

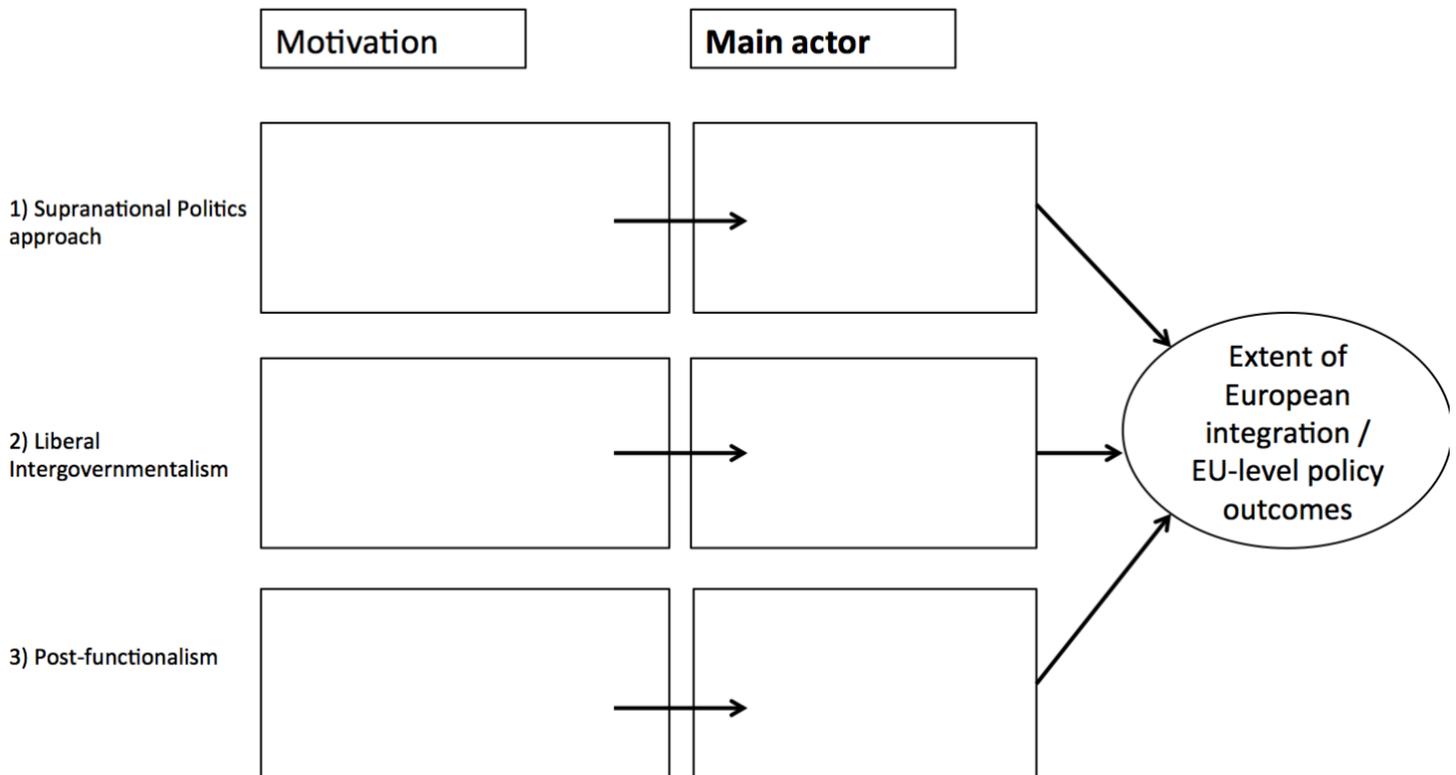
Course: GV251

Class teacher: Kira Gartzou-Katsouyanni

Week 7: Public Opinion

PART I) Public opinion and theories of integration

Discuss: According to the following three theoretical approaches to European integration, what are the main determinants of the degree and direction of European integration? Who are the crucial decision-makers at the EU arena, and which are their motivations?



The following excerpt from Moravcsik's article on "the European Constitutional Settlement" relates to the boxes on intergovernmentalism (p. 160-161; article listed in the supplementary readings of Week 1):

*"[In explaining European integration, liberal intergovernmentalism] stresses the immediate substantive benefits of EU policies, notably economic integration. In explaining the economic issues which have dominated the EU agenda to this day, this explanation follows modern theories of the political economy of foreign economic policy or 'endogenous' theories of commercial policy. (...) **The commercial interests of domestic producer groups dominated, which in turn reflected their respective positions in the global market – with more competitive sectors supporting regional liberalisation in their respective areas.** At the same time, however, support for producer interests is constrained by the need to provide public goods."*

PART II) Which factors shape people's attitudes towards the EU?

(a) *Discuss in groups:* Assume that people are motivated solely by the desire to maximize their own income. Based on this assumption, would we expect the typical member of the following professional groups to be pro-European? Why?



(b) *Discuss in groups:* Now relax the assumption of economic preference-formation. What are some ideational factors that may influence people's attitudes about European integration?

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(c) *Discuss in groups:* What role do political parties play in the formation of people's attitudes towards European integration? Do parties *reflect* or *shape* public opinion?

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(d) *Think about:* To what extent did each of the above factors influence public opinion during the British referendum of June 2016?

From the Leave website:

What would happen...

If we vote to leave the EU Click to find out

We will be able to save £350 million a week
We can spend our money on our priorities like the NHS, schools, and housing.




We'll be in charge of our own borders
In a world with so many new threats, it's safer to control our own borders and decide for ourselves who can come into this country, not be overruled by EU judges.

We can control immigration
and have a fairer system which welcomes people to the UK based on the skills they have, not the passport they hold.




We'll be free to trade with the whole world
The EU stops us signing our own trade deals with key allies like Australia or New Zealand, and growing economies like India, China or Brazil. We'll be free to seize new opportunities which means more jobs.

We can make our own laws
Our laws should be made by people we can elect and kick out - that's more democratic.




Source: http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/why_vote_leave.html

From the Remain website:

6 REASONS YOU NEED TO VOTE REMAIN ON JUNE 23RD

1. Over 3 million UK jobs are linked to our trade with the EU

2. Being in the EU means lower prices in our shops

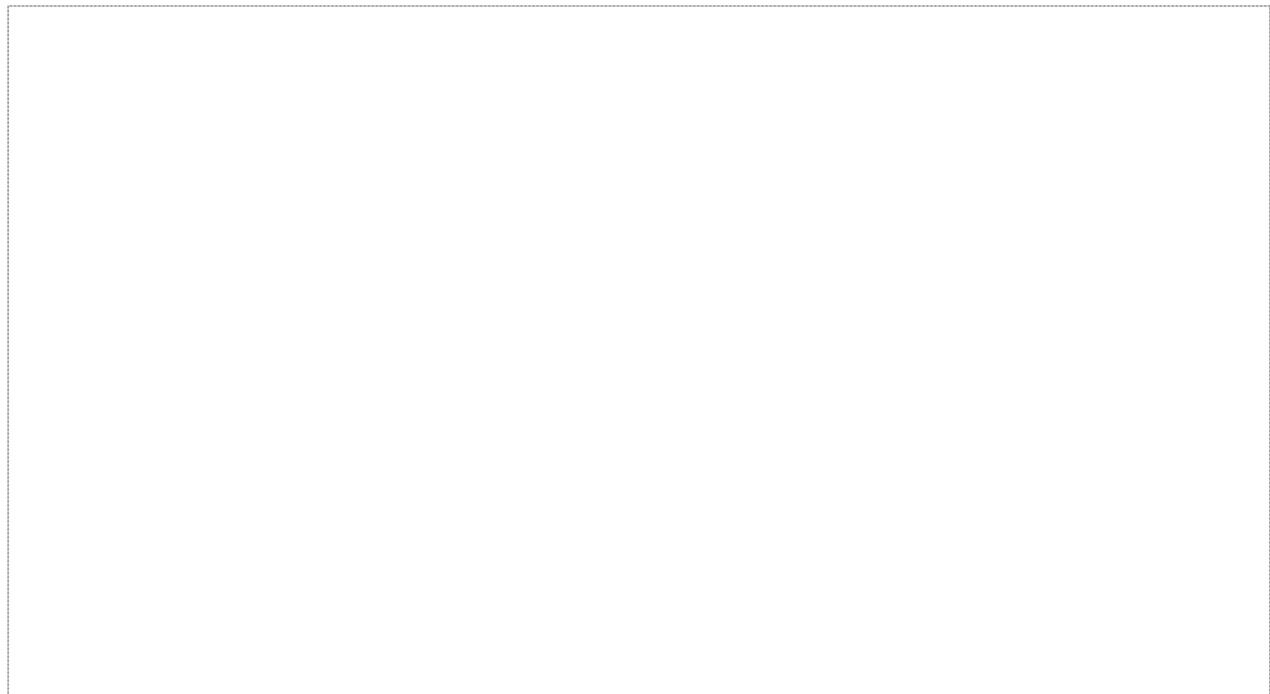
3. Over 200,000 UK businesses trade with the EU

4. The UK gets £66 million of investment a day from EU countries

5. The European Arrest Warrant helps arrest criminals across the EU

6. For every £1 we put into the EU, we get almost £10 back

Source: <http://www.strongerin.co.uk/#P5FWCGimorlKheBA.97>



NB: If you are interested in the topic of local-level debates about Brexit in particular case-study British local authorities, you can take a look at the reports and short film published in the context of the following LSE-based project: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/international-development/conflict-and-civil-society/current-projects/debating-brexit-at-a-local-level>

(e) Think about: To what extent did each of the above factors influence public opinion during the Greek referendum of July 2015?

Excerpt from the short book: *The Greco-German Affair in the Euro Crisis: Mutual Recognition Lost?* (Claudia Sternberg, Kira Gartzou-Katsouyanni and Kalypso Nicolaïdis, Palgrave Pivot 2018)

Europe and the Greek narrative on modernisation

Even a cursory look at domestic Greek media discourses during the crisis reveals that some Greek commentators tenaciously refused to analyse Greece's membership in the EU and the Eurozone in terms of a simple cost-benefit analysis, because for them, membership at the core of the European family was inextricably tied with certain ideas about progress in ways that went far deeper than short- or medium-term economic indicators. For them, a Grexit would not only imply a trade-off between short-term economic dislocation versus potential long-term gains; it would also mean that Greece is a 'country that doesn't have the structures and institutions that befit a Eurozone member'; 'it is a different matter to have a high debt and deficit and a different one to be treated by your European partners, the markets and the investors like a third-world country, which remains in the Eurozone by mistake'.¹

Such statements may appear hard to understand for a foreign audience, which might regard them as evidence of an ideological or even obsessive attachment to EU institutions that defies logical analysis. This might be one of the reasons why these domestic voices were often ignored by foreign commentators who jumped into the Grexit debate when it attracted the widest attention, and conducted the Greeks' cost-benefit analyses of the various choices that they faced during the crisis for them.

Nevertheless, these statements become clearer when one considers the extent to which Greece's EU membership has been considered from the start, and is still considered by many in Greece, as an anchor of political and economic modernity, including the consolidation of democracy itself in the country.² The following comment that was published in *Kathimerini* [a centrist newspaper] exemplifies this narrative:

Our history as an independent state was a history of hunger, poverty, wars and civil wars, dictatorships, ethnic divisions, emigration, bankruptcy, crises and uncontrolled inflation. The only interlude of real democracy, a European way of life, and stability during the last four decades is thanks to our attachment to the nucleus of Europe. Without this vital link, we will backslide to the dark corridors of our historical destiny, prey to the dangers and threats of our troubled neighbourhood.³

A journalist in *Avgi* [a left-leaning newspaper] made a similar remark when he noted that 'if there are hopes for survival, these are thanks to the post-1974 consolidation of the Greek Democracy, with the leading events being our accession initially to the EU and subsequently to EMU (note: I know that I evoke the mockery of those who believe that Greece is an unhappy country, trapped in a European neo-liberalism that doesn't let it develop the multiple facets of its idiosyncrasy, but I remain incorrigible)'.⁴ (...)

¹ *Kathimerini* 15/11/09, cover page, main article, 'At nadir point'.

² See Diamandouros, N. (1993). *Politics and Culture in Greece, 1974-91: An Interpretation*. Greece, 1981-89: the Populist Decade. R. Clogg. New York, N.Y., St. Martin's Press: 1-23.

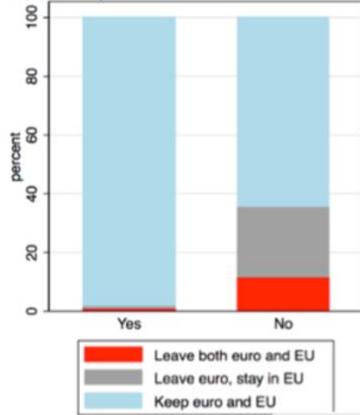
³ *Kathimerini online*, 04/07/2015, 'The day after "No"' (George Pagoulatos)

⁴ *Avgi* 18/04/10, 'Post-1974 distortions' (George Bramos)

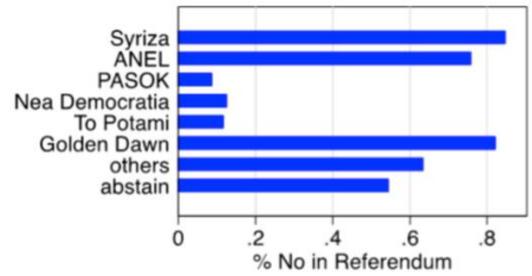
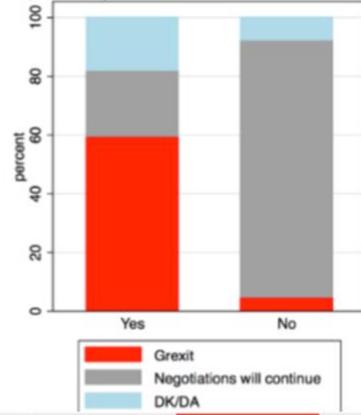
Voting outcomes in the Greek referendum by preferences and expectations regarding the outcome of the vote, political party support, occupation, and education level, based on a survey conducted the day before the referendum:

Figure 1: Preferences and expectations of Yes and No voters

Preferred future course for Greece in percent, by referendum vote

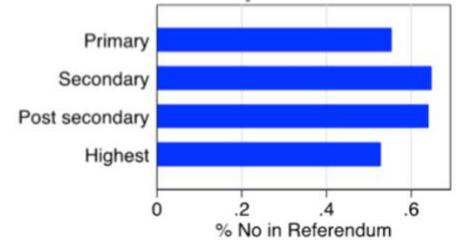
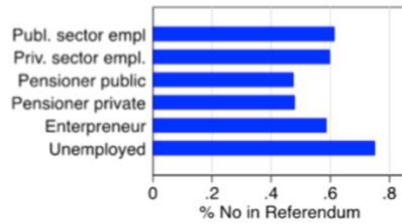


What will happen if there is a No vote in percent, by referendum vote



Parties that supported the "No" campaign: Coalition of the Radical Left (Syriza), Independent Greeks (ANEL), Golden Dawn
 Parties that supported the "Yes campaign": New Democracy (Nea Demokratia), Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), The River (To Potami)

Note: Data from original survey of 989 respon



Source: "Ignacio Jurado, Nikitas Konstantinidis and Stefanie Walter, "Why Greeks voted the way they did in the bailout referendum", 20/7/15, EUROPP Blog, LSE, available at: <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2015/07/20/why-greeks-voted-the-way-they-did-in-the-bailout-referendum/>)

