Awakening the Sleeping Giant: Rising Euroscepticism & Turnout in European Parliament Elections

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Abstract

After decades of decline, voter turnout in European Parliament (EP) elections has surged since 2014. This article hypothesises that the recent increase in voter participation results from the politicisation of European integration and the rise of Eurosceptic parties at the national level. Two empirical analyses support this hypothesis: a time-series cross-sectional analysis of aggregate turnout across all 202 EP elections held between 1979 and 2024, and a hierarchical analysis of nearly 200,000 individual voting decisions from all ten European Election Studies to date. The results indicate that, while EP turnout is unrelated to economic or cultural political divisions, it is strongly associated with the prior success of Eurosceptic parties in national elections. Turnout increases as these parties gain domestic seats, primarily reflecting stronger participation among Eurosceptic voters and, to a lesser extent, counter-mobilisation by pro-Europeans. Secondary findings underscore the influence of institutional factors, such as compulsory voting and election frequency.

Key words: Voter Turnout, European Parliament Elections, Euroscepticism, Politicisation, Representation

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Voter turnout has troubled European officials for decades. Since 1979, the European Union's (EU) main source of democratic legitimacy has been the direct elections to the European Parliament (EP). To address criticisms of the EU's democratic deficit, each successive reform of European treaties enhanced the EP's institutional powers (Hix and Høyland 2013; Brack and Costa 2018). The Achilles' heel of this strategy was, however, the low and declining voting rates in EP elections. Not only did citizens participate significantly less than in national legislative contests, but the EU-wide turnout fell even lower with each successive EP election. Furthermore, election campaigns were dominated by national rather than European issues (Reif and Schmitt 1980) and the factors driving participation were largely institutional and unrelated to European integration per se (see an overview below).

Yet, the last two EP elections bucked the declining participatory trend. After attaining its nadir $(43.3\%)^2$ in 2014, voter turnout went up for the first time in 2019, reaching its highest level (48.8%) since 1999. Participation remained equally high in 2024, prompting the question of what accounts for the renewed engagement of European citizens in EP elections. Does this participatory increase result from changes in institutional factors, prominent in the scientific literature on turnout in EP elections, such as the conduct of concurrent national elections in a large number of EU member states? Or has something more fundamental changed about European integration, making elections more mobilising to citizens?

This paper hypothesises that citizens' stronger participation in EP elections is due to the rise of Eurosceptic political forces, which often question the very existence of the European Union and its policies. By providing representation to Eurosceptic citizens and sending a warning sign to pro-Europeans, Eurosceptic parties heighten the stakes in EP elections and thus increase participation. The stronger these parties are, the more European integration is contested, and the more meaningful EP elections become.

The empirical section conducts two analyses. The first is the most extensive time-series cross-sectional analysis of voter turnout in EP elections to date, including all 202 contests held between 1979 and 2024. The main independent variables incorporate information on party positions and vote shares in all national legislative elections preceding EP elections. To control for concurrent national contests and election frequency, we also built an original database of more than 2,487 significant elections and popular votes held in all the current and past EU member states since 1974. The second analysis is hierarchical and combines our key independent variable from Analysis 1, Eurosceptic seat shares at the national level, and individual-level data on electoral participation from all ten European Election Studies conducted to date. This second analysis spans nearly 200,000 individual voting decisions in EP elections.

The results provide consistent support for our main hypothesis. Voter turnout in EP elections is strongly and positively associated with the vote shares and seat shares of

Eurosceptic parties in preceding legislative elections. The stronger Eurosceptic forces are domestically, the higher the voter turnout in EP elections. Controlling for institutional factors such as compulsory voting, concurrent elections, and election frequency makes the relationship even more manifest. Our second, hierarchical analysis shows that the primary reason why turnout goes up in EP elections when Eurosceptic parties are present in the national parliament is that Eurosceptic voters—previously underrepresented in national politics and media—participate at higher rates. This, in turn, though to a lesser extent, mobilises pro-European voters. These findings, which are robust to a variety of alternative model specifications and other checks, hold important implications for our understanding of voter turnout, EP elections, and the interplay between the national and European political arenas.

Voter Turnout Change in EP Elections 1979-2024

Figure 1 displays voter turnout rates in EP elections for three groups of countries: all EU member states; the 8 member states that participated in all EP elections (EU-8);[3] and the 11 member states from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE-11),[4] which joined the EU between 2004 and 2013 and are known for particularly low voting rates in national elections (Kostelka 2014, 2017; Kostelka and Krejcova, Forthcoming).

Figure 1: Voter Turnout in EP Elections 1979-2004
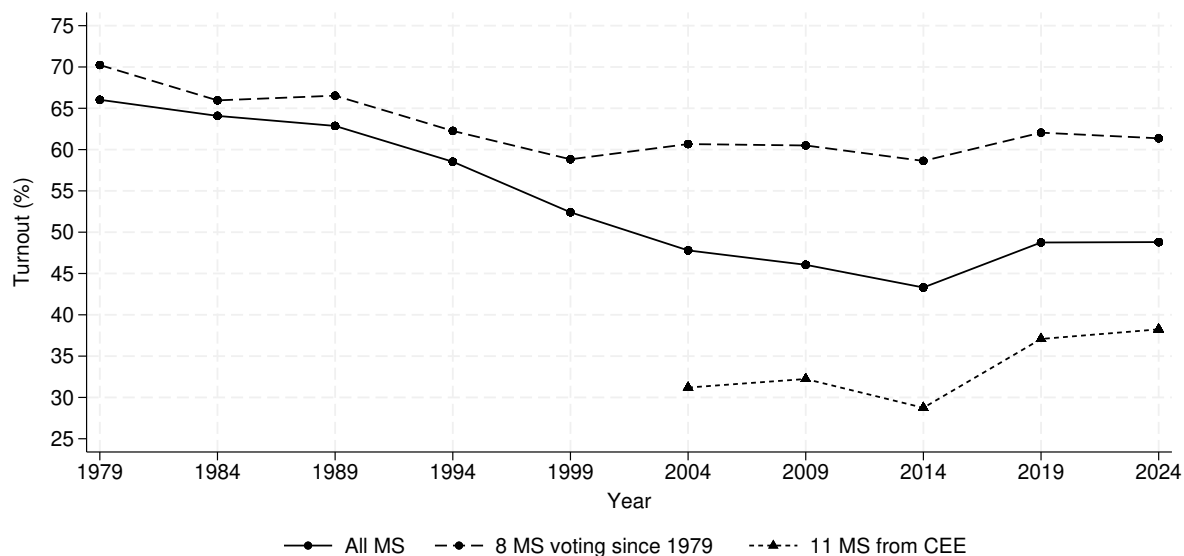
Note: Off-cycle elections in accessing member states are not included in this graph. The figure reports country averages that are not weighted by population and thus slightly differ from the official EU-wide voter turnout rates reported by the European Parliament. Own compilation. Source: National statistical offices and European Parliament.

The EU-wide average voting rate fell by a considerable 22.7 percentage points between 1979 and 2014. The figure reveals that much of this decline is due to the EU's enlarge-

ment. In the CEE-11, voting rates are nearly half of those in the EU-8. When the post-communist countries joined, this discrepancy thus dramatically depressed the EU's overall turnout rate. In the EU-8, the decline was much more moderate (10 points in the first four EP elections) and stabilized by 1999.

The post-2014 increase in participation, of 5.5 points on average, can strikingly be observed in all three groups of countries displayed in Figure 1. Between 2014 and 2024, this increase reached 2.7 and 9.5 points in the EU-8 and the CEE-11, respectively. In the heterogeneous group of countries without a communist past that joined the EU between 1981 and 2004 (not shown separately in Figure 1),[5] participation went up by 1.8 points.

Unlike most of the previous downward trend, the recent increase in turnout thus cannot be attributed to compositional change (Brexit) or developments in a single group of countries. The descriptive data suggest that a factor observed across the entire EU may have been at play. Before we theorize it, we first review how EP voter turnout has been studied in the existing literature.

Literature Review

In their seminal article, Reif and Schmitt (1980) called EP elections second-order because, among other characteristics, they mobilized fewer citizens than national legislative or presidential elections. They explained the weak turnout by the lower perceived stakes in EP elections among both voters and politicians. Later observers questioned the low-stakes explanation, noting that only a minority of citizens perceive the EP as less powerful than national parliaments (Niedermayer 1990) and that further integration and the empowerment of the European Parliament did not increase turnout (Mattila 2003; Studlar et al. 2003). However, others could argue that the low stakes are rather about the weak linkage between the election outcome and the composition of the European Commission and its policies (Follesdal and Hix 2006), and the fact that the EU had little competence in those policy areas that interest citizens the most such as taxation, pensions, and health care (Moravcsik 2002).

Macro-level studies of EP turnout, which are naturally the most suitable to explain shifts in aggregated voting rates, are relatively rare and focus primarily on institutional explanations. Early observers noted that EP turnout was higher in those countries in which participation was compulsory and where EP elections coincided with national legislative elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Niedermayer 1990; Mattila 2003). Franklin (2001; see also van der Eijk and Franklin 1996) found that changes in three factors positively associated with turnout could account for all the EP turnout decline between 1979 and 1999: compulsory voting, the first country's EP election, and proximity to the next legislative election. The initial decline would thus be due to the fact that fewer citizens lived in countries with compulsory voting, they would no longer experience the

excitement associated with their country's first EP election, and EP elections would accidentally move earlier in the national electoral cycles and be less considered as rehearsals for first-order elections. After the EU's big bang enlargement of 2004, Franklin's model remained relevant, but its overall explanatory power decreased (Sio et al. 2019; Hosli et al. 2024). Importantly, the model could not explain the 2019 uptick in participation (Sio et al. 2019).

Recent research has adopted a different perspective on the electoral cycle, emphasizing election frequency and the resulting voter fatigue. Garmann (2017) shows that, in the German state of Hesse, distance from the last local election–held in a staggered format–is positively associated with EP turnout across the state's municipalities. Nonnemacher (2021) finds that EP turnout is depressed by the total number of preceding national (legislative and presidential) contests. Kostelka et al. (2023; see also Kostelka 2025) argue that all types of past elections contribute to voter fatigue, and show that EP elections are at least as vulnerable–if not more so–to election frequency as first-order elections.[6] Building on Kostelka et al.'s conceptualization and measures, Briatte et al. (2024) demonstrate that both first-order and second-order past elections contribute to voter fatigue and negatively affect EP turnout.

The evidence regarding the role of attitudinal factors, such as support for European integration, is mixed. Some country-level and region-level studies find that more supportive countries of EU membership have higher turnout rates (Mattila 2003; Fauvelle-Aymar and Stegmaier 2008; Stockemer 2012). However, others report null findings (Studlar et al. 2003; Flickinger and Studlar 2007), and the evidence from micro-level studies is also inconclusive. Dissatisfaction with the EU leads to abstention in some analyses (Blondel et al. 1997; Hobolt and Spoon 2012; Hernández and Kriesi 2016; Kentmen-Cin 2017), but it exerts no effect in others (van der Eijk and Franklin 1996; Schuck et al. 2016; Blais and Kostelka 2015; Kostelka and Blais 2018; Braun 2021; Braun and Schäfer 2022; see also Remer-Bollow et al. 2019; Kostelka et al. 2025). Based on their cross-sectional analysis of the 2014 EP election, Hernández and Kriesi (2016) suggest that the effect of dissatisfaction depends on the political offer and the availability of Eurosceptic parties. If their hypothesis is right,[7] this could explain the inconsistent findings across so many studies.

While most research agrees that individual-level socio-demographic and attitudinal characteristics are associated with participation in EP elections in the same way as in national elections (Schmitt et al. 2015; Blais and Kostelka 2015), the low turnout levels may amplify their effects (Bhatti et al. 2019).[8] For instance, political interest is more strongly associated with voting in EP elections (Söderlund et al. 2011), which accounts for the persistence of the traditional gender gap in participation disadvantaging women (Kostelka et al. 2019; Dassonneville and Kostelka 2021). Similar to findings in national elections (Blais and Rubenson 2013; Kostelka and Blais 2021), Bhatti and Hansen (2012)

show a generational difference in EP participation rates, predicting further turnout decline of 0.9 to 2.5 points by 2020 due to generational replacement, barring any 'dramatic shocks'. Conversely, Li (2024) suggests that, unlike in national elections, the generational trend reverses in European Parliament elections, with the youngest generation (born in the 1990s/2000s) voting at higher rates than those born in the 1980s. As these effects are small and participation in younger ages is volatile (Bhatti and Hansen 2012; Bhatti et al. 2016), it remains to be seen whether this is a durable change.

Overall, the existing literature offers relatively few insights into the sources of the recent increase in EP turnout. The works focusing on long-term trends either acknowledged that their model could not explain the rise in participation (Sio et al. 2019) or predicted further decline (Bhatti and Hansen 2012). Furthermore, most of the existing country-level studies do not address common issues in time-series cross-section data analysis, such as unit heterogeneity, autocorrelation, contemporaneous correlation, or stationarity, which cast doubt on the robustness of some of the reported results.[9] In what follows, this study aims to address these challenges. Building on some of the reviewed findings and more general EU literature, it theorizes a potential source of the increase in EP turnout and puts it to the test through a rigorous empirical analysis.

Theory & Hypotheses

For decades, European integration did not play a major role in national or EP elections. Until the early 1990s, European electorates were either supportive of or cared little about EU policies. Scholars spoke of a permissive consensus (Lindberg 1970), and popular support for European integration largely followed the EU's economic growth rate (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993; Hix and Høyland 2022: Chapter 5). After the Cold War ended and European electorates had to ratify the Maastricht Treaty, which extended European integration beyond the economic realm, public opinion became more volatile. In the new era of constraining dissensus (Hooghe and Marks 2009), significant numbers of voters in various member states opposed further integration in referendums, but the topic of European integration remained largely limited to fringe political parties. Mainstream parties refused to politicise the issue in elections and kept pro-European positions (Marks et al. 2006), drifting apart from their voters (Mattila and Raunio 2012). As van der Eijk and Franklin (2004) aptly put it, the issue of European integration thus constituted a 'sleeping giant', which had the potential to disrupt European party systems if politicised. To protect themselves from challengers, mainstream political parties actually deliberately 'sedated the giant', which did not create a democratic deficit only at the European level, but also at the national one (Mair 2007).

Figure 2 illustrates how stably pro-European party positions were in national parliaments until the 2010s. Drawing mainly on the Chapel Hill Expert survey data (see the

Data and Methods section for details), it gives the average party position (weighted by vote shares) and the share of seats held by Eurosceptic parties in the last national election preceding each EP election. On a 1-7 scale, where 7 means strongly in favour of European integration, national party systems remained at a distinctly pro-European 5.5 during the first thirty years of EP electoral politics. With the exception of the run-up to the 1999 EP election, Eurosceptic parties remained marginalized, controlling usually less than 5% of seats in national parliaments. As a result, Eurosceptic voters in most countries could not turn to credible political forces to voice their discontent with European integration.

Figure 2: Euroscepticism in National Elections 1974-2024
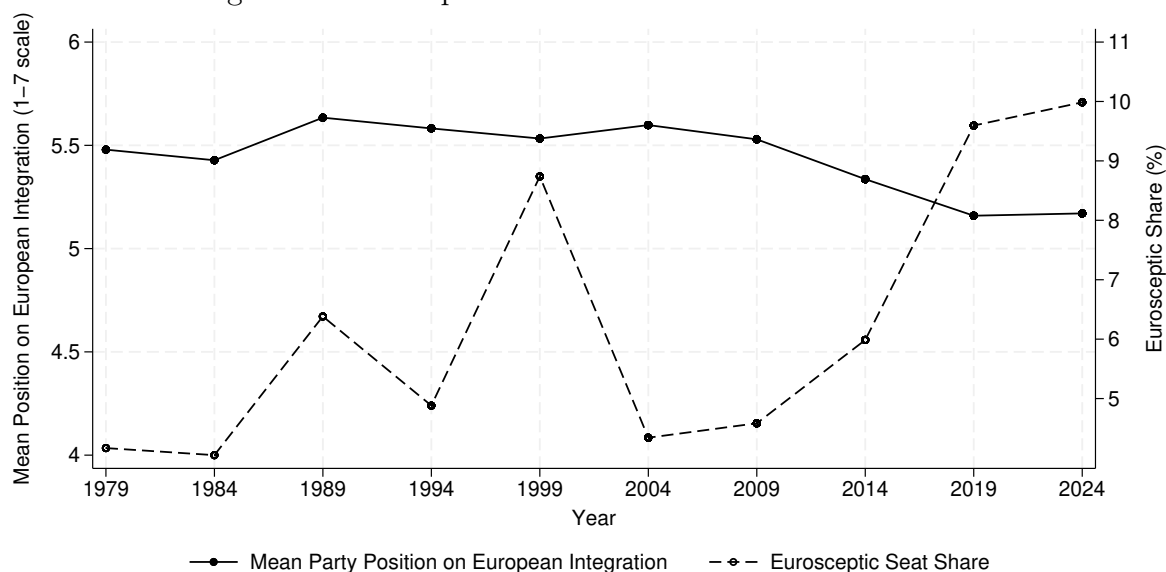
Note: Data based on aggregated party positions (weighted by vote shares) and seat shares in the last national election preceding each EP election. On the left y-axis, 1 means "Strongly opposed" and 7 "Strongly in favour". Own compilation. Main source: Chapel Hill Expert surveys. See the Data and Methods for further details.

However, the pro-European consensus among national-level parties significantly weakened after 2015, likely reflecting several major, partly interconnected developments in European politics. These developments include the financial and refugee crises, which began in 2007 and 2015, respectively, and which led to open conflicts between national governments and EU institutions (Hutter and Kriesi 2019). The European Commission's policy responses to these crises have 'gained a directly attributable, visible and mostly negatively perceived effect on people's lives' (Schimmelfennig 2018). These policies eroded support for European integration and led to criticisms even among otherwise pro-European parties, who felt they could not ignore these issues (de Vries and Hobolt 2020; Braun and Grande 2021; Maier et al. 2021). In the United Kingdom, European integration became the key political issue in the lead-up to the 2016 referendum on EU membership and its aftermath. Although Brexit did not emerge as a success story and, today, may discourage Eurosceptics in different member states from advocating an exit from the EU (Miró et

al. 2024; Schelkle et al. 2024), its initial phase (2016-2017) may have helped politicise European integration elsewhere. Populists and far-right critics of European integration also electorally benefited from a new decentralized media environment, which bypassed traditional media gate-keeping of anti-system views (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018) and allowed both domestic and foreign actors to spread anti-EU disinformation and conspiracy theories (Kostelka and Krejcova 2017; Kostelka 2023). Partly as a result, 'populist parties that challenge the existence of the EU [...] [entered the government] in member states such as Austria, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland' (van der Brug et al. 2022). In Hungary and Poland especially, the radical-right governments clashed with the European Commission over violations of democratic norms and breaches of the EU's core values (Halmai 2024). Across the EU, for the first time, the average party position significantly declined (by 0.3 points), and Eurosceptic parties doubled their domestic seat shares, reaching an average of 10% (see Figure 1).[10]

The politicisation of European integration and the success of Eurosceptic parties at the national level are likely to benefit voter turnout in EP elections. As Hernández and Kriesi (2016) argued, such developments provide Eurosceptic voters with viable party alternatives for whom they can vote to manifest their discontent with the European Union. For example, until the last two EP elections, Germany was characterized by a strong 'positivity bias' in the news reporting of European topics, and Euroscepticism received 'little support by political parties and the media' (Galpin and Trenz 2019: 265). The surge of the Alternative for Germany (AfD) in the 2017 federal election suddenly gave unprecedented publicity to critical views of the current form of European integration (Lees 2018). Similarly, in Slovakia, the 'politicization of European integration was virtually non-existent' in the 2000s and early 2010s (Világi 2024: 224). Yet, two Eurosceptic parties entered the Slovak unicameral parliament in 2016—the People's Party of Slovakia (LSNS) and We are a family—and their positions vis-à-vis pro-European parties 'made the political campaign before the 2019 EP [election] polarized as never before' (Gyárfášová and Mokrá 2021: 132). This trend intensified and, 'by the 2024 [EP election] campaign, contestation over European integration was fully evident' (Világi 2024: 225). In Hungary, the transformation of Fidesz from a moderate, pro-European party into a radical-right, Eurosceptic one produced a 'third-party system [since democratization] in 2019, closely connected with the EP elections'. As a result, Hungary's 'party landscape [...] in the early 2020s can be best described [...] as a deep contrast and fierce fight between "sovereigntists" and "federalists" ' (Ágh 2021: 22). Furthermore, far-right parties such as Fidesz, AfD, and Spain's Vox—some of which recently gained access to parliamentary resources—invested heavily in EU-focused online campaigning in the 2024 EP Election (Mudde 2024). They outspent mainstream parties and promoted messages that strongly resonated with their countries' Eurosceptic citizens. We thus hypothesise that the electoral strength of Eurosceptic parties in domestic arenas is positively associated with voter

turnout in European Parliament elections in general (Hypothesis 1) and voting rates of Eurosceptic citizens in particular (Hypothesis 2).

Hypothesis 1: *Domestic strength of Eurosceptic parties is positively associated with voter turnout in European Parliament elections.*

Hypothesis 2: *Domestic strength of Eurosceptic parties is positively associated with voter turnout of Eurosceptic citizens in European Parliament elections.*

Besides better representation of Eurosceptic citizens, additional mechanisms may account for Hypothesis 1. First, the rise of Eurosceptic parties and their campaigning has increased the visibility of European institutions, policies, and issues in national debates, thereby raising the salience of EP elections for all voters. Second, for pro-European voters, Euroscepticism at the national level makes the Eurosceptic challenge a credible threat in EP elections. Until the 2010s, the general pro-European composition of the EP was largely taken for granted. In stark contrast, analysts warned against waves of Euroscepticism ahead of the last three EP elections, and both the 2019 and 2024 EP elections resulted in a record number of Eurosceptic candidates being elected (Hix et al. 2024b; Hix et al. 2024a). The rise of Euroscepticism and the increasingly contested nature of European integration have clearly heightened the stakes in EP elections, potentially mobilising pro-European voters.

Hypothesis 3: *Domestic strength of Eurosceptic parties is positively associated with voter turnout of pro-European citizens in European Parliament elections.*

Analysis 1

Data and Methods

To test Hypothesis 1, we analyse voter turnout, measured as the percentage of registered voters who cast a ballot, in all 202 national EP elections held between 1979 and 2024. We collected data on voter turnout and election results from national election bodies and the European Parliament's website.

The main independent variables are the vote and seat share of Eurosceptic parties in the most recent national election that preceded each EP election.[11] The election results are drawn from the Parlgov dataset (Döring and Manow 2024), which we complemented with data from national electoral bodies for the most recent elections. To identify Eurosceptic parties, we merged the election results with the information on party positions from expert surveys on political parties: the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys (CHES; Polk et al. 2017; Jolly et al. 2022; Hooghe et al. 2024) and their predecessors (Ray 1999).[12] We define Eurosceptic parties as those that score 2.5 or less on the 1-7 scale 'EU_Position'

provided by CHES, where 1 means 'Strongly opposed' to European integration and 7 means 'Strongly in favour'. The cut-off of 2.5 lies between 2 and 3, which are respectively labelled as 'Opposed' and 'Somewhat opposed' in the survey, and should thus correspond to parties whose opposition to European integration is clear to voters. Replication of our analyses with alternative cut-off points (2 and 3) leads to similar substantive and statistically significant results (see Appendix C).

Our first empirical analysis compares the effect of Eurosceptic parties to that of other types of political forces. Besides pro-European parties (whose position on the 1-7 scale is greater than or equal to 5.5), we consider parties with strong positions on the general left-right scale, cultural gal-tan scale, and economic left-right scale from the CHES data. As these are all 0-10 scales, we measure the vote shares of parties that score 3 or less (left-wing or gal parties) or 7 or more (right-wing or tan parties).

Our main analyses control for the principal factors identified by the macro-level studies of voter turnout. The first two control variables operationalize the competitiveness and stakes in the party competition. *Closeness* measures the difference between the first and second parties in the election and should be negatively associated with voter turnout (Blais 2000). Similarly, *Majority Status*, which is the absolute value of the difference between the score of the first party and 50% of votes, should negatively relate to turnout (Franklin 2004). The variables *CV* and *CV Enforced* are dummies coded as one for elections in which voting was compulsory and the compulsion was enforced, respectively, which should benefit turnout (Kostelka et al. 2024). The dummy variable *First EP election* identifies the first EP election held in each country, which should record higher turnout (Franklin 2001). We also control for elections held jointly with the EP election, which should boost turnout (Mattila 2003), through additional dummy variables: *Joint Presidential*, *Joint Lower House*, *Joint Referendum*. Following some earlier studies (Mattila 2003; Studlar et al. 2003), some of our models also include turnout in the last national election as a control. To model support for European integration, like Stockemer (2012), we rely on the question 'Generally speaking, do you think that [our country's] membership of the Common Market is a good thing, a bad thing, or neither bad nor good?' from the closest Eurobarometer before each EP election.[13] The variable *EU Support* gives the difference between the percentage of citizens who considered their country's EU membership as a good thing and that of citizens who considered their country's membership a bad thing.[14]

To measure the position of EP elections in the electoral cycle, we use the Index of Election Frequency (*IEF*) proposed by Kostelka et al. (2023), which sums all past elections J held in the last five years and weights them by their scope (the share of the country's registered voters eligible to vote in the election) and distance in time from the current election i (see Equation 1). To construct the index, we compiled an original dataset of all 2,487 significant elections held in the 28 current and former EU member

states between January 1st, 1974, and the EP election of 2024.[15] The index includes elections in which at least 10% of the population was eligible to vote.[16]

$$\text{IEF}_i = \sum_{j=1}^{J} \frac{Scope_j}{exp(Distance \ in \ years_{i-j})} \tag{1}$$

All our models are OLS regressions. Given the times-series cross-section nature of the data, we conducted statistical tests for issues such as unit heterogeneity, serial correlation, contemporaneous correlation, and non-stationarity (Wilson and Butler 2007). The tests indicate the presence of unit heterogeneity and serial correlation,[17] which we address through country-fixed effects and country-clustered standard errors. To operationalize the global declining trend in turnout, accounted for mostly by generational change (Blais and Rubenson 2013; Kostelka and Blais 2021), our analyses include a linear time trend (number of years since 1979) and, in an additional model specification, year fixed effects. Equation 2 formally describes our main model specification. For country i in year t, voter turnout is regressed on country fixed effects α_i, our main substantive variable (*Eurosceptic Seats %*$_{it}$), the time trend (*Year since 1979*$_t$), and the vector of control variables (*Controls*$_{it}$).

$$\text{Turnout}_{it} = \alpha_i + \beta_1 * \text{Eurosceptic Seats \%}_{it} + \beta_2 * \text{Year since 1979}_t + \beta_c * \text{Controls}_{it} + \epsilon_i \tag{2}$$

Our analyses are not formally causally identified, and the empirical results should, therefore, be interpreted with caution. That said, we believe that, altogether, the following empirical section provides strong evidence for the hypothesized relationship. The independent variable temporally precedes the dependent variable, it exerts no effect on national turnout (see Model 5 in Table 1), and the main result holds *inter alia* in both two-way fixed effects and first-differenced model specifications (see Appendix C), which considerably reduces the danger of spurious temporal dynamics.

Before proceeding with the analyses, we rescaled all independent variables to a 0-1 scale, where 0 represents the minimum and 1 represents the maximum in our data. Each regression coefficient can thus be interpreted as the maximum potential effect of the given predictor based on the observed values in the dataset.

Results

Table 1 investigates the relationship between the strength of different ideological camps and voter turnout. Models 1-4 regress voter turnout in EP elections on the vote shares of

ideologically distinct political parties in previous national elections. The results strongly support our hypothesis, demonstrating that Euroscepticism is more strongly associated with EP turnout than any other ideological orientation. The regression coefficient of *Eurosceptic %* is substantively and statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) and indicates that a maximal change in the variable could result in a 16-point turnout increase. Conversely, the regression coefficients of other party types (pro-European, tan, gal, economic left, economic right, general left, and general right) are mostly substantively and statistically insignificant. Model 5 regresses national turnout on Eurosceptic and pro-European vote shares in the given national election. Unlike in EP elections, the *Eurosceptic %* coefficient is substantively small and statistically insignificant. This suggests that, in line with our theory, Euroscepticism matters significantly more for EP elections than national elections and that the strong regression coefficient from Model 1 is unlikely to reflect general spikes in voter turnout that would affect both national and EP elections.

Table 1: Party Competition and Turnout

	EP Elections				National Elections
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Eurosceptic %	15.77 (4.86)**				2.95 (2.77)
Pro-European %	5.80 (3.65)				3.89 (2.05)
Tan %		0.49 (4.22)			
Gal %		−2.00 (5.69)			
Economic Right %			−4.34 (3.49)		
Economic Left %			−2.64 (4.56)		
Right %				0.73 (4.39)	
Left %				−3.01 (5.00)	
Constant	50.75 (3.40)***	56.12 (2.93)***	57.71 (2.67)***	56.17 (2.77)***	87.56 (4.59)***
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Linear Trend	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	202	202	202	202	280
R2 (within)	0.12	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.32

Note: OLS regression. All EP elections between 1979 and 2024. All independent variables on a 0-1 scale. Model 5 includes lower house elections held between 1974 and 2024. Clustered standard errors by country in brackets. $^{*}p < 0.05$, $^{**}p < 0.01$, $^{***}p < 0.001$.

The following analyses focus more closely on the effect of Eurosceptic gains in preceding national elections and gradually incorporate the control variables. Table 2 uses Eurosceptic vote shares and demonstrates that the positive association with EP turnout holds across various model specifications: when we include only the main independent variable (Model 1); when controlling for party competition, compulsory voting, first EP election, and EU support (Model 2); when accounting for election frequency and simultaneous elections (Model 3); when using year fixed effects (Model 4); and when incorporating turnout from the previous national election (Model 5). The regression coefficient of *Eurosceptic %* is always positive, substantive (never smaller than 8.71), and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). The regression coefficients of the controls are largely in the expected direction and often also statistically significant. Models 2 to 5 show that voter turnout is higher when voting is compulsory and when this compulsion is enforced; when

EP elections are held jointly with presidential elections; when public support for the EU is high; when the overall election frequency is low; and when turnout was high in the preceding national election. These findings corroborate the importance of institutional factors identified by earlier studies using fewer data points.

Table 2: Euroscepticism, Institutional Factors, and Turnout in EP Elections

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Eurosceptic %	12.96 (5.44)*	13.50 (4.46)**	12.56 (4.19)**	11.25 (3.24)**	8.71 (3.00)**
Closeness		−2.08 (6.32)	−3.57 (6.17)	−5.48 (5.81)	−1.21 (5.07)
Majority Status		−1.08 (7.51)	−1.70 (7.21)	−1.74 (6.60)	3.13 (6.44)
CV		9.98 (2.26)***	9.81 (2.08)***	10.63 (1.88)***	7.05 (2.75)*
Enforced CV		16.33 (1.43)***	13.44 (1.94)***	13.17 (1.43)***	9.45 (1.51)***
First EP Election		4.08 (1.77)*	3.85 (1.78)*	0.31 (2.76)	−0.81 (2.85)
EU Support		16.02 (4.33)***	15.85 (4.36)**	11.44 (6.06)	7.76 (5.42)
IEF			−9.67 (3.74)*	−9.01 (3.85)*	−11.40 (3.46)**
Joint Presidential			23.64 (1.14)***	25.83 (1.54)***	22.80 (1.61)***
Joint Lower House			3.97 (3.09)	2.02 (2.22)	3.45 (2.03)
Joint Referendum			1.66 (1.74)	3.53 (2.05)	2.89 (1.46)
Nat. Election Turnout					30.80 (6.88)***
Constant	55.26 (2.58)***	40.85 (4.23)***	43.51 (4.04)***	50.25 (6.96)***	29.65 (8.07)**
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Linear Trend	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Year FE	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
N	202	202	202	202	202
R2 (within)	0.10	0.33	0.42	0.54	0.60

Note: OLS regression. All EP elections between 1979 and 2024. All independent variables on a 0-1 scale. Clustered standard errors by country in brackets. $*p < 0.05$, $**p < 0.01$, $***p < 0.001$.

Table 3 replicates the analyses from Table 2, replacing Eurosceptic vote shares with Eurosceptic seat shares. The regression coefficients become even more substantively significant (never less than 10.02) and meet even more stringent thresholds of statistical significance ($p < 0.01$ in all model specifications). This provides strong support for our hypothesis. If it is the power and visibility of Euroscepticism that affects EP voter turnout, Eurosceptics' actual strength in the national parliament should matter more than their vote shares in national elections, which may fail to lead to parliamentary representation when Eurosceptic forces are fragmented.

Appendix C shows that the association between Eurosceptic seat shares and EP voter turnout holds under a variety of robustness checks. These include the use of panel-corrected standard errors with AR(1) autocorrelation structure, a first-differenced model specification, alternative cut-off points for Eurosceptic parties (2 or 3 instead of 2.5 on the CHES 1-7 scale), and the removal of any single country at a time from the analysis. Model 7 in Appendix Table A3 shows that using party system polarisation on EU issues instead of Eurosceptic seat shares yields the expectedly positive regression coefficient, which, however, lacks statistical significance ($p > 0.1$). This suggests that the primary driving mechanism of the relationship between Eurosceptic seat shares and voter turnout is Eurosceptics' representation, and not party system polarisation on EU issues.

Figure 3 visualizes the substantive significance of the effects of Euroscepticism on

Table 3: Replication of Table 2 with Seat Shares

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Eurosceptic Seats %	18.26 (5.66)**	17.45 (4.79)**	15.92 (4.31)**	13.65 (3.48)***	10.02 (3.32)**
Closeness		−2.35 (6.28)	−3.71 (6.20)	−5.55 (5.88)	−1.35 (5.09)
Majority Status		−1.48 (7.54)	−2.02 (7.29)	−1.93 (6.73)	2.92 (6.45)
CV		10.04 (2.35)***	9.76 (2.11)***	10.52 (1.85)***	7.03 (2.72)*
Enforced CV		17.02 (1.38)***	14.18 (1.84)***	13.72 (1.44)***	9.94 (1.55)***
First EP Election		3.86 (1.76)*	3.64 (1.79)	0.06 (2.76)	−0.97 (2.83)
EU Support		15.19 (4.28)**	15.09 (4.32)**	11.06 (6.05)	7.57 (5.44)
IEF			−9.25 (3.69)*	−8.67 (3.82)*	−11.09 (3.47)**
Joint Presidential			23.28 (1.11)***	25.36 (1.52)***	22.51 (1.57)***
Joint Lower House			3.82 (2.93)	1.95 (2.15)	3.41 (2.01)
Joint Referendum			1.93 (1.68)	3.70 (2.00)	3.03 (1.43)*
Nat. Election Turnout					29.95 (6.79)***
Constant	55.37 (2.54)***	41.58 (4.33)***	44.09 (4.12)***	50.65 (7.06)***	30.54 (8.02)***
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Linear Trend	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Year FE	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
N	202	202	202	202	202
R2 (within)	0.13	0.34	0.43	0.55	0.61

Note: OLS regression. All EP elections between 1979 and 2024. All independent variables on a 0-1 scale. Clustered standard errors by country in brackets. $^{*}p < 0.05$, $^{**}p < 0.01$, $^{***}p < 0.001$.

turnout. It draws on marginal effects[18] from two replications of Model 4 from Table 3: one with and one without year fixed effects.[19] These replications employ an untransformed version of *Eurosceptic Seats %*, which simply gives the percentage of seats in the national parliament held by Eurosceptic parties. The figure indicates that increasing the Eurosceptic vote share from 0% (e.g., Slovenia in 2024) to 70% (Hungary in 2024) could increase voter turnout in an average EU member state from 49.5% to 63% (with FEs) or 64% (without FEs). Of course, as these estimates are not causally identified and combine within variance (from the regression model) and between variance (from the dataset), they should be taken with a pinch of salt. However, they demonstrate that the effects of Euroscepticism on voter turnout in EP elections may be substantial, and the studied relationship is far from trivial.

Analysis 2

Data and Methods

To investigate who gets mobilised by the emergence of Eurosceptic parties and test Hypotheses 2 and 3, we merged all voter datasets from European Election Studies conducted between 1979 and 2024.[20] The dependent variable is reported voter turnout in the last EP election. To distinguish different types of citizens, we use a question that has been asked continuously since 1979: 'Generally speaking, do you think that [the country's] membership of the European Union [Common Market before 1994] is a good thing, a bad thing, or neither good nor bad?' The first two responses, recoded into dummy variables

Figure 3: Predicted Turnout at Different Levels of Euroscepticism in National Parliament
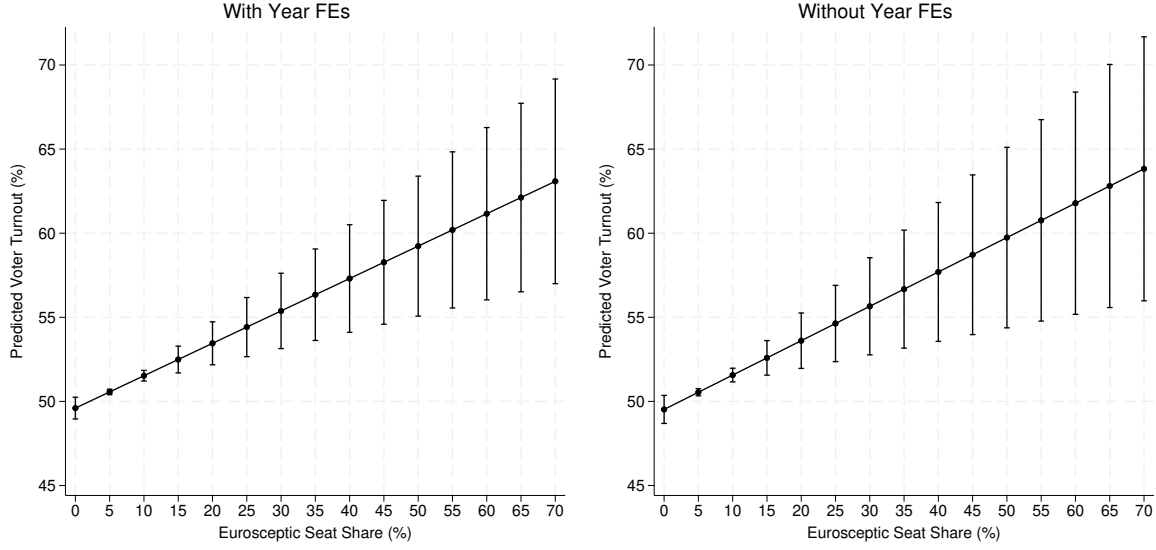
Note: Marginal effects from a replication of Model 4 from Table 3 using untransformed Eurosceptic seat shares (see Table A7 in the Appendix). 95% confidence intervals.

Membership: Good and *Membership: Bad*, identify pro-European voters and Eurosceptic voters, respectively. The neutral response ('neither good nor bad'), combined with don't knows, serves as a reference category. We interact these individual-level dummies with the macro-level variable *Eurosceptic Seat Share (%)* from Analysis 1. As we are interested in the variation in participation among different political camps, we do not include individual-level control variables in our main model specification, but we weight the data by the real voter turnout rates. In an additional model, we control for basic socio-demographics (gender, age, and post-secondary education) following Blais and Daoust (2020). Like in Analysis 1, we rescaled all variables to a 0-1 scale.

Given the binary nature of the dependent variable, we conduct hierarchical logistic regressions with country fixed effects and random intercepts for elections. Equation 3 formally describes our main model specification (Model 2 below). For an individual i in country j and election k, voter turnout is regressed on country fixed effects (α_j); the membership dummies (Membership: Good_{ikj}; Membership: Bad_{ikj}); the macro-level variable Eurosceptic Seats $\%_{kj}$ and its interactions with the membership dummies. The model also includes election-level random effects (u_{kj}).

$$
\begin{aligned}
\text{Turnout}_{ikj} = {} & \alpha_j + \beta_1 * \text{Membership: Bad}_{ikj} + \beta_2 * \text{Membership: Bad}_{ikj} * \\
& \text{Eurosceptic Seats } \%_{kj} + \beta_3 * \text{Membership: Good}_{ikj} + \\
& \beta_4 * \text{Membership: Good}_{ikj} * \text{Eurosceptic Seats } \%_{kj} + \\
& \beta_5 * \text{Eurosceptic Seats } \%_{kj} + u_{kj} + \epsilon_{ikj} \quad (3)
\end{aligned}
$$

Results

Table 4 reports the results of the hierarchical analyses, which largely align with those of Analysis 1, which used aggregate voter turnout. The regression coefficients of the membership variables demonstrate that pro-European citizens are more likely to participate in EP elections than their neutral or Eurosceptic counterparts. In all three model specifications, the regression coefficient of *Membership: Good* is in the expected positive direction and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). Similarly, in Model 1, the domestic share of Eurosceptic seats is positively associated with participation ($p < 0.01$), which provides additional support for Hypothesis 1. Finally, the regression coefficients of the control variables in Model 3 are all statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) and in the expected direction reported in earlier studies (Kostelka et al. 2019; Dassonneville and Kostelka 2021): male, older, and more educated citizens report higher participation rates in EP elections.

To make sense of the interactions and assess evidence for Hypotheses 2 and 3, Figure 4 plots the predicted probabilities to vote based on Model 2 from Table 4 (Mize 2019). The figure clearly supports Hypothesis 2. Eurosceptics' voting probability increases from 0.4 when no strongly Eurosceptic party is represented in the national parliament (e.g., Hungary, Czechia, or Slovakia in 2004) to 0.52 when Eurosceptic parties hold 50% of lower-house seats (e.g., United Kingdom in 2019), and to 0.57 when the domestic Eurosceptic seat share reaches the maximum value in our sample—71% (Hungary in 2024). These 12-point and 17-point increases are statistically significant ($p < 0.01$ in both cases).[21] There is also some support for Hypothesis 3. Pro-Europeans' predicted probabilities to vote increase from 0.55 when Eurosceptics have no domestic representation, to 0.62 when Eurosceptic parties hold 50% of lower-house seats, and to 0.65 when the Eurosceptic seat-share reaches 71%. These 7-point and 10-point increases do not meet the conventional threshold of statistical significance by only a thin margin ($p \leq 0.06$ in both cases). We interpret this result as tentative support for Hypothesis 3 and the mobilising effect of Eurosceptic parties on pro-European citizens.

Discussion

This paper has conducted the most extensive investigation of voter turnout in EP elections to date. Building on the existing literature, it hypothesised that the strength of Eurosceptic forces at the national level may, for several reasons, affect participation in EP elections. Combining rich data from a variety of sources, the empirical sections examined how the state of domestic party competition and various institutional factors relate to turnout at the European level. We also analysed newly merged surveys from all European Election Studies conducted to date. The results support the main hypothesis. The elect-

Table 4: Hierarchical Analysis: Euroscepticism in Domestic Parliament and Individual-Level Participation in EP Elections (1979-2024)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Membership: Bad	−0.02 (0.03)	−0.08 (0.04)	−0.11 (0.04)**
Membership: Bad X Eurosceptic Seats %		0.50 (0.22)*	0.45 (0.19)*
Membership: Good	0.65 (0.03)***	0.63 (0.03)***	0.62 (0.03)***
Membership: Good X Eurosceptic Seats %		0.09 (0.16)	0.11 (0.17)
Eurosceptic Seats %	0.53 (0.20)**	0.40 (0.23)	0.39 (0.26)
Female			−0.08 (0.02)***
Age (in years)			2.52 (0.09)***
Post-Secondary Education			0.32 (0.03)***
Constant	−0.44 (0.12)***	−0.43 (0.12)***	−1.62 (0.14)***
Country-Election Variance	0.11 (0.01)***	0.11 (0.01)***	0.14 (0.02)***
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
N (individuals)	195778	195778	189013
N (elections)	190	190	189

Note: Hierarchical logistic regression of all European Election Studies conducted between 1979 and 2024. All independent variables on a 0-1 scale. N (elections) is smaller in Model 3 as the age variable is not available for Luxembourg in 2004. The reference category is *Membership: Neither Good Nor Bad*. Standard errors in brackets. $^{*}p < 0.05$, $^{**}p < 0.01$, $^{***}p < 0.001$.

Figure 4: Predicted Probability to Vote at Different Levels of Euroscepticism in National Parliament
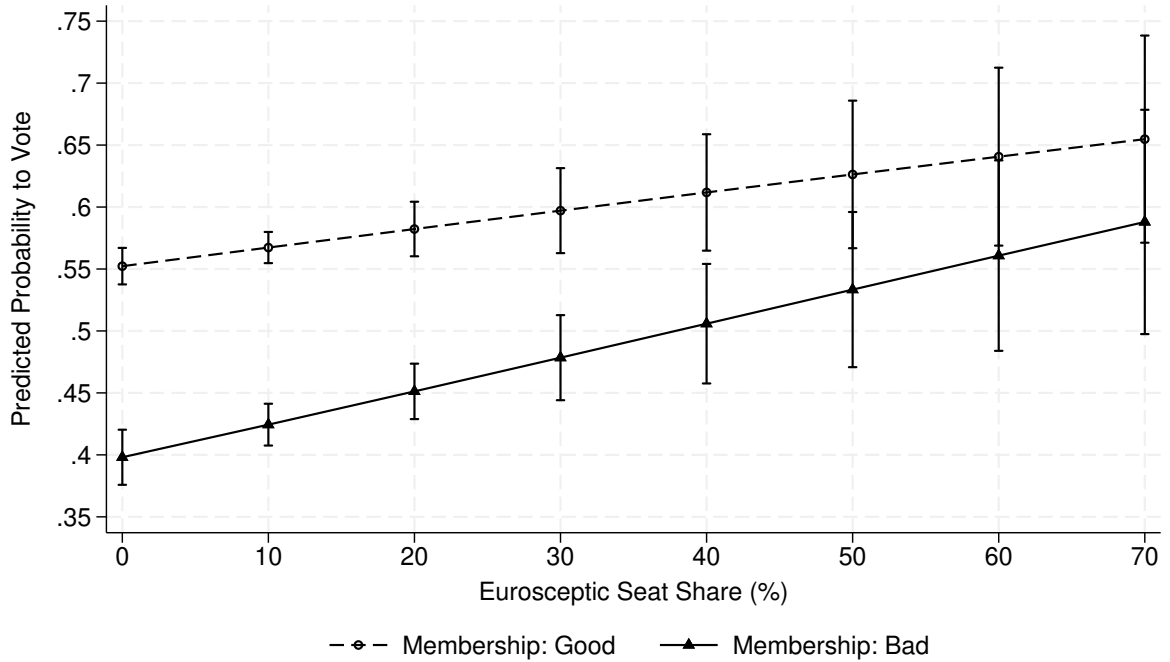
Note: Marginal effects from a replication of Model 1 from Table 3 using untransformed Eurosceptic seat shares. 95% confidence intervals.

oral success of Eurosceptic parties in national elections is strongly linked to turnout in subsequent European Parliament elections. While this success primarily mobilises Eurosceptic citizens, it also increases participation among pro-Europeans. By contrast, the domestic electoral performance of other parties, defined culturally or economically, exerts

no effect. Secondary findings underscore the importance of institutional factors, such as compulsory voting and election frequency, for EP turnout.

Our analyses suggest one reason for the increased voter turnout in the last two EP elections is that the 'sleeping giant', as the issue of European integration was once famously called (van der Eijk and Franklin 2004), is increasingly coming to life in European politics. Our analyses empirically demonstrate that Euroscepticism has reached an all-time high in EU member states, with distinctly Eurosceptic parties holding, on average, 10% of legislative seats across the whole European Union. That said, Eurosceptic forces still have ample room to grow further, which could drive EP turnout and diminish the second-order nature of EP elections.[22] The more balanced the domestic distribution of power becomes on the issue of European integration, the higher stakes will be perceived in EP elections, which is likely to benefit participation and political equality (Blais et al. 2020). Of course, such heightened politicisation, led by distinctly Eurosceptic parties, may be perilous for the entire European project as, for these parties, European integration is often a constitutive issue rather than an isomorphic one (Bartolini 2005). For European officials, the price of the additional legitimacy from higher turnout might prove prohibitively high.

Future research should further investigate the micro-level mechanisms underlying the relationship between the strength of party Euroscepticism in domestic politics and citizen participation in EP elections. For example, future studies could more systematically examine how the parliamentary representation of Eurosceptic parties shapes the format and content of national debates on EU politics, influences funding and party strategy in EP campaigns, and alters voters' campaign engagement and perceptions of EP elections. Such research would advance our understanding of the politicisation dynamics between the national and transnational arenas.

Notes

1. The Version of Record of this manuscript has been published and is available in *West European Politics*, 30 Sep 2025, link to the article.

2. Unless otherwise stated, EU voter turnout in this article refers to the unweighted average across EU member states. As a result, the voting rates discussed here slightly differ from the official European Parliament figures, which assign greater weight to more populous countries.

3. Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany (West Germany until 1989), Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands.

4. Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

5. Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Malta, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden.

6. They find that EP elections are more vulnerable, but the substantively significant difference is not statistically significant.

7. The cross-sectional relationship they observe could also be causally reversed: high Eurosceptic turnout could account for party availability.

8. This is true also of macro-level institutional and political factors. Kostelka and Blais (Forthcoming) show that these factors exert similar effects in both national and EP elections, but their magnitude varies due to different baseline levels in voter turnout. Factors that increase participation show stronger effects in EP elections, while those that reduce turnout are more pronounced in national contests.

9. It should be acknowledged that, in the past, some (though not all) of these issues were less acute due to the short length of the time-series.

10. The increase in Eurosceptic seat shares occurred in both Western Europe (+6.1 percentage points between 2004 and 2024) and Central and Eastern Europe (+8.8 points). Appendix Table A2 presents these data by country and year.

11. If EP and national elections were held jointly, we take the results from the simultaneous national elections. Model 6 in Appendix Table A3 shows that excluding those cases does not change the results.

12. For each election, we used the nearest following wave of the expert survey. The simple merge allowed us to code, on average, 91.9% of the vote share in all the national elections. We extended the coverage to an additional 3.6% of vote shares (95.5% in total) by assuming position stability (for parties coded in the expert surveys only in earlier periods) and by predicting party positions in the expert surveys based on data from the Manifesto Project (Lehmann et al. 2024). See Appendix D for more details.

13. See Appendix E for the full list of surveys used.

14. For the calculations, we apply the available design weights. Following Stockemer (2012), 'neither good nor bad' responses and don't knows are disregarded.

15. More details on the collected data are available in Appendix F.

16. In consequence, our measure does not include municipal elections in four member states (Austria, Germany, Italy, and the UK) in which they are held asynchronously and where the municipal data cannot be efficiently collected. As our models apply country fixed effects, this omission should not seriously bias the analysis. When we use a dummy variable for these four countries and interact them with *IEF*, the interaction is neither substantively nor statistically significant (see Model 5 in Table A3 in the Appendix).

17. The tests and their results are discussed in Appendix B.

18. We calculated these marginal effects leaving all the control variables at the observed values (Mood 2010).

19. The a-theoretical year dummy variables could partly subsume the effects of Euroscepticism.

20. Appendix G presents the full list of included studies.

21. These p-values come from additional Wald tests.

22. That said, growing Eurosceptic parties may moderate their positions on European integration when faced with the prospect of governmental power (Vasilopoulou 2018), which would prevent a strong politicisation of European integration.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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Appendices to the Paper 'Awakening the Sleeping Giant: Rising Euroscepticism Turnout in European Parliament Elections'

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Appendix A: Descriptive Statistics (Analysis 1)

Table A1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Eurosceptic %	202	.13	.16	0	1
Eurosceptic Seats %	202	.09	.14	0	1
Pro-European %	202	.6	.27	0	1
Tan %	202	.29	.26	0	1
Gal %	202	.21	.2	0	1
Economic Right %	202	.26	.22	0	1
Economic Left %	202	.2	.23	0	1
Right %	202	.35	.25	0	1
Left %	202	.21	.21	0	1
Closeness	202	.19	.18	0	1
Majority Status	202	.52	.24	0	1
CV	202	.18	.38	0	1
Enforced CV	202	.12	.32	0	1
First EP Election	202	.14	.35	0	1
EU Support	202	.55	.24	0	1
IEF	202	.22	.18	0	1
Joint Presidential	202	.01	.12	0	1
Joint Lower House	202	.07	.26	0	1
Joint Referendum	202	.04	.21	0	1

Table A2: Share of Eurosceptic Seats 2004-2024

Country	2004	2009	2014	2019	2024	Difference
DK	14.53	16.20	18.99	28.49	6.15	-8.38
ES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
FI	1.50	2.50	19.50	19.50	23.00	21.50
FR	0.35	0.17	0.35	1.39	15.42	15.08
GR	4.00	12.00	16.67	14.33	11.00	7.00
IE	3.61	0.00	2.41	3.80	3.12	-0.49
MT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
NL	6.00	22.67	20.00	14.67	27.33	21.33
PT	0.00	0.00	6.96	7.39	1.74	1.74
SE	13.47	11.75	11.17	17.77	20.92	7.45
AT	0.00	30.05	21.86	27.87	16.94	16.94
BE	12.67	0.00	0.00	12.00	13.33	0.67
CY	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
IT	4.76	0.00	21.59	24.60	0.00	-4.76
LU	8.33	6.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	-8.33
UK	25.19	0.00	0.00	50.46		25.27
DE	0.00	0.00	0.00	13.26	11.28	11.28
BG		8.75	9.58	0.00	15.83	7.08
HR			0.00	5.30	0.00	0.00
CZ	0.00	13.00	7.00	18.50	10.00	10.00
EE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
HU	0.00	0.00	11.56	0.00	70.85	70.85
LV	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
LT	1.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.13	0.71
PL	8.26	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.91	-4.35
RO		0.00	0.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
SK	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.33	6.67	6.67
SI	4.44	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-4.44
West						6.25
West (without UK)						5.06
EAST						8.77
EAST without (BG, HR, RO)						9.93

Note: The Column 'Difference' gives the difference in the Eurosceptic seat shares in the national parliament between 2004 and 2024. Because of accession and exit dates, we use different years for Bulgaria (2007 and 2024), Croatia (2013 and 2024), Romania (2007 and 2024), and the UK (2004 and 2019).

Appendix B: Statistical Tests for TSCS Data

We conducted the following tests on model 4 from Table 3: Hausman's specification test (Hausman 1978, $H_0 =$ no systematic difference between the fixed and random model specifications, $p < 0.01$), the Wooldridge test for serial correlation (Wooldridge 2010, $H_0 =$ no first-order autocorrelation, $p < 0.001$), the Phillips-Perron unit-root test for non-stationarity (Baltagi 2008, $H_0 =$ panels are non-stationary, $p < 0.001$), and the Pesaran test for cross-sectional dependence (Pesaran 2004; $H_0 =$ no contemporaneous correlation, $p > 0.7$; $p < 0.04$ when limited to the countries with at least 9 elections). These tests suggest that the main potential issues are unit effects, which we address through country fixed effects (FE) (Allison 2009), and serial correlation, which we tackle through clustered standard errors as our data are cross-sectionally dominated (Wooldridge 2010, Section 13.8.2). In the robustness checks (see below), we show that our results hold when we apply panel-corrected standard errors with AR1 autocorrelation, which are robust to contemporaneous correlation, and first-difference our data, which would address non-stationarity.

Table A3: General Robustness Checks

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Eurosceptic Seats (%)	11.84 (2.68)***				13.66 (3.31)***	13.68 (3.26)***	
Eurosceptic Seats %, cutting point = 2		10.19 (3.78)*					
Eurosceptic Seats %, cutting point = 3			7.89 (2.31)**				
EU Polarisation							1.97 (1.62)
Closeness	−4.98 (3.68)	−4.61 (6.20)	−6.00 (5.99)		−5.73 (5.84)	−6.62 (6.20)	−5.30 (6.16)
Majority Status	−0.57 (4.83)	−0.72 (7.11)	−0.75 (6.38)		−1.75 (6.87)	−2.20 (7.05)	0.14 (6.69)
CV	4.87 (3.28)	4.52 (4.38)	4.89 (4.32)		5.35 (4.17)	4.27 (4.33)	5.39 (4.67)
Enforced CV	11.73 (2.93)***	12.70 (1.48)***	12.59 (1.49)***		13.18 (1.42)***	12.38 (1.30)***	13.07 (1.47)***
First EP Election	−0.59 (2.48)	0.51 (2.99)	0.63 (2.92)		0.30 (2.79)	0.60 (2.99)	0.49 (3.09)
IEF	−8.88 (2.13)***	−8.45 (3.99)*	−8.74 (4.10)*		−8.46 (3.74)*	−9.54 (3.78)*	−9.30 (4.02)*
No municipal X IEF					−2.94 (14.70)		
Joint Presidential	25.30 (2.21)***	25.12 (1.58)***	25.00 (1.61)***		25.23 (1.54)***	25.29 (1.59)***	25.28 (1.70)***
Joint Lower House	2.84 (1.82)	2.39 (1.87)	2.15 (1.99)		1.64 (2.18)	5.75 (5.18)	2.27 (1.84)
Joint Referendum	3.73 (2.99)	4.20 (1.87)*	4.29 (1.92)*		4.09 (1.99)*	4.48 (1.76)*	3.90 (1.91)
EU Support	10.78 (3.66)**	12.74 (6.51)	12.16 (6.25)		12.19 (6.08)	12.35 (6.33)	12.40 (6.32)
D.Eurosceptic Seats (%)				6.92 (2.95)*			
D.Closeness				−3.22 (4.35)			
D.Majority Status				1.22 (5.92)			
D.CV				−0.26 (4.83)			
D.Enforced CV				−5.21 (2.33)*			
D.First EP Election				2.04 (2.76)			
D.EU Support				5.19 (5.43)			
D.IEF				−8.80 (2.71)**			
D.Joint Presidential				25.35 (1.47)***			
D.Joint Lower House				7.20 (3.55)			
D.Joint Referendum				2.81 (1.57)			
Constant	55.90 (5.21)***	50.51 (7.59)***	50.96 (7.35)***	−1.15 (3.47)	51.33 (7.45)***	51.95 (7.31)***	48.69 (6.86)***
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	202	202	202	174	202	189	202
R2 (within)	0.90	0.52	0.52	0.40	0.53	0.55	0.51

Note: For models 1 and 4, the table reports overall (and not withing) R2. Panel-corrected (Model 1) or country-clustered (Models 2-6) standard errors in brackets. $^*p < 0.05$, $^{**}p < 0.01$, $^{***}p < 0.001$.

All models replicate Model 4 from Table 3 and demonstrate the robustness of the association between *Eurosceptic Seats %* and EP turnout. Model 1 uses panel-corrected standard errors with AR1 autocorrelation structure instead of country-clustered standard errors. Model 2 and 3 demonstrate that the result is robust to alternative definitions of Eurosceptic parties (≤ 2 or ≤ 3 instead of ≤ 2.5 on the 1-7 scale). Model 4 shows that the result also holds in a first-differenced specification, which is robust to potential non-stationarity. Model 5 shows that the effect of the Index of Election Frequency (IEF) does not differ significantly for countries where the index does not include municipal elections (Austria, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom). Model 6 shows that the result holds when we exclude thirteen EP elections that were held simultaneously with a legislative election (which is considered as the preceding one in the main analyses). Model 7 shows that polarisation on European integration (operationalised as the standard deviation in EU positions, weighted by vote shares) does not yield a statistically significant result (although the point estimate is in the expected, positive direction). This suggests that the main driving mechanism of the relationship between Eurosceptic seat shares and voter turnout is Eurosceptics' representation and not party system polarisation on EU positions.

Table A4: Jack-Knife Test: Replication of Model 4 from Table 4 (Part 1)

	(1) Without Denmark	(2) Without Spain	(3) Without Finland	(4) Without France	(5) Without Greece	(6) Without Ireland	(7) Without Malta	(8) Without Netherlands	(9) Without Portugal
Eurosceptic Seats (%)	14.22 (3.23)***	13.57 (3.16)***	13.70 (3.36)***	13.45 (3.53)***	13.57 (3.28)***	14.24 (3.64)***	13.19 (3.25)***	13.95 (3.57)***	12.69 (3.35)***
Closeness	−6.45 (5.95)	−7.78 (6.22)	−5.69 (5.92)	−5.84 (6.59)	−3.83 (5.74)	−4.96 (6.11)	−6.14 (5.89)	−5.14 (6.14)	−6.19 (5.97)
Majority Status	−1.63 (7.25)	−3.61 (7.17)	−1.82 (6.87)	−2.00 (7.42)	−0.57 (6.85)	−2.38 (7.00)	−1.87 (6.68)	−0.86 (7.11)	−1.99 (7.11)
CV	5.37 (4.18)	5.30 (3.96)	5.35 (4.18)	5.35 (4.16)	5.64 (4.32)	5.59 (4.12)	5.37 (4.26)	5.80 (4.26)	5.51 (4.23)
Enforced CV	12.89 (1.42)***	13.31 (1.41)***	13.22 (1.43)***	13.34 (1.57)***	0.00 (.)	13.08 (1.38)***	12.95 (1.43)***	13.67 (1.55)***	13.01 (1.46)***
First EP Election	−0.47 (2.97)	0.10 (2.96)	0.43 (2.95)	0.43 (3.00)	0.62 (3.00)	0.40 (2.89)	−0.55 (2.93)	0.26 (2.93)	0.69 (2.97)
IEF	−8.84 (3.82)*	−7.85 (4.06)	−8.38 (3.90)*	−8.54 (5.24)	−8.72 (3.89)*	−8.55 (3.99)*	−9.30 (3.81)*	−7.86 (3.82)*	−9.31 (3.95)*
Joint Presidential	25.39 (1.56)***	25.79 (1.50)***	25.25 (1.58)***	25.33 (1.62)***	25.66 (1.48)***	25.21 (1.61)***	25.43 (1.53)***	25.38 (1.57)***	25.05 (1.56)***
Joint Lower House	1.40 (2.13)	0.88 (2.15)	1.58 (2.16)	1.65 (2.15)	1.67 (2.08)	−0.18 (1.38)	1.58 (2.13)	1.56 (2.16)	0.87 (2.13)
Joint Referendum	3.60 (2.20)	3.98 (2.01)	4.17 (1.98)*	4.05 (1.99)	4.17 (1.98)*	5.78 (1.58)**	3.96 (1.93)	4.10 (2.03)	4.20 (2.33)
EU Support	9.44 (6.38)	11.97 (6.41)	12.08 (6.22)	12.08 (6.48)	11.62 (6.68)	12.75 (6.30)	12.63 (6.17)	12.04 (6.27)	11.60 (6.65)
Constant	54.91 (7.12)***	51.99 (7.47)***	51.33 (7.49)***	50.86 (7.57)***	51.28 (7.38)***	49.78 (7.53)***	51.40 (7.30)***	49.84 (7.43)***	51.99 (7.49)***
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	192	193	195	192	192	192	197	192	193
R2 (within)	0.55	0.55	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.55	0.55	0.53	0.50

Note: Country-clustered standard errors. $^*p < 0.05$, $^{**}p < 0.01$, $^{***}p < 0.001$.

Table A5: Jack-Knife Test: Replication of Model 4 from Table 4 (Part 2)

	(1) Without Sweden	(2) Without Austria	(3) Without Belgium	(4) Without Cyprus	(5) Without Italy	(6) Without Luxembourg	(7) Without United Kingdom	(8) Without Germany	(9) Without Bulgaria
Eurosceptic Seats (%)	13.92 (3.38)***	14.11 (3.48)***	13.75 (3.50)***	13.16 (3.26)***	13.50 (3.72)**	13.50 (3.17)***	16.77 (2.53)***	12.93 (3.26)***	13.12 (3.44)***
Closeness	−6.35 (6.21)	−5.85 (6.06)	−5.53 (6.27)	−6.42 (5.68)	−8.69 (5.65)	−6.85 (5.94)	−6.26 (6.16)	−5.51 (6.42)	−5.62 (5.95)
Majority Status	−2.05 (7.05)	−1.55 (6.98)	−1.95 (7.11)	−3.04 (6.57)	−6.73 (6.93)	−1.14 (6.77)	−3.33 (7.10)	−2.57 (7.27)	−2.08 (6.88)
CV	5.55 (4.23)	5.31 (4.03)	5.21 (4.28)	3.46 (5.97)	0.92 (7.06)	4.43 (4.17)	5.32 (4.22)	5.37 (4.15)	10.48 (1.87)***
Enforced CV	13.37 (1.45)***	13.29 (1.44)***	13.18 (1.53)***	12.92 (1.49)***	13.84 (1.54)***	12.15 (1.18)***	13.19 (1.57)***	13.58 (1.48)***	13.62 (1.47)***
First EP Election	−0.31 (2.94)	0.09 (2.94)	0.50 (2.99)	−1.47 (2.41)	2.14 (2.75)	0.32 (2.95)	0.50 (2.89)	−0.07 (2.90)	0.10 (2.77)
IEF	−8.39 (3.77)*	−7.94 (3.93)	−8.41 (3.83)*	−9.24 (3.82)*	−9.77 (3.62)*	−9.58 (3.79)*	−8.17 (3.73)*	−7.89 (3.85)	−8.73 (3.98)*
Joint Presidential	25.50 (1.55)***	25.37 (1.57)***	25.29 (1.56)***	25.60 (1.42)***	25.41 (1.55)***	25.16 (1.59)***	25.29 (1.55)***	25.35 (1.57)***	25.32 (1.55)***
Joint Lower House	1.52 (2.21)	1.65 (2.20)	1.95 (3.71)	1.81 (2.14)	1.85 (2.17)	3.43 (2.67)	1.25 (2.27)	1.82 (2.21)	2.83 (2.48)
Joint Referendum	4.26 (1.99)*	4.16 (2.00)*	4.19 (2.00)*	4.26 (1.98)*	4.19 (1.92)*	4.37 (1.83)*	4.29 (2.03)*	4.15 (2.07)	4.24 (2.15)
EU Support	10.44 (6.69)	12.27 (6.21)	12.03 (6.26)	11.15 (6.53)	6.96 (6.47)	12.60 (6.23)	12.37 (6.22)	12.04 (6.53)	10.91 (6.11)
Constant	52.92 (7.81)***	50.94 (7.63)***	50.32 (7.24)***	54.64 (6.79)***	53.27 (8.33)***	52.02 (7.34)***	52.27 (7.78)***	51.07 (8.04)***	51.03 (7.09)***
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	195	195	192	197	192	192	193	192	197
R2 (within)	0.53	0.53	0.54	0.55	0.53	0.55	0.55	0.53	0.56

Note: Country-clustered standard errors. $^*p < 0.05$, $^{**}p < 0.01$, $^{***}p < 0.001$.

Table A6: Jack-Knife Test: Replication of Model 4 from Table 4 (Part 3)

	(1) Without Croatia	(2) Without Czech Republic	(3) Without Estonia	(4) Without Hungary	(5) Without Latvia	(6) Without Lithuania	(7) Without Poland	(8) Without Romania	(9) Without Slovakia	(10) Without Slovenia
Eurosceptic Seats (%)	13.47 (3.24)***	13.68 (3.34)***	13.59 (3.35)***	13.23 (4.99)*	12.87 (3.18)***	13.80 (3.28)***	14.30 (3.50)***	13.24 (3.17)***	13.31 (3.36)***	13.82 (3.37)***
Closeness	−5.66 (5.98)	−5.67 (5.98)	−5.15 (6.09)	−6.51 (7.49)	−5.14 (5.68)	−5.73 (6.03)	−1.90 (5.21)	−8.34 (5.67)	−4.17 (5.96)	−5.78 (5.93)
Majority Status	−1.70 (7.04)	−1.29 (6.96)	−1.97 (7.01)	−2.48 (7.93)	−2.04 (6.56)	−1.91 (6.91)	3.60 (5.63)	−1.00 (6.88)	0.25 (7.09)	−1.39 (7.03)
CV	5.34 (4.19)	5.35 (4.08)	5.37 (4.25)	5.23 (4.10)	5.12 (4.22)	5.37 (4.10)	5.40 (3.87)	5.37 (3.56)	5.13 (3.90)	5.58 (4.12)
Enforced CV	13.15 (1.43)***	13.21 (1.43)***	13.30 (1.46)***	13.12 (1.47)***	12.52 (1.26)***	13.05 (1.43)***	13.35 (1.54)***	13.07 (1.45)***	13.02 (1.41)***	13.22 (1.44)***
First EP Election	0.34 (2.87)	0.24 (3.16)	1.00 (3.14)	0.87 (3.05)	0.18 (3.05)	0.75 (3.14)	1.31 (2.91)	0.20 (2.70)	0.99 (2.97)	0.34 (3.10)
IEF	−8.70 (3.91)*	−8.52 (3.85)*	−8.32 (3.75)*	−8.35 (3.81)*	−10.54 (3.40)**	−9.36 (4.01)*	−9.93 (3.73)*	−6.65 (3.67)	−9.30 (3.81)*	−8.70 (4.05)*
Joint Presidential	25.41 (1.56)***	25.10 (1.66)***	25.03 (1.59)***	25.02 (1.63)***	24.70 (1.51)***	0.00 (.)	24.31 (1.58)***	25.28 (1.64)***	24.52 (1.60)***	25.04 (1.61)***
Joint Lower House	1.60 (2.14)	1.65 (2.15)	1.64 (2.14)	1.70 (2.21)	1.57 (2.08)	1.56 (2.16)	1.50 (2.18)	2.10 (2.16)	1.72 (2.14)	1.59 (2.12)
Joint Referendum	4.14 (1.95)*	4.10 (1.99)*	4.21 (2.02)*	4.07 (1.97)*	3.77 (1.96)	4.10 (1.97)*	4.32 (2.07)*	3.54 (2.17)	4.07 (2.07)	2.97 (2.06)
EU Support	12.16 (6.12)	12.11 (6.26)	11.64 (6.37)	12.08 (6.25)	14.79 (5.24)**	12.04 (6.21)	12.58 (6.06)*	14.94 (5.34)**	13.63 (6.06)*	12.31 (6.30)
Constant	51.49 (7.35)***	51.47 (7.69)***	50.83 (7.43)***	51.06 (7.64)***	50.61 (7.17)***	51.54 (7.42)***	48.19 (7.45)***	49.45 (7.07)***	49.49 (7.54)***	51.19 (7.73)***
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	198	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197
R2 (within)	0.54	0.53	0.53	0.52	0.57	0.51	0.55	0.56	0.54	0.53

Note: Country-clustered standard errors. $^{*}p < 0.05$, $^{**}p < 0.01$, $^{***}p < 0.001$.

	(1)	(2)
	Table A7: Analyses for Figure 3	
Eurosceptic Seats (%)	0.19 (0.05)***	0.20 (0.06)**
Closeness	−5.80 (5.91)	−7.21 (5.70)
Majority Status	−1.80 (6.86)	−7.78 (5.11)
CV	5.36 (4.15)	7.74 (3.70)*
Enforced CV	13.16 (1.42)***	15.96 (1.41)***
First EP Election	0.34 (2.89)	5.73 (2.06)**
EU Support	12.07 (6.15)	14.13 (4.26)**
IEF	−8.70 (3.79)*	−8.90 (3.81)*
Joint Presidential	25.23 (1.54)***	23.53 (0.98)***
Joint Lower House	1.62 (2.15)	3.73 (3.25)
Joint Referendum	4.10 (1.97)*	1.47 (1.52)
Constant	51.23 (7.34)***	44.29 (4.61)***
Country FE	Yes	Yes
Linear Trend	No	No
Year FE	Yes	Yes
N	202	202
R2 (within)	0.53	0.40

Note: Country-clustered standard errors. $^*p < 0.05$, $^{**}p < 0.01$, $^{***}p < 0.001$.

These analyses uses the original untransformed version of the variable *Eurosceptic Seats %*, which is on a 0-100 scale and where 100 stands for 100 % of seats. As a reminder, the main analyses in the manuscript rescaled the variable on 0-1 scale, where 1 corresponds to the empirical maximum observed in the data.

Appendix D: Coding Political Parties

The baseline coding of the main independent variables (*Eurosceptic %* and *Eurosceptic Seats%*), which covers 1,956 parties (and 91.92 % of vote shares) in national legislative elections held between 1974 and 2024, is based on the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys (CHES; Jolly et al. 2022; Hooghe et al. 2024) and their predecessors (Ray 1999). For each election, we use the nearest following (or, if not available, the nearest preceding) wave of the expert survey (see Table A8). We coded additional 393 parties (3.55 % of vote shares) assuming position stability (if parties were coded only in earlier or later waves of the expert survey) or predicting party positions in the expert surveys using data from the Manifesto Project (Lehmann et al. 2024).

Table A8: Correspondence Between Elections and Surveys

Election Year	Survey Year	Reference
1974-1984	1984	Ray 1999
1984-1988	1988	Ray 1999
1989-1992	1992	Ray 1999
1993-1996	1996	Ray 1999
1997-1999	1999	Jolly et al. 2022
2000-2002	2002	Jolly et al. 2022
2003-2006	2006	Jolly et al. 2022
2007-2010	2010	Jolly et al. 2022
2011-2014	2014	Jolly et al. 2022
2015-2019	2019	Jolly et al. 2022
2020-2024	2023	Hooghe et al. 2024

Appendix E: List of Eurobarometer Studies

Table A9: Eurobarometer Studies

Study No.	EB	Fieldwork	Election Year	Variable	Note
1036	11	05.04.1979 - 28.04.1979	1979	v94	
1206	15	23.03.1981 - 30.04.1981	1981	v15	GR
1320	21	14.03.1984 - 13.04.1984	1984	v189	
1712	27	17.03.1987 - 8.05.1987	1987	v266	ES, PT
1750	31	13.03.1989 - 17.04.1989	1989	v273	
2490	41.0	08.03.1994 - 30.05.1994	1994	v61	
2639	43.1bis	19.05.1995 - 26.06.1995	1995	v40	SE
2831	45.1	12.04.1996 - 9.05.1996	1996	v39	AT, FI
3171	51.0	12.03.1999 - 04.05.1999	1999	v104	
4056	61	20.02.2004 - 28.03.2004	2004	v60	
4246	2004.1	20.02.2004 - 17.03.2004	2004	q8	Candidate EB
4530	67.2	10.04.2007 - 30.05.2007	2007	v123	BG, RO
4971	71.1	16.01.2009 - 21.02.2009	2009	v181	
5481	75.3	06.05.2011 - 26.05.2011	2013	v298	HR
5875	79.5	07.06.2013 - 23.06.2013	2014	qp22	
7561	91.1	19.02.2019 - 04.03.2019	2019	qa11	
7952	98.1	12.10.2022 - 07.11.2022	2024	qa7	

Note: Includes all member states participating in the election unless stated otherwise.

Appendix F: Information on the Index of Election Frequency

Election Overviews by Country

The data span the period from 1974 to the 2024 European Parliament election. In each country, the data begin at least five years before the country's first participation in a European Parliament election. They cover national elections, referendums, regional elections, and municipal elections[23] Election scope, defined as the share of eligible voters among registered voters, often requires adjustment when elections occur only in select sub-national units without a concurrent national election, such as in Italy, Spain, Malta, or the United Kingdom. In such cases, we estimate the total number of registered voters using cubic spline interpolation based on data on registered voters from adjacent national elections. When eligible voter data is unavailable, especially during staggered elections, we measure election scope by the proportion of sub-national units with active elections.

Austria

The data for Austria include lower house (*Nationalrat*) legislative elections, presidential elections, European Parliament elections, national referendums, and regional elections.

Belgium

The data for Belgium include lower and upper house legislative elections[24], European Parliament elections, national referendums, municipal elections, and regional elections. With the exception of the 1989 Brussels elections, all Brussels, Walloon, and Flemish regional elections were held simultaneously with the lower house national legislative elections.

Cyprus

The data for Cyprus include presidential elections, parliamentary elections, European Parliament elections, national referendums, and municipal elections.

Denmark

The data for Denmark include lower house (*Folketing*) and upper house (*Landsting*) legislative elections, European Parliament elections, national referendums, municipal elections, and regional elections.[25] The coverage focuses on Denmark proper, excluding Denmark's two autonomous territories (the Faroe Islands and Greenland).

Finland

The data for Finland cover presidential elections (*Presidentinvaali*), parliamentary elections (*Eduskuntavaalit*), European Parliament elections, national referendums, and municipal elections (*Kunnallisvaalit*). Even though presidential elections were organized since 1919, the president was originally elected by the members of parliament and the public became involved in the vote only in 1950.[26]

France

The data for France include presidential elections (*Élections Présidentielles*), legislative elections (*Législatives*) to the lower house (*Assemblée Nationale*),[27] European Parliament elections, national referendums, regional elections (*Régionales*), municipal elections (*Municipales*), and departmental elections (*Départementales*).[28] In line with our inclusion criteria (coverage of at least 10% of the total population), the territorial elections that are held only in French overseas territorial collectivities were not included in the data.

Greece

The data for Greece cover legislative elections, European Parliament elections, national referendums, regional elections, and municipal elections. They start with the last legislative election that preceded

the Greek military junta (1964). Prefectural elections took place for the first time in 1994[29] and were replaced by regional elections in 2010 after the 'Kallikrates reform'.

Ireland

The data for Ireland cover presidential elections, legislative lower house (*Dáil Éireann*) elections,[30], European Parliament elections, national referendums, and local elections.

Italy

The data for Italy cover legislative lower house (*Camera dei Deputati*) and upper house (*Senato*) elections, European Parliament elections, referendums, and regional elections.

Luxembourg

The data for Luxembourg cover legislative lower house elections, European Parliament elections, referendums, and municipal elections.

Malta

The data for Malta cover legislative elections (*Elezzjonijiet Ġenerali*), European Parliament elections, national referendums, and municipal elections (Elezzjonijiet tal-Kunsilli Lokali). The first municipal election was held in 1993 and the election take place yearly: each year one-third of the councils are renewed.[31]

Netherlands

The data for the Netherlands include legislative elections (*Tweede Kamerverkiezingen*),[32] European Parliament elections, national referendums, regional elections (*Provinciale Statenverkiezingen*) and municipal elections (*Gemeenteraadsverkiezingen*). They do not include Water Board elections (*Waterschapsverkiezingen*), traditionally organized by each municipality, due to their largely apolitical nature and low relevance.[33]

Portugal

The data for Portugal include presidential elections (*Eleições Presidenciais*), legislative elections (Legislativas), European Parliament elections, national referendums, regional elections (*Legislativas Regionais*),[34] and municipal elections (*Autárquicas*).[35] The data start with the non-democratic 1965 legislative elections. The Portuguese Communities Elections for Portuguese citizens abroad, which generate very little interest (average turnout of approximately 2 %) are not included.

Spain

The data for Spain cover lower house (*Congreso de los Diputados*) and upper house (*Senado*) legislative elections, European Parliament elections, national referendums, regional elections (*Elecciones autonómicas*), and municipal elections (*Elecciones municipales*).

Sweden

The data for Sweden include legislative elections (*Riksdagsvalet*), European Parliament elections, national referendums, municipal elections (*Kommunalfullmäktigevalen*) and county council elections (*Landstingsvalen*).[36]

United Kingdom

The data for the United Kingdom cover lower house legislative elections, European Parliament elections, national and subnational referendums, and regional elections to the Scottish Parliament, the Northern Ireland Assembly, and the National Assembly for Wales.

Bulgaria

The data for Bulgaria cover presidential elections, legislative elections, European Parliament elections (held since 2007), nationwide referendums, and municipal elections.

Czech Republic

The data for the Czech Republic cover presidential elections (conducted since 2013), lower house (*Poslanecká Sněmovna*) elections, upper house (*Senát*, 1996) elections, one nationwide referendum (held in 2004), European Parliament elections (conducted since 2004), regional elections (2000), and municipal elections.

Estonia

The data for Estonia mostly cover legislative elections, referendums, European Parliament elections (conducted since 2004), and municipal elections. Idiosyncratic contests include the election to the Congress of Estonia (*Eesti Kongress*) in 1990 and the only direct presidential election of 1993 (held simultaneously with the 1993 legislative election).

Hungary

The data for Hungary mostly cover legislative elections, referendums, European Parliament elections (conducted since 2004), and municipal elections.[37]

Latvia

The data for Latvia mostly cover legislative elections, referendums, European Parliament elections (conducted since 2004), and municipal elections. By contrast to all other democratic legislative contests, the 2000 election to the unicameral parliament (*Seimas*) had a single round.

Lithuania

The data for Lithuania mostly cover legislative elections, referendums, European Parliament elections (conducted since 2004), and municipal elections.

Poland

The data for Poland mostly cover presidential, simultaneous lower house (*Sejm*) and upper house (*Senat*) legislative elections, referendums, European Parliament elections (conducted since 2004), and local (i.e., simultaneous municipal, county and provincial) elections.

Romania

The data for Romania mostly cover presidential elections, simultaneous legislative lower house (*Camera Deputaților*) and upper house (*Senat*) legislative elections, referendums, European Parliament elections (conducted since 2007), and local (i.e., simultaneous municipal and country) elections.

Slovenia

The data for Slovenia mostly cover presidential elections, lower house (*Državni Zbor*) legislative elections,[38] referendums, European Parliament elections (conducted since 2004), and municipal elections.

Slovakia

The data for Slovakia cover presidential elections (conducted from 1999), legislative elections, nationwide referendums, European Parliament elections (conducted since 2004), regional elections (from 2001), and municipal elections.

Appendix G: List of Studied Included in Analysis 2

EES Voter Studies

1979

Kommission Der Europäischen Gemeinschaften. 2012. Eurobarometer 12 (Oct 1979): version 1.0.1. GESIS Data Archive.

1984

Kommission der Europäischen Gemeinschaften (2012). Eurobarometer 22 (Oct 1984). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA1321 Data file Version 1.0.1.

1989

Eijk, C. Van Der, Oppenhuis, E., Schmitt, H. 1993. European Election Study 1989 (EES 1989): version 1.0.0. GESIS Data Archive.

1994

Schmitt, H., Eijk, C. van der, Scholz, E., Klein, M. (1997). European Election Study 1994 (EES 1994). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA2865 Data file Version 1.0.0.

1999

Eijk, C. van der, Franklin, M., Schoenbach, K., Schmitt, H. , Semetko, H., with:, Brug, W. van der, Holmberg, S., Mannheimer, R., Marsh, M., Thomassen, J., Wessels, B., International Research Group "European Election Studies", IPSOS, Hamburg, Germany (primary investigator), 2009, "European Election Study - 1999", DANS Data Station Social Sciences and Humanities, V3.

2004

Schmitt, H., Bartolini, S., Brug, W. van der, Eijk, C. van der, Franklin, M., Fuchs, D., Toka, G., Marsh, M., Thomassen, J. (2009). European Election Study 2004 (2nd edition). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA4566 Data file Version 2.0.0.

2009

Egmond, M. van, Brug, W. van der, Hobolt, S., Franklin, M., Sapir, E. V. (2017). European Parliament Election Study 2009, Voter Study. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5055 Data file Version 1.1.1.

2014

Schmitt, H., Hobolt, S. B., Popa, S. A., Teperoglou, E., European Parliament, Directorate-General for Communication, Public Monitoring Unit (2024). European Parliament Election Study 2014, Voter Study, First Post-Election Survey. GESIS, Cologne. ZA5160 Data file Version 4.1.0.

2019

Schmitt, H., Hobolt, S. B., Brug, W. van der, Popa, S. A. (2022). European Parliament Election Study 2019, Voter Study. GESIS, Cologne. ZA7581 Data file Version 2.0.1.

2024

Popa, Sebastian A., Hobolt, Sara B., van der Brug, Wouter, Katsanidou, Alexia, Gattermann, Katjana, Sorace, Miriam, Toygür, Ilke, & de Vreese, Claes (2024). European Parliament Election Study 2024, Voter Study. GESIS, Cologne. ZA8868 Data file Version 1.0.0.

Appendix H: Descriptive Statistics (Analysis 2)

Table A10: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
R turnout in European elections	203589	.68	.47	0	1
Membership: Bad	195778	.13	.33	0	1
Membership: Neither Good Nor Bad	195778	.26	.44	0	1
Membership: Good	195778	.61	.49	0	1
Eurosceptic Seats (%)	203589	.1	.14	0	1
Female	203438	.53	.5	0	1
Age (in Years)	202012	.45	.18	0	1
Post-Secondary Education	197230	.34	.47	0	1

Appendix I: Robustness Checks (Analysis 2)

Table A11: Replications of Model 2 from Table 4

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Membership: Bad	$-0.08\ (0.04)$	$-0.08\ (0.04)$	$-0.08\ (0.02)^{***}$
Membership: Bad X Eurosceptic Seats %	$0.49\ (0.22)^{*}$	$0.49\ (0.22)^{*}$	$0.49\ (0.12)^{***}$
Membership: Good	$0.63\ (0.03)^{***}$	$0.64\ (0.03)^{***}$	$0.65\ (0.01)^{***}$
Membership: Good X Eurosceptic Seats %	$0.09\ (0.16)$	$0.09\ (0.16)$	$0.03\ (0.09)$
Eurosceptic Seats %	$0.44\ (0.20)^{*}$	$0.64\ (0.16)^{***}$	$0.51\ (0.32)$
Constant	$0.05\ (0.15)$	$-0.50\ (0.11)^{***}$	$0.38\ (0.22)$
Country-Election Variance	$0.08\ (0.01)^{***}$	$0.11\ (0.01)^{***}$	$0.24\ (0.03)^{***}$
Eurosceptic Seats % Variance		$0.10\ (0.02)^{***}$	
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	No	No
N (individuals)	195778	195778	195778
N (elections)	190	190	190

Note: Hierarchical logistic regression of all European Election Studies conducted between 1979 and 2024. All independent variables on a 0-1 scale. The reference category is *Membership: Neither Good Nor Bad*. Standard errors in brackets. $^{*}p < 0.05$, $^{**}p < 0.01$, $^{***}p < 0.001$.

The table shows that the results from Table 4 are robust to the inclusion of year fixed effects (Model 1), random slopes for *Eurosceptic Seats %* (Model 2), and the removal of turnout weights (Model 3).

Appendix J: Appendix Bibliography

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Lehmann, Pola, Simon Franzmann, Denise Al-Gaddooa, Tobias Burst, Christoph Ivanusch, Sven Regel, Felicia Riethmüller, Andrea Volkens, Bernhard Weßels and Lisa Zehnter. 2024. *The Manifesto Data Collection. Manifesto Project.* V. 2024a. Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung / Institut für Demokratieforschung. Data retrieved from https://doi.org/10.25522/manifesto.mpds.2024a.

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