Beyond Euroscepticism and Europhilia: multiple views about Europe . [1]

Federico Russo (federico.russo@unisi.it) and Maurizio Cotta (cotta@unisi.it) (CIRCaP-University of Siena) [2]

<u>NOTE</u>

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[2] This chapter was discussed and written jointly, but Russo was particularly responsible for sections on *Exploring the dimensionality of attitudes toward Europe among national elites* and *In search of the structure of national elites' attitudes toward the EU*.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to map the structure of preferences concerning the European Union held by parliamentarians of the member states. The opinions of national politicians are relevant as they influence the governments which participate in the institutions and the decision making processes of the Union. Do they evaluate the European integration process according to a single independence-integration dimension? Or do they acknowledge the existence of multiple lines of conflict? Is the structure of preferences stable? Finally, how are national parliamentarians grouped according to their preferences and what this can tell about the future of European Integration? This paper, based on a two waves survey of national parliamentarians belonging to 16 member states, analyses their views about the *governance system* and the *policy goals* of the EU. The findings of this paper shed some new light on several old questions. Firstly, while several studies assume that the preferences about European Integration can be ordered in a one-dimensional continuum that has the *status quo* and *complete integration* as the two opposite poles, this paper shows that the preferences of national parliamentarians have a multi-dimensional structure. Secondly it moves to analyse the four main clusters of national parliamentarians which these preferences generate. And thirdly it discusses how these clusters react to different problems and challenges the EU faces today.

1. Introduction

It has been frequently noted that *integration* is no longer to be seen as the only (simple and uni-dimensional) dependent variable to be studied by scholars interested in the EU. The European Union must be considered a fully fledged political system with a complex institutional network, where authoritative decisions are taken in several policy areas (Hix 1999) and problems of collective allocation of costs and benefits (with the ensuing questions of distributive justice, of legitimacy and solidarity) are increasingly relevant. The past debates on the necessity of a European Constitution till the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty and the current ones about the ways to face a major economic and financial crisis (Cotta 2013) highlight the importance of a careful mapping of the positions of political elites (and of public opinions) with regard to a plurality of aspects of the European construction. The powers to be attributed to the different European institutions, the policy competences to be delegated to Brussels, the identity of the supranational political community and its relations with the national polities: on all these points there are significantly different views but not necessarily two opposing fronts.

In a previous work (Cotta & Russo 2011) we had explored the views national political and economic elites have about different aspects of the European construction and more specifically about the three main dimensions of a European citizenship – identity, representation and scope of governance (Cotta & Isernia 2009). Using the results of the Intune survey of 2007 based on national samples of elected politicians (members of national parliaments) and economic leaders (top executive officers of the top economic firms of each country) we could show some interesting features of the views shared by the elites of the Member States about European integration. Given the multilevel structure of the EU (Marks *et al.* 1996) and the *compound* nature of its politics as some others suggest (Fabbrini 2007; Cotta 2012), these views are important. The fundamental mechanisms of democratic accountability are still national and it is national governments which play a crucial role in defining the direction of the Union; what national elites think will probably

guide (or in any case correspond closely to) the positions of national governments in the top European institutions such as the Council of Ministers and the European Council.

The results of our analysis of the 2007 data could be summarized as follows:

1. A positive instrumental evaluation of the EU is shared by an extremely large proportion of national elites. European integration is globally seen as beneficial for national interests and support for further advances in the process of integration is also rather broad

2. An affective connection with the EU is also shared by a very large majority, but its intensity is significantly lower than the attachment felt for the national community.

3. With regard to the future of the EU a broad majority is ready to envisage a common foreign policy, some degree of solidarity with the less prosperous regions, and even a common social security and taxation systems.

4. When it comes to a more precise and comparative choice between the national (or sub-national) level and the supra-national one for the conduct of specific policies, only with regard to immigration and environment national elites are ready to express a clear preference for the European solution against the national one. For healthcare, unemployment and taxation their preferences still go to the national level.

5. For what concerns the European process of representation a very large majority shares the view that member states do not have the same weight; but questioned whether the country interests are taken enough into account or not their views are evenly split.

6. The feeling of trust in European institutions is more positive than negative.

7. When faced with more concrete choices about the (relative) role and weight of different European institutions national elites are generally conservative: a large majority continues to defend the role of national states, and only a minority is ready to accept a

transformation of the Commission in the true government of the Union. However, they are more open to accept increased powers for the European Parliament.

8. On average differences between political and economic elites are not too great

These results indicate that on average national elites of the member countries surveyed by Intune continue to provide a rather solid backing to the process of European integration. If European integration has been in the past an Elite process (Haller 2008) conducted with the permissive consensus of the masses, there was no strong sign until 2007 that the support for a continuation of this process would be discontinued by national elites. If any, problems might arise from the masses changing to a constraining dissensus (Hooghe & Marks 2008). Things become somewhat more complicated when it comes to the different possible directions of the integration process. The *Intune* survey has shown the variety of views about Europe that are present among national elites: when asked to express their attitudes and positions towards Europe and supranational integration, they do not define themselves along a simple one-dimensional continuum (pro-Europe↔anti-Europe) but rather display variable combinations of positions depending on whether they are asked to express their views on aspects that concern the nature of the European polity, its institutional configuration, or different sets of policy goals. Put in front of an articulated *European menu* the components of national elites tend to order rather diversified combinations of courses.

If we consider how the process of European integration has developed so far, we should not be too surprised by this finding. Integration has not been the result of the victory of one ideologically cohesive position against an opposite one, as if there were clear fronts defined by a neat cleavage between pro-Europeans and anti-Europeans. It was rather the product of a long series of (higher and lower) compromises, negotiated among a plurality of national actors fully aware of their specific interests. These actors have systematically strived to exploit as best as possible the advantages

offered by a mechanism of integration which had shown its functional efficacy (and at the same time they have tried to contain the disadvantages entailed by it) (Hoffman 1966; Moravcsik 1998). The positions expressed by national elites fundamentally reflect this background. This makes also for multifaceted and not necessarily geometrically coherent views about the European polity, the European citizenship and their future. This is particularly clear when views about the institutional shape of the European Union and about its policy competencies are examined: they are variable and susceptible to combine in multiple ways. Those who prefer a more supra-national institutional system do not necessarily want to expand also the policy competencies of the Union and vice versa. Moreover, with regard to policy competencies, preferences for a stronger European role vary according to policy sectors. This means that in the wide pool of national elites there is not simply a group that wants «more Europe», but rather different groups each of which wants more of the different aspects of Europe. Vice versa there is not so much a group that is against more Europe, but a plurality of groups that oppose different aspects of European expansion. Changing the shape and scope of European governance and the contents of the European citizenship requires therefore broad coalitions and compromises among these different views.

In this article we try to move some steps forward also through the possibility of using a second set of data based upon the survey of 2009, which replicates the questionnaire of 2007, but introduces also a few additional questions. We will concentrate here our attention only upon politicians without considering here other elite groups for which data are also available.

1. We will first analyse to what extent preferences are stable over time. And by replicating the search for the dimensions underlying the answers of national elites about the different aspects of the EU we will check if the dimensions found with the 2007 data are also stable.We will then try to interpret these dimensions and their meaning.

2. Having analysed the whole European set of politicians as a pooled sample (which would reflect the idea of the European Union as a unified polity, where national elites are just territorially dislocated component of a common elite) we will then explore with the use of cluster analysis the internal articulations of this elite pool.

3. Finally we will explore the potential consequences of these alignments for the future of European developments and for the choices to be taken in time of crisis.

Both surveys included a representative sample of parliamentarians from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and Spain [3]. The 2007 survey included 1263 parliamentarians while the 2009 survey included 1069 parliamentarians.

2. Attitudes toward Europe after the onset of the crisis

As the first of the Intune surveys was conducted in 2007 when the biggest global financial and economic crisis since the Great Depression was not yet announced (except by few visionaries), while the second was done in the spring of 2009, when the first impact of the crisis was already strongly felt, we can first briefly explore whether this event produced any significant change in the attitudes toward European integration.

[TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

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[3] The surveys covered also Serbia, which is excluded here from the analyses because it is not a member state.

Table 1 presents the answers to the main questions asked in both surveys about the process of political integration. The broad support for the unification process has not changed in the period considered, showing a high level of stability. In both years, when asked to evaluate whether «unification has gone too far or should be strengthened» more than two thirds among national parliamentarians (about 68%) expressed their preference for further integration.

When we come to explore different aspects that can offer a more specific definition of the European model preferred differences between the two years are again not very strong. A very clear majority of national parliamentarians (about 75%) think that Member states should remain the central actors, the European Parliament should be strengthened and a common European Army should be created. Both in 2007 and in 2009 parliamentarians are evenly split between those in favour and those against reinforcing the role of the Commission making it the real EU government.

With regard to policies and the choice for their allocation among different levels of government results of 2007 showed significant differences among policy sector. Environment and immigration gathered the highest support for a European responsibility, health care and fighting unemployment the least. As table 1 shows most of these opinions have been left untouched by the beginning of the crisis, but support for a European policy competence to fight unemployment has even declined.

Finally, when asked about the character of the European Union in 10 years, the vast majority of parliamentarians approve the adoption of a single foreign policy and more help for the regions with economic or social difficulties and a clear but less wide majority supported a unified tax system and a common system of social security. All these options were extremely stable between 2007 and 2009.

For what concerns the preferred institutional formula previous works (Cotta & Russo 2010; 2011) analyzed preferences about the powers and roles of the main European institutions and of governments of the member states. Three main positions emerged from these data. As expected two more clear and opposite positions could be identified: the *federalist one*, combining support for the

European Commission as the true government of the EU and a negative attitude towards the role of Member states governments, opposed to the *intergovernmental one* combining support for the role of Member states as central actors of the European Union and a negative attitude towards the Commission as the true government of the EU. A third position, defined *compound* as it combines support for the role of the Commission as EU government and for the central role of the Member states, was also fairly frequent. At the aggregate level, national parliamentarians' preferences have not changed much between 2007 and 2009: a relative majority is still in favour of an intergovernmental solution (more than 40%), while the second most preferred option is a compound system (more than 30%). Less than 20% of national parliamentarians opt for a (rather centralized) federal system. There is also an overwhelming support for the opinion that the European Parliament should have more powers. However, parliamentarians favoring different models of government have also different preferences about the role of the European Parliament, an institution which is clearly supranational. On average, with reference to the 2009 survey, 96% of the Federalists agree that the powers of the European Parliament ought to be strengthened, an opinion that is shared by only 60% of those supporting an intergovernmental solution (the others are in-between).

This first exploration suggests that in spite of the emerging crisis a rather stable panorama of preferences prevails. Unfortunately we have not yet systematic data for the more recent period and we cannot thus know whether the extension of the crisis changed significantly the views of political elites (possibly under the impact of changing views of the electorates).

3. Exploring the dimensionality of attitudes toward Europe among national elites

The unprecedented attempt to integrate different national polities, with a long tradition of political and military conflicts, into a single, albeit peculiar, political system has stimulated this fundamental question: why? Integration studies have tried to understand why the European integration effort was launched (Haas 1958, Lindberg 1963) and why it had periods of acceleration and interruptions

(Hoffman 1966; Moravcsik1991; Garrett 1992). Among scholars and the public there is a widespread consensus that the process of European unification has been steered by the initiative of elites (Haller 2008; Best *et al.* 2012) and many studies have attempted to explain why different national actors, such as public opinion (Hooghe & Marks 2005), parties (Marks *et al.* 2002) and governments (Moravcsik 1993), supported or opposed European integration. Various theories have also been developed to explain the preferences of political actors toward the European unification. Most studies consider that the position of different actors can be ordered on a single scale with two extreme poles, Euro-philes and Euro-sceptics. The European integration dimension is believed to reflect the conflict between national sovereignty and full political integration (Hix 1999; Hix & Lord 1997; Kreppel & Tsebelis 1999; Tsebelis & Garrett 2001) and the position of political actors is measured accordingly.

For instance, as Proksch and Lo (2012) noted, since 1999 the European Election Surveys have asked the following question to estimate voters' and parties' attitude toward European unification:

Some say European unification should be pushed further. Others say it already has gone too far. What is your opinion? Please indicate your views using a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means unification 'has already gone too far' and 10 means it 'should be pushed further'. What number on this scale best describes your position? And about where would you place the following parties on this scale? (quoted in Proksch & Lo 2012, 320).

An alternative source of information on party positions toward European unification is provided by expert surveys, which resort to the opinion of people who should be more knowledgeable than ordinary voters on party platforms. The Chapel Hill survey, one of the most authoritative sources of data for studies on EU politics, measures the position of parties with the following question:

How would you describe the general position on European integration that the party leadership took over the course of 2006? For each party, please circle the number that corresponds best to your view, scaled from 1 (strongly opposed to European integration) to 7 (strongly in favour of European integration) (quoted in Proksch & Lo 2012, 321).

These studies do no not neglect that attitudes toward EU integration might be multidimensional, but decide to focus on the most general and aggregate aspect of the question. However, we argue that as the process of European integration has caused several successive transfers of sovereignty from member States to the supranational level, the present conflict is on which additional aspects should be delegated as much as on whether the overall European integration process should be strengthened. Beyond the main line on conflict between advocates of more integration and defenders of national states, political actors may have different preferences on which policy domains should be dealt at the European rather than at the national level and on what institutional instruments should be developed and strengthened.

The questions of the *Intune* questionnaire were drafted on the assumption that the attitudes of national parliamentarians toward Europe could structure around several dimensions. More specifically the *Intune* surveys envisaged at the theoretical level three dimensions of citizenship (identity, representation and scope of government) as the structuring elements of these attitudes. In a previous contribution (Cotta & Russo 2012) we had explored inductively which dimensions could be found to be underlying the answers to the questions concerning different aspects of European integration. Our finding was that when asked to choose among the different courses of the integrationist Menu national parliamentarians combined different aspects and composed their own «Europe à la Carte».

If the preferences of national elite could be summarised by different latent dimensions it is important to know whether they are sufficiently stable or not. Table 2 shows the results of the factor

analysis for all questions concerning the future of European integration that were included in both 2007 and 2009 waves[4]. In performing this comparison some relevant items that were asked in only one of the two waves are excluded from the analysis[5]. By comparing the results obtained in the two waves it is possible to assess the stability of the dimensions according to which national elites evaluate the process of integration. The results obtained in 2009 are virtually undistinguishable when compared to those of 2007: though not a test, this is an important indication further confirming that the structure of preferences about European Integration is rather stable.

[TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

The results are sufficiently clear: three main dimensions can be found and it is not too difficult to interpret their meaning. On the first dimension we found a positive loading for the positions taken on the questions concerning «unification should be strengthened...», the «European Commission should become the true government of Europe», «the European Parliament should be strengthened», and negatively on the question «Member States ought to remain central actors». There was a significant positive loading also for a question concerning the choice for a European army as against purely national armies and another one concerning the desirability of a common foreign

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[4] The method of extraction adopted is principal axis factoring with varimax rotation. Factors with Eigenvalues greater than 1 were extracted.

[5] The 2009 questionnaire used for the second wave of the Intune elite survey contained also the following additional items about the process of integration: a question on the favourite method to be used if a President of the European Union should be elected; a question on the desirability of popular referendum to allow European citizens to take the most important decisions concerning the EU; a question on the desirability of having a European Constitution; a question concerning the opportunity to extend majority voting in the European Council; a question about the role that the EU should have in addressing the recent financial crisis. When introduced in a new factor analysis only the items concerning the extension of majority voting and the desirability of a European constitutions loads on the first factor, while all the others either do not load on any factor or constitute a single item dimension. All the remaining dimensions are not affected by the introduction of these variables.

policy. On the second factor we could find positive loading for questions concerning the views about future developments of the European Union (in the direction of «a unified tax system», «a common system of social security» and, but to a lesser extent, «increased solidarity with regions in difficulties»). On the third dimension there was a positive loading for all the questions concerning the allocation to the European level (as against national and sub-national levels) of the responsibility for a series of policy sectors (immigration, environment, fight against crime, and to a less extent unemployment and health care).

The first dimensions discovered is not too difficult to interpret: we will call it *Supranational integration*. This in fact concerns the development of the EU stateness as it touches upon crucial aspects of the political architecture of the Union and also upon two policy areas which have been traditionally linked to stateness (foreign policy and the army).

The second dimension is at first more difficult to interpret: the questions asked here concern also in some way policy areas (the tax system, social security, to a lesser extent aid to regions in difficulties), but the factor analysis has shown almost no connection with the next policy dimension. The questions were in fact formulated as concerning the future of the EU («Thinking about the European Union over the next 10 years, can you tell me whether you are in favour or against the following....»), and the mentioned aspects while having a policy aspect had also a *systemic* tinge («A unified tax system», «A common system of social security»; «More help for EU regions in economic or social difficulties»). They could be seen therefore as systemic features of the European polity suggesting a common solidarity (with regard to inputs and outputs) more than simple policy competences. The items loading on this dimension might have raised in the minds of parliamentarians the question of resource redistribution in favour of the people and the territories experiencing social and economic problems. We might tentatively call this dimension *Redistributive integration*.

The third dimension can be easily defined as *Policy delegation*: it has to do with transferring policy competencies from the state (and regional) to the supranational level. It suggests a somewhat instrumental view of the EU: the Union as a tool to solve policy problems that member states are probably not able to solve at the national or sub-national level. Our exploration has also shown that this is much more acceptable in some policy fields, such as crime prevention, immigration policy or environmental protection, than in others (health care, unemployment).

The factor structure emerging from the two waves suggest that at least for political elites views and preferences about the future of European integration can be synthetically organised along three main dimensions. These dimensions are meaningful and are relatively independent among each other. They suggest that views about Europe are fundamentally ordered but also that they do not fit into the simple continuum «more Europe/less Europe». European integration can be seen (positively and negatively!) from more angles. It can be seen as a *quasi-state* construction transferring in fact some of the traditional attributes of states (both institutional and functional) to the supranational level; as a provider of policy solutions in alternative to the member states or their internal articulations; or as the way to create a European wide social policy space (here probably the main question is not the production of specific policies per se, but the common space and the bonds of solidarity that European integration can imply).

4. In search of the structure of national elites' attitudes toward the EU

The dimensions found in our analysis define a three-dimensional space on which each national parliamentarian can be placed, according to his or her unique combination of attitudes toward the process of European integration. After having analysed the dimensionality we will try to move a further step and see how these elements ideally structure the landscape of national politicians. Is it possible on the basis of common patterns of attitudes to define a series of typical profiles of parliamentarians, and to determine what is their share in the joint pool of national elites? The

instrument we propose to find inductively this structure is hierarchical agglomerative cluster analysis. Cluster analysis organizes observed data into groups based on a set of variables maximizing the similarity of cases within each cluster while maximizing the dissimilarity between different clusters. In hierarchical cluster analysis, one of the most popular clustering techniques employed in the social sciences, at the beginning each case is a separate cluster, and at each step the two most proximate clusters are merged into a single group. The researcher has to make three choices: the variables to be included, the rule to measure the distance between clusters and the algorithm deciding how to merge clusters. In this article we perform a hierarchical cluster analysis to classify parliamentarians on the basis of the three dimensions of attitudes toward Europe discovered through factor analysis[6], we adopt the Squared Euclidean distance as a proximity measure, and the Ward's algorithm to agglomerate the clusters[7].

The major problem with hierarchical cluster analysis is choosing the «right» number of clusters. For this purpose it is useful to look at the agglomeration schedule, where for each stage of the agglomeration process it is indicated the two clusters which are merged and a dissimilarity measure[8]. As we want to cluster similar cases, we stop at the agglomeration stage reached before a large increase on the agglomeration coefficient (Burnes & Burnes 2009).

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[6] In the cluster analysis we use factor scores, rescaling them from 0 and 100. There are two commonly adopted methods to obtain synthetic measures from factor analyses. One is using the scores directly derived from the factor solution, the second is resorting to constant range scales; this scales are constructed giving the same weight to each variable, regardless of their loadings, but considering only the items with a given minimum load (the standard cut off value is 0,5 or 0,6). Factor scores have better statistical properties (they use all the information available) but are more difficult to interpret because they have undefined ranges. In our case factor scores and constant range scales are highly correlated, with Pearson's R varying between 0,89 and 0,96.

[7] Ward's method minimizes the variance within clusters. It is different from other methods because it evaluates the distance between clusters using a variance approach; the criterion for fusion is that it should produce the smallest possible increase in the error sum of squares.

[8] When using Ward's measure the coefficient given in the agglomeration schedule is the within-cluster sum of squares at that step. In other popular methods it is the distance between the clusters that are merged.

[TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

The analysis was performed on the 940 parliamentarians interviewed in 2009 with no missing values on the variables used for the factor analysis. 129 parliamentarians were excluded for having missing values in at least one relevant variable. Table 3 shows the agglomeration schedule for the last 10 stages of the cluster analysis. The most intuitive solution is a two groups solution which could be approximately interpreted as a distinction between warmer (2/3 of the total) and less warm supporters (1/3) of European integration. To begin the analysis of the results it is useful to describe the clusters by comparing their mean score on each dimension on which they are generated. Table 4 shows that on average members of Group2 have higher scores on all the dimensions of Europeanism, and that all the differences are statistically significant. In terms of magnitude, the widest gap is observed on the *unified policy space* dimension.

[TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE]

This solution however blurs the distinctions that we have found to be relevant in our previous analyses. We suggest therefore to move to the next solution with four clusters. If compared with the previous one, the four clusters solution indicates that both the Eurosceptic and the Europhile groups are divided into two smaller sub-groups. The Eurosceptic group consists of two subgroups of similar size, which we propose to denominate *Euro-instrumentalists* (160) and *Radical Euro-sceptics* (147). Likewise, the Europhile group can be split in two subgroups, a very large one that we can label *Moderate Europhiles* (537) and a smaller one consisting of *Euro-enthusiasts* (96).

Looking at the average scores of these four groups on the three dimensions of European integration reveals a more nuanced picture.

The error bars plotted in Figure 1 graphically describe the average position of every group on each dimension (the horizontal lines represent the overall average position on each dimension), while exact scores are reported in Table 5. On the first dimension (*Supranational Integration*), the attitudes of national parliamentarians are clearly polarized between the vast majority of national parliamentarians having a high score (more than 55) and only the *Radical Eurosceptics* having a low 32. The polarization is very pronounced also on the *Redistributive Integration* dimension, but in this case the *Euro-minimalists* join the *Radical Eurosceptics* at the very bottom of the scale. Finally, with regard to the *Policy Delegation* dimension the groups are scattered all along the whole scale; the most supportive of policy delegation are the *Euro-enthusiasts*, followed interestingly enough by the *Euro-instrumentalists*, then by the *Moderate Europhiles* and the *Radical Eurosceptics*.

[TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE]

[FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE]

5. Preferences and geographical distribution of the four typical profiles of parliamentarians

Having identified the main clusters and the distribution of national politicians among them, we must now move to better clarify their meaning with regard to the position held by their members on the future of European integration, and more precisely on the questions used to generate the three factors. Next, we will explore the preferences of each of the four clusters regarding some additional aspects of the European integration process, especially those more related with the solutions to the current economic and political crisis. Finally, we will check how members of

the clusters are distributed among different countries, to see the prevailing positions in each parliament at the outset of the crisis.

On the first point, after having described their relations with the three factors we have identified (Table 5), it is useful to examine how the different clusters fare with regard to some specific components of the three factors in order to provide more substance to our definition of the groups (Table 6). Only among *Radical Eurosceptics* the ideas that unification (27.2%) and the European Parliament (44.3%) should be strengthened are shared by a minority. In all other groups they enlist large majorities. The idea that Member States should remain central actors of the EU prevails in all groups, while only *Euro-enthusiasts* and *Moderate Europhiles* want to transform the EU commission in the true government of the Union. If we combine the institutional preferences held by members of the four clusters to see their preferred model of government, we can appreciate the distance between *Euro-enthusiasts* and *Euro-sceptics* (30% against 6% in support of the federalist model, and 18% against 83% in support of the intergovernmental model) and the middle position of the two other groups. In all groups, with the usual exception of the *Radical Eurosceptics*, there is a clear consensus on the necessity of a European Army.

On policies to be attributed to the EU the four groups distribute themselves in a different way. It is interesting to see how *Euro-instrumentalists* and *Moderate Europhiles* are very close to each other and in a central position between the two more extreme groups. While *Radical Eurosceptics* oppose delegation in all the policy areas considered and *Euro-enthusiasts* are always in favour, the two moderate groups want to delegate totally or partially immigration policy, environmental policy and crime prevention and oppose delegation only when it comes to health care and fighting unemployment.

Moderate Europhiles and *Euro-instrumentalists* clearly differ with regard to their intention to build some redistributive channels within the EU. An overwhelming majority among the former favours a unified tax system and social security system, two aspects that are vigorously opposed by *Euro-instrumentalists*. As expected, with regard to these issues *Euro-enthusiasts* join forces with *Moderate Europhiles* while *Radical Euro-sceptics* team with *Euro-instrumentalists*. Finally, it is striking to note that only *Radical Eurosceptics* are not in favour of having a single European foreign policy, a goal that is enthusiastically shared by all other groups.

As it is apparent from these findings variable coalitions are foreseeable in different areas of European integration.

A systematic exploration of all the different positions of the four clusters would go beyond the scope of this article. For the purpose of this article we will concentrate on two main areas of problems that are particularly relevant today and in the near future for the European polity and its ability to overcome a very difficult historical moment. We will therefore explore how the clusters differ with regard to further institutional aspects that have not been considered so far and for what concerns their preferred solutions to the European crisis. On the first aspect we found that a clear majority of national parliamentarians are in favour of having a common constitution of the European Union (72.8%), a president of the European Union (59%) and of extending majority voting in the European Council (70.1%). *Radical Eurosceptics* are the usual exception, opposing all these reforms (in fact, among them only 29.7% are in favour of a common constitution, 41.1% of extending majority voting and 22.1% of having a president of the EU). We must caution that the answers on the president of the EU have a degree of ambiguity, because the characteristics of this figure are not specified in the question and it might be interpreted in different ways. In fact the Lisbon Treaty that was in the final stage of ratification during the fieldwork of the 2009 Intune

survey introduced important innovations both for the President of the European Council and for the Commission President. On the one hand, the Lisbon Treaty reformed the informal six-months rotating Presidency of the European Council into a more stable figure elected by the European Council by a qualified majority for a term of two and a half years, renewable once. On the other hand, the Lisbon Treaty reinforced also the role and legitimacy of the Commission President, linking its election to the results of the European elections: according to the new rules the European Council will appoint a candidate for the post taking into account the results of European Elections; next, the appointee must receive an absolute majority in the European Parliament to be nominated. The existence of two political figures which can be seen as the President of the EU makes it difficult to understand the kind of figure that respondents had in mind. However, another question can help to clarify this point. Whether in favour or against having a President of the EU, however defined, parliamentarians were asked which way of designation would be most appropriate, and they had to choose among three alternatives: an election by all EU citizens, an election by the European Parliament or an appointment by national governments through the European Council. A relative majority of them (49.1%) opted for an election by the European Parliament, while about one third on them (33.1%) favoured a direct popular election. Only *Radical Eurosceptics* are divided in three groups of equal size among those supporting one of these two options and those preferring the appointment by national governments (however, it should be also remembered that *Radical Eurosceptics* generally oppose the idea of having a President of the EU).

With regard to their preferred actions to address the crisis that was beginning to undermine European economy, in 2009 all clusters of parliamentarians held similar preferences: for about half of them the first option was a coordinate action of the national governments. About one fifth (slightly more in the case of *Euro-enthusiasts*, clearly less in the case of *Radical Eurosceptics*)

preferred a direct action of the EU level, while only a small minority (but almost one third in the case of *Radical Eurosceptics*) suggested an autonomous action of their national governments.

[TABLE 7 ABOUT HERE]

If the European Union was a unified polity and national elites were just territorially dislocated component of a common elite, the 2009 survey of national parliamentarians would suggest a solid support at the elite level for furthering integration. While it is clear that there are several different directions that members of the political elite would like to pursue, it is also undeniable that a decisive consensus exists on many important steps. As it was shown, among national parliamentarians there is an overwhelming consensus that European unification should be strengthened and a vast majority of them are in favour of adopting a proper constitution, giving more powers to the European Parliament, reinforcing majority voting in the European Council, creating a European Army, adopting a common foreign policy and strengthening cohesion policy. In several of these fields the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, whose implementation failed after the negative vote cast be French and Dutch voters in 2005, and the Treaty of Lisbon actually made clear progresses. In others, such as foreign and defense policy, the Lisbon Treaty made only hesitant progresses: in fact the creation of the High Representative for the Union in Foreign Affairs and Security Policy does not imply new powers to the EU (because he or she acts in foreign policy matters on the basis of decisions taken unanimously by the EU 27) and military capabilities firmly remain in national hands.

Advances in other fields, where the support for further integration has an absolute but not overwhelming consensus, are not even debated in the political agenda: these include transforming the Commission in the true government of the EU, adopting a unified tax system for the European Union and a common system of social security. To understand why these proposals, agreed upon by

most national parliamentarians, fail to be seriously debated it is useful to look at how the four groups of parliamentarians are distributed among the member states included in the survey. It is worth noting that results at the national level are based on small samples, thus caution must be applied in the interpretation, as the findings might not be extended to the relative populations. This is especially true for estimation of small aggregates (such as Euro-enthusiasts). However, results are indicative of the major differences among countries.

In most countries *Moderate Europhiles* constitute an overwhelming majority: it is so in Bulgaria (87.9%), Greece (82.9%), Hungary (77.0%), Poland (72.0%), Italy (71.4%) and Lithuania (71.0%). Also in Spain (57.9%), France (56.9%), the Czech Republic (56.4%), and Belgium (54.7%) this group appears to be an absolute majority. In these countries supranational integration and redistributive integration should enjoy considerable support. In addition, as far as these two dimensions are concerned, *Moderate Europhiles* can join forces with the small *Euro-enthusiasts* group; considering these two groups together an integrationist consensus in these matters could be found also in Portugal (68.3%) Austria (56.5%) and Slovakia (57.1%).

In the United Kingdom, Germany and Denmark the two sub-groups belonging to the Europhile cluster do not reach the majority. The United Kingdom is the only country where *Radical Eurosceptics*, opposing European integration on all its dimensions, are an overwhelming majority (70.8%). In Denmark the situation is more nuanced: the relative majority of *Euro-instrumentalists* (47.2%) can join forces with the *Moderate Europhiles* to further policy delegation on certain policy fields and with *Radical Eurosceptics* to block any attempt of supranational and redistributive integration. A bigger surprise is Germany where the relative majority of *Moderate Europhiles* (48.2%) is balanced by a more or less equivalent strength of the Eurosceptics, made of *Euro-instrumentalists* and *Radical Eurosceptics* who together control the other half of the parliament. This distribution contributes to explain the not very warm stance that Germany has taken in the past years on the integration debate.

[TABLE 8 ABOUT HERE]

7. Conclusions

This article has shown that national parliamentarians evaluate the process of European integration according to a multidimensional frame of reference: the three dimensions found relate to (1) supranational political integration, (2) policy delegation and (3) the transformation of EU in a unified redistributive space where tax are collected and common welfare policies are drafted. The first and the third dimensions are to a certain extent parallel, because they both more clearly imply a structural form of political integration, while the policy delegation dimension has also a clear utilitarian meaning.

Having analyzed the different «courses» of the European menu, we have described how these preferences combine in the minds of national parliamentarians, finding inductively four clusters of parliamentarians - *Euro-instrumentalists*, *Moderate Europhiles*, *Radical Eurosceptics* and *Euro-enthusiasts* - who have different ideas on whether, to what extent and in which directions furthering the European integration process.

The fact that one of the groups (the *Moderate Europhiles*) is by far the largest confirms the existence of a large (but not very enthusiastic) support among national elites for the process of European integration. It indicates also that this process will be incremental and probably slow. The small size of the *Radical Eurosceptics* cluster suggests that open and straightforward opposition to further integration is minoritarian. Its blocking power however can be increased by the fact that on specific issues their opinions can coincide with that of members of the *Euro-instrumentalist* cluster (and more rarely even of the *Moderate Europhiles*). We must also consider that the four groups are unevenly distributed among the member states included in the Intune survey, and this means that the sum of national majorities may differ from the majority of the combined elite pool.

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The next step would be to begin discussing systematically the consequences of this upon the future developments of the EU (on the assumption that preferences of national elites may influence the decisions). In this article we have only formulated a few points for further elaboration. Firstly, the multidimensional structure of preferences provides the background for a non linear development of the process of integration: advances along one dimension may not necessarily coincide with advances along another dimension. This is especially true for the preferences on how many (and which) policies should be delegated to the European level. Secondly, the non-coincidence in the distribution of preferences along the different dimensions makes for the possibility of deals cutting across them. It might be hypothesized that actors who are not willing to support further integration but wish to shift specific policies to the EU level can accept a progress in the integrationist process conditioned to the delegation of that policy. Finally, in order to evaluate the potential impact of elite preferences we cannot avoid bringing into play the problem of the *European political space* and of its definition. Is it to be seen as the *sum of national spaces*, whereby national preferences must be added to produce the European preference; or as a *common space* where all individual preferences would be directly aggregated (this is in fact what happens to a significant extent in the EP)?

This article has not explored other interesting questions that could be raised with regard to the different dimensions according to which parliamentarians look at the process of European integration. Most notably, discovering the determinants of support for integration in each of these dimensions would also shed some light on why parliamentarians do not evaluate the process of integration on a single pro/anti Europe axis. Secondly, uncovering the causal links between each dimension and its determinants would help to understand why parliamentarians belonging to different clusters are so unevenly distributed in different countries. Finally, it would be highly interesting to see whether and to what extent the worsening of the economic crisis has changed the attitudes of national parliamentarians in the various regions affected to a different degree by it. In 2009, when the last wave of the Intune survey was conducted, the crisis was only at its beginning

and was still a European-wide phenomenon. The severe impact that the crisis had on Southern Europe (and not only) pushed the EU, and especially the Euro zone, to impose in some countries the adoption of strong austerity measures, but also to create new costly solidarity mechanisms (such as ESM). We may therefore expect these changes to have affected asymmetrically the attitudes of the parliamentarians of different countries.

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Tables and graphs

Table 1. A summary table of variations 2007-2009

	2007	2009	Difference
Do you think that unification should be strengthened or has gone too far? (% who scored 6 or more on a 0-10 scale*)	69.9%	67.3%	-2.6%
Member States ought to remain the central actors (% agree strongly and agree somewhat)	76.4%	75.3%	-1.1%
European Commission should become true EU government (% agree strongly and agree somewhat)	50.7%	49.6%	-1.1%
European Parliament should be strengthened (% agree strongly and agree somewhat)	74.0%	75.7%	1.7%
Single European Army or keep its own national army? (% in favour of European Army or both National and European)	67.1%	70.3%	3.2%
How do you think it would be most appropriate to deal with each of the following policy areas? (% in favour of exclusive or concurrent European competence)			
Fighting unemployment	38.9%	33.9%	-5.0%
Immigration policy	72.5%	71.9%	-0.6%
Environmental policy	78.4%	78.5%	0.1%
Crime prevention	60.4%	61.7%	1.3%
Health care	22.9%	24.8%	1.9%
The character of the European Union in 10 years. Tell me whether you approve or disapprove... (% strongly or somewhat in favour)			
...a unified tax system for the European Union	58.3%	56.7%	-1.6%
...a common system of social security	66.7%	65.7%	-1.1%
...single foreign policy toward outside countries	85.2%	85.6%	0.4%
...more help for regions with economic or social difficulties	89.9%	88.6%	-1.3%
N	1263	1069	

*On this scale '0' means unification "has already gone too far" and '10' means it "should be strengthened".

Table 2. Dimensions of support for European integration (principal axis factoring. varimax rotation)

Item number		2007			2009		
		1	2	3	1	2	3
1	Unification should be strengthend (1-10)	**.557**	.186	.121	**.665**	.222	.143
2	Member States ought to remain central actors (1-4)	-.413	-.062	-.148	**-.549**	-.050	-.153
3	European Commission should become EU government (1-4)	**.595**	.261	-.009	**.538**	.313	.085
4	European Parliament should be strengthened (1-4)	**.523**	.098	.119	**.562**	.173	.109
5	European Army (1-3)	**.506**	.147	.165	.479	.238	.158
6	EU should make policy - unemployment (1-3)	.078	.169	.343	.087	.157	.410
7	EU should make policy - immigration (1-3)	.185	-.004	**.555**	.358	.108	.413
8	EU should make policy - environment (1-3)	.122	-.118	**.649**	.188	-.075	**.532**
9	EU should make policy - crime (1-3)	.085	.083	**.568**	.086	.106	.489
10	EU should make policy - health (1-3)	.052	.239	.295	.037	.202	.441
11	Favours EU...for tax system (1-5)	.383	**.594**	.118	.337	**.657**	.118
12	Favours EU...for social security (1-5)	.247	**.832**	.087	.261	**.789**	.156
13	Favours EU...for foreign policy (1-5)	**.527**	.241	.122	**.524**	.370	.167
14	Favours EU...for regional aid (1-5)	.181	.408	.011	.171	.411	.176
	Rotation sums of squared loadings	1.948	1.514	1.370	2.244	1.690	1.239

Table 3. Agglomeration schedule for the cluster analysis (Ward's method)

Stage	Number of clusters	Coefficients	Coefficients change to the next stage
930	10	313245.737	22834.252
931	9	336079.989	30477.823
932	8	366557.812	33405.860
933	7	399963.672	34869.768
934	6	434833.440	58770.578
935	5	493604.018	79657.623
936	4	573261.641	109254.585
937	3	682516.226	126695.067
938	2	809211.293	364211.220
939	1	1173422.513	

Table 4. Mean score on the three dimensions of Europeanism by cluster (two clusters solution)

	Eurosceptics	Europhiles	T-test statistic	Sig. (two tailed)
Supranational Integration	45.83	55.82	-8.46	0.00
Redistributive Integration	30.06	70.48	-48.32	0.00
Policy delegation	41	46.31	-3.67	0.00
N	307	633		

Table 5. Mean score on the three dimensions of Europeanism by cluster (four clusters solution)

	Euro-instrumentalists	Moderate Europhiles	Radical Eurosceptics	Euro-enthusiasts	Total
Supranational Integration	58.12	55.11	32.47	59.86	52.56
Redistributive Integration	31.10	70.37	28.94	71.14	57.28
Policy Delegation	54.24	40.37	26.61	79.52	44.58
N	160	537	147	96	940

Table 6. Summary table of positions about European integration by cluster

	Euro-instrumentalists	Moderate Europhiles	Radical Eurosceptics	Euro-enthusiasts	Total
Do you think that unification should be strengthened or has gone too far? (% who scored 6 or more on a 0-10 scale*)	73.8%	73.7%	27.2%	85.4%	67.7%
Member States ought to remain central actors (% agree strongly and agree somewhat)	75.6%	75.5%	89.8%	58.3%	76.0%
European Commission should become EU government (% agree strongly and agree somewhat)	43.8%	58.4%	12.9%	70.8%	50.1%
European Parliament should be strengthened (% agree strongly and agree somewhat)	76.2%	79.7%	44.3%	93.7%	75.0%
Single European Army or keep its own national army? (% in favour of European Army or both National and European)	72.6%	78.0%	30.7%	92.7%	71.2%
How do you think it would be most appropriate to deal with each of the following policy areas? (% in favour of exclusive or concurrent European competence)					
Fighting unemployment	36.3%	33.0%	8.2%	77.1%	34.1%
Immigration policy	84.4%	76.4%	25.2%	99.0%	72.0%
Environmental policy	84.4%	76.4%	25.2%	99.0%	72.0%
Crime prevention	72.5%	61.5%	29.9%	94.8%	61.8%
Health care	20.0%	23.5%	3.4%	77.1%	25.2%
The character of the European Union in 10 years. Tell me whether you approve or disapprove... (% strongly or somewhat in favour)					
...a unified tax system for the European Union	16.3%	76.0%	6.1%	86.5%	56.0%
...a common system of social security	12.5%	93.3%	0.7%	100.0%	65.7%
...single foreign policy toward outside countries	91.3%	94.2%	41.5%	97.9%	85.9%
...more help for regions with economic or social difficulties	83.8%	95.2%	63.9%	97.9%	88.6%
N	160	537	147	96	940

*On this scale, 0 means unification «has already gone too far" and 10 means it «should be strengthened.

Table 7. Further preferences about EU integration by cluster

	Euro-instrumentalists	Moderate Europhiles	Radical Eurosceptics	Euro-enthusiasts	Total
Most important decisions concerning the EU should be taken by a majority of all European citizens via a popular referendum. (% agree strongly and agree somewhat)	32.9%	51.3%	39.3%	51.6%	46.4%
Europe needs a common constitution. (% agree strongly and agree somewhat)	73.4%	81.2%	29.7%	90.4%	72.8%
Majority voting should be extended in the European Council. (% agree strongly and agree somewhat)	69.9%	75.5%	41.1%	84.9%	70.1%
Are you in favour or against having a president of the European Union? (% agree strongly and agree somewhat)	54.6%	65.3%	22.1%	86.0%	59.0%
Alternatives to reduce the impact of the current financial crisis upon the economy of your country (% of first choice)					
An intervention of the European Union	17.9%	23.2%	7.4%	25.6%	20.1%
A coordinate action of the national governments	55.1%	46.2%	51.8%	52.7%	49.2%
An autonomous action of your national government	9.0%	14.6%	31.2%	5.4%	15.3%
N	160	537	147	96	940

Table 8. Country distribution of the four clusters

	Euro-instrumentalists	Moderate Europhiles	Radical Eurosceptics	Euro-enthusiasts	Total
Austria	15.2%	50.0%	28.3%	6.5%	100.0%
Belgium	23.4%	54.7%	7.8%	14.1%	100.0%
Bulgaria	3.4%	87.9%	5.2%	3.4% 0	100.0%
Czech Republic	10.3%	56.4%	33.3%		100.0%
Denmark	47.2%	30.6%	19.4%	2.8%	100.0%
France	19.0%	56.9%	6.9%	17.2% 0	100.0%
Germany	30.4%	48.2%	21.4%		100.0%
Great Britain	11.1%	16.7%	70.8% 0	1.4%	100.0%
Greece	7.3%	82.9%		9.8%	100.0%
Hungary	9.8%	77.0%	1.6%	11.5%	100.0%
Italy	12.7%	71.4%	6.3%	9.5%	100.0%
Lithuania	14.5%	71.0%	10.1%	4.3% 0	100.0%
Poland	12.0%	72.0%	16.0%		100.0%
Portugal	27.0%	41.3%	4.8%	27.0%	100.0%

Slovakia	31.7%	38.1%	11.1%	19.0%	100.0%
Spain	7.9%	57.9%	6.6%	27.6%	100.0%
Total	17.0%	57.1%	15.6%	10.2%	100.0%
N	160	537	147	96	940

Figure 1. Error bars for the three dimensions of Europeanism by cluster (four clusters solution)

Error Bars: 95% CI