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## **WHAT DETERMINES DEMAND FOR EUROPEAN UNION REFERENDUMS?**

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**ABSTRACT** Notwithstanding elite opposition to referendums as inconsistent with theories of representative democracy, the 27-nation European Election Study finds that 63 percent of EU citizens want a vote on EU treaties. One explanation is that the majority want more popular participation in politics; another is that referendums are demanded by those negative about the performance of their governors at national and EU levels; a third is that demand is higher where referendums are part of the national context. Multi-level statistical analysis shows greater support for the hypotheses that citizens dissatisfied with government performance are more likely to want referendums to check their governors and that national context matters. However, dissatisfied EU citizens are a minority; most who endorse EU referendums are actually pro-EU. This lowers the risk of defeat if the EU consulted its citizens in a pan-European referendum.

**KEY WORDS:** European Union, referendums, integration, participation, performance.

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## **Introduction**

The popular election of representatives is a necessary condition of a political system being democratically accountable. Periodic elections are deemed sufficient to hold representatives accountable (see Qvortrup, 2005) and many contributions to this symposium regard increasing the involvement of national parliaments in EU affairs as the appropriate means of strengthening democracy within the EU. Within the European Union, less than half of its members require national referendums (C2D, 2011; Altman, 2011). There is no reference to referendums in the index of Dahl's (1989) overview of democracy. The American Constitution makes no provision for federal referendums and less than half of American states do so (see Stanley and Niemi, 2008: 313). Switzerland is egregious in the use of referendums (Kriesi and Trechsel, 2007).

A referendum is a vote on a specific issue of public policy, whereas parliamentary elections offer a broad brush choice. Voters endorse the party or representatives with a package of policies closest to their priorities, even though some may be inconsistent with their preferences. Alt and Alesina (1996: 659) note, 'There will always be agency losses'. By contrast, in a referendum voters decide the outcome, even though governors decide the text on the ballot.<sup>1</sup> Unlike deliberative democracy forums, which may not produce a clear cut outcome that is politically binding on government, a referendum can do so (Goodin, 2008). The result is: 'Referendums disarm party elites' (Hooghe and Marks, 2009: 20). A referendum is democratic if there is the possibility that the electorate may reject the government's position; if not, the ballot is a plebiscite (Uleri, 2000). If a referendum result supports government policy, it may appear redundant, but this is not the case. It demonstrates majority commitment to a decision by representatives and losers as well as winners are expected to accept the outcome (cf. Anderson et al., 2005; Esaiasson, 2010). If a proposal is rejected, this supports the case for giving citizens a referendum veto because governors cannot be trusted to represent their views (Bowler et al., 2007).

The use of referendums in the European Union is contested (cf. Setälä, 2009; Maduz, 2010). The opposition is strongest from those who see themselves as trustees of the collective interest of all Europeans and those committed to the founders goal of an ever closer Union. Jean Monnet (1978: 367), thought it 'wrong to

consult the peoples of Europe about the structure of a Community of which they had no practical experience'. The current President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, argues that to have important EU issues decided by a vote of uninformed and uninterested electors would 'undermine the Europe we are trying to build by simplifying important and complex subjects' (Hobolt, 2009: 23). Most critics of the democratic deficit contributing papers to this symposium call for more representative democracy, (e.g. Bellamy, Cooper, Lord and Pollak). Proponents of participatory democracy justify referendums as increasing the opportunity for citizens to be involved in making political decisions (Pateman, 1970, 2012; Hobolt, 2009: 242ff).

This article shifts attention to the empirical level. Notwithstanding the collection opposition of elites at the EU level, a big majority of member states have held one or more national referendums on EU issues. Moreover, the 2009 European Election Study shows that a clear majority of Europe's citizens think that referendums ought to be held on treaties about European integration. We test hypotheses about why there is substantial popular support for EU referendums.

### **The Supply and Demand for European Union Referendums**

The Maastricht Treaty's statement in Article 10.1 that 'the Union shall be founded on representative democracy' makes the EU distinctive among intergovernmental organizations in having a popularly elected parliament with significant institutional powers. It also supports the view that elected representatives do not require having their decisions checked by referendums. Because EU decisions are made in multi-national institutions, there is much more potential for agency loss between national electorates and decision makers than in national politics (Rose and Borz, 2013).

The principle set out in Article 10.3 of the Treaty of the European Union- 'decisions shall be taken as openly and as closely as possible to the citizen'- is interpreted as being met by the European Parliament. A proposal for the Constitution for Europe to be ratified by a pan-European referendum was explicitly rejected by the non-elected Constitutional Convention (Castiglione et al., 2007). The Lisbon Treaty's authorization of a Citizens' Initiative shows the EU's rejection of direct popular

engagement in EU policymaking. Unlike initiatives in national political systems, the EU Initiative does not trigger a vote. Instead, a valid Initiative petition only requires the European Commission to make a formal response to the issue that is raised. Moreover, the Treaty's endorsement of decision making by consensus (Article 15.4) implicitly rejects referendums, since any free and fair vote will necessarily reveal a division of public opinion.

Members of the European Parliament oppose referendums. The EU Profiler data base of party positions on EU referendums (Trechsel and Mair, 2009) found that 45 percent of MEPs were elected on national programmes that explicitly opposed holding referendums on EU issues and an additional 20 percent on programmes that took no position. Only 35 percent of MEPs were positive. This is consistent not only with theories of representative democracy but also with the interest of MEPs in wanting to avoid a challenge to their claim to be the exclusive voice of Europe's citizens.

National governments supply referendums. There is a conflict between the collective opposition to referendums in Brussels and the behaviour of national governments. The subsidiarity principle recognizes that national governments can call referendums on EU issues. Although there is no treaty obligation to call a referendum on an EU treaty, 22 member states have nonetheless done so since 1972.<sup>2</sup> Since the adoption of an EU treaty requires the unanimous approval of member states, a referendum in a single country is in effect a European referendum, since a defeat in one country is a veto of adoption. By contrast, referendums in American states and Swiss cantons do not put national policies in jeopardy nor do constitutional amendments require unanimity (cf. Tierney, 2012: chapter 6).

Whether a referendum is held can reflect a variety of rationales. A national government can invoke the logic of appropriateness to justify asking citizens to give their consent to a measure of constitutional importance (Closa, 2007: 1316, 1321; March and Olsen, 2006). A decision to call an EU referendum can be a tactical tool of a government seeking partisan advantage against the opposition or a means of escaping from partisan divisions within itself (Dür and Mateo, 2011: Setälä and Schiller, 2009; Altman, 2011). Ireland and Denmark are exceptional in having

constitutional obligations to hold EU referendums on the grounds that they alter the country's national constitution. Since 2011 a British Act of Parliament requires a referendum on any further transfer of power to Brussels. A national government can use the prospect of a referendum to seek concessions in Brussels on the grounds that this will help ensure passage, a tactic that Irish governments have used to secure the reversal of a No vote in the first of a pair of referendums.

National referendums invariably show that voters divide in their views about EU measures; an average of 57 percent are in favour and 43 percent against. This average is greater than the percentage electing 21 of the national governments that endorsed the Lisbon Treaty; the British government that did so had won only 35 percent of the national vote (Rose, 2013: Figure 4.1). Of the 40 referendums held since 1972, 31 showed a majority approving an EU measure, while 9 rejected a measure that their national government had endorsed at the EU level. When Denmark's voters rejected the Maastricht Treaty and when Irish voters rejected the Nice and Lisbon treaties, EU officials were unwilling to accept defeat. Instead, the EU gave concessions to national governments that led to second referendums producing majorities in favour. However, rejection of the Constitution for Europe by a majority of French and Dutch referendum votes in 2005 has made EU policymakers anxious to avoid referendums.

Whatever the outcome, the selectivity of national referendums on EU issues creates gross inequalities between EU citizens, because a big majority is not allowed to vote on a treaty since their national government does not call a referendum (Figure 1). In the extreme case of the Lisbon and Nice treaties, 99 percent of EU citizens did not have a chance to register a vote and 97 percent had no chance of voting on the Single European Act or the Amsterdam treaty. Although holding votes on the Constitution for Europe in four countries increased the size of the minority given a voice, 73 percent of EU citizens did not have a referendum in which they could register their views. Whereas the requirement of unanimity means that a referendum vote in only one country can affect the whole of the EU, referendums in American states and Swiss cantons do not put national policies in jeopardy.

(Figure 1 Exclusion of Europe's Citizens by National Referendums)

### *Popular Demand*

In the weeks following the June, 2009 European Parliament election, the European Election Study (EES) conducted nationally representative sample surveys in each of the EU's 27 member states. A total of 27,069 respondents were asked: *Should EU treaty changes be decided by referendum?* (see [www.piredeu.eu](http://www.piredeu.eu)). Since EU treaties are similar to constitutional amendments, the question focuses on a critical meta-rule: How should decisions be taken about expanding the powers of the European Union? Because the question is independent of a specific treaty, respondents are not primed to give an answer that reflects their views about a particular European issue or about membership in the EU.

A substantial majority of EES respondents, 63 percent, are positive about referendums, including 26 percent who strongly agree. By contrast 18 percent are against, but only 4 percent take the Brussels view of strong opposition to referendums. A total of 19 percent have no opinion either way. Thus, there is more than a three and one-half to one majority in favour of referendums on EU treaties. This substantial majority is consistent with national surveys asking citizens about referendums on national political issues (Bowler et al., 2007: 352).

Support for referendums extends across the whole of Europe: the chief difference between countries is in the size of the national majority. In Ireland, Greece and the United Kingdom, more than 80 percent endorsed a referendum and in 25 of 27 member states an absolute majority of respondents was in favour. The size of the majority endorsing a referendum is more likely to be reduced by an above-average percentage of don't knows than by large-scale opposition. In Sweden and Slovenia, where endorsement is lowest, there are nonetheless pluralities of 45 and 41 percent in favour of referendums.

Since a survey question is hypothetical, replies may exaggerate demand. Turnout at actual European referendums provides an indication of the extent to which action matches words (see LeDuc, 2003: 170f). In 20 referendums in countries that were already members of the European Union when a ballot was held, turnout

has averaged 66.1 percent. Consistent with theories that turnout should be higher at first-order elections (Reif and Schmitt, 1980), in the immediately preceding national election turnout was 10 percentage points higher on average. However, by comparison with the national turnout at the immediately preceding European Parliament election, average turnout at an EU referendum was more than 12 percentage points higher.

### **Theories of Why Citizens Want Referendums**

Normative theories justifying or rejecting referendums have empirical implications. Theories that make popular participation a major desideratum of democracy imply that individuals who participate in politics or have the resources to do so will be more likely to favour referendums. An alternative theory is that referendum demand comes from dissatisfied citizens who see referendums as a chance to impose checks on governors with whom they are dissatisfied. Bowler et al. (2007) describe participatory theories as offering an "engaged" motivation for favouring referendums, while dissatisfaction with institutional performance creates an "enraged" motivation (see also, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 2002). The multi-national character of the European Union makes differences in national context potentially relevant. In countries where national referendums are held, they may be seen as suitable for EU measures too and citizens enraged by their national government may take out their ire on the EU.

Political participation is the result of a socialization process in which individuals acquire socio-economic resources and predispositions to political engagement. Empirical research consistently finds that people with more socio-economic resources, such as education, income and social status, are more likely to participate in politics (Nevitte et al., 2009). Inglehart (1990) has theorized that the EU's complex and remote character requires even more education for individuals to participate. Since older people have had more time to become familiar with politics, age should also encourage more support for referendums (see e.g. Plutzer, 2002).

A disposition to endorse political participation, including referendums, can also be driven by interest in politics. Brady et al. (1995: 283) emphasize the importance of interest in politics independent of socio-economic resources. However,

Almond and Verba (1963: 77ff, 180ff) caution that many people high in resources do not bother to participate because politicians are trusted to act as agents responsive to the wishes of better educated and economically better off citizens (cf. Lijphart, 1997). Thus:

*H 1 PARTICIPATION. The more inclined individuals are to participate in politics, the more likely they are to favour EU referendums.*

Theories of representative democracy postulate that as long as citizens are satisfied with the performance of their government, then referendums are not needed to check what trusted governors do. This theory is consistent with Jean Monnet's (1978) policy of furthering European integration through politically invisible small-scale increments of policy that claimed a 'permissive consensus' from citizens who were neither engaged nor enraged (Lindberg and Scheingold, 1970: 41). However, the eurozone crisis has made the impact of EU policies very visible, distributing costs as well as benefits.

Referendums offer citizens dissatisfied with government performance an effective means of rejecting decisions taken by governors whom they do not see as representing their views. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002: 227) argue that citizens who do not want to be engaged in conventional politics 'feel that they need to be involved, even though they would rather not be' in order to check unsatisfactory governors. Moreover, they theorize that individuals low in socio-economic resources favour referendums as giving them the opportunity to veto decisions made by policymakers representing more resourceful electors.

In the multi-level European political system, the performance of government can be evaluated at both the national and the European levels. Reif and Schmitt's (1980; Hix and Marsh, 2011) model of public opinion stresses that national politics is of first-order importance, because it provides shortcuts for understanding remote second-order issues arising at the EU level. Individuals dissatisfied with the performance of their national government or national economic situation can project their feelings onto EU institutions (cf. Duch and Stevenson, 2008: 157ff). However, a referendum on an EU issue increases the potential second-order effect of EU

performance (Glencross and Trechsel, 2011). The more confidence individuals have in how the EU performs, the less they should feel the need for referendums, while citizens against European integration should endorse referendums as offering a means of stopping moves toward an ever closer Union.

*H 2. EVALUATION OF POLITICAL PERFORMANCE. The less satisfied individuals are with the performance of the EU or their national government, the more likely they are to favour EU referendums.*

Differences among member states in the requirement for referendums on major national issues may influence whether individuals regard a referendum as a normal method of deciding major EU issues (Closa, 2007). If a country's MEPs differ about having EU referendums, their debate can break the elite spiral of silence about popular review of EU decisions and boost popular demand for a referendum (Dür and Mateo, 2011: 488f). There are substantial cross-national variations in the percentage of MEPs committed to EU referendums, ranging from 0 in four countries to 100 percent in Portugal.

Indirectly, the performance of national government may create distrust of national governors responsible for representing their citizens in EU discussions. Corruption is a major source of distrust; therefore, citizens in countries where the government is more corrupt are more likely to be enraged and demand a referendum check on what their nominal representatives agree to in Brussels. There are big differences in the extent of corruption in the governments of EU member states. On the 10-point Transparency international Corruption Perception Index, at the time of the 2009 EP election Denmark and Sweden were both placed above 9, while Bulgaria and Romania were as low as 3.8 and Italy and Greece were almost as low ([www.transparency.org](http://www.transparency.org)).

*H 3 CONTEXT. The more national context favours referendums, the more likely individuals are to favour EU referendums.*

## **Testing Hypotheses about the Demand for Referendums**

In forming their political opinions, individuals are subject to stimuli evaluated according to the prior political dispositions and cognitive capacities (Zaller, 1992: 42ff). Because we want to take both individual and contextual influences into account, multi-level modelling (MLM) is an appropriate statistic. Given the ordinal distribution of our dependent variable, the STATA `gllamm` function is used to estimate an ordered logit model (Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal, 2008; Gelman and Hill, 2007). Since the EES sample has 27,069 respondents, we focus on variables with a significance level of better than .00. Details of the distribution and coding of independent variables are given in the Appendix table.

### *Participatory Influences Not as Expected*

Although characteristics that encourage individuals to participate in national politics significantly affect the demand for EU referendums, the direction of influence sometimes differs from that predicted in hypothesis 1. Instead of social class encouraging a demand for more participation, higher status individuals are less likely to endorse referendums. Consistent with Lijphart's (1997) expectations, it appears that people above average in status appear more confident of their representatives doing what they want without a referendum check. The tendency of those lower in class to want a referendum check on governors is consistent with the Hibbing-Theiss (2002) theory that referendums are favoured by those who feel under-represented through parliamentary elections. None of the other measures of socio-economic resources—education, standard of living, age or gender-- has a significant direct effect on attitudes toward a referendum (Table 1).

Table 1 about here Participation and Performance

Indicators of political engagement do support the participation hypothesis. People more interested in politics are more in favour of referendums and this is also the case of those socialized to identify with a party (Table 1). However, the interaction of education and political interest has a significant negative effect. Education moderates the predisposition of politically interested people to favour

referendums, apparently on the grounds that educated people are more prepared to trust representatives to think as they do. Conversely, politically interested citizens with less education are, as Hibbing and Theiss-Morse argue, significantly more likely to want the right to vote on treaties. The quarter of citizens who view the EU as having an effect on their country's most important political problem are more inclined to want referendums in order to hold Brussels accountable. On the other hand, identification with Europe encourages people to feel that Brussels does represent them and referendums are less needed. These findings qualify conventional theories of resources and political interest encouraging electoral participation in national elections (cf. Brady et al., 1995; Nevin et al., 2009). This may be due to referendums being about issues rather than party or candidate-focussed.

#### *Dissatisfaction with performance drives demand*

In Europe's multi-level political system citizens have a choice of governments to be satisfied or dissatisfied with. National governments can be held to account for their performance at the European level and vice versa. As predicted in hypothesis 2, government performance at both levels has a significant effect on referendum demand. The more dissatisfied people are with their national government, the readier they are to endorse referendums that enable them to challenge treaties approved by governments that lack their confidence. In a complementary manner, individuals who voted for the governing party are more likely to accept decisions at the EU level without a referendum. Even though the EES survey was conducted after the 2008 economic crisis had erupted, the state of the national economy had no significant direct effect on referendum demand. Since an individual's standard of living also lacks a significant effect, this gives strong support to the view that attitudes toward EU referendums do not reflect economic performance but satisfaction or dissatisfaction with political performance.

Hypothesis 2 predicts that citizens dissatisfied with the EU ought to be readier to express their rage by rejecting EU treaties at referendums, and this receives statistical support. People who lack confidence in the EU's governors taking decisions in the interests of their country are significantly more likely to favour

referendums. Likewise, the more people are dissatisfied with the existing level of democracy in the EU, the readier they are to endorse referendums. Since an EU treaty advances European integration, those more opposed to an ever closer Union are readier to want the check of a referendum.

### *Context matters too*

After controlling for the effect of differences found within every country, differences in national context also have an effect on referendum demand (Table 1). When a national government appears corrupt, this significantly encourages popular demand for referendums as a check on an untrustworthy government. In addition, national corruption has an interaction effect with individual dissatisfaction with government, thereby giving an additional boost to referendum demand. National politicians and institutions also have a significant effect in mobilizing support for referendums. If a country's MEPs break the spiral of silence and start demanding a referendum, this encourages more citizens to come out in favour of such a vote and has a positive interaction effect with the requirement in a country's constitution for referendums on major national issues. The use of multiple indicators of context as well as individual-level controls results in a national requirement for referendums not having a significant effect.

Given the very large sample size, there is support for all three of our hypotheses; however, the degree of support is not equal. A likelihood ratio test of the influence of different sets of indicators<sup>3</sup> finds that the highest chi<sup>2</sup> (df) value is given to hypothesis 2, especially from measures of EU performance and satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the performance of the national government. The very strong influence of EU performance suggests that first-order national influences on EU attitudes have declined since their importance was emphasized more than three decades ago by Reif and Schmitt (1980), at least as far as issue-oriented referendums are concerned. Moreover, the eurozone crisis has increased the national salience of EU performance, creating the possibility of the 'sleeping giant' of EU issues being roused in electing the European Parliament or national parliaments (Eijk and Franklin, 2007). The likelihood ratio tests also show some support for

socio-economic resources and political engagement affecting the demand for referendums. However, this does not always occur as predicted by theories of participation, since pro-referendum citizens affected by rage at the performance of government tend to be lower in their capacity for participation. There is least support for the influence of context; within every member state attitudes toward referendums tend to be divided, with the foregoing influences accounting for within-nation differences of opinion.

Consistent with referendums offering a check on governors, referendum demand is stronger among enraged than engaged citizens (cf. Bowler et al., 2007). People who do not identify with Europe, have low confidence in EU decisions, and see it as having a democratic deficit are more likely to favour referendums that can check further advances toward an ever closer Union. While this appears to support the Brussels fear of involving unsympathetic European citizens in decisions about the future of the EU, the fear is exaggerated, because those unsympathetic with the EU are a minority of European citizens. A majority in favour of more integration also endorse referendums. Altogether, 39 percent of those favouring a referendum endorse increased integration, 33 percent are against further integration, and 28 percent are undecided. If a referendum is held, the median voter is likely to be undecided about whether an ever closer Union is in principle desirable or undesirable, and open to evaluating the specifics of the issues at stake in a given ballot.

### **Dynamic Implications**

Whatever public opinion surveys say, EU policymakers would like to continue relying on the existing system of representation without the risk of the future rejection of a treaty arrived at after painstaking negotiations among governments representing member states. Since the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark have legal obligations to hold a referendum before ratifying any new treaty, to sustain this position would require confining the EU's activities within the limits of powers conferred by existing treaties. The new economic powers approved to deal with the eurozone crisis have an ambiguous status: they are set out in a document described

as a Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance.<sup>4</sup> Its section 16 declares that 'within five years at most following the entry into force of this Treaty' necessary steps will be taken to 'incorporate the substance of this Treaty into the legal framework of the European Union'. A referendum in one or more countries appears unavoidable in the medium term; doing so under existing practices would raise issues about equality among EU citizens.

### *Unanimity and Inequality in a Multi-National EU*

In a national referendum every citizen has the right to vote. However, in the EU today the few percent living in countries have a vote on multi-national EU treaties and the unanimity requirement means that this small minority determines the outcome for up to 99 percent with no vote. A unanimity rule is not required to amend a national constitution. The norm is to require some kind of super or concurring majority of legislative chambers, federal partners or citizens.

It would be possible to finesse the unanimity requirement by making provision for enhanced cooperation, an existing EU procedure in which a substantial number of member states agree to cooperate for stated ends, but those that do not wish to do so opt out (Piris, 2012). Thus, if an EU measure was rejected in one or more national referendums, a national majority would be respected by the country being allowed to opt out of its provisions, while enhanced cooperation would proceed among countries where a majority approved (Koelliker, 2006).

The dynamic consequences of enhanced co-operation for European integration depend on whether divisions are temporary or permanent (Rose, 2013: chapter 9). The EU's official glossary mistakenly describes the variable geometry that initially results from enhanced co-operation as creating 'irreconcilable' differences separating member states ([www.europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/glossary](http://www.europa.eu/legislation_summaries/glossary)). However, divisions are temporary if there are leaders and laggards. Should the initiative of leaders in enhanced co-operation appear successful, laggards can catch up and adopt an enhance policy to. What originally appeared as a two-speed Europe then becomes a Union in which all member states have sooner or later moved together. The conversion of EFTA

members into EU members is an example of catching up, while the eurozone crisis has re-enforced the division of Europe into multiple currency zones.

### *Promoting Equality*

Current practice within the EU creates gross inequalities between those of its citizens allowed to vote on treaties and those that are not. Since the EU lacks the power to prevent a national government from calling a referendum, the only way to give every European citizen the right to vote would be to hold a pan-European referendum on each new treaty. Consistent with the EU's use of super-majorities and rules for amending national constitutions, a positive EU outcome could require a concurring majority of the electorate and of member states. This principle is often found in federal systems (Rose, 2012) and is consistent with the logical of individuals being both national and European citizens.

The EU regards endorsement by national governments as a surrogate form of endorsement by national citizens; however, surrogate endorsement is a very weak source of popular commitment. The strongest form of popular commitment is that conferred by a popular vote. A referendum can increase commitment by encouraging national governments and parties in favour of an ever closer union to campaign for popular support for European integration. Because a referendum involves a sustained campaign about an issue, electors with no strongly held views or knowledge about the EU are more likely to change their minds in the light of campaign information (see Kriesi, 2012; Hobolt, 2007: chapter 7). If a turnout of 50 percent was required for a referendum to be authoritative, it would prod groups in favour of EU integration to campaign more actively than in a European Parliament election, where turnout was 43 percent in 2009. If past patterns persist, most EU referendums would show a majority in favour of further integration.

A basic premise of a democratic vote is that losers as well as winners should accept the outcome (Anderson et al., 2005). Losers' consent is absent when national referendums are held selectively, since citizens of up to two dozen states have no right to vote. A treaty endorsed by a majority of voters and countries would have a far better claim to popular commitment than an Economic Stability Treaty negotiated

at the elite level and with a strong technocratic component. Likewise, a treaty that could not gain support from most of Europe's citizens should force EU policymakers to ask themselves why they are out of touch with the citizens whom they are meant to represent.

## Notes

1. An Initiative is different from a referendum because the decision to call a vote and the text of the question is determined by whoever organizes the initiative (see Setälä and Schiller, 2012).
2. In addition, Norway has held two referendums in which voters rejected EU membership and Switzerland six about association with the EU.
3. Details available from the authors.
4. A cognate word for treaty is used in other official languages except German, which describes the document ambiguously as a *vertrag* (treaty or contract) or evasively as a *pakt*.

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Table 1. INFLUENCES ON POPULAR DEMAND FOR REFERENDUMS

	Coefficient	Stand. Error	P
Hypothesis 1 PARTICIPATION			
<i>Socio-Economic Resources</i>			
Social class	-.112	.015	.000
Education	-.007	.013	.584
Standard of living	.007	.016	.645
Age	-.002	.001	.010
Female	.000	.023	.999
<i>Political Engagement</i>			
Interest in politics	.457	.061	.000
Interest in politics*education	-.098	.017	.000
Identifies with a party	.113	.024	.000
Identifies with Europe	-.105	.024	.000
EU handles most important problem	.110	.026	.000
Hypothesis 2 POLITICAL PERFORMANCE			
<i>National Performance</i>			
Dissatisfied government record	.148	.038	.000
Dissatisfied national economy	-.004	.013	.738
Voted for governing party	-.071	.026	.006
<i>EU Performance</i>			
Less confidence in EU decisions	.109	.017	.000
Dislikes EU integration	.148	.014	.000
Dissatisfied with democracy	.213	.020	.000
Hypothesis 3 NATIONAL CONTEXT			
Perception of corruption index	.033	.010	.001
National referendum required	-.082	.043	.058
National MEPs pro-referendum	.008	.001	.000
National referendum *MEPs pro-ref.	.012	.001	.000
Dissatisfied govt.* Corruption index	.021	.006	.000
log likelihood	-37325.99		
Variance	.06123274		
AIC	74703.98		

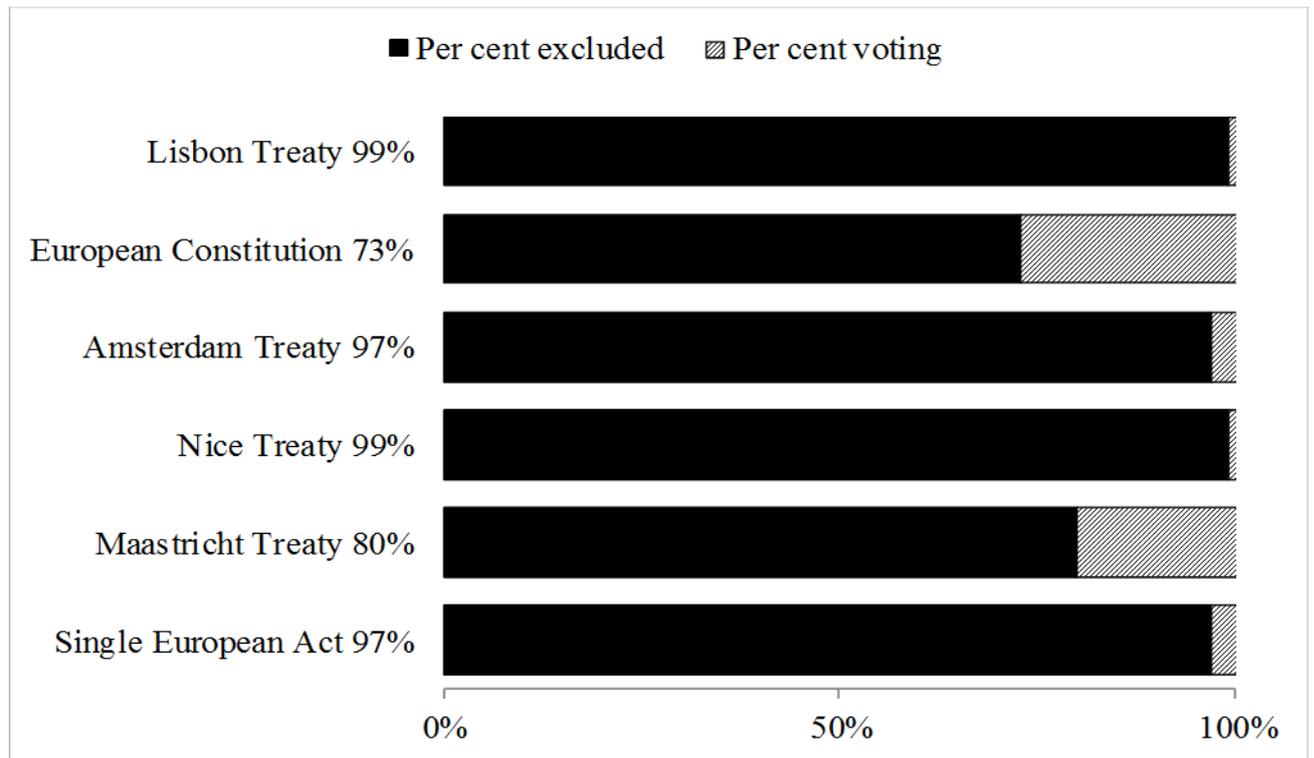
Source: European Election Study 2009 [www.piredeu.eu](http://www.piredeu.eu); Individual level N=27,069; Context level N=27. The ordered logit model was estimated using the gllamm command in Stata.

Appendix Table: LIST OF VARIABLES IN THE ANALYSIS

	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
DEPENDENT VARIABLE				
Decide treaty changes by referendum	1	5	3.67	1.11
Hypothesis 1 PARTICIPATION				
<i>Socio-Economic Resources</i>				
Social class	1	3	2.37	0.85
Education	0	5	3.30	1.32
Standard of living	1	3	2.05	0.78
Age	18	75	49.97	16.23
Female	0	1	0.56	-
<i>Political Engagement</i>				
Interest in politics	0	1	0.53	-
Identifies with a party	0	1	0.54	-
Identifies with Europe	0	1	0.57	-
EU handles most important problem	0	1	0.24	-
Hypothesis 2 POLITICAL PERFORMANCE				
<i>National Performance</i>				
Dissatisfied with government record	0	1	0.52	-
Dissatisfied national economy	1	4	3.15	0.92
Voted for governing party	0	1	0.30	-
<i>EU Performance</i>				
Less confidence in EU decisions	1	4	2.60	0.75
Dislikes EU integration	1	3	1.90	0.83
Dissatisfied with democracy	1	4	2.63	0.71
Hypothesis 3 NATIONAL CONTEXT				
National referendum required	0	1	0.37	-
National MEPs pro-referendum	0	100	34.05	28.85
Perception of corruption index (inverted)	0.7	6.2	3.64	1.79

Notes: Satisfied democracy scale averages responses for EU and national institutions. Perception of Corruption index 2009: Transparency International Index inverted so higher score is more corrupt. Transparency International, [www.transparency.org](http://www.transparency.org). European Election Study ([www.piredeu.eu](http://www.piredeu.eu)). Individual respondents in 27 countries, 27,069.

**Figure 1. EXCLUSION OF EUROPE'S CITIZENS BY NATIONAL REFERENDUMS**



Notes: Lisbon: Ireland voted; 26 countries did not. European Constitution: France, Spain, Luxembourg and Netherlands voted, 21 did not. Amsterdam: Ireland and Denmark voted, 13 countries did not. Nice: Ireland voted, 14 countries did not. Maastricht: France, Ireland and Denmark voted, 9 countries did not. Single European Act: Denmark and Ireland voted, 10 countries did not.