past decade maximizes the threat that they pose in conjunction. Kriesi (2016)

### Emerging eurosceptical parties and political entrepreneurs

Following the unexpected backlash from the 1992 Maastricht Treaty and the failure of the so-called Constitutional Treaty, also known as the Treaty of Rome (2004), Member State executives and the EU Commission engaged in numerous attempts or schemes to remove questions regarding European integration from the agendas of political parties within Member States, as well as attempting to limit the involvement of citizens in decision-making on and within the EU. De Wilde and Zürn (2012) argue that these initiatives aiming at de-politicizing EU-related issues are unlikely to succeed, particularly in the medium-to long-term. They go on to argue that politicization is a direct consequence of the increasing authority of the EU over a variety of policy areas, and what some regard as the EU's "integration at any cost"-mentality. The well-known debates and concerns over the EU's democratic deficit, as well as growing sentiments of the EU having been afforded, or affording itself ever-increasing powers with tangible implications for ordinary citizens, has further contributed to growing Eurosceptical attitudes among Europeans. These attitudes are in turn mobilized, perhaps even strengthened, by so-called "political entrepreneurs" from the left and right fringes of countries' domestic political arena. Some of the more contentious issues that have received considerable backlash are the proposed "EU army", the austerity measures imposed on poorer Southern European countries following the Euro crisis, and the proposed EU constitution. Such points of contention tend to reinforce populist notions of power struggles between self-interested and unresponsive elites on one hand, and a disenfranchised, silent majority on the other.

To summarize, domestic cues and benchmarks have been found to determine individual-level attitudes towards the EU insofar as EU-related issues have become politicized. Mainstream political parties have traditionally had much to lose and little to gain from adopting anti-EU positions, while the opposite is increasingly the case for challenger parties from the left and right extremes of the political spectrum in European countries: Since the mainstream, centre-left and centre-right parties are reluctant to politicize questions regarding the EU, the subject is "up for grabs". Satisfaction with the incumbent government and the functioning of democracy in one's country is likely to correlate with support for the EU, but the changing structure of competition among political parties across Europe is increasingly forcing previously Euro-supportive politicians to respond to the people's identity-based and economic concerns over the ever-growing speed, scope and depth of integration.

## **2.7 Human Values, Schwartz's theory and the effects of values on attitudes**

As I have presented in the previous chapters, the research literature on attitudes towards the EU is extensive and spans a wide range of different explanatory perspectives, with each perspective being characterised by different (although sometimes interdependent) explanatory variables. However, none of the aforementioned studies have managed to account for more than 20-30% of the variation in support for the EU. The limited explanatory power of the existing models presented in the previous sections may be caused by measures with less than perfect reliability and validity. For example, if the true relationship between an independent variable (a) and a dependent variable (b) is 1, and the reliabilities of the two are .7 (which is considered as satisfactory), the observed correlation between (a) and (b) is going to be 0.49. Moreover, the construct validity of the measures, i.e. the degree to which the measures capture the theoretical construct, is always less than perfect. Less than perfect construct validity is also going to attenuate the observed relationships between independent and dependent variables.

However, a second potential explanation for the limited explained variance is that past research has used an incomplete set of variables. This means that important explanatory variables are omitted from the models, and thus that there are other, unexplored variables that can possibly be included in order to improve the explained variance. Basic human values have been found to determine, and reliably predict, a wide array of social and political attitudes (e.g. pro-environmental attitudes, pro- or anti-social tendencies and identification with left-or right wing parties, among others). However, attitudes towards the EU and towards European Integration have not yet been explored through a value-theoretical lens. I wish to contribute to the scholarship on attitudes towards the EU and fill this research gap by exploring the potential relationships between human values and EU attitudes among respondents to the European Social Survey from Sweden, Denmark and Norway.

### ***2.7.1 Human values in social science***

In social and political life, values serve the function of guiding principles or underlying motivational orientations and tendencies that determine and structure people's attitudes, beliefs and conduct in particular ways (e.g. Rokeach 1973; Feather 1979a; Schwartz 1994). Values are generally conceptualized as overarching evaluative standards or orientations which allows humans to identify and subsequently pursue the goals and modes of action that they deem to be the most *valuable*. Human values, value systems and people's orientational tendencies are also central to much of public discourse and political contestation. Rokeach (1973) defines values as "... *multifaceted standards that guide conduct in a variety of ways. They lead us to take*

*particular positions on social issues and they predispose us to favour one ideology over another. They are standards employed to evaluate and judge others and ourselves*". Following this logic, values are a precursor to, or predeterminant of, the attitudes that in turn direct and determine a person's actions. As Mayton, Ball-Rokeach and Loges (1994) argue, human values belong to a distinctive and restricted class of psychological constructs that are truly multidisciplinary, and that have successfully been applied in research projects across most social and political science disciplines. Values are continuously debated against one another and competing interest groups tend to demand or pursue priority (i.e. in terms of policies, legislation and representation) for the values that they hold dear or regard as important. Furthermore, values are often rhetorically invoked in presidential and parliamentary speeches, for example by conservatives urging citizens to uphold traditional "family values", or Norwegian parliamentarians contentiously debating the essence of what constitutes collective Norwegian values. When used as a verb, to value something means to prioritize it, hold it in high esteem and consistently regarding it as important. In the social scientific context, values refer to the standards, principles and evaluative tendencies that predetermine people's attitudes and behaviours.

Social psychologists have been studying values since as early as the 1960's, and some of these earlier works have provided the foundations for the theorizing that eventually became the theory of Basic Human Values (Schwartz 1992, 1994) developed by Shalom Schwartz and colleagues. In the psychological and social or political scientific application of the concept, however, values must comply with several definitional criteria. According to Schwartz (1994), a value is 1) a persistent belief that 2) relates to a person's conception of desirable goals and modes of conduct, 3) transcends specific situations and contexts, 4) informs or guides evaluations of behaviour, people or other attitude objects and 5) is hierarchically ordered by its importance in relation to other values.

### ***2.7.2 Schwartz's theory of basic human values***

In 1992, Shalom Schwartz presented a theory of *basic human values*, building on some key elements derived from earlier approaches to the study of values and their relationship to attitudes and behaviour among individuals. The theory of basic human values prescribes ten motivationally distinct values, which are presumed (and empirically indicated) to encompass the major value orientations that are recognized and observed across cultures around the globe. In addition to identifying and describing the ten value types that are presumed to be universally present in all societies and among individuals across the world, Schwartz also presented an

original measurement instrument that was cross-culturally validated. In 2001, Schwartz and colleagues further developed the measurement instrument in order to achieve the highest possible degree of universal applicability and basis for systematic comparisons.

The contributions made by Schwartz have spurred a revival of empirical research on the relations of values to attitudes and behaviour, both within and across cultures. This revival of research interest was further accelerated by the incorporation of a modified, somewhat simpler measurement instrument for human values in the semi-annual European Social Survey (ESS).

Universals in the content of human values and their structural organization have been the focus of research for more than two decades (Schwartz 1992, 2006; Schwartz & Bilsky 1987, 1990), with Schwartz arguably making the most notable contributions as well as sparking a renewed research interest into human values and their role as determinants of social and political attitudes and behaviours. In 1992, Shalom Schwartz presented a theory of *basic human values*, building on common elements in earlier approaches to the study of values and their relationship to attitudes and behaviour among individuals. The theory of basic human values encompasses ten motivationally distinct value types, which are presumed (and empirically indicated) to encompass the primary value orientations that are recognized and observed across cultures and countries around the globe. In addition to identifying and describing the ten value types that are presumed to be universally present in all societies and among individuals across the world, Schwartz also generated an original measurement instrument that was cross-culturally validated. In 2001, Schwartz and colleagues further developed the measurement instrument in order to achieve the highest possible degree of universal applicability, and to provide a basis for systematic comparisons.

Schwartz defines human values as “*desirable transsituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person*”. In simple terms, a value constitutes a belief, or rather a conviction, that one circumstance, potential outcome or mode of conduct is preferable over another. Consequently, values tend to transcend specific situations in a predictable manner, whereas attitudes explicitly refer to assessments of one specific object and its perceived attributes. Values are considered as being central to understanding and, in certain instances, predicting people’s attitudes and related behaviour. Schwartz and others conceptualize values as deeply rooted, abstract motivations that may guide, justify and explain attitudes, norms, opinions and actions (cf. Feldman 2003; Halman and de Moor 1994; Rokeach 1973; Schwartz 1992, 1994). According to Schwartz’s conceptualization, the primary aspect that differentiates among people’s value orientations is the motivational goals that they express.

A key component of Schwartz’s theory is the way in which he conceives the relationship among the distinct universal values, particularly those that are termed “higher-order values”. The actions that people undertake in pursuit of each value can generate consequences that may be conflicting or compatible with the pursuit of other values. The incompatibility of certain values in relation to one another yields a two-dimensional structure dividing the so-called “human value circumplex” into four sections. The assumption that people’s value systems are structured on a “motivational continuum” facilitates the generation of systematic, coherent hypotheses about possible links between people’s value priorities and other variables that are likely to result in either accordance or opposition to the motivational goals.

Schwartz’s theory postulates ten universal values which can be organised into four higher-order groups. Each of the values identified by Schwartz is based on a central goal that constitutes the underlying motivating factor. The four higher-order value types, the corresponding ten values and the motivational goals that define them are presented in the table below.

**Table 2.1** – Higher-order values, universal human values and their definitional motivations

<b>Higher-order</b>	<b>Values</b>	<b>Motivational emphasis</b>
Openness to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Self-direction</li> <li>- Stimulation</li> </ul>	Independent thought and action, appreciation for free choice, creativity and exploration without prejudice.
Self-Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hedonism</li> <li>- Achievement</li> <li>- Power</li> </ul>	Pleasure, sensory gratification; personal success through demonstrating competence according to societal standards; social status and prestige, control or dominance over others
Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Security</li> <li>- Conformity</li> <li>- Tradition</li> </ul>	Safety, harmony and stability of society; restraint of actions or impulses that are likely to be disruptive, cause harm or violate social norms; and respect, commitment to customs or ideas provided by the dominant culture
Self-transcendence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Benevolence</li> <li>- Universalism</li> </ul>	Preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent contact (i.e. the “in-group”); understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature

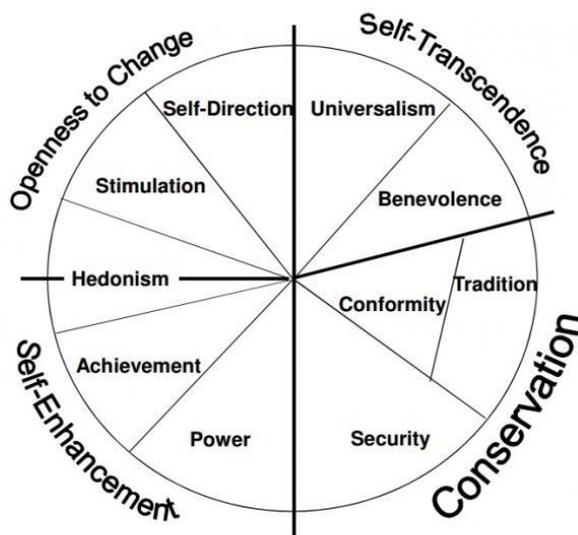
The pursuit of any of the ten basic values presented by Schwartz and colleagues may result in either an accordance with one another, or in a conflict with at least one other basic value. Therefore, the theory also explains how these values are interconnected, and how they influence each other. Since values can lightly or strongly oppose one another on a spectrum, Schwartz and colleagues visually organised the values in a circular structure along two bipolar dimensions. The first of these dimensions is **openness to change** versus **conservation**, which contrasts independence and freedom of choice with conformity and veneration of traditions. The second bipolar dimension is **self-enhancement** versus **self-transcendence**, which contrasts a focus on achievement and status-seeking with altruism and giving primacy to the well-being of others. It should be noted that the borders between the key motivational goals are artificial and that one value therefore flows into the next. This can be illustrated by the following shared motivational emphases between distinct (but adjacent) values from Schwartz's theoretical framework (see also Figure 1):

#### Overlapping motivational goals between values

- Power and achievement: Social superiority and esteem;
- Achievement and hedonism: Self-centered satisfaction;
- Hedonism and stimulation: A desire for affectively pleasant (sensory) arousal;
- Stimulation and self-direction: Intrinsic interest in novelty and mastery;
- Self-direction and universalism: Reliance upon one's own judgement and comfort with diversity of experience;
- Universalism and benevolence: Enhancement of others and transcendence of selfish interests
- Benevolence and tradition: Devotion to one's in-group (in attitudes, loyalty and behaviour);
- Benevolence and conformity: Normative behaviour that promotes close relationships;
- Conformity and tradition: Subordination of self in favour of socially imposed expectations;
- Tradition and security: Preserving existing social arrangements that give certainty to life;
- Conformity and security: Protection of order and harmony in social, familial relations;
- Security and power: Avoiding or overcoming threats by controlling relationships and resources.

Furthermore, people can (and indeed do) follow opposing values by acting differently and stressing different priorities from one context to another (e.g. social, professional or familial) or at different life stages. Thus, while an individual's motivational orientations and value priorities often appear to be static or at least highly consistent over time, it must be noted that value orientations, akin to attitudes, are subject to amendments and changes.

The interconnections among different value prioritizations have two distinct implications for how the value construct may be utilised when explaining political attitudes, according to Devos, Spini and Schwartz (2002). First, any external variable that is explored in relation to values tends to be similarly associated or correlated with values that are adjacent in the circumplex. Secondly, the associations with an external variable will decrease as one moves around the circumplex from the strongest positive association to the strongest negative association. The content and interrelations of different values, and the two-dimensional higher order value structure allows us to generate integrated hypotheses that specify proposed patterns of associations between an external explanatory variable and one or more values (Devos, Spini and Schwartz 2002).



**Figure 1** - Theoretical model of relations among ten motivational types of value

Taken from Schwartz (2012)

### ***2.7.3 The relationship between values and attitudes***

Schwartz's theoretical framework of universal human values has successfully been applied to explain, and in some cases reliably predict, the attitudes that people hold towards political objects. Before I move on to generate hypotheses regarding the ways in which I expect human values to affect people's attitudes towards the EU, I first present some notable findings from existing research. Devos, Spini and Schwartz (2002) found a robust relationship between the value types from Schwartz's framework and people's degree of trust in politicians and institutions: They predicted and subsequently found that people's level of trust in political institutions correlated positively with the values that emphasize or are primarily characterized by a preference for stability, protection and preservation of society, its traditions and its norms. This relationship makes intuitive sense: Trust in political and societal institutions is a primary component of regime support (as discussed in chapter 2). A person's wish to protect and

preserve the political status quo, to maintain traditions and to enforce societal norms clearly presupposes a substantial degree of support for the structure and character of the society in which they are embedded. Thus, they quite safely predicted that conservation values would be positively related to general trust in institutions. Furthermore, they also found support for their prediction that individuals' level of institutional trust is negatively related to the values that stress the importance of independent thought and action, and favour change and development as opposed to conformity and tradition.

People's underlying value orientations have been shown to structure, determine or influence their attitudes towards other objects as well. One of the categories of socio-political attitudes that human value orientations have been indicated to affect quite strongly, is *prejudice*. This term encompasses hostility and distrust of ethnic, religious, sexual or other minorities, extreme and exclusive nationalism, preference for harsher social policies and pronounced acceptance for socio-economic inequalities in society. Prejudice is mainly comprised of two aggregate attitudes: Right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) and Social Dominance Orientation (SDO). Because of the strong predictive power of RWA and SDO on prejudice, it is necessary to understand what drives these variables. In other words, it is important to understand the *motivational dynamics* that underlie RWA and SDO, which subsequently contribute to prejudice. With Schwartz's theory of basic human values as their point of departure, Cohrs et al. (2005) hypothesized and subsequently found empirical support indicating that RWA is likely determined by a person's orientation along the conservation versus openness-to-change dimension, and SDO by orientation on the self-transcendence versus self-enhancement dimension.

Moreover, Schwartz's theoretical framework and its methodological instruments have been applied to the study of negative stereotypes and prejudiced attitudes towards homosexuals among Australian graduate students (Heaven and Oxman 1999). The results of this study indicated that people who prioritized *conservationist* values (security, tradition and conformity) were more likely to hold and express unfavourable attitudes towards homosexuals and homosexuality. Another Australian study by Braithwaite (1997) found that individuals who were motivated by national strength, security and harmonious social order were significantly less supportive of economic benefits and welfare policies for Australian Aborigines, and more supportive of mining for uranium.

Braithwaite (1997) interestingly found an inverse relationship between *self-transcendence* values, particularly those that are defined by motivations of international harmony and equality,

and the aforementioned attitudes that were explored in his study. Furthermore, research has indicated that people's value orientations may serve as predictors of voting behaviour. Heaven (1991) found that individuals who prioritized the values within the *conservationist* higher-order were more likely to express intentions to vote for right-wing parties in Australian elections. Heaven additionally demonstrated that people who were motivated by international harmony and equality had a higher likelihood of intending to vote for left-wing parties. It is well-established that certain value orientations are linked to ideology. This relationship seems to be The relationship appears to be particularly strong between national strength, security and order-driven values and conservative social and political attitudes (Heaven and Oxman 1999). Finally, other noteworthy examples of political attitudes that may be accurately predicted by exploring people's underlying value hierarchies are attitudes toward nuclear weapons (Kristiansen and Matheson 1990), attitudes towards the unemployed (Heaven 1990) and generalised belief in a "just" world (Feather 1991).

Fontaine et al. (2008) reported that the higher the level of societal development of a country, the less the structure of values in the sample deviated from the average value structure and the stronger the contrast between two alternatively conceptualised (i.e. not arranged among the higher-order dimensions from Schwartz's framework) sets of values, "growth" versus "protection". These sets differ based on their relations to anxiety. Growth values (self-direction, universalism, benevolence, stimulation, and hedonism) express anxiety-free self-expansion; protection values (security, power, achievement, conformity and tradition) express anxiety-based/driven self-protection.

Davidov, Schmidt and Schwartz, and Schwartz and other colleagues, have produced substantial amounts of literature and reports on the usefulness of application of basic human value-measurements (particularly Schwartz's own 21-item measurement instrument) that are available freely on the ESS homepage. One of these reports is called "Bringing Values Back In: The Adequacy of the European Social Survey to Measure Values in 20 Countries" (2005/8). This article gives a thorough theoretical and empirically grounded introduction and overview of the motivations for including the Value measurement items in the ESS, the relevance of attitudes (esp. when they are in flux within a population) towards the EU, and whether the universal value orientations are indeed applicable in cross-national comparative analyses.

The authors approach the assessment of the validity and utility of the inclusion of value measurements in the ESS through a variety of methods and approaches. Davidov et al. (2005) assess two primary sources of validity/proposed adequacy. The configural and measurement

(metric) invariance of the values – necessary conditions for equivalence of the meaning of any construct, and scalar invariance – are a key precondition for comparing value means across countries. They find that, overall, the ESS value items are invariantly measured across the examined countries.

Homer and Kahle's (1988) *cognitive hierarchy model* posits that values indirectly influence behaviour, through their determinant effect on attitude formation. In simple terms, the influence flows from abstract cognitions, through mid-range cognitions, to resulting behaviours (or lack thereof). In this thesis, I restrict my scope to exploring the relationship and mechanisms that link the first two components of this chain, excluding the potential behaviours resulting from the attitudes that people hold towards the EU. Specifically, I apply Schwartz's value theoretical framework to explain individual-level variation in support for the EU in Sweden, Denmark and Norway.

## **2.8 Connecting values to attitudes**

Devos, Spini and Schwartz (2002) found that, as they had predicted, *conservation* values (security, conformity and tradition) had a positive impact on trust in institutions. It seems quite logical to assume that for a person to be motivated by preserving traditions and the established order of politics, norms and customs, they must regard the status quo as preferable over possible alternatives and developments from it. *Trust* is, together with *legitimacy*, one of the two primary components of diffuse political support (or regime support) in Easton's theory of support. Furthermore, this study confirmed the two-dimensional structure of the circumplex, as the values on the opposite side of *conservation* (the higher order named "openness to change") negatively correlated with trust in institutions.

Schultz and Zelezny (1999) reaffirmed the relationship between values and attitudes in a study of attitudes toward proposed environmental policies, goals and pro-environmental and conservationist actions and activism, measured using the so-called New Environmental Paradigm (Dunlap 2008) and Thompson and Barton's (1994) ecocentrism-anthropocentrism scales. They found that university students' environmental attitudes were consistently predicted, across 14 countries, by their values as measured with Schwartz's universal values scale. As the authors expected, the students' scores on the NEP and ecocentrism scales were predicted by *universalism* (positively) and *power* (negatively). Furthermore, their anthropocentric attitudes were found to be significantly related to *benevolence* (negatively), *power* (positively), *tradition* (positively), and *security* (positively).

In another study, Schwartz (2010) found evidence for a hypothesized linkage between values and prosocial behaviour. Benevolence is characterized by concern for the welfare of the ingroup, while universalism values concern the welfare of all people. Benevolence and conformity values both contribute to prosocial attitudes and behaviour, albeit through very different mechanisms. Benevolence motivates actions that promote the welfare of others out of concern for them. Conformity values, in contrast, contribute to prosocial behaviour due to the motivational emphasis on avoiding negative social outcomes for oneself.

Attitude theory (reviewed in chapter 2) tells us that people's attitudes (i.e. evaluative orientations or tendencies) are formed by evaluations of an object's *attributes*. Certain attitudes are formed based on well-informed, thoroughly reasoned evaluations of an array of attributes, and the degree to which these are favourable to the individual. Value theory posits that *which* attributes are assessed, and the importance given by an individual to one attribute over another in the overall evaluation of an object, is in many instances determined by a person's hierarchical value prioritizations.

Attitudes towards the EU can, as I have presented in the previous chapter, stem from evaluations of the perceived economic, identity-based or political attributes and implications of EU membership and integration. Most individuals will likely base their attitudes on evaluations of attributes that pertain to more than one explanatory perspective. Naturally, there are other perceived properties of the EU that do not fit this tripartite typology.

Attitudes are determined by value prioritizations insofar as the attributes of the object in question are judged or perceived to have implications that are either congruent or conflicting with the motivational goals associated with a value, i.e. have a relevant impact on a person's likelihood of attaining motivational goals that they cherish or prioritize. In other words, values must be *activated* in order for them to have a relevant impact on attitudes. This logic naturally extends to political attitudes. Scholars have indeed found that basic values determine individuals' preferences and loyalties within the domestic political arena. Individuals tend to support representatives, parties and coalitions that are perceived to be working towards goals that correspond with those that underlie their value priorities. In the context of supportive vs. oppositional attitudes towards the EU and European integration, we can thus relate the relative importance given to different objective and perceived characteristics and implications of EU membership and the "European project" to their commensurability with pursuing the goals that characterize each of the basic values and the primary bipolar dimensions (i.e. "higher-order"-values). Research from the past two decades has indicated that basic values predict and explain

individual-level political affiliation and policy preferences more reliably than earlier decades' theories of socio-economic class status or group membership.

According to Schwartz (2006), the first requirement of value activation is a conscious awareness of need. Batson et al. (2007) found that self-transcendence values correlated positively, and self-enhancement values negatively, with self-reported levels of worrying about societal poverty, injustice and environmental destruction. Self-transcendence values are characterized by concern for the needs and well-being of *others*. Self-enhancement values, conversely, are motivated by individuals' concern for themselves and their subjective needs, even if pursuing these interests comes at a cost for other people. Schwartz argues that benevolence values may increase the perception of need, emphatic concern and evaluative orientation in relation to members of the ingroup; universalism values may have the same effect in relation to strangers or outgroup members. Self-enhancement values are found to correlate negatively with the perception of need, perspective taking and empathy.

As exemplified by studies that examine the relationship between specific values and attitudes towards homosexuality and homosexuals, the studies that seek to predict social or political attitudes with multiple rather than single value priorities are more successful because they account for the possible interplay between various value predictors (Beckers, Siegers and Kuntz 2012; Kuntz et al. 2015). Previous research on values as predictors of attitudes has also indicated that values relate differently to attitudes depending on contextual conditions such as social norms and historical legacies. It is not usually presumed, nor claimed or implied, that values are invariant throughout the life cycle or that they exist independently of social influences. However, value-and attitude theory does postulate that they serve as guiding principles in life, and that they serve as likely guideposts for action in unfamiliar situations and conditions. This includes the condition of forming attitudes about new (or emergent) objects. Values are also more general than attitudes and, they presume, more stable or inflexible. Schwartz et al. see values as being shaped largely by preadult socialization and, compared to attitudes, are relatively resistant to being reshaped by information. Faced with an unfamiliar situation, development and so on, values allow individuals to pose the question: "What are the implications of  $x$  for the things, goals and modes of conduct that I value the most?"

In another notable contribution to the study of how basic values can affect political attitudes, Schwartz, Caprara and Vecchione (2010) argue that the pursuit of basic values leads people to favour certain ideologies or policies over others, depending on the degree to which they are deemed compatible with, or conducive to, the attainment of goals. Relying on mostly Italian

data, they provide evidence that basic values determine political affiliation (measured through voting) in quite logical ways. Voters for the center-left in the 2001 Italian elections expressed a higher emphasis on universalism and benevolence values; center-right voters prioritized achievement, power, security and conformity. However, as noted by Hooghe and Marks (2009) support for European integration does not appear to be predictable by left-right political orientation; the relationship between support for the EU and party affiliation has been found to be structured in an inverted U-shape. Centre-left and center-right parties and their voters are largely supportive of the EU, while explicit opposition to integration is primarily expressed among parties and voters located at the extremities of the left-right spectrum.

### 3 Hypotheses

Having reviewed the concepts of attitudes and values, both separately and in conjunction, and presented an overview of the current state of research on individual-level determinants of attitudes towards the EU, and the ways in which values influence political preferences and attitudes, I will now proceed to generate a set of testable hypotheses regarding the ways in which basic human values are related to EU attitudes. To my knowledge, there are no existing publications that examine variation in attitudes towards the EU through a value-theoretical lens. Because of the apparent lack of published studies that resemble the research design of this thesis, I find it to be most useful to take cues and inspiration from studies that explain how other attitudes, especially political ones, are influenced by individuals' value systems. The core logic and key characteristics that I propose as determinants of the relationship between values and EU attitudes, are presented in the forthcoming paragraphs. Then I present hypotheses about the ways in which I expect conservation, self-transcendence, openness to change and self-enhancement values to influence people's attitudes towards the EU.

As I have touched on in the previous subchapter, people continuously evaluate their surroundings, their fellow citizens, aspects of themselves, the past, present and the future. These evaluations could be made subconsciously (i.e. not as a result of cognitive reasoning) or consciously. The resulting attitudes can be either entirely or mostly positive, neutral, or entirely or mostly negative. Schwartz (1992) describes values as serving a social function, first and foremost. The sharing and contestation of values against each other can control and motivate both social cohesion and progress. This social control has two basic functions. First, they function as "internalized guides" for individuals – similarly to the concept of principles – to ensure that the behaviour of group members is controlled and conducive to harmonious social relations, thus alleviating the need for constant social control. People typically adapt their values to their life circumstances; They tend to upgrade the importance attributed to readily attainable values and downgrade the importance of values whose pursuit is blocked or constrained for some reason (Schwartz 1992; 1994). This is true for most values, with the exception of the values that relate to material well-being and security. When the pursuit of these values is blocked, their importance increases; when they become more easily attainable, their importance decreases. As for the antecedents of how an individual's value priorities are determined and structured, Schwartz (2002) argues that a person's age, gender and education will often have a decisive influence on their experiences and life circumstances, which in turn affect value prioritisations. Age, gender and education, he argues, will determine how

socialization and learning are imposed or encouraged, the expectations and sanctions of their behaviour by others, and the need to manage different social roles and responsibilities. Consequently, the differential social pressures and behavioural incentives that people experience determine a person's abilities and opportunities, thus structuring value hierarchies according to the perceived attainability of the goals that define each value.

Actions that are driven by the motivations pertaining to a value can have consequences (e.g. socially, politically, practically...) that may be congruent, or conflicting, with the pursuit of other values. For example, the pursuit of novel experiences and challenges (stimulation values) will likely undermine the adherence to norms, order and appreciation for tradition (conservation values). Furthermore, people have the ability to prioritize opposing values simultaneously, e.g. being motivated by achievement in the pursuit of a career opportunity and by benevolence when caring for family members in need. However, opposing values cannot be equally prioritized as the motivational basis of an action.

### **3.1 Conservation and attitudes towards the EU**

As I have illustrated in the previous sections, we can derive certain hypotheses from relating people's perceptions about the EU and its attributes to the attainment of the motivational goals that define each value. The higher-order value type of *conservation* is characterized by a motivation "*to preserve the status quo and the certainty it provides in relationships with close others, institutions and traditions*" (Schwartz 1992, 43). People who prioritize conservationist values more so than the opposite higher-order of "openness to change" are unlikely to favour substantial political or judicial reforms that may bring about uncertain consequences and political or economic upheaval. The higher order of *Conservation* is constituted by security, tradition and conformity.

The complexity of the policy deliberation and decision-making processes within the institutions of the EU, coupled with limited news coverage and correspondingly low levels of interest and sophisticated understanding of everything EU-related, has allowed the EU to become entrenched and established as the status quo in Member States. Mainstream parties across Europe tend to be far more supportive of European integration (albeit tacitly) than the general public and have largely been reluctant to politicize the issue. While it is certain that Euroscepticism is on the rise across the continent, the European public is still mostly in favour of continued membership over the chaos that a Brexit-type scenario is likely to produce. As noted in the section on domestic political determinants of EU support and opposition, the issue

of continuing membership in the Union is generally not on the agenda of the dominant parties in Europe. For the time being, the primary exceptions to this common attachment and loyalty to the European project are the UK, which had always been regarded as the most insubordinate and unenthusiastic of the members, in addition to Orbán's Fidesz Party in Hungary and the Polish Freedom and Justice party (however, eurosceptic sentiments in Hungary and Poland have not yet translated into any substantive popular support for exiting the EU).

For EU Member States, we can regard continued EU membership and its implications for free trade, movement of people and coordination around common threats and obstacles as an intrinsic property of the political status quo. A wish to preserve the established order of society, including the legal and political arrangements and institutions that govern it, is a key motivational goal for the higher-order value of conservation (consisting of tradition, conformity and security). Disapproval or outright opposition to the EU, although not entirely uncommon, is mostly expressed among citizens who support parties at the extreme fringes of the conventional left-right spectrum of political contestation. Anti-EU attitudes will therefore likely be regarded as radical and rebellious, and thus incompatible with the pursuit of goals related to socio-political conformity and tradition. Furthermore, as the chaotic management and uncertain mid-to long-term consequences of the UK's vote to leave the Union has shown, a pivot towards policies seeking disintegration and a weakening of the political authority of the EU can potentially have negative consequences for the country's material and geopolitical security. The uncertainty brought about by such disturbances to the political order is incompatible with the attainment of the motivational goals that are cherished by conservationist individuals (i.e. people who prioritise security, tradition and conformity).

Thus, we can derive the following hypothesis:

*H1a: For citizens of EU Member States, conservation is positively related to pro-EU attitudes at the individual level.*

Following this logic of adherence to the prevailing political order, including the supranational (European-level) dimension of law, trade and politics, the opposite should be true for non-Member States. Apart from the countries that are actively pursuing membership, the question of whether or not to enter the Union has been settled in countries such as Switzerland, Iceland and Norway. Because the issue has been decided either through parliamentary deliberation or referenda, the question of whether to join the Union can be regarded as decisively settled for the time being. Preferential agreements and arrangements with mutual benefits, such as those

prescribed by the EEA and Schengen agreements, allow citizens of these outsider states to trade, move and seek employment anywhere in the EU.

Conservationist individuals' emphasis on socio-political conformity and adherence to order, stability and tradition can be expected to produce supportive attitudes towards continued non-membership in Norway. Therefore, I hypothesize that:

*H1b: For citizens of countries outside of the EU, conservation is positively related to anti-EU attitudes at the individual level.*

### **3.2 Self-transcendence and attitudes towards the EU**

The second set of human values that I expect to influence the attitudes that European citizens hold towards the EU are those that make up the higher-order value type called *self-transcendence*. This higher-order type is made up of the values *universalism* and *benevolence*. These values are defined by a motivational emphasis on tolerance, understanding and showing concern for the welfare of people, and promoting the well-being of others, both members and non-members of a person's "ingroup". These values are contrasted by the higher order of *self-enhancement*, which is made up of *achievement* and *power* values. As noted previously in this chapter, self-transcendence values are more strongly emphasized among individuals who feel physically and materially secure. As Schwartz argues, anxiety produced by contextual obstacles to the attainment of conservation values (especially security) will drain an individuals' surplus of energy and attention to the needs of others. Self-transcendence values tend to become activated when one's own material and physical needs are fulfilled. Because of the relative wealth, security, liberal democratic tradition and high standard of living in the Scandinavian countries, the motivational goals pertaining to benevolence and universalism are likely to be of some importance to all Scandinavians, but to a varying degree.

The European Union can be described as a collaborative and cooperative project with both supranational and intergovernmental features, in which nation states seek common interests and mutually beneficial conditions for members to engage in free trade, movement and coordinated problem-solving. Since its inception, the EU has increased its number of Member States from six to twenty-eight. While the Copenhagen Criteria require aspiring members to meet certain benchmarks of economic performance, civil and social freedoms and liberal democratic governance, the EU includes countries with varying levels of wealth and resources, unemployment rates, different varieties of capitalism and welfare regimes. The entry of relatively poorer countries into the EU expands opportunities for exports and trade that often

benefit the national economies of existing members. However, the various redistributive and monetary policies of the EU require a handful of (mainly older, Western European) states to contribute more in direct financial transfers to the rest of the EU than what they receive in return. Both the Scandinavian Member States, and the non-member (although being very compliant and supportive of EU directives and policies) Norway are net contributors to the EU's budgets. In addition to being net financial contributors to the EU, the Scandinavian countries also benefit citizens of other EU states by providing job opportunities with high salaries and ample benefits. The employment of low-skilled labourers from poorer Member States also threatens the job security and employment opportunities of these countries' own low-skilled labour force and potentially exert a downward pressure on their wages. Moreover, labourers from poorer Eastern European states, especially short or mid-term workers, are likely to be financially straining on welfare and public services.

In the Scandinavian Member States, I expect support for the EU to be positively related to self-transcendence values. Benevolence and universalism are characterized by motivational goals that concern the needs and well-being of others, even when pursuing these goals comes at a financial cost. From the perspective of the few, wealthier net benefactor countries, their disproportional contribution to the Union's budgets are a clear cost; the benefits are not as easily quantifiable, since citizens benefit differently from arrangements such as Schengen and liberalization of financial markets. Continuing membership in the EU and adherence to the "European project" is likely to be perceived as conducive to attaining the motivational goals of the people emphasizing self-transcendence values, particularly those that constitute universalism. Therefore, I derive the following hypothesis:

*H2: In all three countries, I expect self-transcendence values to be positively related to pro-EU attitudes at the individual level.*

### **3.3 Openness to change and attitudes towards the EU**

Next, I wish to explore the relationship between the higher-order value called "openness to change" (comprised of the values *stimulation* and *self-direction*) and Scandinavians' attitudes towards the EU. I have chosen to exclude the final, tenth value (hedonism) from my analyses for two main reasons. First, a principal component analysis (presented below) confirms what Schwartz pointed out in his first paper on the universal structure of values and their dynamic relations: *hedonism* shares its defining motivational goals equally with the higher-order values of Self-Enhancement and Openness to Change, and thus cannot be definitively regarded as

belonging to one value type over the other. Secondly, hedonism values are defined by a motivational emphasis on pure sensory satisfaction and pleasure-seeking. These goals are likely neither facilitated nor obstructed by EU policies or the process of integration, and I therefore expect hedonism to remain inactivated when individuals evaluate the degree to which their value priorities are aided by EU membership and integration.

The Openness to Change-values are characterized by encouraging independent thought and action, seeking novelty, being tolerant of different opinions and lifestyles, and receptiveness to change. In the circular representation of the basic human values based on the compatibility of their motivational goals, this value type is situated directly opposite of Conservation values. This means that the pursuit of goals pertaining to one value type will conflict with the goals of the other. As I have noted previously in this chapter, values that represent conflicting motivations can still produce the same outcomes or attitudes (e.g. benevolence and conformity both contributing to prosocial behaviour, or far-right and far-left parties across Europe both opposing the EU based on different political and ideological motivations). I have already hypothesized that people who cherish Conservation values are likely to be more supportive of the EU than opposed to it (in Member States, conversely among Norwegians). However, this does not preclude the possibility that individuals who value Openness to Change, who are motivated by seeking novel experiences and by protection of individual freedom and choice, may reach the same evaluative orientation based on preferential assessments of an entirely different set of attributes and implications of European integration.

A study by Devos, Spini and Schwartz (2002) applied the theory of basic human values as a predictor of individual-level trust in institutions. They hypothesized that Conservation would have the strongest positive effect on trust in institutions, while Openness to Change was expected to have the strongest negative effect of the four higher-order value types. These predictions were supported by their analysis of data from a survey of Swiss university students (N=265), which found that individuals who expressed an emphasis on independent thought and action, novelty and receptiveness to change, were the most distrustful of institutions (e.g. the political system, the police, the media, the health care system and religious institutions) (Devos, Spini and Schwartz 2002). However, I expect individuals who prioritize Openness to Change to focus their attention and lend more importance to attributes of the EU that they perceive as positive and conducive to the attainment of their goals, and not regard it as merely another institution that seeks to exert control and pressures on people's lives. Individuals who express these values are likely to regard EU-related supranational and intergovernmental arrangements

such as the Schengen Agreement and the EU's extensive financing of academic research as facilitating, rather than obstructing, the pursuit of their goals. These attributes of the EU will likely contribute positively to the pursuit of stimulation and self-direction (e.g. through free travel, generating knowledge and novel insights, and multiculturalism).

It is more difficult to hypothesize a negative relationship between Openness to Change and support for the EU; the motivational goals underpinning this value type are commensurate with many of the EU's stated objectives and motivations for further integration in both depth and scope, and no policies or initiatives stemming from EU institutions are explicitly or implicitly motivated by restricting individuals' pursuit of stimulation or self-direction. I expect this higher-order value to have a positive effect on attitudes towards the EU in all three countries, and thus I derive the following hypothesis:

*H3: In all three countries, Openness to Change is positively related to pro-EU attitudes at the individual level.*

### **3.4 Self-Enhancement and attitudes towards the EU**

Finally, I will examine the possible relationship between Self-enhancement values (achievement and power) and attitudes towards the EU. Self-enhancement-driven individuals are characterised by the primacy that they give to achieving acknowledgements and respect for their achievements, to achieving wealth and status, and to climbing social and professional hierarchies. As I have presented in the literature review, the processes of European integration have different objective and subjective implications for individuals depending on their financial status, occupation and so on. People who are primarily driven by money and professional achievements are likely to be highly attentive to potential avenues for financial investments or opportunities to further their career. Since the European Union is primarily tasked with securing and promoting free trade and movement of its member states' citizens, achievement- and power-driven individuals are likely to support it; people who have little or no interest in money, status and career advancement are less likely to do so. Thereby I derive the following hypothesis:

*H4: Self-Enhancement values are positively related to support for European integration and trust in the European Parliament.*

In addition to the hypothesized linkages outlined in this chapter, I expect the higher-order values to correlate differently with EU support at different points in time. Borrowing from Lipset and Rokkan (1967) and Hooghe and Marks (2017), I intend to explore potential changes in the

hypothesized value-attitude relations resulting from two global events that could serve the function of *critical junctures*: The financial crisis of 2007-8, and the migrant crisis of 2015. These exogenous shocks would seem consequential enough to significantly alter and restructure the ways in which the EU and European integration is regarded as being conducive to the attainment of the goals that characterize the three higher-order values. The differential effects of the value prioritizations at different points in time (i.e. different ESS rounds) are calculated by performing an additional regression analysis of a model including interaction terms that account for time.

## 4 Data and Methods

This section includes description and discussion of the methodological approaches that I regard as being necessary and useful in order to answer the central research questions of this thesis. First, I present the European Social Survey (ESS), how the 10 basic values are measured, and the procedures by which the samples are selected. I then move on to describe the variables that I have analysed, some methodological approaches to determine the validity and the reliability of the data, and the primary analytical approach (linear regression) through which I test my hypotheses regarding the effects of human values on attitudes towards the EU.

The key characteristic of comparative political studies is the aim of linking theory to empirical evidence through the process of comparison across time, national or cultural contexts. The data that form the basis of my analyses have been downloaded through the ESS's "cumulative data wizard", a tool that allows for the inclusion and exclusion of one's own choice of descriptive variables, countries and rounds of the survey.

### 4.1 Measurement of values in the ESS

The European Social Survey includes 21 questions that serve to measure the 10 values postulated by Schwartz's theory. Each value is measured through two distinct questions, except for *universalism* which requires three separate questions due to its broad content. The value section of the ESS is based on Schwartz's original 40-item portrait values questionnaire (PVQ) but was shortened to facilitate its inclusion in the ESS alongside the other survey questions.

The portrait questions, or statements, describe a fictitious person, gender-matched to the respondent, and respondents are asked to rate the extent to which this description *is* or *is not* like her or him. Each portrait describes a person's goals, aspirations or preferences, implicitly pointing towards the importance of a given value. Respondents answer on a six-point Likert scale ranging from (1) "not like me at all" to (6) "very much like me". The respondents' values are then inferred from their degree of self-reported similarity to the particular value prioritizations that are implicitly described in the portraits. Based on previous research and theoretical considerations, Devos, Spini and Schwartz (2002) state that "... one can identify the values that come into play when people orient themselves toward a specific construct, the values that are conducive to a positive orientation and the conflicting values conducive to a negative orientation". Therefore, low scores on

## 4.2 Sampling of ESS respondents

The European Social Survey has a designated Sampling and Weighting Expert Panel, consisting of experts appointed to set out the principles of ESS sampling, provide guidance to effective and consistent sample design, and to help implement it in cooperation with the National Coordinators of the study.

The SWEP outlines certain principles for national sample designs that should be followed in order to adequately represent each national population, and to provide comparability between countries. These principles are:

- The use of a sampling frame/method that provides the most adequate coverage of the target population;
- The use of probability sampling;
- The use of a design that provides a prescribed level of statistical precision.

Outside of a general adherence to these principles, however, sample designs do not necessarily have to be identically constructed in each country. The choice of a specific design in a given country is dependent on the available sampling frames, and potential population characteristics that influence the cost and practicality of different sample designs (e.g. population density or geographic dispersal).

The ESS SWEP guidelines define the target population for a national survey round as “*All persons aged 15 and over (no upper age limit) resident within private households in each country, regardless of their nationality, citizenship or language*”. Furthermore, the samples are selected by strict random probability methods at all stages. Every member of the target population should have a greater than zero probability of being selected into the sample. Quota sampling and *random route techniques* are not permitted at any stage. To guarantee a certain (minimum) level of precision and facilitate reliable comparison between countries, the ESS aims to achieve the *same* minimum level of precision in each country. The statistical precision of survey estimates is determined by key factors such as: 1) Sample size; 2) Distribution of selection probabilities; 3) Sample clustering; 4) Sample stratification; and 5) Population variance of the survey variables.

## 4.3 Comparative analysis - Comparing fewer countries and Most Similar Systems Designs

Comparative politics is a methodological approach within political science. This approach is characterized by the usage of systematic comparisons of two or more countries, political

systems, policies or any other observable political feature or entity, with the purpose of gaining new insights about political matters in one or more of the units of comparison. While there are numerous advantages associated with statistical comparison of many countries (large-N comparative analysis), such analyses have certain potential limitations and weaknesses, and this method may well be inappropriate for uncovering individual-level determinants of attitudes towards the EU. Small-N comparative analysis, on the other hand, allow us to consider a wider range of relevant social, cultural or political contextual factors that are unique to the countries that constitute the units of analysis.

The comparison of few countries has been described as being more *intensive* than *extensive*, because the factors that are considered and analysed do not vary across a wide range of countries, but instead vary over time and across sub-national units within a smaller sample of countries. This allows researchers to probe more deeply into each individual case (i.e. country). Limiting the number of countries under comparison tends to sacrifice the broad generalizations made possible through large-N analyses, instead allowing for more detailed and nuanced, but less generalisable, insights to be made and conclusion to be drawn.

Small-N comparative analyses of countries are typically studies that focus on anywhere between two and twenty countries as units, depending on the scope of the research question. In this thesis, I have chosen the countries Norway, Sweden and Denmark as my units of analysis. I have selected these countries due to their cultural similarity, the comparable sizes of their populations and the size of their economies, as well as the availability of ESS data (demographic, theoretical and value data) from all eight rounds for each country.

#### **4.4 Case selection – Scandinavian countries**

Following the logic presented in the section on Most Similar Systems Design, I will now present the countries that serve as the units of analysis for this thesis. I have chosen to explore the potential antecedents and determinants of attitudes towards the EU among ESS respondents from Denmark, Sweden and Norway. I have selected these particular cases due to the large number of comparable characteristics between them, as well as one major difference, namely EU membership status.

Denmark, Sweden and Norway have a number of shared attributes that make them apt for comparison. In the literature on economics and political science, these countries are often grouped together due to their similar welfare models. Some defining features of the so-called “Nordic Welfare Model” are high degrees of equality, relatively high welfare spending, large

public sectors, active labour market policies and a relatively even income distribution. In terms of political traditions and legacy, the welfare states of the Scandinavian countries are closely linked to the political Left – especially the Social Democratic movement. In Norway and Denmark, the debate on potential membership in the EC was originally centred around primarily economic considerations. The economic questions revolved around the potential economic benefits, and disadvantages, of seeking membership in the EC. In Sweden, on the other hand, the debate has been to a larger extent been characterised by humanitarian and prosocial factors.

#### **4.5 Dependent variables – Support for further unification and trust in the European Parliament**

In this section I will briefly describe the dependent variables, i.e. the attitude measures, that I seek to explain the variation of. Trust in the European Parliament was selected as one of two measures of EU attitudes for two primary reasons. First, it was the only item in the ESS core questionnaire that directly gauged the survey participants' attitudes towards a specific institution from within the EU framework, and was therefore the most direct measure of support or opposition towards the EU to be found in the ESS. Secondly, while trust and support are separate concepts, they are conceptually related. As I have mentioned in the literature review, Easton (1965, 1975) regards trust as one of the two key components of diffuse political support (for regimes or systems, parties, actors and so on), alongside *legitimacy*. In the ESS questionnaire, respondents report their trust. This variable is measured on a 10-point Likert scale that ranges from “0 – No trust at all” to “10 – Complete trust”.

The second dependent variable, “EUnification”, measures the degree to which respondents support further European unification, or think that unification (i.e. integration) has already gone too far. As with the variable measuring trust in the European Parliament, respondents give their answers on a 10-point scale, ranging from “0 – Unification has gone too far” to “10 – Unification should go further”. Lower scores on this question are regarded as negative or unpreferable attitudes towards European integration. In much of the research presented in chapter 2, whether or not citizens support (further) European integration is the key EU attitude of interest.

#### **4.6 Hierarchical linear regression**

In order to examine the effects of Scandinavian ESS respondents' value prioritizations on their attitudes towards the EU, I have chosen to perform a series of hierarchical linear regression analyses. Hierarchical linear regression is a method of statistical analysis that can be used to

show whether selected variables of interest explain a statistically significant amount of variance in the dependent variable after controlling for all other variables. Hierarchical regression should not be confused with “hierarchical linear modelling”, which is another term for multi-level modelling. Hierarchical regression is alternatively known as sequential or *nested* regression. It is characterized by performing successive regression analyses where new explanatory variables are added to previous models, with the aim of the added variables accounting for a larger portion of the observed variance in the DV. The main purpose of performing each successive step (or additional regression model) is to determine whether the added variables that are included contribute to a significant improvement in  $R^2$  (i.e. the proportion of explained variance in the DV by the model).

The following procedural steps should be followed in hierarchical regression models:

- First, build sequential or nested regression models by including additional IV's to each step.
- Run ANOVAs to compute  $R^2$ , and then regressions to obtain coefficients.
- Compare the sum of squares between models from ANOVA results.
- Compute the difference in sum of squares at each step.
- Find corresponding F-statistics and p-values for the differences in SS.
- Compute increased  $R^2$  from the SS differences.

These steps should ideally be followed regardless of the software that is used. I have chosen to use SPSS, although STATA and R are equally capable.

The first model (Model 1) in hierarchical regression analyses typically includes demographic control variables such as gender, age or education levels, as these factors have been shown to affect various types of political attitudes, tendencies, preferences and behaviours. In the next step (Model 2), we include predominant theoretical explanatory variables outside of the present study. In other words, Model 2 should include variables that adequately represent factors that have previously been found to explain some of the variance in the DV. This step allows for a partial replication of findings from previous research, securing theoretical consistency while allowing for new contributions to be made through the inclusion of additional explanatory variables in the subsequent model. Finally, in the last step (Model 3) we can include new variables of interest, ideally ones that have not yet been explored. We are interested in seeing whether Model 3 explains the variance of the dependent variables to a larger extent than the previous two models. If the difference between Models 2 and 3 is statistically significant, we

can conclude that the variables that are added to the third model actually contribute to a better understanding of the variance in our dependent variables.

In my regression models, Model 1 includes the respondents' educational level (total number of years), age and gender. These variables are often included as demographic control variables in social and political science research, and have been found to predictably influence a wide range of different political attitudes, preferences and behaviours.

#### **4.7 Testing invariance of value measurements**

Measurement invariance refers to “whether or not, under different conditions of observing and studying a phenomenon, measurement operations yield measures of the same attribute” (Horn and McArdle 1992, 117). Multigroup confirmatory factor analysis (MGCFA) is one of the most commonly used techniques for assessing measurement invariance. MGCFA provides researchers with tools to assess whether a construct or measurement is invariant or not, which indicators contribute to incomparability across countries, and which types of statistics may be compared (correlates, mean levels or both). Davidov (2010) and others (e.g. Vandenberg and Lance 2000; Steenkamp and Baumgartner 1998) describe two strategies to test for invariance

The lowest level of invariance is called “configural” or “weak factorial invariance”. Configural invariance requires that the same indicators measure the same theoretical constructs in different groups (i.e. countries or cultures) and time points. Configural invariance is supported if a multigroup model fits the data well, all factor loadings are significant, and correlations between the factors are less than one in all countries and time points. The latter of these requirements guarantees discriminant validity between the factors (Davidov 2010).

Configural invariance alone *does not* guarantee that the relationships between factors and items are the same across groups and over time. This level of invariance, which presupposes configural invariance, is called “metric” or “measurement invariance”. Metric invariance is a necessary condition in order to conduct a comparison and interpretation of factors' correlates (i.e. unstandardized regression coefficients or means). Metric invariance is tested by restricting the factor loading of each item on its corresponding factor to be equal across groups, and is supported if such a model fits the data well in a MGCFA and does not result in a reduction of model fit (Davidov 2010, 177).

#### **4.8 Principal component analysis**

Principal component analysis is a statistical tool that is usually applied when making predictive models based on numerous items. This mathematical procedure transforms a number of

possibly correlated variables into a smaller number of uncorrelated variables. The resulting, uncorrelated variables are called *principal components*. The first of these components accounts for as much of the variance in the data as possible. Each of the succeeding components, restricted by the condition of being orthogonal to the former, then accounts for as much of the remaining variance as possible.

PCA is mathematically defined as an *orthogonal linear transformation* that transforms data into a new coordinate system. In this new coordinate system, the data is organized in such a way that the greatest variance within a projection of the data lies on the first coordinate, which is called the first *principal component*, the second greatest variance on the second coordinate, and so on.

As I have presented in the previous chapter, Schwartz's value types can be visually represented in a circumplex structure. Factor/Principal component analysis and Multidimensional scaling are the most commonly used methods for testing circumplex structures. The circular structure portrays the pattern of relations among the values postulated by Schwartz's theory. The circular arrangement represents a motivational continuum: the closer any two or more values are in either direction around the circle, the more similar their underlying motivational goals; and the more distant any two values are, the more incongruent or antagonistic their underlying motivations. It should be noted that the theory postulates a circular arrangement of the 10 values, but not necessarily of the items that characterize each value. For these items, the theory postulates that each item correlates more highly with the set of items that measure the same value than with a set of items that measure a different value.

In other words, the theory assumes that the distinct items in Schwartz's value survey form 10 *latent factors* and that only these factors relate to each other in a strictly circular manner. For the purposes of this thesis, I will perform a PCA in order to confirm whether respondents' self-reported value priorities do in fact follow the two-dimensional distribution postulated by Schwartz's theory. Does confirmatory factor analysis corroborate the theoretical structure of value relations? If so, we can then move on to constructing a multivariate regression model including higher-order value types as independent variables, with the aim of analysing the effect of adherence to each higher-order value on pro-and anti-EU sentiments among Norwegians, Danes and Swedes.

In this thesis, I will perform a factor/principal component analysis to ensure that respondents' value prioritizations indeed correspond with the structure that is proposed in Schwartz's theory and confirmed in later empirical studies of the structure and interrelation of value orientations.

As I have previously described, relationships between values can be summarized in a two-dimensional structure composed of four higher-order value types. One higher-order type, called openness to change, combines *stimulation* and *self-direction* values. This higher-order type forms a bipolar dimension with the contrasting value type called conservation, that combines *security*, *conformity* and *tradition* values. This dimension arrays values based on the extent to which they motivate people to either follow their own emotional and intellectual interests in unpredictable and uncertain directions (openness), versus to preserve the status quo and the certainty that it provides (conservation).

Schwartz treats these higher-order types as a way to describe, and analytically apply, the value structures more simply. These four types are sometimes used, rather than the 10 values individually, to predict behaviour and attitudes (e.g. Bilsky 1998; Schwartz, 1994). By performing a principal component analysis, the objective is to confirm that the value measurement items conform to the higher-order structure laid out in the theory of basic human values.

#### **4.9 Validity and comparability**

Various studies on the effect of value priorities on attitudes and behaviours have raised methodological issues and challenges regarding the validity and comparability of values measured in different contexts such as nations, cultures or points in time. Even when the same questions are posed to respondents in different contexts, individuals may understand these questions differently. The way respondents use the scale to answer value questions might also be temporally or culturally context-dependent. Before performing cross-national and cross-time studies and comparisons of values, one must guarantee that the values are invariant across groups and time points. According to Davidov (2010), the following three steps must be carried out to adequately assess the invariance of value measurements across time and national contexts:

- 1) Explaining why testing for invariance is necessary *before* comparisons are done
- 2) Presenting how invariance may be tested cross-nationally or across time points, and to demonstrate a practical application of such a test with the human value measurements from the ESS; and

- 3) Discussing problems that arise during the analysis of invariance.

Davidov (2010) investigates the cross-national comparability of value measurements by using data from the third round of the ESS. Earlier studies by Davidov, based on the previous two rounds of the ESS, suggest that the data do not support full invariance of the values, and thus cannot simply be assumed and must be tested. Furthermore, Davidov found that values are quite stable within countries over a period of time of two to three years.

#### **4.10 Detecting multicollinearity**

Multicollinearity is a statistical term referring to a phenomenon where one predictor variable in a multiple regression model can be linearly predicted from the others with a certain degree of accuracy. In other words, multicollinearity refers to the degree to which there is a linear relationship between two or more explanatory or independent variables in a regression model. Multicollinearity should generally be maximally reduced or avoided in linear regression models, as it leads to unreliable or unstable estimates of regression coefficients. Independent variables should be independent, as multicollinearity can cause problems when interpreting the results of the regression.

The severity of multicollinearity in OLS regression analyses can be indicated by the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). This measure serves as an index of how much the variance of an estimated regression coefficient is increased due to collinearity. The VIF can be calculated for each predictor/ by performing a linear regression of each IV on all of the others, and then obtaining the  $R^2$  from that regression. The formula for the VIF is:

$$\text{VIF} = \frac{1}{1 - R_i^2}$$

There are certain instances where multicollinearity may safely be ignored without risking uncertain or unstable results in a regression model. These are: 1) When variables with high VIFs are control variables, while the key variables of interest (i.e. theoretical variables) do not have high VIFs; 2) When high VIFS are caused by inclusion of products of other variables; and 3) When variables showing high VIFS are dummy variables representing categorical variables with three or more categories.

#### **4.11 Assessing reliability via Cronbach's Alpha**

Next, I will perform a *Cronbach's alpha* test in order to test the reliability of the constructed items that serve as measures of a given higher-order value. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is a function of the number

of items in a test, the average covariance between item-pairs and the variance of the total score. It is not a statistical test, but rather a coefficient of the reliability or internal consistency of items. A high level of internal consistency of measurement items indicates that the items do in fact measure what they should. Conventionally, a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  score of 0.7 or above indicates a satisfactory degree of internal consistency of items, and thus can be regarded as reliable (Nunnally 1978). Conversely, scores of less than 0.7 indicate that the items are internally inconsistent. It should however be noted that this is a rule of thumb or working convention, and not an absolute statistical requirement. It should also be kept in mind that the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  score is dependent on the number of items composing the scale. The lesser the number of items in a scale, the lower the  $\alpha$  score.

Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is computed using the following formula:

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N - 1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

In this formula, N represents the number of items,  $\bar{v}$  is the average variance and  $\bar{c}$  is the average covariance among all pairs of variables.

#### **4.12 Analysis of interaction effects**

The final methodological step that I will perform and subsequently discuss, is testing of the interaction effects laid out in H1a & H1b. In simple terms, an interaction effect is when the combination of two variables produces a different effect on the dependent variable than simply the sum of the impact from each variable by themselves. H1a and H1b state that the EU membership-status of a respondent's country will likely have a significant effect on the degree to which conservation values (conformity, security and tradition) positively or negatively affect their attitudes towards the EU. For member states (Denmark and Sweden) conservation values likely correlate positively with pro-EU attitudes, while I expect conservation to have the opposite effect among Norwegians. In other words, I wish to examine the extent to which the relationship between V1 (conservation) and attitudes towards the EU is dependent on EU membership-status, i.e. any effects of the main regression are amplified or attenuated when I control for membership status.

In my case, the interaction effect is represented by the product of two variables: A dummy used to separate between member and non-member state data, and the relevant higher-order value variable (V1 = Conservation values).

Significance testing of the interaction effects is performed by testing whether the regression coefficient associated with the interaction term is significantly different from 0 (Ordinary t-test). The second step in analysing interaction effects is to determine whether the interaction effect positive or negative. If the interaction regression coefficient is  $> 0$ , this implies that the relationship between conservation values and attitudes toward the EU is stronger for member states (Dummy = 1 for member states, and 0 for non-member states) than non-member states. Conversely, if the interaction regression coefficient is  $< 0$ , this implies that the relationship between conservation values and attitudes toward the EU is weaker for member states (Dummy = 1 for member states, and 0 for non-member states) than for non-member states. Third, strong interaction - or a crossover effect - is present when the value regression coefficient is negative in one group and positive in the other (as proposed in H1a&b).

Finally, when testing interaction effects in multiple regression models, the predictor variables should be *mean centred*. This means that a variable's mean is subtracted from each individual score. After subtracting the mean, a variable will have a mean of exactly zero while leaving its standard deviation, skewness and distributional slope the same. Mean centering of continuous variables has two primary potential benefits. First, it generally diminishes multicollinearity, especially between the interaction effect and its constituent main effects. Secondly, it can produce more easily interpretable b coefficients.

## 5 Results

In this section I will present the results of the various steps that I have performed in analysing the effect of human value orientations on attitudes towards the EU among Norwegians, Danes and Swedes. First, I report some descriptive statistics of regarding the composition of the ESS data that the analyses are based on. After describing the sociodemographic composition of the Scandinavian samples, I report the results from two sets of ANOVA tests that show the differences in mean scores on the two dependent variables, both between countries (Norway, Sweden and Denmark) and across time (Rounds 1-8). Following this, I report the results from the principal component analyses that I performed in order to reduce the dimensionality of the 21 value measurement items from the ESS dataset. I performed a second round of PCAs on each country, in order to check whether the measurements are invariant. Next, I present a multicollinearity test of the higher-order value variables, and assess the reliability of the value items by calculating Cronbach's alpha. Finally, I report the results of the regression analyses that I have performed in order to directly test my hypotheses regarding the effect of human value prioritizations on attitudes towards the EU (trust in the European Parliament and support for further European unification).

### 5.1 Descriptive results

First, I will give a brief descriptive overview of the sociodemographic composition of the samples that I base my analyses on. Included are the same demographic variables that make up the first of my hierarchical multiple regression models: Age, gender and education (total number of years). This overview is useful for uncovering potential differences in sample composition of each country (Sweden, Norway and Denmark) that may have implications for the results of the analyses. For example, large discrepancies in the proportion of older vs. younger respondents between the countries may negatively impact the comparability of the data, as age has been found to influence a range of political considerations, preferences and attitudes (ref).

Among Swedes, the median age of respondents is 48. The gender of respondents is equally distributed, with exactly 50% males and females, respectively. 53% of Swedes have 12 total years of education; 8.1% have 15 years (3 years of higher education), 7.1% 16 years and 5.8% have a total of 17 years of education (4 or 5 years of higher education).

The demographic distribution of Norwegian respondents is very similar to the Swedish sample: the median age of respondents is 45 (N = 13247), with 52.6% male and 47.4 female respondents.

In Norway, 42.1% of respondents have completed 12 years of full-time education; 10.1% have 13 years, 8.4% have 15 years and 8% have 17 years of total education.

Among the Danish respondents, the distribution is also very similar. As in the other countries, the median age of respondents is 48. There are 50.2% male and 49.8% female respondents (N = 10836). The distribution of total completed years of full-time education among the Danish respondents mirrors that of their Scandinavian neighbours: 41.9% have completed 12 years of full-time education and 52.9% have 13 years in total; 8.3% have a total of 15 years, 7.8% a total of 16 years and 6.6% have completed 17 years. 20.2% of the Danish respondents have completed a maximum of 9 years full-time education, and the median number of years is 13.

## **5.2 Stability and change of attitudes towards the EU: Across time and between countries**

In this section I report the mean differences in variance of my two dependent variables, within and between countries, from the different rounds of the ESS. This step is merely explorative and is neither intended to test my hypotheses, nor to answer my core research question regarding the effect of human value priorities on attitudes towards the EU. However, computing and analysing mean differences over time allows us to identify and possibly expand upon trends and time-effects, such as emergent cleavages or critical junctures, that may have an impact on the attitudes that people have and express towards the EU. Additionally, it clarifies the validity of my dependent variables as measures of attitudes towards the EU, because differences in the development of means on one dependent variable to another could suggest that they measure different aspects of the EU.

The difference in means for each round of the ESS is calculated by performing a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). It is important to note that an ANOVA test does not give us a measure of statistically significant differences between the groups (rounds), only whether there is a difference in the means of the dependent variable between two or more groups. The tables below (tables 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3) show the mean differences of my first dependent variable, “Support for further European unification”, between the different rounds of the ESS.

**Table 5.1** Comparing mean differences in support for European unification over time, Denmark

Round	2	3	4	6
3	0.01			
4	0.08	0.06		
6	0.06	0.05	0.01	
7	-0.39***	-0.38***	-0.31***	-0.33***

P-levels are based on the least significant difference tests (LSD).

\*:  $p < 0.1$  \*\*:  $p < 0.05$  \*\*\*:  $p < 0.01$

**Table 5.2** Comparing mean differences in support for European unification over time, Norway

Round	2	3	4	6	7
3	0.10				
4	-0.07	-0.17**			
6	0.25***	0.15**	0.33***		
7	-0.25***	-0.15*	-0.33***	-0.002	
8	0.29***	0.19**	0.37***	0.04	0.04

P-levels are based on the least significant difference tests (LSD).

\*:  $p < 0.1$  \*\*:  $p < 0.05$  \*\*\*:  $p < 0.01$

**Table 5.3** Comparing mean differences in support for European unification over time, Sweden

Round	2	3	4	6	7
3	-0.27***				
4	-0.43***	-0.16**			
6	-0.14*	0.11	0.28***		
7	-0.19***	0.07	-0.23**	-0.04	
8	-0.25***	0.01	0.17**	0.10	-0.06

P-levels are based on the least significant difference tests (LSD).

\*:  $p < 0.1$  \*\*:  $p < 0.05$  \*\*\*:  $p < 0.01$

Next, I will compare the means of my second dependent variable, “Trust in the European parliament”. This is done by using the “One-way ANOVA” (analysis of variance) command in SPSS, choosing my dependent variable and selecting “ESSround” as the “Factor” by which it is divided. As with the previous ANOVA, SPSS produces separate analyses by country through the “Split file”-function. Mean differences in trust in the European Parliament are presented in tables 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6.

**Table 5.4** Comparing mean differences in trust in the EP over time, Denmark

Round	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	0.00					
3	-0.12	-0.12				
4	-0.21**	-0.21**	-0.09			
5	-0.13	-0.13	-0.01	0.07		
6	-0.32	-0.32***	-0.20**	-0.11	-0.18**	
7	0.05	0.05	0.17**	0.26**	0.19**	0.37***

P-levels are based on the least significant difference tests (LSD).

\*:  $p < 0.1$  \*\*:  $p < 0.05$  \*\*\*:  $p < 0.01$

**Table 5.5** Comparing mean differences in trust in the EP over time, Norway

Round	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	0.12*						
3	-0.05	-0.18**					
4	-0.29***	-0.42***	-0.23***				
5	-0.29***	-0.42***	-0.23**	-0.00			
6	-0.25***	-0.38***	-0.19**	0.04	0.04		
7	-0.29***	-0.42***	-0.23***	0.00	0.00	-0.04	
8	-0.41***	-0.54***	-0.35***	-0.12	-0.12	-0.16**	0.12

P-levels are based on the least significant difference tests (LSD).

\*:  $p < 0.1$  \*\*:  $p < 0.05$  \*\*\*:  $p < 0.01$

**Table 5.6** Comparing mean differences in trust in the EP over time, Sweden

Round	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	0.06						
3	-0.47***	-0.53***					
4	-0.63***	-0.70***	-0.16**				
5	-0.94***	-1.0***	-0.47***	-0.30***			
6	-0.68***	-0.75***	-0.21**	-0.04	0.04		
7	-0.70***	-0.76***	-0.23***	-0.06	0.00	-0.01	
8	-0.73***	-0.80***	-0.26***	-0.10	-0.12	-0.05	-0.03

P-levels are based on the least significant difference tests (LSD).

\*:  $p < 0.1$  \*\*:  $p < 0.05$  \*\*\*:  $p < 0.01$

The results from the ANOVA tests reveal certain similarities as well as differences between respondents from the different Scandinavian countries. Additionally, the mean differences over time follow similar trends for both support for further European unification, and for trust in the European Parliament.

As shown in table 5.1, the item measuring support for further European unification is missing from rounds 1, 5 and 8 in Denmark. For the other two countries, rounds 1 and 5 are missing. The Danish respondents appear to express distinctly more stable attitudes towards the EU on both indicators of support. On the first indicator, Danish respondents (N=7440) are more eurosceptical than those from the other countries. In later ESS rounds, however, Swedes and Norwegians are noticeably becoming less trusting of the EP on average. Potential causes of the apparent increase in Euroscepticism as measured by support for further unification and trust in the EP are thoroughly investigated in the discussion chapter.

### **5.3 Assessing the reliability and validity of the value measurements**

#### ***5.3.1 Principal component analysis of the ESS value items***

In this section I will report the results from the principal component analyses of the value items from the ESS. In SPSS, PCAs are performed by clicking Dimension reduction > Factor and then including all the items that I wish to reduce to their principal components. After selecting all the value measurement items, I then selected the adequate extraction and rotation methods. The extraction method is Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. The results of the principal component analysis are presented in table 5.7.

The principal component analysis of the 21 value items from the ESS produced four principal components that are orthogonal (i.e. uncorrelated), each consisting of the linear combination of individual items that accounts for the largest variance possible. Clark and Watson (1995) argue that item loadings of 0.40 or above can safely be retained, while loadings of 0.20 or less are too weak and thus should be regarded as candidates for exclusion. As shown in table 5.7, some of the items are significantly cross-loading on two different components. There is considerable disagreement about the appropriate threshold for cross-loading items in factor analyses, but the literature seems to indicate that items that have cross-loadings of above 0.20-0.30 should be discarded.

**Table 5.7** Principal component analysis of ESS value items

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
1. Important to think new ideas and being creative	0.055	-0.218	-0.496	0.308
2. Important to be rich, have money and expensive things	0.221	0.041	0.244	0.587
3. Important that people are treated equally and have equal opportunities	-0.139	-0.013	-0.696	0.001
4. Important to show abilities and be admired	0.005	0.013	-0.059	0.751
5. Important to live in secure and safe surroundings	-0.014	0.675	0.064	0.140
6. Important to try new and different things in life	0.493	-0.187	-0.272	0.208
7. Important to do what is told and follow rules	-0.147	0.658	-0.051	0.151
8. Important to understand different people	0.025	0.030	-0.693	-0.041
9. Important to be humble and modest, not draw attention	-0.013	0.406	-0.148	-0.210
10. Important to have a good time	0.752	-0.003	0.077	0.116
11. Important to make own decisions and be free	0.220	-0.085	-0.315	0.227
12. Important to help people and care for others well-being	0.258	0.215	-0.539	-0.121
13. Important to be successful and that people recognize achievements	0.098	0.131	-0.022	0.744
14. Important that government is strong and ensures safety	0.069	0.533	-0.139	0.134
15. Important to seek adventures and have an exciting life	0.536	-0.285	-0.122	0.288
16. Important to behave properly	-0.123	0.695	-0.054	0.191
17. Important to get respect from others	0.012	0.309	-0.009	0.631
18. Important to be loyal to friends and devote to people close	0.377	0.235	-0.364	-0.067
19. Important to care for nature and the environment	-0.009	0.182	-0.540	-0.110
20. Important to follow traditions and customs	0.302	0.574	0.080	-0.167
21. Important to seek fun and things that give pleasure	0.840	0.057	0.044	-0.031

In table 5.7, the factor loadings on each of the four principal components are highlighted in green. Items that are cross-loading on two or more factors, are highlighted in red. In addition to confirming Schwartz's proposed four-dimensional higher-order structure of values, the PCA results indicate which measurement items may reliably be retained, which ones to discard or exclude from subsequent analyses for conceptual clarity and reliable measurement, and which

items to include in the construction of new variables representing the higher-order values in my regression analyses.

Following the PCA, I computed a scree plot in order to determine the number of components to retain as the basis for my multi-item variables representing the higher-order values. A scree plot is a procedure that visually indicates the eigenvalues of principal components, and is used to determine the number of factors or components that should be retained. The scree plot also confirms the four-factor extraction of principal components, corresponding with the four higher-order values identified by Schwartz.

The next step is to perform separate PCAs for each country, in order to assess the measurement invariance of the value items in the dataset. I followed the same procedure as above, but with the “Split File” function activated to produce separate analyses for each country. The four-factor extraction was confirmed in Norway and Sweden, but the items initially produced five principal components in Denmark. To mitigate this, I ran the PCA once more, but selected the option to force the extraction of four principal components. This procedure extracted the same four components, with the same pattern of factor loadings and cross-loadings as in the case of the other two countries.

I choose to exclude the cross-loading items (indicated with red boxes in table 5.7) from my aggregated higher-order value items (Openness, Conservation, Self-transcendence and Self-enhancement values) because it is unclear which of the higher-order values they are actually measuring, and to avoid possible multicollinearity. The individual items that constitute each constructed higher-order value variable are presented below. Excluding the cross-loading items, the PCA confirms the expected four-factor structure, with each principal component representing one of Schwartz’s four higher-order value types.

### ***5.3.2 Assessing measurement reliability with Cronbach’s Alpha***

While the terms are often used interchangeably, reliability and validity have subtly different meanings in statistical research. *Measurement validity* refers to whether a measurement item *actually* measures the intended attributes of a concept or an individual. *Measurement reliability*, on the other hand, refers to whether the items of a multi-item scale are suited for measuring a construct when their individual scores are summated.

In this section, I will report the results of a reliability test of my value items using Cronbach’s  $\alpha$ . This procedure is not a statistical test, but rather a way to calculate a coefficient of reliability or internal consistency. It should be noted that the Cronbach’s Alpha score does not indicate

the reliability of the measurement instruments themselves, but rather the degree to which they are reliable when applied to a specific sample. Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  scores are calculated based on the following formula:

$$\alpha = rk / [1 + (k - 1)r]$$

K is the number of items considered; r is the mean of inter-item correlations. The size of the alpha is determined by both the number of items constituting the scale, and by the mean inter-item correlations. In SPSS, Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  is calculated by selecting Analyze -> Scale -> Reliability analysis, and then selecting the items that correspond to a higher-order value. This step is repeated for each of the four higher-order values, and the analysis is performed on the entire data set from all three countries. The results are shown in table 5.8 below.

**Table 5.8** Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  of higher-order value scales

Higher-order value	Cronbach’s $\alpha$	N (items)
Openness to change	0.762	4
Conservation	0.680	6
Self-transcendence	0.626	4
Self-enhancement	0.721	4

As shown in table 5.8, the higher-order value items that I have constructed from the ESS measurement items produce Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  scores of between 0.626 and 0.762. These scores are within the commonly applied threshold of 0.6 to 0.7 and above, and we can therefore conclude that the higher-order value variables have a satisfactory degree of internal consistency.

**5.3.3 Assessing multicollinearity**

The next step of my data analysis is to assess the potential multicollinearity of my value measurements. As noted in the previous chapter, multicollinearity occurs when two or more predictors (independent variables) are correlated to such an extent that they become redundant or unstable. The variance inflation factor (VIF) was calculated for each of the four value items, once for each dependent variable (table 5.9).

**Table 5.9** – Multicollinearity assessment: variance inflation factor

<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>VIF</b>
<b>EUnification</b>		
	Openness	1.13
	Conservation	1.17
	Self-Enhancement	1.19
	Self-Transcendence	1.33
<b>TrustEP</b>		
	Openness	1.35
	Conservation	1.17
	Self-Enhancement	1.19
	Self-Transcendence	1.31

Critical values for VIF = < 5 (Hair et al. 1999)

According to Hair et al. (1999), the maximum acceptable VIF level is 10, but the lower, the better. The VIF scores (table 5.9) are all well below the conventional threshold of <5, indicating very low or non-existent multicollinearity between my constructed higher-order variables.

#### **5.4 Computing multi-item variables**

The next step is to compute multi-item variables based on the four components that were extracted through principal component analysis (Table 5.7). Each of these variables represent one of the four higher-order values presented in Schwartz’s theory. These variables are computed by using the following click-based commands in SPSS:

Transform > Compute variable

In the “Target Variable” field, I then entered my chosen name for the new variables that each represent one of Schwartz’s higher-order value types. I then located each of their corresponding measurement items in the drop-down list on the left-hand side of the window, except for the items that were found to be cross-loading in the principal component analysis. Finally, the summated value items were divided by the number of items for each variable.

First, I computed the variable “Openness”, representing the higher-order value called “openness to change”. This variable consists of the items “important to.. “: 6. “... try new things”; 10. “... have a good time”; 15. “... seek adventures”; and 21. “... seek fun and pleasure”.

The second component that was extracted in the PCA represents the higher-order value “Conservation”. I repeated the step outlined above, including the following items: 5. “... live in safe surroundings”; 7. “... do what is told and follow rules”; 9. “... be humble and modest”; 14. “... that government is strong”; 16. “... to behave properly”; and 20. “... to follow traditions and customs”.

The third component represents the higher-order value “Self-Transcendence”. I computed the Self-transcendence variable by merging the items that were found to be factor-loading correspondingly: 3. “... that people are treated equally”; 8. “... to understand different people”; 12. “... to help people and care for others”; and 19. “... to care for nature and the environment”.

The fourth and final variable that I computed, based on the extracted component from the principal component analysis, represents the higher-order value “Self-enhancement” and consists of the following ESS value items: 2. “... to be rich, have money”; 4. “... to show abilities and be admired”; 13. “... to be successful and that people recognize achievements”; and 17. “... to get respect”.

## **5.5 Computing interaction-effect variables**

After computing the four variables described above, I then created dummy variables representing my three target countries. A dummy variable is a variable that is dichotomous, meaning that it can take one of two values: 1 (presence of an attribute) or 0 (absence of an attribute). This is easily done in SPSS by clicking the following commands: Transform > recode into different variables, then computing a new variable for each country where residence in that country is given the value 1, and residence in any of the two others is given the value 0. These dummy variables are useful for computing interaction-effect variables to test for differences in the effect of values on EU attitudes between the three countries included in the regression models, and between different points in time.

The first step before creating the interaction predictors is mean centering of my four computed higher-order value items. This is most easily achieved by creating an output of the means for each variable and subtracting the means from their respective value items.

Next, I created two dummy variables, one for Sweden and one for Denmark, thus making Norway the basis country. After having computed interaction variables for Denmark and Sweden, the interaction-effect variables can be included in the fourth regression block, selected to exclude all cases that were not the target of my exploration of interaction effects (NO-DK, excluding Sweden and NO-SE, excluding Denmark). In addition to constructing variables that

distinguish between the countries, I then created dummies representing different points in time by following the same procedure as with EU membership.

## **5.6 Regression analyses**

### ***5.6.1 Regression analyses – Main effects***

Following the previous exploratory and descriptive analytical tests, I will now proceed with the regression analyses. In this section, I report the results from a series of hierarchical regression models performed on each of the two dependent variables. Hierarchical linear regression is most easily performed in SPSS by selecting Analyse -> Regression -> Linear, selecting the dependent variable and then entering the independent variables in separate blocks, one for each of my three models (Model 1-3). These steps are then repeated for the second dependent variable. The first block includes the sociodemographic control variables: age, gender and years of completed full-time education. The second block includes three theoretical variables, each representing one of the three predominant explanatory perspectives on attitudes towards the EU that are highlighted in the literature review: 1) feeling about household's income, 2) satisfaction with national government and 3) allow many/few immigrants from poorer countries outside Europe. The variables of this second block are included in order to control for the most commonly proposed sources of support and opposition to the EU; the remaining variance in the dependent variables, which is not accounted for as a function of either 1) identity-based/cultural concerns, 2) domestic political satisfaction, 3) personal economy, or age, gender or education, is what I seek to explain by applying Schwartz's basic value theory.

The third regression block (Model 3) includes my value variables, the construction of which is outlined above. Finally, in order to run the regressions separately for each country, I activate the "Split file" function and set it to generate separate outputs for each country.

Table 5.10 provides R, R<sup>2</sup>, adjusted R<sup>2</sup> and the standard error of the estimate. These scores indicate how well each regression model fits the data. For each of the three models described above, SPSS produces some key outputs regarding the models and how suited they are for explaining the variance of the dependent variables. These measures of model fit are useful when comparing the exploratory power of the subsequent models, and assessing the degree to which the addition of new variables contributes to the explanatory power of the model as a whole. First, a multiple regression was calculated to predict trust in the European Parliament, one of my two measures of attitudes towards the EU, based on respondents' age, gender and total years

of full-time education. This model has an  $R^2$  score of 0.031, 0.036 and 0.038 and an F-score of 110.366, 131.786 and 138.539, for Norway, Sweden and Denmark, respectively.

For each of the subsequent regression models, R-square change and F-change ( $\Delta R^2$  and  $F_{\Delta R^2}$  in table 5.10) tell us the degree to which the inclusion of additional variables (theoretical variables in model 2 and values in model 3) increase the explanatory power of the regression model. Model 2 has a  $\Delta R^2$  score of 0.113 for Norway, 0.181 for Sweden and 0.123 for Denmark. The  $F_{\Delta R^2}$  scores are 456.125 for Norway, 825.138 for Sweden and 441.955 for Denmark, all with  $p < 0.01$ . The  $R^2$  and F scores of Model 3, which includes the four constructed higher-order value variables outlined in chapter 5.3.2, indicate that the inclusion of the value variables have a modest, positive effect on the overall explanatory power of the regression model.

As shown in table 5.10, age has a small but significant, negative effect on trust in the European Parliament. This effect of age is also present on the second dependent variable, albeit to a lesser extent, and is significant for all the three countries of the analysis. These results indicate that age has a modest, negative effect on a person's tendency to trust the European Parliament and support further European unification. Furthermore, gender is positively related to trust in the EP, for respondents of all countries. In the data set, 0 = female and 1 = male, so a positive coefficient indicates that male respondents are more trusting of the European Parliament than females. On the second dependent variable, gender has a significant effect in the opposite direction among Swedes, while it is not a significant predictor in Norway or Denmark. Lastly, education has a significant positive effect on both measures of EU attitudes, in all three countries. This is consistent with findings from previous research on the topic of attitudes towards the EU and European integration: the more educated a person is, the more likely they are to understand, and thereby support, the complex nature of EU politics.

Next, I will report the results of the second regression block, which contains the theoretical variables that represent each of the three predominant explanatory perspectives on attitudes towards the EU. Looking at the regression coefficients in the second block of Table 5.10, satisfaction with household income has a negative effect on trust in the European Parliament among Norwegian and Swedish respondents, and a positive effect among Danes. Satisfaction with household income has a negative impact on support for further European unification among the EU citizens of my sample, while it has no effect on this DV among Norwegians (i.e. non-EU citizens). Satisfaction with country's government has a strong, positive effect on trust in the EP among all citizens. This pattern of correlations is the same for the second EU attitude (EU unification). The third of my theoretical variables is "allow many/few immigrants from

poorer countries outside Europe”, where 1 = many, and 4 = none. In table 5.10 we see that the responses to this survey item are significant predictors of EU attitudes across the board: the less supportive a respondent is of allowing poor immigrants from outside of Europe, the less supportive they are on both measures of EU attitudes.

Then I will report the results from the third regression model, which includes the four constructed higher-order value variables outlined in chapter 5.3.2. The  $R^2$  and F scores of Model 3 indicate that the inclusion of the value variables have a modest, positive effect on the overall explanatory power of the regression model.

H1a states that *for citizens of EU Member States, conservation is positively related to pro-EU attitudes at the individual level*. Conversely, H1b states that *conservation is positively related to anti-EU attitudes for non-EU members*. As I have noted in the methods section, “pro-EU attitudes” are measured by my two distinct dependent variables (TrustEP and EUnification). In order to assess whether my regression models support these hypothesized value-attitude relationships, we must look at the regression coefficients for the “Conservation” variable in all three countries and for both dependent variables. In order to *directly* test this hypothesis, I created a fourth regression model with new variables computed to test for the interaction effects between a respondents’ home country and the strength of the relationship between values and EU attitudes. The regression coefficients and p-values for these interaction variables, shown in Table 5.11, tell us whether, and to which extent, there is a differential effect by country on a given value on EU attitudes.

For the first of my dependent variables, “trust in the European Parliament”, we can see that there is a moderately negative effect of conservation values on trust in the EP among Swedes, as well as among Norwegians. For the Danish ESS respondents, on the other hand, there is no significant effect. This pattern of correlations is similar when looking at the second dependent variable: there is no significant effect of conservation values on support for further European unification among Swedes. Among Norwegian respondents, there is a positive effect of 0.087 with a p-value of  $< 0.001$ ; among Danes there is a positive regression coefficient of 0.234. Although the conservation values do influence attitudes towards the EU, the effects do not follow the expected patterns; H1a&b are therefore rejected.

H2 states that, in all three Scandinavian countries, Self-transcendence values are positively related to pro-EU attitudes. Looking at Table 5.10, we can see that Self-transcendence has no effect on either dependent variable among Norwegian respondents. Self-transcendence has a

significant, negative effect on trust in the EP among Swedes and Danes alike. On the second dependent variable, there is a moderate, negative effect of self-transcendence values among Swedes ( $p < 0.1$ ) and a significant, strongly negative effect among Danes.

H3 states that for all of my three case countries, I expect “Openness to Change”-values to have a positive effect on both measures of EU attitudes. Among the value-attitude relationships that are significant ( $p$ -values of  $< 0.1$ ), Openness has a slight positive effect on “TrustEP” for Norwegian respondents, and a strongly negative effect on “EUnification” among Swedes. No other significant effects were found between openness to change and attitudes towards the EU among Scandinavians.

H4 states that, in all countries, I expect “Self-enhancement”-values to be positively linked to attitudes towards the EU. As shown in table 5.10 below, this hypothesised relationship is entirely unsupported. Instead of positively influencing attitudes towards the EU, the regression analysis shows that a prioritisation of achievement and power has a remarkably strong, negative influence on both trust in the European Parliament and on support for further European unification. In fact, the negative relationship between “Self-enhancement”-values and the EU attitudes that are explored here, is both stronger and more consistent (in a negative direction) than any of the other value-attitude relationships.

**Table 5.10** Regression coefficients, models 1-3

	<u>Dependent variable</u>					
	TrustEP			EUnification		
	NO	SE	DK	NO	SE	DK
<b><u>Control variables</u></b>						
Age	-0.016***	-0.014***	-0.023***	-0.004***	-0.008***	-0.011***
Gender	0.176***	0.102**	0.252***	-0.051	-0.194***	-0.062
Education	0.043***	0.076***	0.038***	0.038***	0.062***	0.073***
$\Delta R^2$	0.031	0.036	0.044	0.007	0.018	0.025
$F_{\Delta R^2}$	110.366***	131.786***	138.539***	18.468***	51.341***	58.589***
<b><u>Theoretical variables</u></b>						
Income	-0.185***	-0.071**	0.217***	-0.036	-0.073**	-0.199***
Satisfied with govt.	.305***	0.412***	0.297***	0.127***	0.240***	0.221***
Many/few immigrants	-0.200***	-0.266***	-0.450***	-0.300***	-0.318***	-0.767***
$\Delta R^2$	0.113	0.181	0.123	0.029	0.070	0.091
$F_{\Delta R^2}$	456.125***	825.138***	441.955***	84.818***	217.428***	235.005***
<b><u>Values</u></b>						
Openness	0.067***	-0.030	-0.002	-0.040	-0.106***	0.019
Conservation	-0.105***	-0.094***	-0.014	0.087***	0.055	0.234***
Self-transcendence	0.025	-0.165***	-0.155***	0.011	-0.072*	-0.241***
Self-enhancement	-0.136***	-0.107***	-0.168***	-0.197***	-0.194***	-0.133***
$\Delta R^2$	0.005	0.009	0.008	0.007	0.011	0.007
$F_{\Delta R^2}$	15.305***	32.383***	20.922***	15.138***	25.072***	13.328***
<b>F</b>	181.373***	312,665***	190.243***	37.419***	92.757***	95.870***
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.149	0.227	0.175	0.043	0.098	0.123
<b>Df</b>	4.10397	4.10673	4.8970	4.8346	4.8519	4.6809

### 5.6.2 Interaction effects – Differences between countries

Regarding H1a&b, we can see that the effect of conservation values on trust in the European parliament is indeed different from one country to the next. In Sweden, conservation values have a stronger negative relationship to trust in the European Parliament, than they do in Norway (-0.098 with  $p < 0.05$ ). On the second parameter measuring EU attitudes, however, the difference is not statistically significant. In Denmark, the correlations were quite different: Conservation values correlate more strongly with trust in the EP than they do in Norway, and the effect is even stronger on the relationship between conservation values and support for further European unification. In other words, conservation values have a more positive effect in Denmark, and more strongly negative effect in Sweden, than what they do in Norway.

**Table 5.11:** Regression table, model 4 – Interaction effects: Country

<u>Interaction effects</u>	<b>TrustEP</b>	<b>EUunification</b>
Sweden, Openness	-0.184***	-0.060
Sweden, Conservation	-0.098**	-0.043
Sweden, Self-transcendence	0.127***	-0.039
Sweden, Self-enhancement	0.033	-0.073
Denmark, Openness	-0.137***	0.110
Denmark, Conservation	0.153***	0.418***
Denmark, Self-transcendence	-233***	-0.978***
Denmark, Self-enhancement	-0.040	-0.112*
<b>F</b>	366.471***	143.063***
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.180	0.098
<b>df</b>	8.30054	8.23688

Self-Transcendence values have a stronger effect on trust in the European Parliament among Swedes than Danes or Norwegians. Among Danish respondents, the negative relationship between Self-Transcendence values and EU attitudes is even stronger than among respondents from the two other countries.

Openness to change affects EU attitudes more strongly in a negative direction in both EU countries than they do in Norway, the basis country. Self-enhancement values do not appear to have a differential effect on EU attitudes between the countries, except for a somewhat more

negative effect (-0.112 with  $p < 0.1$ ) on support for further European integration in Denmark than in the two other countries.

### 5.6.3 Exploring possible cleavages – Intertemporal stability of the relationship between values and EU attitudes

The next interaction effects that I have examined are the effects of time on the relationship between values and attitudes towards the EU. I have not presented any hypotheses regarding the effects that time may have on the value-attitude relationship, but Hooghe and Marks (2008) and others have argued that exogenous shocks and notable events on the world stage are potential sources of changing attitudes towards the EU among European populations. Two events of this kind that have been proposed as potential triggers for growing eurosceptical sentiments across Europe are the financial crisis of 2008, and the migration crisis of 2015. Coefficients of the interaction effects of time on the relationship between values and EU attitudes are summarized in table 5.12.

**Table 5.12** – Regression table, model 4: Interaction effects: Time

<b><u>Interaction effects</u></b>	<b>TrustEP</b>	<b>EUunification</b>
Time1, Openness	-0.028	-0.080*
Time1, Conservation	0.028	-0.165***
Time1, Self-transcendence	-0.069**	0.231***
Time1, Self-enhancement	-0.085**	-0.010
Time2, Openness	-0.012	-0.077
Time2, Conservation	0.062	-0.098
Time2, Self-transcendence	-0.195***	0.357***
Time2, Self-enhancement	0.009	-0.021
<b>F</b>	355.541***	108.907***
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.176	0.076
<b>df</b>	8.30054	8.23688

The model is based on data from all available rounds of the ESS, for all three case countries. The first set of interaction variables, named “Time1 + value”, measure the changes in the effect of a given higher-order value on EU attitudes after the financial crisis, compared to the ESS rounds from before 2008 (consists of rounds 5, 6 and 7). The last four interaction variables measure the differential effect of higher-order values on EU attitudes after the 2015 migrant crisis (round 8). The basis group consists of rounds 1-4.

The first set of coefficients for the time1 interaction effect shows that the negative effects of self-enhancement and self-transcendence on trust in the European Parliament *increased* after the financial crisis of 2008. On the second dependent variable, both conservation and openness values became more strongly associated with support for further EU unification, while the positive effect of self-transcendence values increased.

The coefficients of the second interaction variables, time2, show that self-transcendence values became more negatively associated with TrustEP after the migrant crisis of 2015, while they paradoxically gained a more positive effect on respondents' attitudes towards European unification.

Time1: After the financial crisis, before the migrant crisis (rounds 5, 6 and 7).

Time2: After the migrant crisis (round 8).

Basis: Before the financial crisis (rounds 1-4).

## **6 Discussion**

Having reported the results of the different analyses and statistical tests of the ESS data, I will now proceed to discuss the findings; the explanatory power of the variables from Models 1-3, whether the hypotheses are supported or unsupported, and whether the empirical findings meaningfully contribute towards illuminating, or ideally answering, the key research questions of the thesis.

The main goal of this thesis is to contribute to the body of knowledge concerning attitudes towards the EU. This research topic is diverse, with scholars applying different approaches both methodologically, empirically, theoretically and so on. A large proportion of existing EU-attitude research primarily focuses on how these attitudes are shaped, how they develop and change over time and in response to different material or political contexts, internal (individual-level) and external factors, and the implications of public opinion on the trajectory and future outlook of EU integration and “the European Project”, and whether “political choice”-approaches are applicable when researchers are dealing with multifaceted and relatively complex political entities such as the European Union. I will also discuss the differences between the countries and try to illuminate some reasons for why values affect EU attitudes differently among the Norwegian, Danish and Swedish samples.

### **6.1 Demographic predictors of EU attitudes**

First off, the demographic variables from the first hierarchical regression model (Age, gender and total years of education) all showed considerable explanatory power on people’s attitudes towards the EU. The effects were significant for both dependent variables (TrustEP and EUunification) and among respondents from all three Scandinavian countries. These findings are highly consistent with much of the literature on attitudes and public support for the European Union, which among other things shows us that attitudes develop and change significantly as people age. There is also a strong consensus that education tends to be positively correlated with trust in government, including supranational organizations and complex political entities. While it is customary to include these types of sociodemographic variables as mere controls (i.e. not as variables of primary theoretical interest), I find it useful to briefly discuss the mechanisms that underlie the relationships between these control variables and the measures of EU attitudes that I have chosen to study. This is especially because of some unexpected and therefore intriguing correlations in Model 1 (table 5.5), which I elaborate on in the forthcoming subchapters.

### **6.1.1 Gender and EU attitudes**

Concerning gender, I found that men are more likely than women to view European unification, and the EU itself, in a positive manner. As I have previously stated, age, gender and educational level have been identified as reliable and important predictors of a plethora of socio-political attitudes and policy preferences. However, the findings from the literature on demographic predictors of political attitudes, primarily generalized trust in political institutions, are inconsistent: Schoon and Cheng (2011) state that “Women have been shown to be more trusting (Glaeser et al 2000; Schoon et al. 2010) or less trusting (Leigh, 2006) than men.” Schoon and Cheng largely attribute these discrepancies in the social scientific literature to methodological factors: different measurement approaches (single-item measures or the usage of scales), different sampling approaches (cross-sectional or longitudinal), or differences in researchers’ focus on the effects of developmental periods and divergent socialization.

Women and men differ substantially on many other political traits, behaviours and measurable attitudes: studies controlling for socio-economic factors and key political attitudes have found that women are more likely to 1) have voted and 2) have engaged in “private” activism (i.e. voluntary or semi-professional engagement with social movements or interest organizations). Men, conversely, are more likely to 1) have engaged in direct contact with politicians and 2) be (more active) members of political parties (e.g. Coffé and Bolzendahl 2010).

To reiterate the results presented in table 5.5 in the previous chapter, males reported a much higher degree of trust in the European Parliament than women. On the second dependent variable (Eunification), the inverse relationship was found: Male ESS respondents from all three country samples exhibited considerably less support for European unification. This finding, although attributable to methodological differences, are *directly* opposed to what Alvarez (2002) and others have found (albeit in samples from a different data set). How may we, relying on the existing literature on gender differences in a) trust in political institutions and b) support for trans- or supranational political organizations and entities, explain these discrepancies? And, consequentially, could these unexpected demographic attributes of the Scandinavian samples, contribute to illuminate the lack of support for my hypothesized value-EU attitude linkages?

### **6.1.2 Age and EU attitudes**

Continuing on the subject of demographic variables: on the first dependent variable, all effects of age on EU attitudes (TrustEP and Eunification) were significant, although not particularly

strong. These findings are consistent with the expectations derived from the literature, something which contributes to the explanatory power of Model 1. However, the size of the effect of age on EU attitudes seems to be significantly smaller than what other researchers have found.

### ***6.1.3 Educational level and EU attitudes***

The final demographic variable which is often included in demographic “control blocks”, including Model 1 of this thesis, is individuals’ total number of years of full-time education. This variable has been shown to be of great importance and reliability as a predictor of all kinds of attitudes: generalized trust in institutions, pro-social orientations, acceptance of foreigners and diverse cultures, interest and participation in politics, and sceptic reading of news and public communications. In the context of EU attitudes, particularly support for further integration and knowledge about the EU, education has been found to correlate positively with support. The tendency of higher educated individuals to be supportive of complex polities, of which the EU is a prime example, is also found in my regression analysis of Scandinavian ESS participants. There is a significant positive effect of total education on both trust in the EP, and support for further Unification, for all countries.

## **6.2 Theoretical variables: predominant explanatory perspectives on EU attitudes**

After having examined the degree to which the demographic variables of Model 1 explain variations in EU attitudes, I will now move on to discuss the “theoretical variables”, i.e. variables that were included in the second model of the multiple regression analysis in order to control for the sources of varying individual-level EU attitudes that are most commonly hypothesized and identified in the literature. As I presented in chapter 3, these three perspectives are:

- 1) The economic-utilitarian approach
- 2) The national identity and culture-centric approach, and;
- 3) The domestic political approach (incl. politicization, benchmarking and cue-taking theory)

In the second block (Model 2) of the hierarchical regression model presented in table 5.5 (chapter 5), I chose to include a single measurement item from the European Social Survey that represented, and thereby controlled for, the effect of each predominant explanatory perspective found throughout the literature on EU attitudes (i.e. support for integration, trust in EU

institutions, preferable vs. unpreferable views on transferal of decision-making powers to the supranational level).

The first explanatory perspective was operationalized by the variable which I have called “Income”, that measures respondents’ present satisfaction with their household income. The second perspective was operationalized by the variable “satisfied with govt.”, with the intention of gauging survey participants’ general support for their national government and potential cue-taking and benchmarking effects stemming from the domestic political climate of their country of residence. The third theoretical variable, “allow many/few immigrants”, was included to control for the increasingly prevalent explanatory perspective that links EU attitudes and support for integration with individuals’ attitudes towards immigrants, and the degree to which (primarily non-western) immigration is often perceived to be inextricably linked to the EU’s globalist, multiculturalist and redistributive ambitions and policies.

As expected, following a thorough review of summary articles and key contributions in the field of studies of public support for the EU, I found that all three theoretical variables had a considerable explanatory effect on both dependent variables. The direction of the relationships, however, were not *entirely* consistent with my expectations. The logic of “rational/political choice” theory conceptualizes EU support as a function of individuals’ satisfaction with their economic status. In Norway, a non-member state, higher satisfaction with household income correlated with unpreferable attitudes on both measures of EU attitudes. Seeing that the non-member status of Norway is the economic and political status quo, more affluent or economically satisfied individuals are less likely to favour significant reforms to a system that has allowed them to achieve significant wealth and economic security. Conversely, individuals reporting lesser satisfaction with their own economic circumstances would conceivably be more likely to support the substantive changes that EU membership would or could entail. A notable attribute of the relationships between the “income” variable and EU attitudes among the three case countries is the fact that, while income predictably effects unfavourable attitudes/trust in the European Union among Norwegians, the effect of income on the second dependent variable is not significant. Additionally, in the Norwegian context, I expected the second dependent variable (EU unification) to be the most theoretically relevant measure of EU attitudes, as the issue of Norway’s proposed EU membership has been a highly salient political issue at two separate occasions. Contrary to my expectations, however, the effect of income on this attitude item was not statistically significant.

Another notable finding from this theoretical regression model is the difference in the effect of income satisfaction on pro-EU attitudes among Swedes and Danes. In Sweden, individuals who report higher satisfaction with their household income are somewhat less likely to express trust in the European Parliament. On the second EU attitude measure, EUnification, the same effect is present. Danish respondents, on the other hand, exhibit a different relationship between household income and the EU attitude measures: while individuals who are more satisfied with their household income are more likely to trust the European Union, they are simultaneously less supportive of further European unification. What could possibly explain the inconsistency of these findings, when compared to the logic of “rational choice” and the predominant empirical findings from the literature?

The fact that more affluent or economically satisfied Swedes are less likely to either trust the European Parliament or be supportive of further unification, suggests that relative affluence or financial security does not translate to pro-EU attitudes. Support of the EU, particularly their redistributive policies, generous inclusion of poorer or less modernized countries, and willingness to transfer decision-making powers to a transnational community of diverse states, is often regarded as “altruistic” in nature. However, a lack of altruism (which will be discussed directly as a component of “self-transcendence” values), is not necessarily the cause of this effect. Swedes are already taxed quite highly in relation to other Europeans, and they are net benefactors to the EU’s finances by a substantial margin. This could potentially contribute to further unification (compared to the existing state of the “depth” and “width” of the EU” carrying disproportionately high costs. The Danish respondents are, conversely, more likely to trust the European Parliament as their satisfaction with their household income goes up. On the second dependent variable however, there is a strong negative relationship between the “income” variable and support for further Unification.

Satisfaction with one’s national government is generally hypothesized, and empirically supported by numerous studies, as a reliable predictor of pro-EU attitudes. Studies have shown that, among the less politically sophisticated or engaged, and the less educated members of any society, distinguishing between their domestic political institutions and actors (national parliament, regional councils) and transnational or supranational polities (the European Union, the United Nations) is difficult. Furthermore, both for higher and lesser-educated individuals, cue-taking/benchmarking theory (presented in chapter 2) postulates that citizens utilize their assessments of governmental performance, their satisfaction with and trust in domestic political actors, as proxies when prompted to assess their overall satisfaction, familiarity with or support

for politics pertaining to the supranational arena. Following this logic, there is a considerable likelihood of reasonably pro-government, politically content individuals holding favourable views towards the EU and its constituent institutions and key actors. This positive effect of satisfaction with the government of one's country and supportive attitudes towards the EU is supported by the results from Model 2 of the regression analyses. In fact, with b-coefficients ranging from 0.127 to 0.412, all significant (p-values of  $< 0.01$ ), the relationship between satisfaction with government and attitudes towards the EU is the strongest out of all.

Finally, "allow many/few immigrants" (... from poorer countries outside of Europe), which is supposed to represent and control for identity-based concerns, threat perceptions and by extension also tap into the degree to which national identity and in-group preferences inform a person's attitudes towards the EU, has a strong, negative effect on both dimensions of EU attitudes. This is consistent with the findings by McLaren (2002) and Hobolt and De Vries (2016), among others, that found strong national attachment and concerns over foreigners' influence on culture to impact EU attitudes (particularly support for further integration) in a consistently negative manner.

### **6.3 Values and EU attitudes**

In this section, I will proceed to discuss the main and interactive effects between higher-order values and EU attitudes. All hypotheses described in chapter 3 were based on possible compatibilities and conflicts among the motivational goals pertaining to specific values, and perceivable, both objective and widely believed characteristics of the European Parliament, the EU in a broad sense, and the process of European integration. These are the findings that are most directly tied the key contribution of this thesis: the applications of Schwartz's value theory, inspired and supported by the growing body of research on universal human values as predictors of social and political attitudes and behaviours (e.g. support for environmental policies, likelihood to vote for left-or right-wing parties, tolerant attitudes towards sexual minorities), as part of a model that explains the substantial variance observed in attitudes towards the EU among European citizens. The effect of universal human values on pro-and anti-EU attitudes is explored among citizens of Scandinavian countries, cases which were selected following the logic of "most similar systems design" in comparative politics.

Comparing this thesis to the pioneering works of Schwartz and colleagues, it is structured in a similar way: values, either represented individually or as aggregated higher-order values, function as independent variables. The political attitudes that one wishes to explore through a

value-theoretical lens, i.e. outcomes that one expects to vary depending on a subject's degree of importance given to one or more of the 10 primary values, are included as dependent variables in a multiple regression analysis, with some or all values, either individually or aggregated according to the higher-order dimensions, included as independent variables.

Consistently with previous findings in the literature on public attitudes towards the EU, the first two models (Model 1-2) accounted for a high degree of variation in my two dependent variables; the relationships between the independent variables and the attitude measures, were, however, not all in line with the expectations. First off, Model 3 has a limited explanatory power in comparison with the previous two Models (sociodemographic and theoretical variables).

In the social psychological context, values are defined as persistent motivational goals, i.e. decision-making tendencies that inform and guide an individual's thoughts, actions and so on. Values theory and Schwartz's measurement instruments (PVQ and SVS) have been found to be inextricably connected to psychological traits and socio-political choices, and to be ubiquitously observable and similarly distributed across the globe. Despite their apparent consequential nature, value prioritizations are seldom consciously decided, "self-debated" or even considered. Neither are their interrelations and the circumplex structure (fig x above) fully reliant or invariant across populations and scientific contexts. They nonetheless have proven to be both reliable and quite easily applicable across a wide spectrum of research topics (see chapter 3). When researchers have found strong correlations between a given value, for example "universalism", and certain voting patterns, social policy preferences, fondness of house pets or any other attribute or outcome, this value-attitude (object) linkage is determined by the process of "*value activation*". Activation takes place when, in simple terms, an attribute (external/visible or obscure, latent or manifest, etc.) of an object is perceived by a person to be conducive or unconducive to the attainment of the goals that underlie values that they cherish.

When formulating the hypotheses regarding the effect of values on EU attitudes among Scandinavians, I highlighted certain attributes of the European Union, both "objective" and individually perceived, that would activate individual or aggregated higher-order values.

The degree to which the hypothesized relationships between the four higher-order values and the two measures of EU attitudes are supported, or unsupported, is determined by the strength and significance levels of the beta-coefficients. All four higher-order value types were found to have a significant effect on attitudes towards the EU. However, the main effects were primarily in the opposite direction of what I hypothesized. This does not *necessarily* disprove the

hypothesized mechanisms of value activation, but may rather be an expression of the multifaceted nature of the attitude object (the EU) and the different ways in which people regard it as relevant to their value priorities. Some proposed improvements to the explanatory models, and ways in which the apparently inconsistent results may be clarified, are further explored in chapter 7.

### ***6.3.1 Openness to change-values and EU attitudes***

Openness to change-values were expected to be positively related to preferable attitudes towards the EU, irrespective of a person's country of residence. I rationalized this hypothesized value-attitude linkage by focusing on some key attributes of people with high scores on this higher-order value (consisting of stimulation and self-direction), and some inferred assumptions, based on the motivational emphases and tendencies outlined in Schwartz's definition of the values. I then identified, described and emphasised some attributes of the EU that I expected to be relevant to the motivational goals. Earlier research on value-attitude relations (i.e. Devos, Spini & Schwartz, 2002) found that people who cherished openness to change-values were more likely to generally *distrust* institutions than individuals who prioritized any of the three other higher-order value types. Nevertheless, basing my theorizing of "value activation" and "conflicts and compatibilities" on the wording of the measurement items, I, perhaps mistakenly, disregarded this source of anti-institution sentiments among individuals prioritizing "openness to change". Instead, I hypothesized that individuals who were motivated and guided by 1) self-direction (independent action, availability of choices, lack of repression) and 2) stimulation (seeking and appreciating diversity, contrasts and novelty) would see the EU as conducive to the attainment of these motivational goals. This was clearly refuted. Instead, it seems that other mechanisms are at play in the relationship between openness to change-values and attitudes towards the EU.

The negative effect of the openness to change-values on attitudes towards the EU suggests that individuals who prioritize this higher-order value perceive other attributes of the EU than the ones I have hypothesized as being value-relevant. In other words, the "value activation" occurs between different attributes of the attitude object, and the motivational goals of the openness to change-values, than the ones that I hypothesised. As I have mentioned, previous research has found that individuals who report giving high significance to "openness to change"-values are generally less trusting of institutions. The main explanations for this distrust is the perception among these individuals that institutions generally restrict independent action and thought, and are unconducive to change and novelty.

Furthermore, the low baseline level of trust in institutions of all kinds is likely to lead individuals who prioritize “openness”-values to see both the European Parliament, and any further unification at the European level, as a source of increasing restrictions rather than facilitation of the attainment of their goals: opposite to what I proposed, I suspect that these individuals see the EP and proposed integrationist policies as being uncondusive, perhaps obstructive, to their seeking of new and varied impulses, and their opportunities for achieving a sense of self-direction in life (i.e. the opportunity to act and choose on the basis of one’s wishes or impulses, and not according to imposed laws or restrictive norms). This is likely due, at least in part, to these individuals’ tendency to mistrust institutions.

### **6.3.2 Conservation values and EU attitudes**

Conservation values (tradition, security and conformity) were, firstly, expected to affect EU attitudes differently depending on the membership status of the respondents’ own country. The primary logic behind this assumption was that a person who emphasizes conservation (and the motivational goals that this value construct represents) will favour the status quo, and likewise be opposed to significant structural changes to the political framework in which they are embedded. When formulating the hypotheses (chapter 3) on *how* the different higher-order values would influence respondents’ positions on the two measures of EU attitudes, I identified and highlighted attributes of the European Union, EU institutions and the ongoing process of integration that would be relevant to respondents’ most highly prioritized values. As the results of the regression analyses in chapter 5 show, the proposed value-attitude linkages were mostly unsupported, instead indicating value-attitude relationships that required new explanations. Once again, I will rely on the existing literature on individual and higher-order values and their effect on social and political preferences, to explain the findings.

Conservation did indeed have a strong negative effect on trust in the EP among Norwegians. It is possible that, as I theorized in chapter 3, Norwegian citizens tend to regard the European Parliament as something foreign, which is objectively true, and that they distrust (and by extension, oppose) the EP because it does not belong to the social and cultural sphere or status quo which their conservation values are applicable to. Unexpectedly, however, Norwegian respondents who prioritized tradition, security and conformity to a higher extent, were *more* likely to be in favour of further European Integration. This finding potentially negates the logic presented above and suggests that there are other factors at play (i.e. measurement of attitudes towards the EU activate conservation values in a different manner).

As the higher-order value variables consist of multiple (two or three) values that are motivationally related and similar, but conceptually distinct, the constituent values may have differential effects when higher-order constructs are used as independent variables. For example, in regards to support for further European unification, Norwegians may be opposed to the EU itself (as was decisively shown by two referendums on EU membership which ended with a “No”), but their prioritization of security (primarily material or geopolitical) may render them supportive of collaboration and unification through agreements and organizations such as NATO, the European Council and specially the EEA. Alternatively, the conformity values could extend to the international, in this case regional level, and conformist individuals may be inclined to support the prevailing opinions of their “national neighbours”. The fact that full Norwegian EU membership is out of the question for the time being, possibly counteracts the hypothesized linkage between traditionalist values and opposition to European integration: since Norway has its own set of agreements with the EU while still formally not being a full member, conservationist Norwegians can conceivably support further integration and express trust in the EP within existing frameworks.

In the two EU member states, my analyses provided only partial support for the hypothesized effect of conservation on EU attitudes as measured by trust in the European Parliament and support for further European Unification. In Sweden, individuals who cherished conservation more than the other three higher-order values, were notably less trusting in the European Parliament. When this value-attitude relationship was directly tested (Model 4) by including variables representing the interaction effect of a respondent’s country on the value-attitude linkage, I found that the negative effect of conservation on TrustEP was even stronger than in Norway, the basis country. On the variable measuring support for further European unification, the regression showed no significant effect of conservation values. Again, this suggests the existence of different mechanisms than the proposed hypothesis.

Furthermore, Danish respondents diverged from the hypothesized value-attitude relationship on the first EU attitude measure (TrustEP), as conservation values had no significant effect on this dependent variable. Regarding support for further unification, however, conservation showed a strong positive effect. In Model 4 (table 5.6) which directly tested the mediating effect of a respondent’s country on the value-attitude relationship, this was further supported: “Conservative” Danes (i.e. those who are motivated and guided by tradition, conformity and security) were markedly more in favour of further European integration than both Swedes and Norwegians. While the main effect of conservation values on TrustEP was not significant in

Model 3 (table 5.5), the interaction-effect model (Model 4, table 5.6) showed that conservation values still had a stronger positive effect on TrustEP in Denmark than in Norway, the basis country of the analysis. While this value-attitude linkage was significantly stronger in Denmark than in Norway, it was still not strong enough to produce a positive main effect in Model 3.

When seeking to make sense of these findings, national-level differences (e.g. political history, the structure of political competition, national economic interests and international relations) should naturally be considered. Much has been written about the different histories of support for, or scepticism towards, the EU in the different Scandinavian countries. The peculiar, contentious nature of the Scandinavian countries' relationship to the EU has been dubbed "Scandinavian Exceptionalism" by Lawler (1997), and numerous researchers of public support for integration and the EU often emphasize the 1992 Danish referendum on the Maastricht Treaty as both a notable early instance of growing Euroscepticism, and as illustrative of the unusual relationship between Denmark (both the state and public) and the European Union. Furthermore, Sitter (2001) argues that "*Scandinavian party competition has incorporated divisions over European integration to a greater degree than most West European party systems, but with considerable variation in Norway, Sweden and Denmark*". Overall, questions regarding Europe are *more politicised* in Scandinavia than elsewhere in Western Europe. Furthermore, Scandinavians are indicated to be more eurosceptic on average, than others. The general consensus is that, when looking at voting (including referenda on proposed membership and the Maastricht Treaty), Scandinavians (particularly Danes and Norwegians) are more likely than other Europeans to challenge further integrationist measures.

As I have already discussed, several studies have proposed, and in different ways found empirical support for, strong connections between Conservation values and a generalized trust in institutions. This relationship was also present in the Scandinavian samples that I have analysed, but the hypothesised differential effect on the basis of EU-membership/non-membership was not supported.

### **6.3.3 Self-transcendence values and EU attitudes**

I hypothesized that self-transcendence values (comprised of universalism and benevolence) would be positively related to both TrustEP and EUnification in all three countries. Self-transcendent individuals are motivated by the well-being of others, both loved ones and complete strangers, and will engage in behaviours and support policies that aim for "the greater good" even when this incurs direct or indirect personal costs for them. Due to its broad

conceptual scope, universalism is the only value that is measured by three items in the 21-item Schwartz Portrait Value Questionnaire. The results of my regression analyses of the value-attitude relations discredit, or at least prompt a significant re-evaluation, of the ways in which self-transcendent values are related to Euroscepticism and Eurosupport. Among the correlations which were statistically significant, all had the opposite effect of what I had predicted. This suggests that the relationship between self-transcendence and EU attitudes is governed by different mechanisms than the ones that I originally proposed. Results from the regression analyses indicate that altruistic individuals *do not* perceive the European Union and the process of European integration as a socioeconomic “levelling agent”, or as a “force for the greater good”, despite such ambitions being explicitly stated and implicitly grounded at various stages of the “European Project”. Rather, it is quite the opposite: Self-transcendent individuals, who prioritize benevolence and universalism over all other values, are considerably less favourable in their attitudes towards the European Union in all of the countries where the data produced a significant effect.

One possible source of this effect is related to the rationale behind traditional left-wing opposition to the EU in the Scandinavian countries, beginning in the early stages of European Community (EC) expansion. In a study of the effect of the 10 values on voting and self-reported ideological orientation on a conventional left-right spectrum, in 16 countries across 5 continents, Davidov, Schultz and Schwartz (2008) provided an interesting insight: The values that most robustly predict people’s ideological placement were 1) Universalism, which was most strongly correlated with center-left to left policy support, party affiliation, voting history and prospective voting in upcoming national elections, and; 2) Security, the value most strongly associated with center-right to right-wing ideological self-placement and political choices. In my analysis of the Scandinavian ESS data, the respective higher-order values (conservation and self-transcendence) containing these two, supposedly opposed and antithetical values, have quite similar negative effects on attitudes towards the EU.

Additionally, my hypothesis stated that the effect of self-transcendence on pro-EU attitudes would be observed in all three countries; a respondents’ country of residence and its EU membership status does not make a notable difference in the degree to which highly self-transcendent individuals see the EU as commensurate with their priorities. As the main effects in Model 3 (table 5.10) shows, Norwegian individuals who prioritise these values

#### 6.3.4 *Self-Enhancement values and EU attitudes*

Individuals who reported giving priority to self-enhancement values (achievement and power) are driven by their personal accomplishments, generally in direct comparison to others around them. Their actions and choices are motivated by status, respect and acknowledgement of their efforts or achievements by relevant others (i.e. members of an in-group). I hypothesized that people who are motivated primarily by personal accomplishments (i.e. financial gains, improving career and employment status, seeking responsibility and authority over others), are likely to be supportive of the EU. For all the politically sensitive, contentious questions of sovereignty, multiculturalism and the “democratic deficit” within the EU, the Union remains at its core a primarily economic project. To support the EU is, necessarily, to support the free trade of people, goods, services and financial assets. The people who stand to gain the most from liberalized intra-EU trade conditions (business executives, investors, highly skilled professionals and white-collar workers), are more likely to give high priority to self-enhancement values than other social and professional groups, because self-enhancement is likely to stimulate competitiveness and be a required attribute of the individuals who hold these top positions.

The literature on EU support suggests that, alongside the increasing focus on topics like national identity and politicization, perceived economic rationality still plays an important role in explaining the variance in support for the EU across both member and non-member states in Europe. As I have presented in the previous chapter, however, the Scandinavian ESS data do not support this hypothesized relationship. Rather, the findings suggest that individuals who cherish self-enhancement are *less* likely to have supportive or preferable attitudes towards the EU. A possible explanation for this relationship is what can be referred to as a “big fish in a little pond”-mentality. Self-enhancement values are characterized by a focus on status and importance vis-à-vis others, and by acknowledgement of one’s achievements and positive qualities. This is reflective of a two-way comparison process. The individuals compare themselves to others, and others again compare. When hypothesizing about the relationship between self-enhancement values and attitudes towards the EU, I possibly overlooked a critical dynamic within the relationship between this higher-order value type and attitudes towards the EU:

Highly achievement-and power-driven individuals are likely to measure their own success, and by extension their attainment of value-relevant motivational goals, in relation to a limited in-group such as a social network or an academic field. It remains true that the EU and the process

of integration, through its liberalizing and homogenizing of markets, increases the sum of employment and investment opportunities for citizens of participating countries (EU member states and the EEA countries). However, the integration of different markets and sectors of national economies possibly dilutes the relative importance of the achievements of the individuals that sit at the top of national hierarchies. An individual who is motivated by a wish to dominate and be considered as the “best in the business” within their profession, will possibly see their relative status or importance dwindle as the total number of relevant competitors increases. A person who is motivated largely by *relative* status and recognition of their abilities *in relation to others*, will likely find it easier to attain their key motivational goals (recognition of achievements, status and respect, power over others) within existing, well-defined national hierarchies than in the larger and more uncertain professional fields, economic sectors and hierarchies that EU policies and European integration produces. It is easier and incurs fewer, lesser costs for a self-enhancement-driven person to retain their position in a hierarchy by restricting access for competitors, than by constantly improving their skills or their product, and by applying energy and resources in order to remain ahead. In a simple metaphor, the relative size of the “fish” decreases as the “pond” increases. The more important it is for the “fish” to be bigger than its competitors (i.e. a relevant in-group or professional field), the more likely they are to oppose any growth of their “pond”.

Additionally, it is possible that the activities and ambitions of the EU that are not related to liberalization and homogenization of markets, trade policies and so on, are regarded less favourably and possibly uncondusive to attainment of key motivational goals by those who give high importance to self-enhancement values. Schwartz’s theory posits that, within the two-dimensional circumplex structure of value interrelations, an individual who scores high on one higher-order pole will reliably score lower on the opposite pole. Thus, a person who is primarily motivated by self-enhancement is likely to give limited importance to self-transcendence values (universalism and benevolence). Solidarity, economic redistribution or inter-European promotion of democratic values are therefore likely to be of little motivational importance for individuals who score highly on self-enhancement values and are possibly regarded as contrary to the motivational goals of such people.

As with the other three value types, the effect of self-enhancement values on EU support appears to be mediated by uncertain factors that should be studied further in order to definitely establish how attitudes towards the EU may be predicted and shaped by an individual’s value priorities. The findings of this thesis suggest that, based on available data from 8 rounds of the

ESS, Scandinavians who are highly self-enhancing (i.e. highly motivated by achievement and power values) are likely to oppose, rather than support, the EU.

## **7 Limitations and directions for future research**

Finally, I will address some key limitations of this thesis. Throughout the thesis, I have presented some theoretical and empirical contributions to the research on attitudes towards the EU among Scandinavians. In addition to the commonly researched sociodemographic and theoretical predictor variables, I have investigated the effects human values as described by Schwartz (i.e. 1992; 1994). By analysing data from 8 rounds of the European Social Survey, from Norway, Sweden and Denmark, I have found some strong relationships between value prioritizations and attitudes towards the EU and further European integration. However, the values did not impact the EU attitudes in the ways that I hypothesised; the value activation, while shown to clearly be present, apparently takes place between different attributes of the EU and different motivational goals and emphases than the ones that I initially thought to be present. However, I still contend that I have illustrated that the theory of basic human values and the value-prioritisation-data have a certain degree of explanatory power on Scandinavians' attitudes towards the EU.

As I have noted in the preceding chapters, there are several limitations in the way that this project was planned, and the research design, that restrict the findings and the conclusions that they allow for. A primary example of such limitations is the insufficiency of the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the "attitude objects"; support for further European integration, and trust in the European Parliament, hardly exhaust the scope of the perceived and objective attributes of the EU that people evaluate when forming their attitude towards the EU. As Boomgaarden et al. (2011) have stated - given the complex nature of the European integration project - it would be naïve to speak about EU attitudes as a one-dimensional concept. In future research projects, I think it would be beneficial to use a wider selection of, preferably multi-dimensional, measures of EU attitudes. For example, surveys that gauge Europeans' attitudes towards specific EU-level policies, proposed developments and institutional arrangements can probably provide a better, more nuanced set of dependent variables, that in turn would allow for better specified hypotheses regarding the value activating-attributes of the EU.

I decided to construct new variables based on the adjacent and conceptually related higher-order values. The primary benefit of this approach, I argued, was the ability to rely on previously established patterns of relationships between higher order-values and political attitudes such as generalised trust in institutions, left-right party preferences and support for environmental policies, when deriving new hypotheses regarded conceptually related attitudes towards other political objects (the EU and European integration). However, seeing that the constructed variables did not affect attitudes towards the EU in the hypothesised direction, an alternative approach should be considered. For example, the relationships between the 10 basic human values and the applied (or additional, alternative) measures of EU attitudes could be explored individually. This would allow us to 1) see which of the independent values have the greatest effect (before specifying the models further and *then* strengthening the theoretical validity by examining them in conjunction as per the circumplex higher-order structure) and 2) draw certain conclusions regarding the “value profile”, i.e. the value-hierarchical composition, of the average eurosupportive and eurosceptic Scandinavian citizen. This knowledge, in turn, would be valuable for policy-makers, educators and journalists who wish to improve the popular impact of their communication of EU-related news, matters and policy proposals.

Furthermore, the relationship between values and attitudes towards the EU is likely to be mediated by various factors, i.e. intermediary attitudes or attitude objects. Future studies on the subject of values and attitudes towards the EU should consider the differential ways in which value-related goals manifest among different people in different contexts. For example, it is conceivable that people’s party preferences colour their support for different EU policies (i.e. social policies, economic redistributive arrangements and free movement of people). Additionally, more robust relationships and consistent patterns between value prioritisations and attitudes could likely be established in larger-N studies.

## 8 Literature

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