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Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence

**The European Power Hierarchy,
Member State Trust, and Public Support for the
Common Security and Defense Policy**

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**Vol. 15 No. 2
August 2015**

Published with the support of the European Commission

The Jean Monnet/Robert Schuman Paper Series

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The European Power Hierarchy, Member State Trust, and Public Support for the Common Security and Defense Policy

By Gaspare M. Genna & Florian Justwan¹

Abstract

Existing studies focus on overall support for European integration while less work has been done on explaining public opinion on specific policy areas, such as the development of the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). We hypothesize that the probability of supporting a CSDP increases with greater levels of trust in the European Union member states, most notably the more powerful members. This variable is critical since integration's development is influenced strongly by, and dependent on, the resources of the relatively more powerful European member states. Binary logistic regression analyses using pooled repeated cross-sectional data from the *Eurobarometer* surveys conducted from 1992 to 1997 among individuals of 11 member states largely support these claims.

The crises in the Ukraine and the Levant, and their impact on the EU, once again raise the issue of formulating a Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). The idea behind the CSDP is to secure the gains of regional integration from external threats with the goal of having a single European voice (Anderson and Seitz 2006; Howorth and Menon 2010; Posen 2006). The idea was first introduced as part of a border Common Foreign and Security Policy as one of three pillars of European integration in the Treaty on European Union (Maastricht Treaty) and then later given a greater institutional framework in the Amsterdam Treaty. The Treaty of Lisbon created the office of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and an intergovernmental approach of the CSDP among the member-states. Recently, the current High Representative, Federica Mogherini, stated that the EU “cannot rule out a military aspect of our work in the region and in the world.”²

Scholars have long noted that EU citizens have strong support for the CSDP as measured by various Eurobarometer surveys (Wagner 2005; Tournier 2004; Brummer 2007). This can lead to the possible conclusion that the European public is providing the elite with a permissive consensus (Lindberg and Scheingold 1970). Individuals may be providing such a consensus in this policy area because they do not possess the adequate information to evaluate the CSDP given its outward appeal but unclear meaning (Heisbourg 2000; Jegen and Mérand 2014). However, the decline of permissive consensus of economic integration since the 1960s has taught us that EU leaders cannot rely on high levels of support indefinitely (Imig 2004). The defeat of the Constitutional Treaty, with strong provisions for a CSDP, is a clear illustration of this fact. Given the critical role many EU citizens have in the future of European integration through referenda, it is important to explain their level of support for a CSDP.

We examine the CSDP as part of the overall plan to develop a political community among EU member states. A political community refers to the cohesion that emphasizes individuals being drawn together for the purpose of operating in a common structure. (Haas 1958; Easton 1965; Etzioni 1965). With greater political cohesion we would see greater support for European integration policies such as the CSDP. In the case of the EU, decision-making is primarily in the hands of the member states (Moravcsik 1991 &

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² Nikolaj Nielsen, “EU considers ‘military approach’ to local threats.” EUobserver, May 15, 2015, accessed May 15, 2015, <https://euobserver.com/defence/128718>.

1993). They, through Intergovernmental Conferences and the European Council, determine the amount of sovereignty given to EU institutions as well as the direction of integration.

However, not all member states have equal weight in these decisions and an examination of the European power hierarchy is important when explaining integration (Efird and Genna 2002). The European power hierarchy refers to the pattern of power distribution among the member states and how decision-making will generally focus on the preferences of the more powerful (i.e., larger and wealthier) member-states. Therefore, when attempting to explain why individuals would support a CSDP, we need to consider how they perceive the motivations of the more powerful member states. The central argument that we put forward in this paper is that individuals' support for the CSDP depends on the level of trust given to the more powerful member states, namely Germany, France, and the UK.

The remainder of this paper has four sections. First, we discuss the existing literature on support for European integration. Second, we present the theory of this paper in greater detail and formulate testable hypotheses. Third, we describe the data that we use to test our theoretical claims. Fourth, we discuss the results of our statistical analysis. The final section concludes with some practical implications of our findings.

Support for European Integration

Addressing the question of why individuals would support a CSDP first requires an assessment of work on overall support for European integration. Easton's (1965; 1975) theoretical work views public support as being either specific (also known as utilitarian support) or affective. We posit that motivations for utilitarian support are primarily self-interested in nature while affective support stems from a common interest motivation. Utilitarian support results from an exchange where outputs (which can be economic or non-economic gains for the individual) are provided by the state in order to maintain the system through citizen support (Easton 1965: 157). Researchers point out that individuals provide utilitarian support when they believe the EU can minimize the negative side effects produced by the integration of member states (Anderson and Reichert 1996). Feld and Wildgen's (1976) work shows a tie between support levels in the four core countries of the European Economic Community (EEC) to that of welfare increases in the early years of integration. The attempt at explaining support continued with Handley (1981) who descriptively notes that the economic downturns of the 1970s dramatically lowered support levels for the EEC. Eichenberg and Dalton (1993) refined the testing of this argument by looking at the various levels of influence on support levels with similar results. Others have also built upon this method of analysis with similar results (Anderson and Kaltenthaler 1996; Duch and Taylor 1997). Some researchers have taken a more direct approach by examining an individual's socio-economic position in order to predict the probability of their support (Anderson 1991; Gabel and Palmer 1995; Anderson and Reichert 1996; Gabel and Whitten 1997; Gabel 1998; Brineger and Jolly 2005).

Self-interested motivations are not necessarily economic. The founders of European integration were driven by the memories of catastrophic wars and hoped that regional integration would be a vehicle for a permanent peace (Deutsch *et al* 1957; Haas 1958; Etzioni 1965; Mitrany 1966). Europeans supported integration, in its early years, in part for its promise to prevent war (Hewstone 1986). However, with the passing memory of war and the end of the Cold War, physical security is not as strong a factor in supporting integration as it once was (Gabel 1998). Other benefits include a more effective form of governance that is lacking at the national level due to underdeveloped welfare benefits and high levels of corruption (Sánchez-Cuenca 2000).

While significant in their contribution, utilitarian models tells us only part of the story behind citizen support. The other half of the story begins by understanding affective support. Affective support is a "a reservoir of favorable attitudes or good will that helps members to accept or tolerate outputs to which they are opposed or the effect of which they see as damaging to their wants"

(Easton 1965: 273). Affective support enters the picture when the political system has a “communal ideology” that promotes a common interest (Easton 1965: 333). One of the oldest work in this area is the postmaterialist argument. Inglehart (1971; 1977a; 1977b) claims that Europeans who were socialized in an environment of high rates of economic growth developed a different set of values from prior generations and that they are amiable toward the prospects of regional integration. However, Janssen (1991) and Gabel (1998) dispute this claim because their research finds little evidence for the relationship between postmaterialism and support for integration. The problem may not be the postmaterialist explanation, but what it was trying to explain. Postmaterialist theory cannot tell us how postmaterialists or materialists reach their opinions (Rochon 1998). In fact, it may be possible for both value categories to favor regional integration policy for different reasons. It is easy to see that materialists would be in favor if they believe that regional integration will provide material and physical security. One can assume that postmaterialists would be in favor if they believe that it is a means to solve trans-national problems (e.g. clean air, water, etc.).

Other research that looks at affective support for integration has mainly focused on the role of factors that would impede the formation of the political community. They echo the claim by Dahl (1989) that an attachment allows for easier rule because it adds legitimacy to the governors by the governed. Holding a European identity does promote support for integration (Gable 1998; Berezin and Díez-Medrano 2008). McLaren (2002) demonstrates that hostility towards other cultures determines attitudes towards the European Union. Likewise, a strong national attachment lowers the probability that an individual will support regional integration (Carey 2002; De Vreese and Boomgaarden 2005; Elgün and Tillman 2007; Garry and Tilley 2009). In addition, Van Kersbergen (2000) explains support for the EU by examining the role integration has in forming primary national allegiances. His claim is that these attitudes pose a problem in developing a European identity and thereby lower the chances of supporting the EU. Interestingly, individuals that have an inclusive subnational identity are more likely to support integration because they hope the process of integration will strengthening their claims for greater autonomy (Jolly 2007; Fitjar 2010; Chacha 2013).

In this paper, we shift attention away from individuals’ direct evaluations of the EU and towards the evaluations of member states while focusing on the particular policy integration areas, of security and defense policy. We emphasize that common interest and self-interest are not mutually exclusive. By being part of a political community, an individual recognizes that one’s self-interest and the common interest are interdependent.

A power hierarchy trust model for supporting the CSDP

European integration has many potential benefits for member states. This is especially true in the area of security and defense. Closer cooperation in these realms provides the EU with the ability to speak with a louder voice on the world stage and thereby influence international outcomes consistent with the member states’ preferences. Despite this tangible advantage, integration of defense policies is also associated with potential costs for each member state. First, while the CSDP is intergovernmental in nature, which means that individual countries do formally retain sovereignty and veto rights, smaller countries risk the chance that they will occasionally be pressured informally to support defense policies that are not perfectly in line with their own national interests. For example, in the summer of 2013, Austria, the Czech Republic and Sweden had to accept lifting the arms embargo against Syria - an idea favored by the governments in London and Paris.³ Second, common security and defense implies that states are often times required to spend human and financial resources on policy initiatives championed by other members of the union. A

³ Joshua Chaffin, “UK and France win battle to lift EU’s Syria arms embargo,” *Financial Times*, May 28, 2013, accessed March 10, 2015, www.ft.com/cms/s/0/095e5e50-c6c1-11e2-8a36-00144feab7de.html#axzz3UAKaguoj.

case in point is the European provision of troops to secure the 2006 presidential elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. After an official UN request for a European military presence, France was one of the strongest supporters of a joint EU mission. At the same time, however, the government in Paris did not want to take the lead in this initiative. As a result, France and Germany engaged in a lengthy negotiation process which ended in Germany's decision to lead the military operation (Koops et al 2011).

In sum, agreeing to cooperation in the realm of defense and security policy requires member states to accept the risk of incurring tangible costs in the hopes that the long-term benefits of further integration are larger. Individual-level assessments of the CSDP should mirror this logic. If citizens believe that the benefits of security and defense policy integration outweigh the potential costs, they should be likely to support EU-level decision-making in this issue area. Conversely, if the risks of close cooperation are perceived as being too severe, citizens should prefer that security and defense policies remain the responsibility of their national governments.

Even though this logic appears to be straightforward, making informed cost/benefit calculations about European affairs is difficult for citizens. EU decision-making is very complex and many deals and compromises in Brussels are forged behind closed doors. In addition, EU citizens are generally relatively uninformed about European affairs (Clark and Hellwig 2012; Elkink and Sinnott 2015). Schoen (2008) does demonstrate that utilitarian calculations are in play. He shows that individuals from member states with more powerful national militaries (as measured by nuclear capability), are less likely to support a CSDP because there is little added benefit for establishing joint policies in these areas. Individuals from member states with weaker military capabilities perceive an added benefit in integrating policies because they can take advantage of their more powerful partners' capabilities. However, this argument assumes that the role of CSDP would be exclusively to deter external threats (Irondelle et al 2015). It is also important to point out that there is a great deal of individual variation regarding what such policies would entail (Irondelle et al. 2015), what common policies will be achieved (Carrubba and Singh 2004), and what this will mean with reference to NATO (Ray and Johnston 2007).

In this environment of complexity and limited information, citizens rely on heuristics to interpret political events. These cognitive shortcuts enable individuals to generalize from abstract beliefs and to build opinions about political matters (Brewer and Steenbergen 2002). Affective attitudes like trust are especially important in this context since they reflect fundamental orientations of an individual's personality. One often cited definition of trust is the perceived "probability of getting preferred outcomes without the group doing anything to bring them about" (Gamson 1968: 54). In paraphrasing Wintrobe (1995: 46), trust yields a stream of future returns on exchanges that would not otherwise take place because trust makes behavior predictable in the sense that citizens who trust believe that "their trustees have a responsibility to fulfill the trust placed in them even if it means sacrificing some of their own benefits" (Hoffman 2002: 379).

In the context of European politics, individuals may support integration of Europe's security and defense policies when they trust other member states. Given the absence of reliable information about the preferences and future behavior of countries, faith in other EU members allows citizens to give the benefit of the doubt to foreign governments and it leads individuals to have an optimistic outlook on the consequences of international cooperation. People who trust other countries assume that the preferences of states are compatible with each other. As a result, the benefits of integration in the area of security and defense policy outweigh the potential costs. By contrast, citizens who are distrustful of Europe's member states should be more concerned about the risks and costs associated with deeper cooperation. These individuals fear that preferences between countries in Europe are incompatible and other governments cannot be assumed to take into account their country's position and goals. Instead, people who distrust a particular country or a group of countries believe that these actors are willing to exploit the good intentions of other European states. Based on the discussion presented above, we can formulate the first testable

hypothesis about individual-level attitudes concerning European integration in the realm of defense and security policies.

Hypothesis 1: Individuals who trust other member states of the European Union are more likely to support Europe's common security and defense policies than individuals who are distrustful of other member states.

While this hypothesis constitutes the first testable implication of our theory, additional considerations need to be made since trust in some states is a more important predictor for individual-level variation than faith in certain other actors. EU members vary widely in their weight in the decision-making process. Like in many other regions, relative wealth, population, and capabilities (among others) determine which country's preferences will be enacted within the EU and which ones will be held in check. Specifically, the more powerful (the largest and wealthiest) countries will tend to have their wishes debated and implemented. Smaller countries, by contrast, are less likely to influence the direction of Europe's security and defense policies (Moravcsik 1991 & 1993). Conceptually, Europe during the 1990s can be divided into two groups of countries. Germany, France, and the United Kingdom were (and still are) arguably the most influential member states. Their wealth and population size has historically allowed these actors to shape both the European integration process as well as external policies of the EU. The remaining states fall into a second tier of influence. Some of them are relatively wealthy, which allows them to have some influence on European affairs. Others have had historically limited influence on decisions at the European level and their sway over external EU policies is small.

Being generally aware of this power hierarchy, citizen attitudes towards Europe's security and defense policies should primarily be shaped by diffuse feelings towards those actors that have the greatest influence on the overall course within these policy areas. Specifically, this means that trust in Germany, France and the United Kingdom should be a crucial precondition for individual-level support of integration. In other words, most of the empirical relationship suggested in Hypothesis 1 should be driven by trust in these countries. By contrast, trust in the remaining EU member states should only explain a smaller (albeit important) amount of individual-level variation. This discussion allows us to introduce another set of testable hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2: Trust in the most powerful member states of the EU (Germany, France and Britain) should have a pronounced effect on individual-level assessments of Europe's common security and defense policies.

Hypothesis 3: Trust in the remaining member states of the EU should have a smaller effect on individual-level assessments of Europe's common security and defense policies.

Data description and testing procedures

In order to test these claims, we rely on public opinion data from multiple *Eurobarometer* surveys (1992-1997). These surveys were selected because they all included the key independent variables, trust in member states. While these survey waves are somewhat dated, they have two important advantages. First, data from this time period are very well suited to test hypotheses about citizen support of Europe's common security and defense policy. As Clark and Hellwig (2012) show, the level of information that citizens have about a particular policy area crucially influences their degree of support for EU policy control. In the run-up to the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, policy-maker publicly debated the merits and downsides of deepened integration in this issue area, and - as a result - Europe's common security and defense policy was a highly salient issue during the 1990s. Second, these data allow us to examine individual-level attitudes during the very early stages of integration in this policy domain. This enables us to conduct the "cleanest" possible

test for our theory. If we used survey data from a more recent time period (when political integration was already well under way), it would be difficult to analyze the role of trust without assessing how previous achievements in this issue area had shaped citizen attitudes.

Given data constraints, the analysis includes only samples from eleven members of the EU, which include the first twelve members except Luxemburg. Some of the samples were collapsed while others were not included: The Northern Ireland sample was collapsed into the British sample and the East German sample was omitted given its unique attributes.⁴ We used a weighted variable (the nation weight) so that no sub-national group will be over or under representation and results can be interpreted with attention to variations within country samples.⁵ The appropriate technique is to employ binary logit regression models (Long 1997). The evaluations of the coefficients will be based on their significance, direction of signs, and their contribution to predicting the probabilities of the dependent variables.

Dependent variable

The dependent variable is individual support for a common security and defense. A question frequently asked in the *Eurobarometer* surveys is whether a type of policy would be best handled at the national level or the European level of decision-making:

Some people believe that certain areas of policy should be decided by the (NATIONAL) government, while other areas of policy should be decided jointly within the European Community [Union]. Which of the following areas of policy do you think should be decided by the (NATIONAL) government, and which should be decided jointly within the European Community.

1. *Should be decided by the (NATIONAL) government*
2. *Should be decided jointly within the European Community [Union]*

Security and defense was one policy area presented to respondents. Responses were recoded so “national level decision-making” has a value of zero and “EC/U level decision-making” has a value of one.

Independent variables – power hierarchy trust

The main independent variables of this paper measure the respondents’ trust levels in other member-states. Specifically, we rely on the following survey question from the Eurobarometer:⁶

Which, if any, European Community [Union] country or countries do you think can be more trusted politically than others?

0. *Not mentioned*
1. *Mentioned*

⁴ The East German sample may exhibit questionable results given its early phase of democratic transition and its recent membership at the time of the surveys, which may distort findings. One such fear is an inaccuracy of questionnaire responses due to the public’s long legacy of authoritarianism.

⁵ The nature of the hypotheses requires an individual level analysis. While some researchers believe that aggregation of individual level responses to opinion surveys remove random “noise” from the measurements (Page and Shapiro 1992; Stimson, MacKuen, and Erikson 1995), recent research shows that the error associated with individual level variation may be systemic (Duch, Palmer, and Anderson 2000). Therefore aggregating the data would not remove any associated “noise,” but instead may harm the robustness of potential results due to a lower number of observations.

⁶ While this question does not directly ask if the member-states can be trusted in the context of the EU or integration, the years in which they were asked (1992 – 1997) were years of the deepening of integration (implementation of the Single European Act and the Maastricht debate). The public discourse in these years would therefore reflect the saliency of the EU.

The respondents go through the list of member states and indicate which members are more trustworthy than others, including their own.⁷ The data was recoded so that all responses indicating trust in the respondent's own country are considered missing because the independent variable is to measure trust in member states other than the respondent's own state.

Table 1. National samples for “power hierarchy trust” variables by year

Country	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
France	●	●		●	●	●
Germany	●	●		●	●	●
Britain	●	●		●	●	●
Spain	●	●		●	●	●
Italy	●	●	●	●	●	●
Denmark			●			
Ireland			●			
Portugal			●			
Belgium				●		
Netherlands				●		
Greece				●		

This question was not posed to all national samples in all years. Table one indicates which countries' populations were sampled by year. There is a larger frequency of respondents coming from France, Germany, Britain, Italy, and Spain. The Danes, Irish, Portuguese, Belgians, Dutch, and Greeks were polled only once either in 1994 or 1995. Only the Italians were polled consistently from 1992-1997. Since the Luxemburg respondents were not polled at all, this leaves a total of eleven national samples. This pattern of sampling is not a statistical problem for two reasons. First, since the nation weight is employed in the analysis, the results explain within-country variances. Therefore no biases are introduced. Second, since country dummy variables are also employed (see the following section), the analysis will control for country effects. According to our theory, trust in EU member states influences an individual's attitudes towards the common security and defense policy. In order to measure citizen-levels of trust in other EU countries, we create an additive index based on the survey item described above. Specifically, we add up the number of member states that an individual trusts and divide this sum by twelve (the overall number of EU member states in 1992). This variable enables us to test the first hypothesis derived from our theory. Hypotheses 2 and 3 however, requires a more fine grained measure of trust. As stated above, we expect that trust in the more powerful member states should have a larger effect on individual-level support than trust in less powerful countries. We therefore created two additional variables for trust in Germany, France and the United Kingdom and trust in the less influential member states (hereafter “second tier”), respectively. The specific approach is similar to the one described earlier: we add the number of trusted member states in each country group and divide the sum by the number of states per group (i.e. 3 for trust in Germany, France and the UK and 9 for trust in “second tier” member states). By dividing the additive term by the appropriate number, the range of both trust variables is restricted to be between zero and one, thereby allowing comparability.

⁷ So as to include consistency for the 1992-1997 analysis, only trust in the first twelve members of the EU are included.

Control variables

In the following analysis, we account for a standard set of covariates employed in the literature on public opinion and European integration.

Education. First, we control for education. To measure this variable, we use a standard question found in all *Eurobarometer* surveys. The question asked respondents how old they were when they stopped full-time education. The responses are then collapsed into 9 groups: individuals who completed their education at the age of 14 receive a value of “1”. Each additional year of schooling is then associated with a one-unit increase on this indicator. A score of “9” is assigned to those who finished their education after the age of 22.

Age. This information, measured in years, is included in the regular set of demographic variables found in the *Eurobarometer* surveys. The variable was recoded into six categories representing specific age cohorts. Each category’s range is 10 years starting from 15 years of age. The sixth category includes everyone that is 65 years of age and older. An alternative argument would be that memories of war would influence older Europeans to favor common security and defense policies, more so than younger Europeans. Prior research on support for integration demonstrated that this factor has diminished as the memory of the war fades (Gabel 1998). However, it may still prove important in the context of this analysis.

Income. In order to measure an individual’s income level, the Eurobarometer asked respondents to choose from among four categories that approximates their annual household income. The expectation for this variable is that higher levels of economic wealth are associated with stronger support for Europe’s CSFD policies.

Ideology. Next, we control for ideology. Prior research has demonstrated convincingly that an individual’s position on the left-right spectrum partially determines his/her degree of support for integration (McLaren 2002; Carey 2002). In order to account for this relationship, we include a control variable in our statistical model that captures whether a survey respondent self-identifies as liberal, conservative or moderate. This indicator ranges from 1 (very liberal) to 10 (very conservative).

Support for EU membership: A final substantive control variable employed in the statistical analysis of this paper captures individuals’ level of support for their country’s membership in the EU. If citizens are opposed to the European integration project as a whole, it should be unlikely that they express favorable views about close cooperation in the realm of security and defense policies (Schoen 2008). By controlling for general support for integration using a retrospective measure, we can isolate the variance associated with support for common security and defense policies. The specific survey item used to measure general support for EU integration asked respondents whether they believe that EU membership is a “good thing” for their country, “neither good nor bad” or “a bad thing.” Descriptive statistics for all covariates described above can be found in Table 2.

Country and year effects. Finally, country and year dummies are included in each of the models in order to control for effects that are specific to either the countries in the analysis or the year of the surveys. In each regression the base country is Belgium and the base year is 1992. Results are omitted due to space constraints.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
DV: Support for Common Defense Policy	0	1	0.50	0.50
Trust (all EU member states)	0	1	0.13	0.18
Trust (GER/FRA/UK)	0	1	0.22	0.30
Trust in Second Tier	0	1	0.10	0.17
Trust in Germany	0	1	0.28	0.45
Trust in France	0	1	0.21	0.41
Trust in UK	0	1	0.16	0.37
Support for EU membership	1	3	2.51	0.71
Age	1	6	3.33	1.71
Education	1	10	4.23	2.84
Income	1	4	2.62	1.11
Ideology	1	10	5.25	2.02

Explaining support for the Common Security and Defense Policy

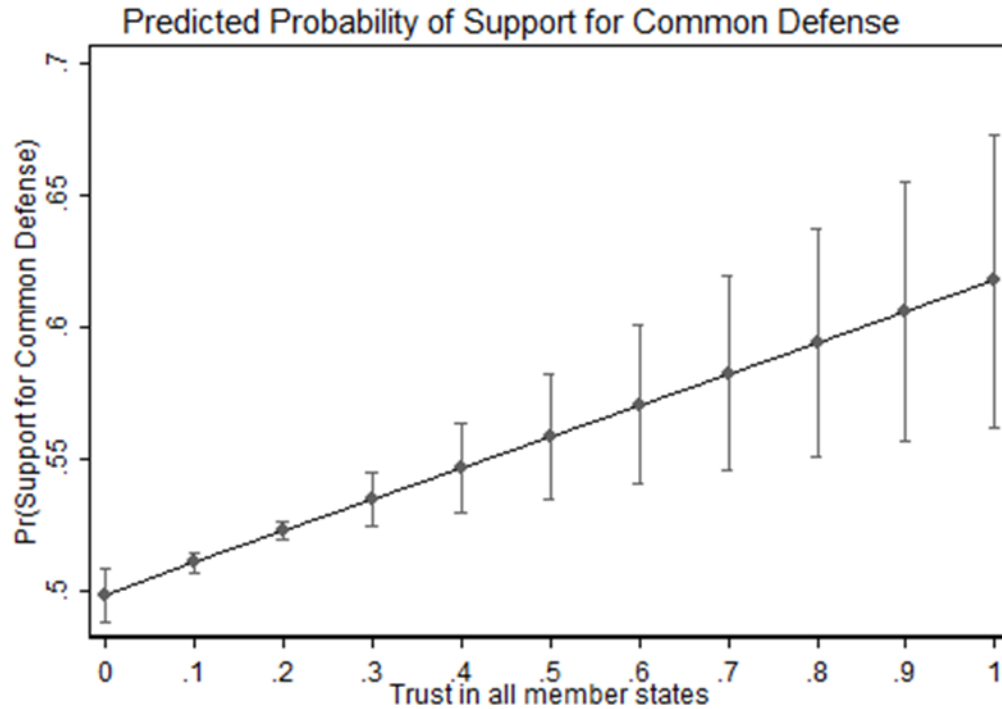
We introduced the variables described above in a series of five statistical models. In Model 1 we estimate the effect of *trust in all member states* on individual-level support of the CSDF. In Model 2, we use the more fine grained measures of trust and assess whether positive views of Germany, France and the UK are qualitatively different from faith in the less influential EU countries.

Table 3. Logit models: Support for EU defense and security policy

<i>Coefficient</i> (<i>Robust Standard Error</i>)	Model 1	Model 2
Trust (all EU members)	0.544*** (0.158)	--
Trust (GER/FRA/UK)	--	0.277** (0.110)
Trust in Second Tier	--	0.254** (0.119)
Support for EU membership	0.610*** (0.035)	0.605*** (0.033)
Age	0.018 (0.020)	0.018 (0.021)
Education	0.068*** (0.005)	0.068*** (0.005)
Income	0.038 (0.032)	0.037 (0.032)
Ideology	-0.040** (0.018)	-0.041** (0.017)
Constant	-1.716 (0.111)	-1.727 (0.115)
Number of Observations	16,111	16,111
Log-Likelihood	-10,085.47	-10,081.47
* = $p \leq 0.10$, ** = $p \leq 0.05$, *** = $p \leq 0.01$		
Notes: Standard errors for coefficients are in parentheses. Estimates for country & year dummies omitted due to space constraints.		

Model 1 (Table 3) offers a test of our first hypothesis. The results indicate that trust in other member states increases the likelihood that a respondent supports common EU action with regards to security and defense policies. The coefficient estimate for *trust in all EU members* is both positive and statistically significant. In addition, the substantive effect of this covariate is substantial.

Figure 1. Predicted Probability of Support for the EU’s Common Defense Policy



As demonstrated in Figure 1, holding all control variables at their median values, the probability that a survey respondent supports a CSDF is about 50.0 percent if this individual distrusts all other member states of the EU. However, as the share of trusted EU countries increases to 1 (that is, if a citizen expresses trust for every member of the European Union), the predicted probability rises markedly and significantly to 61.7 percent. In other words, across the full range of this variable, the relative risk of support for a common security and defense policy increases by over 23 percent. This suggests that trust in the member states of the European Union is a crucially important factor for support of a common security and defense policy. After testing Hypothesis 1, we now move to an examination of the second proposition of our theory.

In Model 2, we estimate the effect of (1) trust in Germany France and the UK as well as (2) trust in the other EU members. Here, both coefficients exert a significant effect on the outcome variable. Holding all controls at their median values (see Table 4), the probability of support for EU policy control is about 50.3 percent for individuals who distrust Germany, France and the United Kingdom. If a respondent trusts one of these countries, the probability rises to 52.0 percent and trust in two of these states is associated with a predictive margin of 53.9 percent. Finally, citizens who harbor positive views of all of these states have a 57.3 percent probability of expressing support for Europe’s common defense policy. This means that the relative risk increases by 13.9 percent across the range of this variable. Faith in the other member states of the EU has a similar effect on the level of support. Complete distrust in the remaining member states results in a predicted probability of 51.0 percent. The corresponding value for citizens who trust all remaining EU countries, by contrast, is 56.9 percent. This suggests two major implications. First, both types of trust contribute to more positive views of EU integration in the realm of defense policy. Second, and consistent with our theoretical expectations, the effect of trust in Germany, France and the UK is bigger than the effect of trust in other member states. While trust in the “big three” raises the relative risk of support by 13.9 percent, trust in other EU members affects the relative risk by 11.6 percent.

Table 4. Substantive Effect of Trust and Control Variables

	Min	Max	Pr(support) at min ^a	Pr(support) at max	Relative Change
<i>Model 2:</i>					
Trust (GER/FRA/UK)	0	1	50.3%	57.3%	+13.9%
Trust in Second Tier	0	1	51.0%	56.9%	+11.6%
Support for EU membership	1	3	32.2%	59.5%	+84.8%
Education	1	10	46.9%	60.5%	+29.0%
Ideology	1	10	55.4%	47.2%	- 14.8%
<i>Model 3:</i>					
Trust in Germany	0	1	47.5%	55.0%	+15.8%
Trust in Second Tier	0	1	49.3%	55.6%	+12.8%

^a Predicted probabilities are significant at the .05-level. All other variables are at their medians.

A number of control variables are statistically significant as well. In line with our expectations, overall support for a country’s EU membership is strongly associated with more favorable attitudes towards integration of Europe’s defense policies. Citizens who believe that EU membership is a “good thing for their country” have a 59.5 percent probability of support. By contrast, the prediction for respondents who are highly skeptical of the European Union is only 32.2 percent. Furthermore, education and ideology are strongly associated with attitudes in this area. Specifically, more educated and more left-leaning respondents tend to exhibit higher levels of support for defense integration. Across the full ranges of these variables, the relative risk of support changes by 29 percent (education) and 14.8 percent (ideology). These findings are consistent with existing research on the subject matter (Schoen 2008; Irondelle et al 2015) and they show that the effect sizes of the trust variables in Model 2 are comparable to the impact of an individual’s self-placement on the left-right spectrum.

Table 5. Logit models: Support for EU defense and security policy (Trust in Germany, France, UK)

<i>Coefficient</i> (<i>Robust Standard Error</i>)	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Trust in Germany	0.337*** (0.066)	--	--
Trust in France	--	0.076 (0.055)	--
Trust in UK	--	--	-0.092 (0.071)
Trust in Second Tier	0.292** (0.146)	0.379** (0.162)	0.385*** (0.093)
Support for EU membership	0.610*** (0.037)	0.590*** (0.032)	0.638*** (0.043)
Age	0.012 (0.025)	0.015 (0.025)	-0.001 (0.018)
Education	0.067*** (0.006)	0.069*** (0.006)	0.069*** (0.001)
Income	0.037 (0.040)	0.062** (0.027)	0.011 (0.022)
Ideology	-0.045** (0.020)	-0.041* (0.023)	-0.023 (0.014)
Constant	-1.715*** (0.139)	-1.616*** (0.150)	-1.679*** (0.144)
Number of Observations	13.248	13.312	13.075
Log-Likelihood	-8303.02	-8286.99	-8076.57
* = p ≤ 0.10, ** = p ≤ 0.05, *** = p ≤ 0.01			
Notes: Standard errors for coefficients are in parentheses. Estimates for country & year dummies omitted due to space constraints.			

The results presented above provide strong support for both of our hypotheses and they suggest that trust in the more powerful member states is substantively more important for individual-level support of the CSDP than trust in the remaining member states. This leaves us with one important unanswered question: what is the relative importance of trust in Germany, trust in France, and trust in the U.K? In order to solve this puzzle, we estimated the effect of trust in Germany (Model 3), France (Model 4), and Britain (Model 5) on the common security and defense policy while controlling for average trust in the remaining member states. This stepwise approach is necessary since trust in Germany, France, and Britain is measured with three separate variables. Introducing all of these covariates into the same regression model would lead to a significant drop in the number of observations. As mentioned earlier, faith in one's own country is coded as "missing." Therefore, simultaneously controlling for attitudes about Germany, France, and Britain would lead to an exclusion of survey responses from all of these countries which would likely introduce systematic bias into our statistical results.

The regressions (displayed in Table 5) provide an even more fine-grained insight into attitudinal patterns. Combined, they suggest that trust in Germany has the biggest effect on individual-level support for defense integration. The coefficient estimate for this variable (Model 3) is positive and clearly distinguishable from zero while the covariates capturing trust in France and trust in the United Kingdom (Models 4 and 5) fail to reach statistical significance. Moreover, the substantive effect for trust in Germany is larger than the impact of any of the trust variables in Model 2. Respondents who distrust the country have a 47.5 percent probability of expressing favorable attitudes towards a CSDP. Conversely, citizens who do harbor favorable views of Germany have a 55 percent probability of support, which amounts to a change in the relative risk of almost 16 percent. By contrast, trust in the remaining EU members is only associated with a relative change of about 13 percent.

Conclusion

The trust model can be an aid in explaining the probabilities for supporting the CSDP. Trust in the member-states among individuals is significantly associated with higher probabilities of support. However, not all member states have the same impact. Two distinct groupings exist with each grouping determined by country size and wealth. The smaller and less wealthy a country is, the less of an impact it has on influencing support for a CSDP. But when it comes to the top powers in Europe (Germany, France, and Britain) clear distinctions are made among the respondents. Trust in the three top European powers is better able to explain support for a CSDP than overall trust and trust in the remaining member states.

Two important issues must be considered with regard to these results. Neither of these issues would necessarily put into question the results found in this paper, but are important enough to consider. First, given that the earliest surveys used in this analysis are over twenty years old, we would need to obtain up-to-date data that indicates that the association between trust and support has not changed. However, there is nothing in the model's logic that makes the arguments any less salient today. Most of the year dummy variables were not significantly different from the base year, which indicates that there is a lack of temporal influence. However, more current data is an important way to determine if the findings of the 1990s hold today.

Second, the EU's eastward expansion adds complexity to model. The security and defense policies of countries such as Poland and the Baltic states are not in line with those of Germany. Decisions on troop deployments to Iraq, heated disagreements at EU Council meetings over the Iraqi war, and debates about the most appropriate foreign policy towards Russia are evidence of this. If our results hold, less trust in Germany in the post-Cold War membership expansion may lead to less support for a CSDP.

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