

Anti-Elite/Establishment Rhetoric and Party Positioning on European Integration

Jonathan Polk¹ · Jan Rovny²

Received: 22 April 2017 / Accepted: 5 June 2017 / Published online: 27 June 2017
© The Author(s) 2017. This article is an open access publication

Abstract This article addresses the relationship between the salience of anti-elite/establishment rhetoric for political parties and party positions on European integration. Anti-establishment rhetoric is a feature of populism, which is increasingly influential in contemporary European politics. For populist parties across the continent, in several ways the European Union (EU) represents the pinnacle of elite-driven, establishment-based politics. Previous research has demonstrated that party EU positions are systematically related to their positions on the left-right ideological scale but that this varies from Western to Eastern Europe. Here, we show that parties that place more emphasis on anti-elite/establishment rhetoric are more likely to oppose European integration, and that this holds across the East/West geographical divide and controlling for a variety of other party characteristics.

Keywords Political parties · European Union · Euroskepticism · Populism · Anti-establishment parties

The authors acknowledge funding from the following organizations and Grants: The European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (no. 649281); a public Grant overseen by the French National Research Agency (ANR) as part of the "Investissements d'Avenir" program LIEPP (ANR-11-LABX-0091, ANR-11-IDEX-0005-02); Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet), Grant no. 421-2012-1188; Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, Grant no. P13-1090:1.

✉ Jonathan Polk
jonathan.polk@gu.se
Jan Rovny
jan.rovny@sciencespo.fr

¹ Department of Political Science and Centre for European Research, University of Gothenburg, Box 711, Gothenburg, Sweden

² CEE and LIEPP, Sciences Po, Paris, 27 rue Saint-Guillaume, 75337 Paris Cedex 07, France

1 Introduction

This article examines the relationship between a rejection of established political practices and resistance to the European Union (EU). Anti-elite/establishment rhetoric is central to populist (Mudde 2004, 2007) and challenger parties (Hobolt and De Vries 2015) across Europe. One needs to look no further than the recent referendum on ‘Brexit’ in the United Kingdom to recognize the influence of anti-elite/establishment rhetoric on contemporary European politics (Hobolt 2016). The 2014 wave of the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) on party positioning in Europe included new questions intended to measure two features of populism across the political parties of Europe. One question focused on the salience of reducing political corruption, and a second addressed the salience of anti-elite and/or anti-establishment rhetoric for political parties.

Although these concepts have been treated similarly in previous scholarship and often overlap in particular parties, we provided evidence that they are conceptually and empirically differentiable to a larger degree than one might initially suspect (Polk et al. 2017). More specifically, we found that political parties with extreme left positions on the economic left-right dimension or extreme conservative positions on the cultural dimension were more likely to emphasize anti-elite/establishment rhetoric, but we found less support for a connection between the ideological positioning of a party and the salience of reducing political corruption.¹

The relationship between extreme positions on the economic left or the cultural right and anti-elite salience is strikingly similar to what we know about the connection between the ideological positioning of political parties and their stances on European integration. Here too, parties of the extreme economic left and parties with extremely conservative cultural positions are much more likely to oppose European integration (Taggart 1998; Marks et al. 2006; Kriesi 2007; Hooghe and Marks 2009). Not surprisingly, simple bi-variate analysis of the 2014 CHES data shows a strong relationship between opposition to the European Union (EU) and the importance of anti-establishment rhetoric for political parties in Europe. This article provides a more focused and systematic analysis of parties’ EU positions and their discourse on established political practices and actors.

We begin by surveying the discussion surrounding the importance of anti-elite, anti-establishment appeals for populist parties, both left and right, and then move on to explain how the European Union represents conventional, consensus-based, elite decision-making for parties of both families. Our analysis of the parties contained in the 2014 CHES wave supports our hypothesis that parties that emphasize anti-elite and anti-establishment rhetoric are also more likely to resist European integration.

¹ Our use of the word extreme is intended to describe the positions of parties on ideological scales and should not be interpreted as having normative implications.

2 Populism, Anti-Elite/Establishment Rhetoric, and European Integration

Populism scholarship clusters into at least three distinct research traditions and has been used to understand the politics of a wide range of geographic regions (Bonikowski and Gidron 2016). But whether understood as a leadership strategy (Weyland 2001), as a thin ideology (Mudde 2004; Abts and Rummens 2007; Stanley 2008), or primarily as a discursive style attributable to particular types of political speech rather than certain actors (Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Deegan-Krause and Haughton 2009; Aslanidis 2016, but see also Rooduijn et al. 2014), all definitions of populism in politics are necessarily based on a moral division between the ‘pure people’ and the ‘corrupt elite’ (Bonikowski and Gidron 2016, 7).

In the European context, the conceptualization of populism as a thin ideology has been influential in no small part due to Cas Mudde’s studies of populism and the radical right party family (Mudde 2007; Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013). We draw inspiration from Mudde’s definition of populism as “an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite’, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people” (2004, 543). Here, the ideology is described as thin because although populism stresses a zero-sum competition between the people and elites, privileging the former over the latter, it is adaptable to and in need of additional proposals about how best to implement the will of the people throughout society (Stanley 2008). At the same time, we agree with Aslanidis’s (2016) argument that a working definition of populism does not require the thin ideology component to be applicable to anti-immigration parties of the radical right as well as parties of the political left (March 2007, 2017; Otjes and Louwense 2015; Rooduijn and Akkerman 2015), and we join Aslanidis and others (e.g., Bonikowski and Gidron 2016) in focusing on the discursive aspect of populism.

The electoral successes of SYRIZA in Greece (Stavrakakis and Katsambekis 2014), Podemos in Spain (Kioupkiolis 2016; Ramiro and Gomez 2016), and Beppe Grillo’s Five Star Movement in Italy (Lanzone and Woods 2015) provide clear examples that populism is not exclusive to the extreme right in contemporary European politics (Aslanidis this issue). Arising during the aftermath of the recession that began in Europe in 2009, these parties grew within countries that were particularly hard hit by the economic crisis, and stridently criticized what they saw as excessive austerity measures imposed on the people of their countries by external lenders and international institutions (Aslanidis and Rovira Kaltwasser 2016). In addition to the International Monetary Fund, the European institutions: the European Commission, the European Central Bank, and the Eurogroup received the brunt of the populist left’s disdain.² For the parties of the populist left, these European institutions constitute a political class out of touch with the concerns and difficulties of most European citizens.

² See, for example, Varoufakis, Yannis. September 8, 2015. “How Europe Crushed Greece”. *The New York Times*.

Criticism of the European Union from the extreme left is not new. The earliest years of the European integration project were generally characterized by a “permissive consensus” on the part of public opinion (Lindberg and Scheingold 1970). But where it existed, political opposition to the EU prior to the Maastricht Treaty tended to come from parties of the left over concerns about a potential race to the bottom in regulatory and social policy as a consequence of the push for the creation of the single market (Kriesi 2007, 86). After Maastricht, the permissive consensus of public opinion on the EU gave way to what Hooghe and Marks (2009) have referred to as a “constraining dissensus”. Increasingly, opposition to the EU became concentrated in the parties of the extreme right, which were primarily concerned about the cultural effects of European integration on its member states. For the parties of the populist radical right, European bureaucrats, institutions, and other political actors facilitated migration, cosmopolitan attitudes, and other factors that undermined national distinctiveness and sovereignty (Kriesi 2007).

Although euroskepticism on the political left has tended to focus on the economic effects of integration whereas right-wing euroskepticism more often stresses its supposed deleterious cultural impact (Hooghe et al. 2002; Hooghe and Marks 2009), both types of resistance to the EU within the European public were spurred on by populist parties of the radical left and radical right (De Vries and Edwards 2009). Despite sometimes stark contrasts in other aspects of their policy preferences, including the possibility of inclusionary versus exclusionary populisms (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013), populist parties of the radical left and radical right share a skepticism if not outright disdain for the European Union as the epitome of a political class that has more in common with one another, whether center-left or center-right, than with the citizens of Europe (Otjes and Louwerse 2015).

A major corollary to the idea that European integration initially proceeded amidst a permissive consensus from citizens has been that support for the EU among the public, although not initially salient, is considerably lower than it has been from the political elite (van der Eijk and Franklin 2004; Hooghe and Marks 2009; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). Mainstream politicians and political parties of the center-left and center-right have both been the drivers of the European Union, making the EU an elite-led, politically centrist project. Comparison of the positions of party leadership with the preferences of party voters on European integration from 2014–2015 shows that parties are substantially more in favor of integration than their voters for all major European party families, and that only the radical left and the radical right families are more euroskeptic than their voters (Bakker et al. 2016, 11). For this reason, public attitudes on European integration have been referred to as a ‘sleeping giant’ with the latent capacity to disrupt domestic political competition if mobilized by political entrepreneurs (van der Eijk and Franklin 2004). Although some have referred to this potential giant of politicized integration as ‘fast asleep’, the argument about the lack of EU politicization focuses on the unwillingness of mainstream parties to take this issue up because of its divisiveness (Green-Pedersen 2012). This, in turn, facilitates a potential crisis in representation (Kriesi

2014; Lanzone and Woods 2015) on the EU, which has been capitalized on by populist parties (De Vries 2007; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2016).

At least one previous analysis reports evidence that party-based euroskepticism from the radical left and radical right does not function according to entirely different logics (Halikiopoulou et al.] 2012). Rather than stressing the economic argument for the radical left and cultural argument for the radical right as many do, these authors argue that a shared nationalism undergirds these party families' opposition to the EU. It is the nationalist positions of these parties that can help make sense of otherwise odd partnerships such as the current governing coalition in Greece between the radical left SYRIZA and radical right ANEL.³ Here, we offer a different yet complementary mechanism for euroskepticism on the left and right sides of the scale that is shared by populists of both ideological stripes, the salience of anti-elite and anti-establishment rhetoric.

Hypothesis 1: Political parties that emphasize anti-elite, anti-establishment rhetoric will more likely oppose European integration.

We anticipate two additional items related to our central hypothesis. First, our expectation is that the proposed relationship between the importance of anti-elite rhetoric and EU position will hold in both Western and Central and Eastern Europe. The general ideological positioning of a political party structures its stance on European integration (Hooghe et al. 2002), but the communist legacy in Central and Eastern Europe means that the left-right and socio-cultural positioning of parties differ in East and West (Marks et al. 2006). Subsequent research has uncovered substantial intra-regional variation in the extent to which the economic, socio-cultural, and European integration dimensions are interrelated with one another (Bakker et al. 2012; Rovny and Edwards 2012; Rovny 2014). For much the same reason that Marks et al. (2006) expected traditional, authoritarian, and nationalist parties to oppose integration across the regions of Europe, we suspect parties that emphasize anti-establishment discourse will resist the EU in both West and East.

Our second expectation pertains to the propensity for these anti-elite, anti-establishment appeals to cluster at the extremes of the economic left and cultural right (Polk et al. 2017). Importantly for this paper, others have identified a group of otherwise ideologically moderate anti-establishment reform parties in Eastern Europe (Hanley and Sikk 2016) and the strong presence of protest voting against incumbents (Pop-Eleches 2010). So while a strong correlation exists between economic leftism, cultural rightism, and anti-elite sentiment, ideological extremity does not appear to be a perfect predictor of anti-establishment salience for parties in Europe.

Our subsequent empirical analysis takes this into consideration. We seek to parse out the extent to which variance on EU support is explained by ideological placement on economic and cultural matters, and the extent to which anti-elitism independently accounts for EU support. In the next section, we move on to describe the data with which we test these expectations.

³ For more on this coalition, see Aslanidis and Rovira Kaltwasser (2016).

3 Measuring Populism and EU Party Positions in the 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Survey

Political scientists have devised a number of approaches to estimating party policy positions. Without question, analyzing the content of party manifestos is the most widely used method (see, e.g., Volkens et al. 2016). Increasingly, party politics scholars have also turned to expert surveys as a supplement to manifesto-based measures (e.g., Huber and Inglehart 1995; Benoit and Laver 2006; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). Expert surveys and manifestos each have their strengths and weaknesses as sources of information on party positions (for a fuller discussion see Budge 2000; Steenbergen and Marks 2007; Marks et al. 2007; McDonald et al. 2007). One important strength of expert surveys is that they allow researchers to access party positions on topics that may not be covered in party manifestos. European integration is just such an issue because, as mentioned above, mainstream party leaders are often considerably more positive about the EU than their voters and the EU potentially splits their electorates, making it an unattractive topic to address in manifestos. For these reasons, we rely on expert survey placements of parties for the independent and dependent variables in our analysis.

In total, 337 political scientists that focus on political parties, the politics of European integration, or both received the 2014 wave of the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES).⁴ The responses to this survey ultimately yielded information on the political ideology, stance on European integration, and positioning on a variety of policy issues for 268 parties within Europe. All 28 member states of the European Union are covered by the survey, in addition to Norway, Switzerland, and Turkey.⁵

We take our independent variable from a new item included in the 2014 CHES about the “salience of anti-establishment and anti-elite rhetoric” for the leadership of political parties across Europe.⁶ Experts were asked to indicate the importance of this type of rhetoric for all parties in their country of expertise, and those responses could range from 0 (not at all important) to 10 (very important). The mean value for this variable across the data is 4.9, with a standard deviation of 2.64, a minimum value of 0.5, and a maximum placement of 10. Cross-validation of this survey question with an independent measure of populism (Rooduijn and Pauwels 2011) shows an acceptable level concept validity (see Polk et al. 2017, 3–4 for details).

In Fig. 1 we present our independent variable, the salience of anti-elite and anti-establishment rhetoric, for political parties in two Western European countries, Germany and the Netherlands. We include all parties that received more than 3% of

⁴ The 2014 data have been integrated with previous waves of the survey to create a single trend file that covers five time points between 1999 and 2014 (Bakker et al. 2015; Polk et al. 2017). The CHES data are available for public download at chesdata.eu.

⁵ Huber and Inglehart (1995) suggest that there should be at least five completed surveys per country. Since there were fewer than five completed surveys for Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta in the 2014 CHES data, we drop these countries from our analysis.

⁶ Note that for Mudde and Kaltwasser (2013, p 151) anti-elitism is a necessary but not sufficient aspect of populism. For a party to be counted as populist, according to these authors, the party must combine anti-establishment/elitism with an emphasis on the will of the people. See the study by Selway and Hawkins in this issue for an example of research stressing this former component of populism.

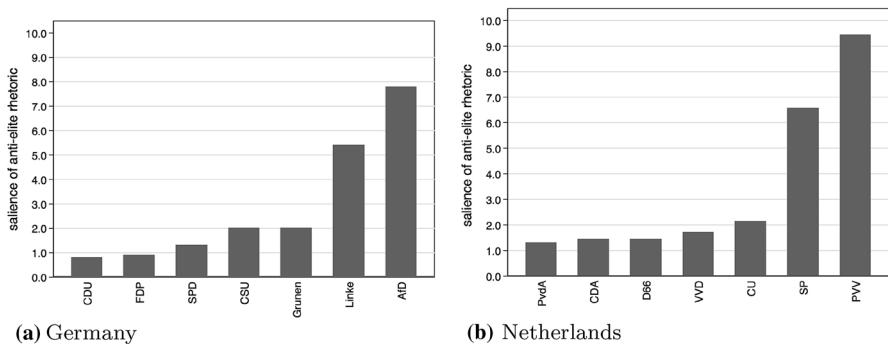


Fig. 1 Anti-elite salience for political parties

the vote in the national legislative elections immediately preceding the 2014 CHES wave. As is clear from the bar graphs, populist rhetoric is considerably important to parties of the political left, such as Die Linke and SP, as well as parties of the political right, e.g., Alternative for Germany (AfD) and Geert Wilders' Freedom Party (PVV). In both countries, established mainstream players, e.g., CDU, SPD, PvdA, and CDA, place much less emphasis on anti-elite discourse.

We also take the dependent variable for our study from the 2014 CHES. It is the question about the “overall orientation of the party leadership towards European integration in 2014”. Responses to this question could range between 1 (strongly opposed) to 7 (strongly in favor). The mean value for this item in the 2014 data is 4.93, a standard deviation of 1.74, minimum value of 1.05, and a maximum placement of 7.

Figure 2 displays the bi-variate correlation between the party-based salience of anti-elite and anti-establishment rhetoric and party positions on European integration, our independent and dependent variables. The left panel shows this relationship for the parties of Western Europe and the right panel does the same for Central and Eastern European parties. As the scatterplots make clear, a similar pattern exists in both regions. In both East and West, there is a strong relationship

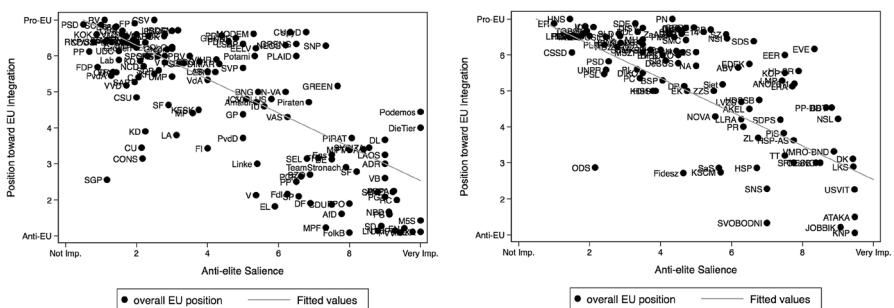


Fig. 2 Correlation between EU position and salience of anti-establishment and anti-elite rhetoric for the political parties in the 2014 CHES data. *Source:* CHES 2014

between parties that stress anti-establishment discourse and anti-EU positions. In the older member states the correlation is ($r = -0.76$) and in the newer EU members it is ($r = -0.69$). This provides preliminary empirical support for our hypothesis, but this relationship could also be spurious—actually driven by, for example, left/right position—and thus requires additional, more careful analysis.

In the next section, we present a more detailed examination of the relationship between the salience of anti-elite/anti-establishment for political parties across European countries and the positions these parties take on European integration. Before proceeding, it is important to note that determining the direction of causality is difficult with cross-sectional data. While we have argued that anti-elite, anti-establishment rhetoric leads to lower support for European integration, it is at least plausible that the causal arrow flows the other way. The results from the regressions in the next section should thus be taken as an additional, more robust piece of evidence for a correlation between populist discourse and party-based euroskepticism, but also findings in need of additional research.

4 Anti-Elite/Establishment Salience and Support for European integration

In addition to the salience of anti-elite rhetoric, a variety of other characteristics of political parties is known to effect their stance on European integration. As mentioned above, the economic left–right position (Hooghe et al. 2002) and socio-cultural position of a party (Marks et al. 2006) need to be taken into consideration in any model of EU positioning. We include both variables from the CHES data in our analysis. Since the relationship between ideological extremity and opposition to the EU is also well established, we further include squared terms for a party’s economic and Gal–Tan positions.⁷

Parties in government are known to be more supportive of the EU than their voters (Hobolt et al. 2009). Since the EU has been a project of established mainstream actors (Sitter 2001), we include a dichotomous variable that indicates whether a party is in or out of government. Furthermore, to account for party history, we include a continuous variable of party age taken from the Party Facts dataset (Döring and Regel 2016). Since age tends to have non-linear effect we also include a squared term for age. Finally, it is well known that levels of EU support differ at the country-level across Europe. Countries that have entered the EU shortly after escaping from authoritarian rule—be it southern European countries in the aftermath of right-wing authoritarianism, or eastern Europe after the fall of communism—are likely to be more enthusiastic about European integration. It is likely that countries with lower levels of Quality of Government are more supportive of EU integration as they see the EU as a positive anchor in terms of democratic and governance practices (see Sánchez-Cuenca 2000; Rohrschneider

⁷ Gal–Tan is the CHES terminology for the socio-cultural dimension. It represents a continuum from Green, Alternative, Libertarian (Gal) parties to those that are more Traditional, Nationalist, Authoritarian (Tan).

2002; Hobolt 2012 for similar arguments at the individual-level). We use the PRS Group's International Country Risk Guide (ICRG) country-level measure of quality of government, which is the mean value of the ICRG variables on corruption, law and order, and bureaucratic quality. We obtained the variable from the Quality of Government (QoG) Institute's Basic Dataset (Dahlberg et al. 2016).

Given that parties are nested within their party systems that differ due to historical and other idiosyncratic factors, we estimate a hierarchical linear model with country-level random intercepts u_j . Our full model is the following:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{EUposition}_{ij} = & \beta_0 + \beta_1 * \text{Anti_Elite_Salience}_{ij} + \beta_2 * \text{econ_left_right}_{ij} \\ & + \beta_3 * \text{econ_left_right}_{ij}^2 + \beta_4 * \text{galtan}_{ij} + \beta_5 * \text{galtan}_{ij}^2 \\ & + \beta_6 * \text{New}_{ij} + \beta_7 * \text{Age}_{ij} + \beta_8 * \text{Age}_{ij}^2 + \beta_9 * \text{In_government}_{ij} \\ & + \beta_{10} * \text{Quality_of_government}_j + u_j + e_{ij} \end{aligned}$$

Before estimating the full model, we consider simpler models. Table 1 presents the results of our multi-level models. Models 1 and 2 in the table predict EU support as a function of ideological variables, omitting anti-elitism as a predictor. These models demonstrate the strong association between both economic left-right and cultural 'Gal-Tan' placement and EU support. Model 2 further suggests that all the proposed control variables exert the expected effects.

Models 3 and 4 introduce the predictor of key theoretical interest for us—anti-elite salience. The effect of this predictor is strongly negative, suggesting that anti-elitism is associated with greatly reduced EU support. Strikingly, when this predictor enters the model, the impact of all other independent variables drop in magnitude, and most lose their statistical significance. Indeed only economic left-right, and Quality of Government remain significant. Anti-elitism entirely displaces the explanatory power of partisan cultural positioning, and significantly (though not completely) reduces the effect of economic placement. It also trumps non-ideological partisan characteristics, such as government participation, and age. In short, these results support our theoretical suggestion that it is primarily anti-elitism that is the core underlying mechanism associating diverse types of parties in their EU outlooks. These results are largely comparable across Eastern and Western Europe (for details see the Appendix).

Figure 3 provides a closer look at the effect of economic and cultural ideology on EU support. The lefthand column reports results from model 2, while the righthand column reports results from model 4 which includes anti-elite salience. We can see that in the absence of anti-elite salience (model 2), extreme left and extreme Tan parties are extensively opposed to EU integration. However, when we control for anti-elite salience, these effects diminish—in the case of Gal-Tan towards insignificance. Figure 4 finally presents the effect of anti-elitism on EU support taken from model 4, which controls for all the factors discussed. It demonstrates the extensive and negative effect, while other predictors are held constant. Again, these findings require some qualification because the cross-sectional nature of the data complicates causal inference. Yet, at the same time, they provide consistent support for a strong relationship between our central variables of interest.

Table 1 Multi-level regression model predicting EU position

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Level 1 fixed effects				
Anti-elite salience			−0.402*** (0.044)	−0.415*** (0.047)
Economic left-right	1.299*** (0.220)	1.158*** (0.230)	0.795*** (0.205)	0.781*** (0.211)
Economic left-right ²	−0.101*** (0.024)	−0.089*** (0.024)	−0.069*** (0.022)	−0.068*** (0.022)
Galtan	0.692*** (0.243)	0.355 (0.243)	−0.024 (0.185)	−0.009 (0.181)
Galtan ²	−0.102*** (0.022)	−0.069*** (0.023)	−0.020 (0.018)	−0.021 (0.018)
Age		0.045*** (0.017)		−0.008 (0.017)
Age ²		−0.000* (0.000)		0.000 (0.000)
In government		0.647** (0.276)		0.003 (0.206)
Level 2 fixed effects				
Quality of government		−2.934*** (0.937)		−2.035** (0.895)
Random effects				
Constant	1.453** (0.656)	3.503*** (1.031)	5.644*** (0.681)	7.370*** (0.774)
σ_u	0.678 (0.091)	0.608 (0.097)	0.636 (0.075)	0.510 (0.083)
Observations	207	207	207	207
Number of groups	24	24	24	24

Robust standard errors are in parentheses

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

5 Discussion

In this article, we provided evidence that political parties that emphasize anti-elite and anti-establishment discourse are more likely to oppose European integration. This contributes to our understanding of populism, party politics, and European Union studies in several ways. In showing that anti-elite/establishment rhetoric is a common characteristic of euroskepticism from parties of the political right and left, we avoid a tendency in the European populism scholarship to focus on the radical right party family and/or the normative ramifications of populism (Aslanidis this issue).

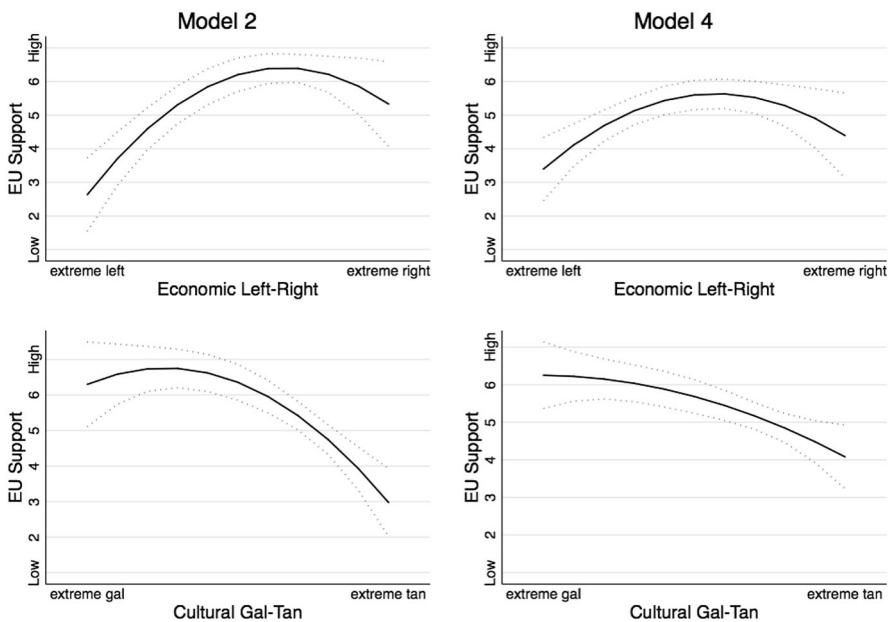


Fig. 3 Marginal effects of economic and cultural ideology on EU support (models 2 and 4 of Table 1)

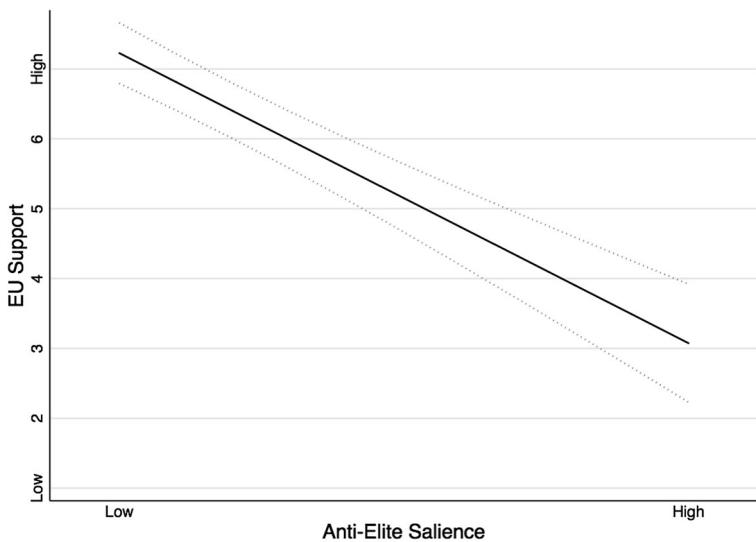


Fig. 4 Marginal effect of anti-establishment and anti-elite rhetoric on EU support (model 4 of Table 1)

Anti-elite and anti-establishment discourse is central to populist parties across Europe. This type of rhetoric, while not exclusive to ideologically extreme parties, is concentrated among parties of the extreme economic left and extreme cultural

right. The same is also true for party-based opposition to European integration, which led us to expect that parties that emphasize anti-elite/establishment rhetoric will also be more likely to oppose the EU. Yet, prior to this analysis we did not know if the salience of anti-elite rhetoric was systematically related to euroskepticism independent of other qualities of political parties, such as ideological position, governing status, and party age. Our results point to a strong and independent relationship between this form of populist discourse and the anti-EU party positions.

Our finding that the connection between anti-elitism and EU positioning exists for parties independent of their left-right position potentially complements research on the existence of non-extreme, anti-establishment reform parties in Central and Eastern Europe (Hanley and Sikk 2016). More generally, the strength of this relationship across both Eastern and Western Europe further contributes to the stream of scholarship which suggests that although there are important differences between Eastern and Western Europe, European politics can and should still be approached from a common theoretical lens (Marks et al. 2006; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012).

Of course, our analysis raises many additional questions. First, as mentioned earlier, the cross-sectional nature of the data complicates our ability to make causal claims about the direction of the relationship between anti-elite rhetoric and anti-EU positions. Future waves of the CHES and alternative sources of data will allow more leverage on this question. Second, our results have interesting implications for questions surrounding the effect of government participation on populist parties that have defined themselves as anti-elite and anti-establishment. The European Union provides parties in government a unique opportunity to potentially externalize the costs associated with governing (Hobolt and Tilley 2014). Fidesz in Hungary and Law and Justice in Poland are recent examples of parties in government that have been able to maintain some anti-elite populist stances while themselves participating within the political establishment. Future work could both look more carefully at if and how populist discourse changes once these parties are in government (see Peruzzotti this issue for a related topic) and the reference point for questions asking about the elite and the establishment.

Additional research should also seek to parse out the associations between the diverse predictors in our model and views of European integration. As our earlier research (Polk et al. 2017) suggests, partisan ideological placements, government participation, and party age are significant predictors of anti-elite and anti-establishment rhetoric, which in turn—as this paper demonstrates—is an important, independent predictor of partisan euroskepticism. This more complex set of relationships between party characteristics and views of Europe invites further research analyzing the structural associations between these variables.

Acknowledgements Versions of this paper were presented at the “Workshop on Populism in the Age of Globalization”, School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University, and the Centre for European Research at the University of Gothenburg (CERGU). We thank participants of both groups and Maurits Meijers for comments and helpful suggestions.

Open Access This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license, and indicate if changes were made.

Appendix

See Table 2.

Table 2 Multi-level regression model predicting EU position across east and west

	West	East
Level 1 fixed effects		
Anti-elite salience	−0.411*** (0.060)	−0.354*** (0.061)
Economic left–right	0.955*** (0.257)	0.836*** (0.295)
Economic left–right ²	−0.080*** (0.026)	−0.079** (0.032)
Galtan	0.086 (0.175)	−0.091 (0.365)
Galtan ²	−0.039** (0.019)	−0.014 (0.036)
Age	0.022 (0.019)	0.111 (0.077)
Age ²	−0.000 (0.000)	−0.005* (0.003)
In government	0.247 (0.205)	−0.331 (0.264)
Level 2 fixed effects		
Quality of government	−1.105 (1.203)	−1.256 (2.277)
Random effects		
Constant	5.616*** (1.008)	6.726*** (1.822)
σ_u	0.490 (0.076)	0.539 (0.159)
Observations	131	76
Number of groups	14	10

References

- Abts, Koen, and Stefan Rummens. 2007. Populism versus democracy. *Political Studies* 55 (2): 405–424.
- Aslanidis, Paris. 2016. Is populism an ideology? A refutation and a new perspective. *Political Studies* 64 (1S): 88–104.
- Aslanidis, Paris. 2017. Academic Biases in Populist Scholarship. *Chinese Political Science Review* 2(3):
- Aslanidis, Paris, and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser. 2016. Dealing with populists in government: the SYRIZA-ANEL coalition in Greece. *Democratization* 23 (6): 1077–1091.
- Bakker, R., S. Jolly, and J. Polk. 2012. Complexity in the European party space: exploring dimensionality with experts. *European Union Politics* 13 (2): 219–245.
- Bakker, Ryan, Catherine De Vries, Erica Edwards, Liesbet Hooghe, Seth Jolly, Gary Marks, Jonathan Polk, Jan Rovny, Marco Steenbergen, and Milada Anna Vachudova. 2015. Measuring party positions in Europe The Chapel Hill expert survey trend file, 1999–2010. *Party Politics* 21 (1): 143–152.
- Bakker, Ryan, Seth Jolly, and Jonathan Polk. 2016. Multidimensional congruence and European Parliament electoral performance. In *American Political Science Association Annual Meeting*.
- Benoit, Kenneth, and Michael Laver. 2006. *Party policy in modern democracies*. Routledge.
- Bonikowski, Bart, and Noam Gidron. 2016. Multiple traditions in populism research: toward a theoretical synthesis. *APSA Comparative Politics Newsletter* 26 (2): 7–14.
- Budge, Ian. 2000. Expert judgements of party policy positions: uses and limitations in political research. *European Journal of Political Research* 37 (1): 103–113.
- Dahlberg, Stefan, Sören Homberg, Bo Rothstein, Anna Khomenko, and Richard Svensson. 2016. “The Quality of Government Basic Dataset, version Jan16.” *University of Gothenburg: The Quality of Government Institute*. <http://www.qog.pol.gu.se>.
- De Vries, Catherine E. 2007. Sleeping giant: fact or fairytale? How European integration affects national elections. *European Union Politics* 8 (3): 363–385.
- De Vries, Catherine E., and Erica E. Edwards. 2009. Taking europe to its extremes extremist parties and public Euroscepticism. *Party Politics* 15 (1): 5–28.
- Deegan-Krause, Kevin, and Tim Haughton. 2009. Toward a more useful conceptualization of populism: types and degrees of populist appeals in the case of Slovakia. *Politics and Policy* 37 (4): 821–841.
- Döring, Holger, and Sven Regel. 2016. *Party Facts: An online platform about political parties*. <http://www.partyfacts.org>.
- Green-Pedersen, Christoffer. 2012. A giant fast asleep? Party incentives and the politicisation of European integration. *Political Studies* 60 (1): 115–130.
- Halikiopoulou, Daphne, Kyriaki Nanou, and Sofia Vasilopoulou. 2012. The paradox of nationalism: the common denominator of radical right and radical left euroscepticism. *European Journal of Political Research* 51 (4): 504–539.
- Hanley, Séan, and Allan Sikk. 2016. Economy, corruption or floating voters? Explaining the breakthroughs of anti-establishment reform parties in eastern Europe. *Party Politics* 22 (5): 522–533.
- Hobolt, Sara B. 2012. “Citizen satisfaction with democracy in the European Union.” *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 50(s1):88–105.
- Hobolt, Sara B. 2016. “The Brexit vote: a divided nation, a divided continent.” *Journal of European Public Policy* 1–19.
- Hobolt, Sara B., and Catherine E. De Vries. 2015. Issue entrepreneurship and multiparty competition. *Comparative Political Studies* 48 (9): 1159–1185.
- Hobolt, Sara B., Jae-Jae Spoon, and James Tilley. 2009. A vote against Europe? Explaining defection at the 1999 and 2004 European Parliament elections. *British Journal of Political Science* 39 (01): 93–115.
- Hobolt, Sara B., and James Tilley. 2014. *Blaming europe? Responsibility without accountability in the european union*. Oxford University Press.
- Hooghe, Liesbet, and Gary Marks. 2009. A postfunctionalist theory of European integration: from permissive consensus to constraining dissensus. *British Journal of Political Science* 39 (01): 1–23.
- Hooghe, Liesbet, Gary Marks, and Carole J. Wilson. 2002. Does left/right structure party positions on European integration? *Comparative Political Studies* 35 (8): 965–989.
- Hooghe, Liesbet, Ryan Bakker, Anna Brigevich, Catherine De Vries, Erica Edwards, Gary Marks, Jan Rovny, Marco Steenbergen, and Milada Vachudova. 2010. Reliability and validity of measuring

- party positions: the Chapel Hill expert surveys of 2002 and 2006. *European Journal of Political Research* 49 (5): 687–703.
- Huber, John, and Ronald Inglehart. 1995. Expert interpretations of party space and party locations in 42 societies. *Party Politics* 1 (1): 73–111.
- Jagers, Jan, and Stefaan Walgrave. 2007. Populism as political communication style: an empirical study of political parties' discourse in Belgium. *European Journal of Political Research* 46 (3): 319–345.
- Kioupkiolios, Alexandros. 2016. Podemos: the ambiguous promises of left-wing populism in contemporary Spain. *Journal of Political Ideologies* 21 (2): 99–120.
- Kriesi, Hanspeter. 2007. The role of European integration in national election campaigns. *European Union Politics* 8 (1): 83–108.
- Kriesi, Hanspeter. 2014. The populist challenge. *West European Politics* 37 (2): 361–378.
- Lanzone, Liza, and Dwayne Woods. 2015. Riding the Populist Web: Contextualizing the Five Star Movement (M5S) in Italy. *Politics and Governance* 3(2).
- Lindberg, Leon N., and Stuart A. Scheingold. 1970. *Europe's would-be polity: patterns of change in the European community*. Prentice Hall.
- March, Luke. 2007. From vanguard of the proletariat to vox populi: left-populism as a 'shadow' of contemporary socialism. *SAIS Review* 27 (1): 63–77.
- March, Luke. 2017. "Left and right populism compared: The British case." *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* p. 1369148117701753.
- Marks, Gary, Liesbet Hooghe, Marco Steenbergen, and Ryan Bakker. 2007. Crossvalidating data on party positioning on European integration. *Electoral Studies* 26 (1): 23–38.
- Marks, Gary, Liesbet Hooghe, Moira Nelson, and Erica Edwards. 2006. Party competition and European integration in the East and West: Different structure, same causality. *Comparative Political Studies* 39 (2): 155–175.
- McDonald, Michael D., Silvia M. Mendes, and Myunghee Kim. 2007. Cross-Temporal and Cross-National Comparisons of Party Left-Right Positions. *Electoral Studies* 26: 62–75.
- Mudde, Cas. 2004. The populist zeitgeist. *Government and Opposition* 39 (4): 542–563.
- Mudde, Cas. 2007. *Populist radical right parties in Europe*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Mudde, Cas, and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser. 2013. Exclusionary vs. inclusionary populism: comparing contemporary Europe and Latin America. *Government and Opposition* 48 (02): 147–174.
- Otjes, Simon, and Tom Louwerse. 2015. Populists in parliament: comparing left-wing and right-wing populism in the Netherlands. *Political Studies* 63 (1): 60–79.
- Peruzzotti, Enrique. 2017. The globalization of populism: trends and threats. *Chinese Political Science Review* 2(3).
- Polk, Jonathan, Jan Rovny, Ryan Bakker, Erica Edwards, Liesbet Hooghe, Seth Jolly, Jelle Koedam, Filip Kostelka, Gary Marks, Gijs Schumacher, et al. 2017. Explaining the salience of anti-elitism and reducing political corruption for political parties in Europe with the 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Survey data. *Research and Politics* 4 (1): 2053168016686915.
- Pop-Eleches, Grigore. 2010. Throwing out the bums: protest voting and unorthodox parties after communism. *World Politics* 62 (02): 221–260.
- Ramiro, Luis, and Raul Gomez. 2016. "Radical-left populism during the great recession: Podemos and its competition with the established radical left." *Political Studies* p. 0032321716647400.
- Rohrschneider, Robert. 2002. "The democracy deficit and mass support for an EU-wide government." *American Journal of Political Science* 463–475.
- Rohrschneider, Robert, and Stephen Whitefield. 2012. *The strain of representation: how parties represent diverse voters in western and eastern Europe*. Oxford University Press.
- Rohrschneider, Robert, and Stephen Whitefield. 2016. Responding to growing European Union-skepticism? The stances of political parties toward European integration in Western and Eastern Europe following the financial crisis. *European Union Politics* 17 (1): 138–161.
- Rooduijn, Matthijs, Sarah L. de Lange, and Wouter Van Der Brug. 2014. A populist Zeitgeist? Programmatic contagion by populist parties in Western Europe. *Party Politics* 20 (4): 563–575.
- Rooduijn, Matthijs, and Teun Pauwels. 2011. Measuring populism: comparing two methods of content analysis. *West European Politics* 34 (6): 1272–1283.
- Rooduijn, Matthijs, and Tjitske Akkerman. 2015. "Flank attacks Populism and left-right radicalism in Western Europe." *Party Politics* 1354068815596514.
- Rovny, Jan. 2014. Communism, federalism, and ethnic minorities: explaining party competition patterns in Eastern Europe. *World Politics* 66(4):669–708.

- Rovny, Jan, and Erica E. Edwards. 2012. Struggle over dimensionality: political competition in Western and Eastern Europe. *East European Politics and Societies* 26(1).
- Sánchez-Cuenca, Ignacio. 2000. The political basis of support for European integration. *European Union Politics* 1 (2): 147–171.
- Selway, Joel, and Kirk Hawkins. 2017. Thaksin the Populist? What the day say: a qualitative coding of Thai political leaders speeches. *Chinese Political Science Review* 2(3).
- Sitter, Nick. 2001. The politics of opposition and European integration in Scandinavia: is Euro-scepticism a government-opposition dynamic? *West European Politics* 24 (4): 22–39.
- Stanley, Ben. 2008. The thin ideology of populism. *Journal of Political Ideologies* 13 (1): 95–110.
- Stavrakakis, Yannis, and Giorgos Katsambekis. 2014. Left-wing populism in the European periphery: the case of SYRIZA. *Journal of Political Ideologies* 19 (2): 119–142.
- Steenbergen, Marco, and Gary Marks. 2007. Evaluating expert judgments. *European Journal of Political Research* 46 (3): 347–366.
- Taggart, Paul. 1998. A touchstone of dissent: Euroscepticism in contemporary Western European party systems. *European Journal of Political Research* 33 (3): 363–388.
- van der Eijk, Cees, and Mark N. Franklin. 2004. Potential for Contestation on European Matters at National Elections in Europe. In *European Integration and Political Conflict*, ed. Gary Marks, and Marco R. Steenbergen, 32–50. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Volkens, Andrea, Pola Lehmann, Theres Matthieß, Nicolas Merz, Sven Regel, and Annika Werner. 2016. *The Manifesto Data Collection. Manifesto Project (MRG / CMP / MARPOR). Version 2016a*. Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB).
- Weyland, Kurt. 2001. “Clarifying a contested concept: Populism in the study of Latin American politics.” *Comparative Politics* 1–22.

Jonathan Polk is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science and the Centre for European Research (CERGU) at the University of Gothenburg. His interests include political parties, European politics, representation, and political participation in economically advanced democracies. His research has been published in Comparative Political Studies, European Journal of Political Research, European Union Politics, Journal of Politics, Party Politics, and among other outlets. He is also one of the principal investigators of the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys on party positioning.

Jan Rovny is an Assistant Professor at the Centre d'études européennes and LIEPP at Sciences Po, Paris. His research concentrates on political competition in Europe with the aim of uncovering the ideological conflict lines in different countries. His work has been published in various journals, such as European Journal of Political Research, European Political Science Review, European Union Politics, Party Politics, and World Politics. He is also one of the principal investigators of the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys on party positioning.