

Sharing is caring? Exploring the Relationship between Preferences for Online Participation and Support for Solidarity between EU Member States

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Abstract

The paper explores the influence of online participation on individual-level support for burden-sharing measures among EU member states. The analysis is set against the backdrop of the discussion about solidarity in times of EU crises and follows an innovative approach by operationalising social inclusion in the EU via online participation. It is argued that the specific nature of the EU favours the use of online channels for political information and participation, but that despite its inclusive potential, online participation does not necessarily mean public support for the EU. Instead, we hypothesize that people who make more use of online participation channels – thus are supposedly better equipped to participate in EU politics – are more critical in their evaluation of burden-sharing measures. Based on a large-scale survey among EU citizens in late 2016, we conduct a regression analysis taking into account the influence of EU support and general considerations on solidarity. Results lend support to our hypothesis that people who participate in political affairs online do not express greater support for EU burden-sharing measures but are more critical. Results are interpreted as an expression of the constraining dissensus regarding EU politics: Negative effects are read as criticism of how solidarity in the EU is implemented, not as opposition to solidarity in the EU as such.

Keywords: EU solidarity, individual attitudes, political participation, ‘refugee crisis’, bailout funds, information behaviour

Short author biographies

Verena K. Brändle was a post-doctoral research fellow associated with Siegen University and University of Copenhagen and is now based at the University of Vienna. Her research focuses on people's contestation of citizenship with a focus on online and offline spheres.

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The European Union in Times of Crisis – Solidarity on the Edge

The European Union (EU) is committed to the principle of solidarity, the spirit of which it has vowed to uphold in its treaties. However, this promise is put to a test in a continuous state of crisis as witnessed over the last 10 years. The EU's crises have destabilised the solidarity ties between EU citizens and countries, bringing up deep divides between Southern and Northern member states, debtor and donor countries, Eurozone members and non-members and different political ideologies (Glencross 2013). These deep-seated divisions continue to endanger the social cohesion of societies and the very fundament of the union itself (Dotti Sani and Magistro 2016; Lahusen and Grasso 2018).

Divides between EU countries were probably most pronounced in the discussions about burden-sharing regarding two particular themes: The bailout policies during economic recession as well as the EU's handling of the so called 'refugee crisis'. First, bailout policies substantiate the principle of solidarity between EU member states by pooling of financial resources to help out countries in need. This redistributive tool was highly contested, bringing vital economic national interests to the fore (Closa and Maatsch 2013: 826). Second, the negotiations about the EU's external borders and distribution rates for refugees and asylum-seekers across member states made visible the demarcation lines between arrival and destination countries for asylum-seekers, while the EU's policies in terms of reallocation, for example, to respond to this crisis proved inefficient (Triandafyllidou 2018).

Measures of solidarity are dependent on the public support of citizens. The EU, however, has long developed as an elite project detached from the public. Consequently, citizens were mostly ignorant regarding the political and economic interdependencies within this union and the question of European solidarity was not a matter of public debate. Today, in times of crises, which highlight the (negative) consequences of these interdependencies, the EU and solidarity between its member states are challenged by the existential dilemma of being more dependent on public support and having grown more contested in the public at the same time (Hobolt and De Vries 2016). Public support and, thus, an increased legitimacy of political output is more likely when citizens are able to participate in politics. This participation, however, is conditioned by socio-economic and political inequalities and the crises in the EU have made visible how social cleavages through socio-economic deprivation hinders political participation (Dotti Sani and Magistro 2016). In particular, citizens' ability to access information and participate in current affairs are essential elements for political and social inclusion. The low institutionalisation of democratic channels in the EU complicates citizens' possibilities for engagement and research has shown the increasing importance of online channels for political information and participation (see de Wilde, Michailidou and Trenz 2014). Against this background, in this paper we aim at investigating the link between online participation and citizens' support for burden-sharing measures by exploring the following research question: *How does online participation influence citizens' support for burden-sharing measures between EU member states?* For explaining individual level support for these measures, that are based on EU principles of solidarity, we focus on citizens' access to and ability of political participation online as an indicator for social inclusion. Differences in inclusion or exclusion through online and social media have especially been addressed in the literature on the 'digital divide' (Castells 1999; Selwyn 2004). In this paper, however, we focus particularly on citizens who are considered as included through their online participation, while the digital divide has been described as an expression of social exclusion (Selwyn 2004).

We explore explanations for citizens' support for burden-sharing measures in the EU in two instances: bailout funds and the so-called 'refugee crisis'. By considering two crises relating to different policy areas, the paper acknowledges that citizens' support might be volatile. Furthermore, this consideration allows for comparing different instances of solidarity implementation, shedding light on solidarity as a contingent phenomenon that is context-dependent. We develop our hypothesis drawing on different strands of literature (public opinion, political communication, solidarity, political participation), and test it based on a regression analysis of a large-scale survey including seven EU member states (France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Denmark, UK). The survey was conducted in late 2016 in the framework of the TransSOL project (see transsol.eu for further details). Results are discussed with reference to social inclusion through civic participation and its possible implications for the state of solidarity in the EU.

Theory Framework: Support for Solidarity Measures through Online Participation?

People, who stand in solidarity to each other as "solidarity groups" might be informal cliques, formal organizations, or full-fledged nation-states but all of them will be based on the idea that membership is tied to the expectations of mutual support' (Lahusen and Grasso 2018: 5). Any assessment of support for the EU's solidarity measures, that is the 'preparedness to share one's own sources with others, ... by supporting the state to reallocate and redistribute some of the funds gathered through taxes or contributions' (Stjerno 2012: 2), is therefore also an assessment of whether or not citizens consider themselves to be members of a (European) community in which they can participate and connect in mutual solidarity.

Citizens' participation and membership in the EU are, however, complicated by two developments in particular: the increasingly important role of online channels for political participation at EU level as well as growing social cleavages among EU citizens not only in socio-economic terms but also visible along the lines of citizens' online participation. First, the low degree of institutionalized channels for participation at EU level confirms the increasing role of especially online mass media for information and engagement with EU politics. More generally, with the rise of online media, research has pointed to their potential to enable citizens to become more involved, thus included, in political affairs. Here, 'digital citizenship' is defined as 'the ability to participate in society online' (Mossberger, Tolbert and McNeal 2007: 1). It is here that citizens' knowledge and participatory skills regarding the EU become important.

For citizens, the EU is a rather remote and complex topic, ascribing a crucial role to the media as first and most important source of information about it (Mancini 2013). Indeed, the media play an important role in the politicization and participation regarding EU political decision-making and its quality (e.g. Boomgaarden et al. 2013; Statham and Trenz 2013). Nevertheless, information on EU issues in mainstream media form a rather low share when compared to domestic issues. Scholars have therefore diagnosed a communication deficit for the EU, implying that citizens do not have a lot of information available on which they could base their opinions about EU politics, let alone solidarity in the EU (e.g., Boomgaarden and De Vreese 2016). In addition, the media system is increasingly described as fragmented or hybrid due to commercialization and technological innovation (Mancini 2013), resulting in diversified news sources and growing audience segmentation. More specifically, '[w]ith the Internet, the number of possible sources of information increases and, therefore, the number of consumers is distributed across a larger number of media outlets. This development shapes new patterns of participation that either give life to new users or move traditional consumers from old to new media' (see Mancini 2013: 45). In that sense, EU citizens can, on the one hand, choose from a broad range of information channels.

On the other hand, citizens require the skills to access this information, to critically reflect on them and to participate online in political affairs, which points to the role of socio-economic differences among them. Scholars highlight the exacerbation of social cleavages especially since the economic recession in the EU. Research suggests that at the individual level, gaps between ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ of European integration are increasing as the latter group suffers from socio-economic deprivation, feelings of social marginalisation, a lack of participatory means, all of which are expressed in declining support of the EU and its policies (Kriesi et al. 2012; Teney, Lacewell and de Wilde 2014). These social cleavages are also expressed in the different capacities and behaviour regarding the use of online and social media for informing oneself and participating in democratic politics (van Deursen and van Dijk 2014; also Norris 2001). The literature addressing social cleavages visible in people’s engagement with online and social media has identified a ‘digital divide’ (Selwyn 2004; Castells 1999). Social cleavages today are especially reflected in participation behaviour due to knowledge gaps, political interest and media literacy (van Deursen and van Dijk 2014; also Norris 2001). Lower educated people on average tend to spend more time online than higher educated ones (e.g., Zillien and Hargittai 2009). The former group is more prone to use online media for entertainment and other forms of social gratification; the latter group disposes of skills through which they can further their careers, benefit economically and search information (DiMaggio et al. 2004). Furthermore, particularly younger people are being mobilised through online and social media as they stumble over topics that are relevant to them, a trend which has been described as an actualization of citizens (e.g. Bennett, Wells and Freelon 2011).

We argue that online participation is crucial in order to understand citizens’ degrees of support for burden-sharing measures in the EU in times of polity contestation and decreasing levels of public support (Hobolt and De Vries 2016). While online media have contributed to the politicization of the EU (de Wilde, Michailidou and Trenz 2014), thus positively affected democratic participation, this does not necessarily go together with public support of the EU. People who are more able to make use of online media to inform themselves about current affairs or to evaluate the quality of information might be more able to grasp politically complex issues. They might therefore be more able to act as responsible and mature democratic citizens (e.g., Urbinati and Warren 2008), which may also be expressed in criticism of bumpy political decision-making and disagreement among member states. Consequently, increased online media literacy might lead to more critically minded citizens who are able to participate in the face of political turmoil that surrounded the decision-making regarding the burden-sharing measures during economic and refugee crises. In this paper, we therefore test the hypothesis that people who participate online, are less supportive of EU burden-sharing measures.

Methodology

The analysis builds on a large-scale survey that was conducted in the end of 2016 and beginning of 2017 in the framework of the TransSOL project (see transsol.eu for further information). The sample for this paper includes seven EU member states: Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, and the United Kingdom. Observations amount to a total of ~2000 per country; 8936 observations were included in the regression analysis.

Dependent Variables: Support for ‘Burden-Sharing’ between EU Member States

We operationalize ‘solidarity measures’ by relating to two major issues of contestation during crises: Bailout policies and EU cooperation to handle the ‘refugee crisis’. (1) Support for bailout policies is measured as follows: ‘The EU is currently pooling funds to help EU countries having difficulties in paying their debts. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this measure?’ The response scale ranges from 1-5, i.e., from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’. (2) Secondly, support for state cooperation in the ‘refugee crisis’ was measured on a 1-11 scale with higher values indicating higher satisfaction. The explicit question asked was: ‘How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the degree of cooperation in the European Union to handle the refugee crisis?’ Regarding the different wordings of the two items, we may, on the one hand, assume that, given the timing of the survey in late 2016, a question on the agreement to bailout measures as a policy tool that has already been in place for some time, may also be at least coloured by how it has been evaluated and thus, by satisfaction with its outcome. On the other hand, satisfaction is probed not for the outcome of cooperation during the refugee crisis but for the degree of cooperation and thus also measures the fact that cooperation in this respect was (and is) still in the making while bailout policies were implemented already.

Main Independent Variable: Online Political Participation and Information Behavior

To capture online political participation and information behavior, we constructed a variable based on the self-reported use of online channels (e.g., ‘Have you ever signed a petition?’ See appendix for details). We computed an additive index for online participation as our main independent variable (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.79$). The three first values in the original variables indicated 1 - ‘have never done this and cannot see myself doing it in the future’ and 2 - ‘have never done this but can see myself doing this in the future’ as well as 3 - ‘not in the last five years’. To make differences between active and inactive users more explicit, we recoded the three starting points of this 1-5 scale (1-3) of the original variables to 0, thus effectively inactive users are coded as 0. In the additive index, then, only such users that reported that they had made use of at least one of the channels in question, either during the last 12 months or in the last 5 years, were coded 1 for use of online channels.

Control Variable: Offline Political Participation and Information Behavior

(1) Online participation may well be accompanied, motivated, or conditioned by general behavior patterns in terms of participation. Online participation may be a simple replication of offline behaviour, both forms may influence each other or be used independently (Gibson and Cantijoch, 2013). To control for this possible influence, we computed a similar variable for offline participation (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.88$), following the same procedures described for our online participation variable (see appendix).

Issue-Specific Control Variables: Solidarity and the EU

Two broader aspects in particular may play a role when assessing support for EU level solidarity measures. (2) General attitudes in terms of solidarity are assumed to have explanatory leverage regarding the support for solidarity measures; (3) moreover, it has been found that a more positive attitude towards the EU positively influences support for EU policies in general (e.g., Hobolt and De Vries 2016; also Lahusen and Grasso 2018).

(2) Starting from our definition of solidarity as support for the reallocation of resources, preferences in terms of redistribution are an effective measure of the perimeter of solidarity. In that respect, ‘[a]ttachment to and preference for ingroups is the primary driver of intergroup relations’ (Brewer 2007: 695). Against the background that members of the in-group as the group of people that one feels a member of are usually the

preferred target group of solidarity (e.g., Brewer 2007), we control for preferences in terms of solidarity towards people that are potentially perceived as ‘others’ by including an (2a) a dummy variable probing the un-conditional of migrants receiving social benefits (1= ‘migrants should receive social benefits immediately upon arrival’; see appendix for details). To generally account for the more ideological dimension of solidarity regarding deservingness and fairness in society, we rely on (2b) an additive index of 8 items including different statements on perceptions of a fair society (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.81$; see appendix for details).

(3) With the EU being a rather distant and complex polity, which for many citizens is not related to their daily lives, people’s capacities to distinguish between individual EU policies or EU politicians are limited. The general public impression of the EU as such then plays an even greater role (Boomgaarden et al. 2013). In line with these and other studies (see Hobolt and De Vries 2016 for a comprehensive overview, also Lahusen and Grasso 2018), we therefore include the support for the EU in general. However, research has highlighted the diffuse and specific features of public support (Easton 1975): Diffuse support is a more undefined feeling that a regime or the values and principles it stands for can generally be trusted – derived from a general feeling of belonging to a political community (e.g., Boomgaarden et al. 2011). Specific support refers to an evaluation of politicians’ every-day performances and is defined as a more rational attitude regarding costs and benefits of ongoing politics. Solidarity, in that sense, may be rooted in both, more diffuse support, e.g., support for fellow members of a political community, or more specific rational considerations, e.g., support for bailout policies due to the own country’s dependence on it. Therefore, we include the (3a) attachment to the EU as an entity, representing the diffuse feature of support; and (3b) the opinion on the benefits of EU membership for the given country. Moreover, and related to citizens’ limited acquaintance with the EU and its policies, research has highlighted how citizens rely on the national level as a ‘proxy’ or a benchmark (Anderson 1998: 291; Sanchez-Cuenca 2000). In that respect, the national context was also the most important arena of contestation of EU cooperation (Dotti Sani and Magistro 2016, Triandafyllidou 2018). As measurement of the influence of the national context, we also include (3c) the satisfaction with democracy in the given country (see appendix for details).

Other Control Variables

In addition, following other studies with similar research interests, some established control variables concerning socio-demographics are included in our analysis. Such are age, gender, and education. In line with other studies of EU (policy) support, we include the self-reported political position in terms of left or right (Hobolt and De Vries 2016). Regarding support for redistribution more generally, income is included as well to control for the influence of people’s own financial situation on support (Jordan 2018: 119). Furthermore, especially preferences in terms of redistribution are found to be influenced by political awareness or interest which are included as well. Moreover, greater religiosity is often related to higher degrees of solidarity, emphasising, e.g., Christian values of altruism and charity. We therefore also include religiosity as a control variable (Jordan 2018). Lastly, the influence of the crisis is controlled for using the item ‘how would you describe the situation of your household compared to 5 years ago?’ ranging from 0 (much worse) to 10 (much better) (see appendix for details).

Analysis Strategy: Multilevel Ordered Logistic Regression

Since our dependent variables are both ordinal, we rely on ordered logistic regression models to test our hypothesis. Variables were all standardised and are the same for both models to ensure comparability. Due to the inclusion of different countries, we need to account for the nested structure of data; we therefore

calculate a multilevel model inserting a random intercept at the country level. This is also against the background that a likelihood-ratio test reveals the multilevel model to be the better fit in comparison to a fixed effects model including country dummies. In employing a multilevel model, we thus account for country differences while treating the pooled dataset as a random sample of countries from which we are able to generalise. We tested robustness of the model by employing also other regression models such as OLS regression and multinomial logistic regression which all yielded very similar results.

Results

Before turning to the results of our regression analysis, descriptive results for our dependent variables (standardized values) reveal some interesting patterns already. In only two countries, support, i.e. regarding both bailout funds and the cooperation in the ‘refugee crisis’, goes in the same direction – a positive direction for Poland and a negative trend for Germany – one of the largest donor countries in the financial crisis and with a very high intake of refugees and asylum seekers. In all other countries, patterns show opposing dynamics where Greece and Italy, that were affected hard by both crises, are the only countries in which the support for bailouts is high, whereas the satisfaction with how the ‘refugee crisis’ was handled is low. Thus, we may expect differences in the results for our two regression models.

[Figure 1 about here]

Looking briefly into descriptive results of our participation measures, online participation seems much more prevalent in all countries in the sample. Differences are most pronounced in Poland and Denmark, whereas participation seems lowest and differences least pronounced in France.

[Figure 2 about here]

Turning to regression results, effects are in general rather small regarding their substantive size. Still, coefficients’ directions differ for the two models: the coefficient for online participation is positive, yet not significant when including all variables (full model) regarding solidarity measures in the financial crisis; it is, in contrast, negative and significant in the case of cooperation during the refugee crisis. Our hypothesis that people who participate in political affairs online, supposedly more included in European society, would be more critical/less supportive of EU burden-sharing measures, thus, is only partly supported by our results. In addition, we find differences between the models that need explanation.

[Tables 1+2 about here]

Almost all control variables show significant effects with notable differences between the two models: Satisfaction with democracy shows a larger effect for the ‘refugee crisis’ model. In addition, the rational calculation of benefits of EU membership shows a significant effect only regarding support for the pooling of financial resources. We find a negative significant effect of the importance of a fair society variable for the ‘refugee crisis’ model, suggesting that the more important fairness is for people, the less likely they are satisfied with EU cooperation during the ‘refugee crisis’. While it is more likely that men agree with bailout funds, women are more likely to be satisfied with the degree to which governments worked together in the ‘refugee crisis’. Furthermore, people with higher incomes are more likely to be less supportive only when it comes to cooperation in the ‘refugee crisis’; more educated people are more likely supportive of burden-sharing in the financial crisis. Last but not least, we find a negative effect of political interest for burden-

sharing in the ‘refugee crisis’, meaning that people with greater interest in politics are more likely to be unsatisfied with cooperation in the EU during the ‘refugee crisis’. For the financial crisis model, in contrast, the effect is positive but not significant.

Discussion and Conclusion

Overall, then, there seem to be different stories behind citizens’ support for each crisis policy area, confirming that solidarity is context-dependent and relative. Burden-sharing measures were implemented supranationally in the form of bailouts during the financial crisis were about stabilising markets and the common currency, dominated by cynical discussions about the deservingness of some ‘lazy’ EU members who were now facing the consequences of their own ‘mismanagement’ (e.g., Closa and Maatsch 2013). Solidarity here was more about solidarity between EU member states, and more indirectly about citizens. Burden-sharing during the ‘refugee crisis’, in contrast, was much more tangible, about solidarity with people fleeing from war and violence to the EU as a safe haven. Moreover, and directly relating to solidarity and inclusion, immigration has always been an extremely salient issue of political mobilization and counter-mobilization with political actors capitalising on fears of being deprived or left out due to ‘foreign infiltration’ (Triandafyllidou 2018). In contrast to supranationally implemented bailout policies, moreover, burden-sharing measures in terms of quota systems for the fair re-allocation of refugees did not find intergovernmental agreement, i.e., agreement amongst member states. They remain an issue of political and public contestation and therefore continue to endanger the normative fundamentals of the EU in terms of human rights and moral obligations to humanitarian assistance. More generally, both types of burden-sharing measures had been in place for some time when the TransSOL survey was conducted in the end of 2016. We may thus assume the success of cooperation between EU member states to have played a role in citizens’ evaluations. Moreover, given that bailout policies were most contested in public opinion much earlier than 2016, we also assume that public attention had shifted towards other topics, pushing criticism raised earlier in the background. The refugee crisis, in contrast, can be assumed to be more salient in that time. In fact, checking with Standard Eurobarometer data, the most important issue facing the EU at the moment shows immigration to be the most salient topic in November 2016 whereas the economic situation, the state of member states public finances or unemployment were much more salient in the years before.

Bearing in mind the different wording of our dependent variables as well as different principles of decision-making regarding solidarity measures (supranational vs. intergovernmental), our results might suggest that less public salience and a more successful implementation of solidarity measures condition the influence of online participation on support positively. For the refugee crisis, in contrast, it seems that the more included people are, the less supportive they will be. Thus, results suggest that EU citizens, who are more able to participate and inform themselves via online channels, are more critical of the ways in which member states cooperated to handle the refugee crisis. In this sense, access to information and participation skills enable EU citizens to challenge political decision-makers. Our results may, then, be read as an expression of the constraining dissensus (Hooghe and Marks 2009): Especially in the results on support for cooperation in the ‘refugee crisis’, we can see that EU measures may here have been perceived as unfair - thus, citizens seem to express their dissatisfaction with how solidarity was implemented by EU politicians, and not their anti-solidary stances towards refugees per se.

Concluding, our study adds to research on online and offline participation which has until now emphasised the consequences of exclusion, one of them being declining support in politics, especially also at EU level.

Our findings focusing on the socially included, however, suggest that more inclusion through participation does not necessarily lead to more support for EU burden-sharing measures but illustrates the existence of critical citizens making their voices heard. The connection between in- and exclusion and support is therefore not a zero-sum relationship.

Our exploratory study has opened up questions that remain for future research. Our findings speak to the general discussion about the politicization of the EU, and specifically to research showing how online participation can contribute to EU politicization (Statham and Trenz 2013). Results can also be understood in reference to forms of Euroscepticism developing online (de Wilde, Michailidou and Trenz 2014). Furthermore, future research should assess the dynamics of in- and exclusion online in relation to research on social cleavages in the EU between ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ in terms of resources (Kriesi et al. 2012) as well as along ideological belief systems (Teney, Lacewell and de Wilde 2014). Further analysis is required to better understand how the ability to participate in political affairs online relates to access to disinformation and the continuing fragmentation of the media landscape.

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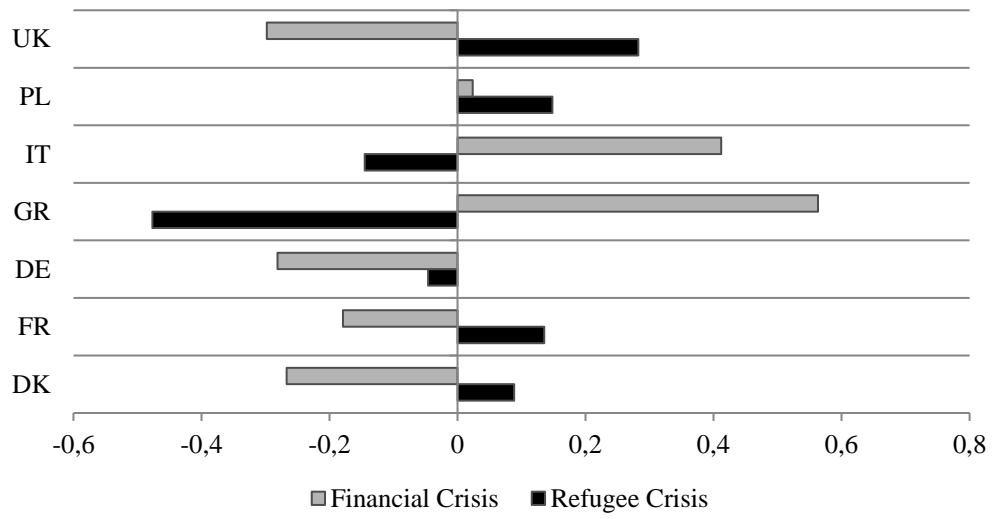


Figure 1: Average Support for Burden-sharing Measures per Country (standardised coefficients)

Figure 2: Average of Participation Measures (standardised coefficients)

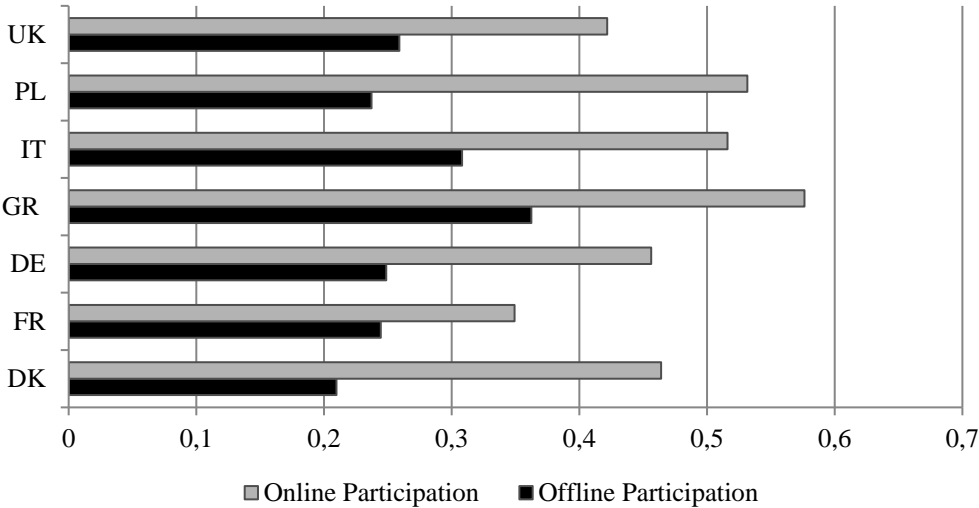


Table 1: Multilevel Ordered Logistic Regression Models ‘Financial Crisis’

	(1) (Participation)	(2) (EU Membership)	(3) (Solidarity)	(4) (Full Model)
Online Participation	1.194*** (0.0512)	1.145** (0.0496)	1.095* (0.0478)	1.051 (0.0477)
Offline Participation	1.348*** (0.0658)	1.205*** (0.0596)	1.195*** (0.0596)	1.113* (0.0565)
Benefits of EU Membership		1.464*** (0.0349)	1.366*** (0.0329)	1.350*** (0.0329)
Attachment to EU		1.687*** (0.0400)	1.616*** (0.0385)	1.589*** (0.0382)
Satisfaction with Democracy		1.189*** (0.0256)	1.206*** (0.0261)	1.187*** (0.0271)
Unconditional Social Benefits for Migrants			1.150*** (0.0232)	1.129*** (0.0229)
Importance of Fairness in Society			1.513*** (0.0331)	1.495*** (0.0343)
Better Financial Situation of Household				1.081** (0.0257)
Age				0.873*** (0.0186)
Gender				0.912*** (0.0186)
Education				1.047* (0.0224)
Income				0.957* (0.0210)
Religiosity				1.086*** (0.0229)
Political Interest				1.028 (0.0246)
Left-Right Positioning				0.833*** (0.0179)
/				
cut1	0.131*** (0.0286)	0.103*** (0.0311)	0.0944*** (0.0269)	0.0883*** (0.0248)
cut2	0.426*** (0.0924)	0.390** (0.118)	0.371*** (0.105)	0.354*** (0.0990)
cut3	1.310	1.408	1.399	1.355

	(0.284)	(0.425)	(0.396)	(0.379)
cut4	9.621*** (2.101)	12.55*** (3.808)	13.41*** (3.817)	13.20*** (3.712)
Random Intercept: Country	1.381 (0.241)	1.882 (0.639)	1.741 (0.518)	1.718 (0.500)
Observations	8936	8936	8936	8936
<i>AIC</i>	26149.9	24578.7	24138.8	24006.2

Exponentiated coefficients (odds ratios); Standard errors in parentheses; * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 2: Multilevel Ordered Logistic Regression Models ‘Refugee Crisis’

	(1) (Participation)	(2) (EU Membership)	(3) (Solidarity)	(4) (Full Model)
Online Participation	0.902* (0.0375)	0.885** (0.0375)	0.882** (0.0375)	0.911* (0.0404)
Offline Participation	1.278*** (0.0601)	1.167** (0.0558)	1.142** (0.0547)	1.166** (0.0572)
Benefits of EU Membership		1.032 (0.0239)	1.041 (0.0243)	1.045 (0.0247)
Attachment to EU		1.673*** (0.0389)	1.678*** (0.0392)	1.721*** (0.0408)
Satisfaction with Democracy		1.774*** (0.0396)	1.769*** (0.0395)	1.685*** (0.0393)
Unconditional Benefits for Migrants			1.126*** (0.0216)	1.098*** (0.0213)
Importance of Fairness in Society			0.926*** (0.0195)	0.939** (0.0208)
Better Financial Situation of Household				1.264*** (0.0301)
Age				0.744*** (0.0157)
Gender				1.081*** (0.0216)
Education				0.978 (0.0205)
Income				0.876*** (0.0189)
Religiosity				1.124*** (0.0234)
Political Interest				0.838*** (0.0197)
Left-Right Scale				0.886*** (0.0190)
/				
cut1	0.351*** (0.0576)	0.316*** (0.0420)	0.311*** (0.0407)	0.277*** (0.0396)
cut2	0.554*** (0.0906)	0.533*** (0.0706)	0.525*** (0.0685)	0.477*** (0.0682)
cut3	0.973	1.016	1.002	0.940

	(0.159)	(0.134)	(0.130)	(0.134)
cut4	1.736*** (0.284)	1.952*** (0.258)	1.930*** (0.252)	1.870*** (0.267)
cut5	2.767*** (0.453)	3.265*** (0.434)	3.235*** (0.423)	3.206*** (0.459)
cut6	6.405*** (1.056)	8.144*** (1.094)	8.099*** (1.071)	8.311*** (1.201)
cut7	11.71*** (1.950)	15.54*** (2.120)	15.49*** (2.083)	16.23*** (2.380)
cut8	24.45*** (4.167)	33.63*** (4.755)	33.64*** (4.691)	35.90*** (5.431)
cut9	55.01*** (9.876)	77.67*** (11.83)	77.95*** (11.73)	84.36*** (13.64)
cut10	94.55*** (18.02)	135.1*** (22.33)	135.8*** (22.23)	148.0*** (25.77)
Random Intercept: Country	1.199 (0.118)	1.123 (0.0715)	1.119 (0.0690)	1.146 (0.0850)
Observations	8936	8936	8936	8936
<i>AIC</i>	36633.4	34964.8	34921.8	34348.1

Exponentiated coefficients (odds ratios); Standard errors in parentheses; * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Appendix Table A1: Correlation matrix of all variables included (based on standardized variables)

	DV: Bailout	DV: Refugee Crisis	Online Part.	Offline Part.	Benefits EU Member.	Attachme nt EU	Satisf. Democr.	Uncond. Benefits	Fairness in Society	Econ. Sit. Compared	Age	Gender	Education	Income	Religiosit y	Political Interest
DV: Refug. Cris.	0.1533 0.0000	1.0000														
Online Part.	0.0994 0.0000	-0.0152 0.1516	1.0000													
Offline Part.	0.1130 0.0000	0.0370 0.0005	0.4366 0.0000	1.0000												
Benefits EU Mem.	0.2533 0.0000	0.1988 0.0000	0.0433 0.0000	0.0199 0.0604	1.0000											
Attachment EU	0.3206 0.0000	0.3190 0.0000	0.0609 0.0000	0.0820 0.0000	0.4976 0.0000	1.0000										
Satisf. Democr.	0.0533 0.0000	0.3358 0.0000	-0.0388 0.0002	-0.0060 0.5723	0.2105 0.0000	0.1950 0.0000	1.0000									
Unconditional benefits	0.1263 0.0000	0.0905 0.0000	0.0837 0.0000	0.1129 0.0000	0.0788 0.0000	0.0942 0.0000	0.0483 0.0000	1.0000								
Fair Society	0.2994 0.0000	-0.0097 0.3575	0.0816 0.0000	0.0575 0.0000	0.1736 0.0000	0.1726 0.0000	-0.0147 0.1649	0.1385 0.0000	1.0000							
Economic Sit.	-0.0050 0.6392	0.2742 0.0000	-0.0211 0.0456	-0.0325 0.0021	0.1729 0.0000	0.1945 0.0000	0.4033 0.0000	0.0337 0.0014	-0.0822 0.0000	1.0000						
Age	-0.0931 0.0000	-0.1406 0.0000	-0.1391 0.0000	-0.1131 0.0000	0.0055 0.6022	0.0222 0.0355	0.0277 0.0089	-0.0647 0.0000	0.0746 0.0000	-0.0689 0.0000	1.0000					
Gender	0.0018 0.8640	0.0600 0.0000	-0.0436 0.0000	-0.0283 0.0075	-0.0329 0.0018	-0.0066 0.5299	-0.0170 0.1076	0.0142 0.1784	0.1144 0.0000	-0.0219 0.0384	-0.1338 0.0000	1.0000				
Education	0.1018 0.0000	0.0134 0.2044	0.1158 0.0000	0.1216 0.0000	0.1674 0.0000	0.1036 0.0000	0.0260 0.0142	0.0465 0.0000	0.0673 0.0000	0.0202 0.0566	-0.1391 0.0000	0.0296 0.0051	1.0000			
Income	-0.0257 0.0153	0.0386 0.0003	0.0328 0.0019	0.0319 0.0026	0.1555 0.0000	0.1505 0.0000	0.1260 0.0000	-0.0018 0.8650	-0.0433 0.0000	0.3001 0.0000	0.0516 0.0000	-0.0966 0.0000	0.2147 0.0000	1.0000		
Religiosity	0.0956 0.0000	0.0509 0.0000	-0.0072 0.4986	-0.0079 0.4563	-0.0355 0.0008	0.0601 0.0000	0.0302 0.0043	-0.0218 0.0393	0.0205 0.0530	-0.0149 0.1580	0.0244 0.0211	0.0629 0.0000	-0.0161 0.1275	-0.0470 0.0000	1.0000	
Political Interest	0.0435 0.0000	-0.0194 0.0667	0.2961 0.0000	0.2150 0.0000	0.1077 0.0000	0.1478 0.0000	0.0818 0.0000	0.0622 0.0000	0.1065 0.0000	0.0774 0.0000	0.0995 0.0000	-0.1166 0.0000	0.1178 0.0000	0.1670 0.0000	-0.0070 0.5110	1.0000
Left Right Scale	-0.1703 0.0000	-0.0238 0.0246	-0.0655 0.0000	-0.1384 0.0000	-0.1098 0.0000	-0.1119 0.0000	0.0634 0.0000	-0.1206 0.0000	-0.2750 0.0000	0.0674 0.0000	-0.0052 0.6211	-0.0573 0.0000	-0.0395 0.0002	0.0458 0.0000	0.2118 0.0000	-0.0263 0.0130

Table A2: Items used for Computing Online and Offline Participation in Original Scaling (non-standardised)

Indices	Contained Items (added)
Online Channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed/shared opinion on politics in social networks • Started/Followed a political group or politician on social media • Visited the website of a political party or politician • Searched for information about politics online
Offline Channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacted/visited a politician or government official • Donated money to a political organ./party or action group • Displayed/worn a political or campaign badge/logo/sticker • Signed a petition, public letter, campaign appeal • Boycotted products for political/ethical/environmental reasons • Deliberately bought products for political/ethical/environmental reasons • Attended a meeting of political organ./party/action group • Attended demonstration, march or rally • Joined a strike • Joined an occupation/sit-in/blockade
<p>Range: 5- in the past 12 months, 4 In the previous 5 years; 3 At some previous point in my life, 2 Never but I could see myself doing this in the future, 1 Never and I would never see myself doing this; first three entries respectively re-coded to 0; rest to 1 (see also description in the text).</p>	

Table A3: Descriptive Statistics for Included Variables in Original Scaling (non-standardised)

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Support for Bailout Policies	8936	3.214526	1.19408	1	5
Satisfaction with EU Cooperation During Refugee Crisis	8936	3.805842	2.477117	1	11
Online Participation	8963	.4773948	.4995167	0	1
Offline Participation	8936	.269248	.4435939	0	1
Attachment EU	8936	-.0143241	.6090317	-1	1
Benefit EU Membership	8936	.5982543	.4902785	0	1
Satisfaction Democracy	8936	4.404208	2.894063	0	10
Uncond. Social Benefits for Migrants	8936	.0755372	.2642709	0	1
Importance of Fairness in Society	8936	7.827859	1.260841	2	10
Situation of Household Compared to 5 Years Ago	8936	4.809423	2.733417	0	10
Age	8936	48.6325	15.46925	18	96
Gender	8936	1.431625	.4953305	1	2
Education	8936	2.068823	.7516945	1	3
Income	8936	5.335385	2.680524	1	10
Religiosity	8936	4.265219	3.20526	0	10
Political Interest	8936	3.019248	.8164981	1	4
Left/Right Positioning	8936	5.031446	2.599474	0	10