Why ‘Return to Europe?’ Exploring Public Opinion to European Union Membership in the Visegrád Countries 2002-2004

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DECLARATION

I Annelin Andersen confirm that this is my own work and the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged.

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Abstract

This study investigates public opinion formation in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary between 2002-2004 using Zaller’s model of opinion formation and Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis. The study has several purposes. A primary objective is to attempt to provide useful information about the selected aspects of the public opinion formation process in the case study countries through using the models. The study also wishes to explore whether the models are able to explain public opinion, evaluate their parsimony and applicability and critically examine their theoretical frameworks. A further purpose is to compare and contrast the models. A final objective is to contribute to the academic debate on whether ‘traditional’ models of public opinion formation which were developed to study public opinion in the old member states are applicable to case studies in the post-communist new member states. This part of the study will discuss whether the theoretical frameworks of the selected models can be transferred to countries with different political contexts and dynamics surrounding the EU issue than countries in the EU15. The study mainly applies quantitative methods to test the models, but also extensive reviews about the literature about the EU issue and the political realities of the selected case study countries had to be conducted to facilitate the specification of the models and to interpret the results.

The study concludes that while none of the models could be confirmed unconditionally, they still produced useful information about attitudes towards EU membership. While the results questioned the theoretical framework of Zaller’s model on a more fundamental level than Gabel and Palmer’s hypothesis, the latter model was concluded to be the most robust framework to study public opinion. Despite the slight preference for Gabel and Palmer’s model, both models were recommended for further research. Therefore, alternative approaches were suggested on how to further explore how the models can contribute to knowledge about how citizens form opinions on European integration. The models were also found to be transferable to the new member states, even if it was suggested that the theoretical frameworks and results may have to be interpreted differently than if the models were applied to old member states.
First of all, I wish to thank my supervisors, Dr. Neil Robinson and Dr. Brendan Halpin, for their advice and support throughout the process and for safely guiding the project into completion. I will always be grateful for their time and effort, and for always having the time to give advice during times of frustration. I am also greatly indebted to Dr. John O’Brennan, who persuaded me to do a PhD, and has been my friend, mentor and advisor throughout the years. I have also been privileged to have the support and help from the faculty at UL, especially Prof. Edward Moxon-Browne and Dr. Owen Worth. I also wish to thank Professor Frances Millard at the University of Essex and Dr. Simona Guerra at the University of Nottingham for their advice.

I also wish to thank my friends, because I literally could not have done it without them; Kyle Murray, Dr. Barry Hussey, Dr. Gerard Downes, Dr. Andrew Shorten, Eidin Nishe, Sarah Hunt and Mujde Erdinc. I am also grateful to Tårnfrid for her pep-talks and statistical advice, and my partner Tom, who patiently cooked, made coffee and offered invaluable support. Thanks are also in order to Patsy, Edina, Antonio, Snorre and Perris, who kept me amused.

This thesis is in its entirety dedicated to Karl Johan Solheim, who taught me how to write.
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Control tests for Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis, generalised ordered logistic regression

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List of abbreviations

ANO          Alliance of the New Citizen
AWS          Solidarity Electoral Action
CEE          Central and Eastern Europe
CEEC         Central and Eastern European countries
CFSP         Common Foreign and Security Policy
ČSSD         Czech Social Democratic Party
EC           European Community
ECT          European Constitutional Treaty
EEA          European Economic Area
EMU          Economic and Monetary Union
EPP          European People’s Party
EU           European Union
EU8          The eight post-communist countries which joined the EU in 2004
EU15         EU member states before the 2004 enlargement
EU27         All EU member states
FGKP         Independent Smallholders’ and Citizens’ Party
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<td>HZDS-(DU)</td>
<td>Movement for a Democratic Slovakia-(Democratic Union)</td>
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<td>KSČM</td>
<td>Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia</td>
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<td>KDH</td>
<td>Christian Democratic Movement</td>
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<td>KDU-ČSL</td>
<td>Christian-Democratic Union-Czechoslovak People's Party</td>
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<td>KSS</td>
<td>Communist Party of Slovakia</td>
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<td>LRP</td>
<td>League of Polish Families</td>
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<td>MDF</td>
<td>Hungarian Democratic Forum</td>
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<td>MIEP</td>
<td>Hungarian Justice and Life party</td>
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<td>MSzP</td>
<td>Hungarian Socialist Party</td>
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<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</td>
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<td>ODS</td>
<td>Civic Democratic Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>PES</td>
<td>Party of European Socialists</td>
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<td>PiS</td>
<td>Law and Justice Party</td>
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<td>PO</td>
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<td>PSL</td>
<td>Polish Peasant Party (Polish People's Party)</td>
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<td>PZPR</td>
<td>Polish Communist Worker's Party</td>
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<td>SDKÚ</td>
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<td>SDL</td>
<td>Party of the Democratic Left</td>
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<td>Social Democracy of Poland</td>
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<td>SI</td>
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Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1. Introduction to the subject area and nature of the problem

Leon Lindberg and Stuart Scheingold in the 1970s famously described public opinion towards the European Community as being characterised by a ‘permissive consensus’. Since then, however, European citizens have increasingly begun to question the benefits of the Common Market. The introduction of two new pillars of European co-operation in the 1992 Treaty of Maastricht brought the opposition of sections of the European populace to the surface. Limited support for European policies has subsequently been expressed through referendums, such as the Irish no to

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the Nice and Lisbon Treaties and the Danish veto to Maastricht in the first referendums on the treaties.

The recent decade also saw the accession of ten post-communist states to the Union. The Central and Eastern European countries which emerged from communist systems in the late 1980s and early 1990s had early envisioned a ‘return to Europe,’ which was widely regarded as a means of securing successful reforms and democratic stability. However, the early uncontested view that there was no alternative to EU membership was increasingly challenged as negotiations commenced and EU membership became a reality; only 52 percent of citizens in the post-communist states believed that EU membership was a ‘good thing’ in 2008.²

While research on public opinion towards European integration is a subject which has been well explored since the 1970s, challenges for the discipline began to emerge with the need to include new case studies in Central and Eastern Europe. The models and variables which traditionally had been applied to explore how citizens form opinions had largely been directed at citizens in consolidated democracies. New approaches had to be found to suit the specificities of countries that were still in transition from communism. To begin with, citizens in these countries form opinions within a fluid political context with unstable party systems and where available political choices often lack clarity, which makes it difficult to study the influence of elite cues and the political context of EU accession. Secondly, political and economic discontent and feelings of disillusionment towards the democratic project created a general feeling of urgency of EU membership, which delayed the start of an elite debate which critically analysed the conditions of accession and EU policies. As Euro-critical voices began to emerge in the mid-to late 1990s, a cleavage in public opinion became visible; one between those who supported reform and EU membership, and those who felt nostalgic towards old ways and were sceptical to

² European Commission Eurobarometer 70, October-November 2008.
integration. These factors, among others, created a different dynamic of public opinion trends than in the old member states.

The difference in circumstances in which EU membership was evaluated in Central and Eastern Europe brought about an academic debate on which factors shape public opinion in the new accession countries. As will be further elaborated upon in the literature review in chapter 2, scholars have yet to reach a consensus about which theoretical approaches, variables and methodologies best explain how post-communist electorates form opinions on EU membership. The fact that the field is still developing brings opportunities for further research, and there is still room to search for approaches which crack the code on which cues and factors shape the opinions of citizens in the new member states on European integration.

1.2. The research questions and case studies

This study attempts to make a general contribution to public opinion research in the post-communist countries, and sets out to answer three questions. Its primary objective is to apply two selected models of opinion formation, Zaller’s model of opinion formation and Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis, in order to investigate a selection of variables which are hypothesised to influence how citizens form opinions on European integration and to attempt to provide useful information about public opinion formation through using the models. The secondary aim is to discuss and assess the theoretical foundations of the models, as well as their applicability and parsimony, and explore whether and how the models can be applied in future research into public opinion formation in the new member states. The study will, based on this discussion, seek to establish whether one model holds stronger explanatory effect than the other, and whether the different properties of the models make one more suited for further study into public opinion in the new member states than the other. A third objective of the study is to contribute to the academic debate on whether ‘old’ models of opinion formation, which originally were designed to test

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case studies in the old member states, are applicable to case studies in Central and Eastern Europe. This part of the study discusses whether the theoretical frameworks of the models are suited to deal with the specificities of post-communist states, and whether the assumptions on how opinions towards European integration are shaped are applicable to this specific context. This part of the study does not attempt to fully answer the question on the applicability of traditional models towards new member states, but will discuss how the tests of these models have contributed to the debate.

The study concentrates on four case studies, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary, which often are treated by the political science literature as the ‘Visegrád bloc’, or the ‘Visegrád Four’, but uses the remaining post-communist 2004 accession states; Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia, as control cases. The choice of models, case studies and methodology will be more thoroughly explained and justified in Chapter 3.

1.3. What contribution will this study make

This study does not aim to develop a meta-theory on how citizens form opinions on integration in Central and Eastern Europe, and neither does it attempt to fully explain all aspects of the opinion formation process. However, the justification for this study lies within the study design and methodology. The selected models for research are scientifically interesting for research in the new member states since they test aspects of opinion formation which still are left to be fully explored for post-communist case studies. While Zaller’s model has not been applied at all to case studies in the new member states, studies which apply Gabel and Palmer’s hypothesis are not conclusive. Secondly, the study applies a methodology which tests the explanatory effects of the model before, during and after the referendum campaign. Testing the models over time will inform whether the models are stable as explanatory models during times of high and low issue salience and will therefore bring about more solid results to support a conclusion. Again, this is more fully explained in chapter 3.

5 The Visegrád triangle was originally a co-operation between Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia as a mechanism to pursue co-operation with Western European institutions. The group became known as the ‘Visegrád Four’ after Czechoslovakia was divided in 1993.
This framework of the study is restricted for many reasons. First and foremost, the scope of a thesis is not sufficiently large to allow for a wide range of approaches to be explored, moreover, designing a very ambitious study creates several pitfalls for falsification of the hypotheses. Focusing on a narrower range of hypotheses facilitates a more focused study, which also constitutes an argument for choosing fewer case studies, since these can be studied more thoroughly than if several, or all, post-communist EU member states were selected for analysis.

Since the framework for analysis is restricted in terms of the selection of models as well as cases, there are also restrictions in terms of the expected output. If the goal was to fully explain public opinion to European integration in the new member states, the objective would be too wide-ranging and ambitious to be met by the study design. Naturally, the study does take into account that there are other factors than those which are explored here which shape public opinion, but the study only attempts to define the effects of a limited number of factors. The choice of a limited framework still allows for a rewarding contribution to be produced from the study, given the scientific interest of the models; the choice of case studies whose opinion dynamics have yet to be fully explored; whether the models are useful frameworks for further studies; and finally, whether the study has contributed to the academic dilemma on whether old models of opinion formation can be transferred to the new member states.

1.4. Chapter outlines

In order to define the scientific framework of this study, a review of the available literature will be provided in chapter 2. The chapter will seek to provide a description and discussion of the hypotheses, methodological approaches and schools of thought within public opinion research, and will address how the realm has been explored within the old as well as the new member states. Chapter 3 will begin with a discussion on how to design a study which can facilitate a contribution to the existing literature, and will present the models which were chosen as theoretical framework in this study and justify these choices. The case studies and methodology of the study will be outlined, along with a description of the process of searching for available data as well as the problems which were encountered and how these were solved. This will be followed by a description of the dependent and independent variables, how the
questions were phrased in the survey, and how the variables were coded. The chapter will also address problems with the selected independent variables and how these were solved. Throughout the chapter, decisions on all methodological aspects of the project will be justified and explained. Chapters 4-7 will present the results for the respective case studies, beginning with the Czech Republic, and continuing with Slovakia, Poland and Hungary. All chapters will begin with a brief introduction on the transition from communism to democracy and market economy, and will be followed by descriptions of the specificities of the respective party systems and party positions on European integration. The empirical results from each study will be presented, and followed by discussions of the explanatory powers of the models for the respective case study. Chapter 8 will present the results for the control cases; however, these tests will be less extensive than the tests in the main case studies and will be used for broad comparative purposes only. Chapter 9 will address the research questions, and will begin with a summary of the results and the conclusions from the individual case studies. This summary will allow for comparative discussion of the explanatory powers of the models which will seek to conclude whether the models adequately explain public opinion formation in the countries when they are treated as a bloc. These sections will also discuss the theoretical foundations of the models and possible weaknesses with the intellectual reasoning behind the hypotheses, and will evaluate the applicability and parsimony of the models. Moreover, approaches for future research on the models will be suggested. The next section will compare the explanatory effects of the models and aim to establish whether one can more adequately explain public opinion formation than the other. Finally, based on the previous sections, a discussion on whether the models are suited for research on public opinion in the new member states will be conducted. The conclusion in chapter 10 will provide a brief summary of the thesis, discuss whether the objectives of the study were met, and will provide a justification for the scientific contribution of this study. The chapter will also address the limitations of this study and possible criticisms towards the selected approach. The chapter will be concluded with some final remarks about the future of public opinion research.
Chapter 2
Literature review: Variables, Approaches and Methods in Public Opinion Research

2.1. Aims and introduction
The purpose of this chapter is to give a critical account of the available literature on the formation of public opinion towards European integration. The tasks of the chapter are to describe the key variables and methods that have been applied in research, and discuss how these have been subject to debate among public opinion researchers. This background study has been done with the purpose of defining approaches which are still left to be explored, and identify opportunities to add to the existing research material. How this functions as a foundation for the definition of this research project is further described in chapter 3.

To begin with, the subject of research into public opinion has attracted scholarly interest for a great number of years. This survey of the literature will demonstrate that the topic has been well-explored in the cases of EU15 and the EFTA member states, but that such research in Central and Eastern Europe, or new member states, is a field which is still developing. While comparative political behaviour has been thoroughly examined in the former case, there is less systematic research pursued about public opinion in the recent accession countries, which represents a lacuna in the realm of public opinion studies. Researchers within the field who have focused on the new members states question whether public opinion in recent EU member states is shaped by different dynamics than in old member states; however, these are yet to be thoroughly defined. What is more, few studies have been conducted which aim to test for determinants of public opinion in a comparative perspective between the old and new member states. The chapter will first begin with an outline of theories and explanatory variables which have been applied in public opinion research towards the old member states, and will then address the literature on the subject towards Central and Eastern Europe specifically. Given that providing a full account of the variables which have been applied in opinion research is an extensive task, this review is not comprehensive. Some approaches will receive more attention than others, depending on how broadly they have been applied and their scientific interest.

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8 Although scholarly work which tests for East-West similarities can be found in Fidrmuc, J. and Doyle, O. (2004), 'Testing for East-West Similarities: Determinants of Support for European Integration Within the EU-25,' paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the European Public Choice Society, Durham, 31 March-3 April.
2.2. The referendum as the expression of public opinion

It is widely recognised among scholars that the opinion formation process and voter preferences play different roles in EU politics than in national politics.\(^9\) Research into public opinion toward European integration and ad-hoc issues will necessarily take on different forms and approaches than traditional public opinion research, which aims to explain voting behaviour in elections.\(^10\) However, when studying public opinion toward issues of European integration, there are other forms of citizen participation which are the subjects of study, mainly referendums, which take on different dynamics than national elections and expose the voters to different sets of choices.\(^11\) There have been 41 referendums held on various aspects of European integration, which have been subject to substantial research.\(^12\)

The bulk of the studies conducted on referendums have traditionally focused on how voters behave and decide, and has focused on single countries or referendums,\(^13\) blocks of comparable countries, or countries that have had referendums around the same time, or alternatively have belonged to the same groups of accession.\(^14\) Some

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\(^10\) Arguably the most significant foundation for public opinion research was formalised in the late 1960s by Rokkan and Lipset, who set a framework for mass opinion studies in Europe through the development of a general model to explain cleavages within public opinion in West European democracies. See Rokkan, S. and Lipset, S.M (eds) (1967), Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives, New York: Free Press.

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\(^12\) Hobolt, S.B. (2006), ‘Direct Democracy and European Integration,’ Journal of European Public Policy, 31 (1), p. 154. The article was written before the Irish 2008 referendum on the Lisbon Treaty, which brings the total number of referendums to 42.


works have also compared referendums within one country.\textsuperscript{15} Hobolt makes the criticism that there is a lack of comparative studies conducted on EU referendums,\textsuperscript{16} and Hug’s criticism also points out that studies have mainly been descriptive and that authors have tried to draw generalisations from single case studies.\textsuperscript{17} Taggart and Szczerbiak's criticism is that the comparative literature on referendums is disparate, and that attempts on general theorising are rare.\textsuperscript{18} Hobolt further notes that there are two competing approaches in referendum studies, the ‘attitude school’ and the ‘second-order election’ school, in which the former focuses on values and beliefs, while the latter argues that voters either use the referendums to express (dis)satisfaction with the current government, or follow the recommendations from political parties.\textsuperscript{19}

However, larger comparative studies exist. Hug presents an attempt to develop a model to explain voting behaviour in referendums through a comparative study of 16 referendums on European integration. The study is extensive, not just given the number of case studies, but also because of the many variables taken into account. The study assesses a range of variables, such as party positions and the voters' relations to the current government, and socio-economic explanations. This is a rare example of a work which develops a general theoretical framework based upon empirical examinations through a comparative approach. Another extensive comparative study conducted on referendums can be found in Jenssen, Giljam and Pesonen,\textsuperscript{20} who apply a wide range of hypotheses to explain the outcomes of the three 1994 Nordic referendums on EU membership. The study also provides a discussion on how the referendum outcomes impact on the political system.

2.3. Which variables explain public opinion formation?

\textsuperscript{17} Hug, p. 47ff.
\textsuperscript{19} Hobolt 2006, p. 154f.
Over the years that public opinion formation has been studied, a vast number of hypotheses have been developed to explain the factors which shape public opinion. This section will address the most commonly used approaches and how these have been subjected to empirical tests and critiques from other scholars, in order to provide a brief overview over the most well-known approaches in traditional public opinion research. Even if the theories, models and approaches which will be dealt with in this section have been little or not applied at all to case studies in Central and Eastern Europe, it is still necessary to include them in order to be familiar with existing approaches when searching for frameworks to apply to Central and Eastern European case studies.

2.3.1. The ‘cognitive mobilisation hypothesis’

The cognitive mobilisation hypothesis was developed by Inglehart in the early 1970s, based upon a study of voters in Britain, France, Germany and Italy. Inglehart proposed that citizens with higher levels of cognitive mobilisation, i.e. those who possess high knowledge about politics and economics, will be more positively orientated towards European integration. This is based upon the assumption that these individuals will be better able to produce abstract ideas about the consequences of European integration, and also, since they possess higher knowledge, will feel less threatened by it. The study also controls for socio-economic variables such as income, education and social class, and argues to find a connection between education and support for the EC; the higher the education the respondents possess, the higher the level of support for the EC.

Scholarly consensus has not been reached on whether this argument can be verified, even if there is a common assumption that the effect of cognitive skills cannot be underestimated. However, Fidrmuc and Doyle argue that studies applying this hypothesis are inconclusive, but the hypothesis was supported in Inglehart et. al who

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21 Inglehart, R. (1970a), ‘Cognitive Mobilisation and European Identity,’ Comparative Politics, 3 (1)
22 Ibid., p. 48ff.
23 Ibid., p. 51.
tested the assumption in surveys covering the time period of 1973-86,\textsuperscript{25} and Janssen, who also controlled for political values.\textsuperscript{26} Gabel, however, criticises these scholars for not including necessary control variables for other or possibly confounding explanations.\textsuperscript{27} In a study which cross-checks five theories, Gabel finds that there is a positive connection between cognitive skills and support.\textsuperscript{28}

2.3.2. Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis

Several academics emphasise the importance of national factors in the opinion formation process, and there is widespread consensus among scholars that voters tend to domesticate issues of European integration, often due to little knowledge about the EU.\textsuperscript{29} Gabel criticises the fact that few scholars have explored how citizens’ economic interests affect their views on international economic policy,\textsuperscript{30} and aims to control such effects in the development of a hypothesis which explores the effect of cost-benefit calculations when citizens form opinions on European integration. This utilitarian hypothesis was initially formalised by Gabel and Palmer (1995), Gabel (1998a), and was extended in Gabel (1998b) and Gabel (1998c), as well as Gabel and Whitten (1997).\textsuperscript{31} This approach argues that economic conditions will influence opinion formation, and relies on the suggestion that individuals will make strategic calculations as to which costs and benefits are to be expected from European

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., p. 351f.
integration. These calculations are related to individual evaluations of one’s own ability to benefit from European integration, which function as proxies for objective economic conditions. The hypothesis assumes that the more welfare gains the individuals imagine they will get from integration, the more positive views they will hold towards it.

Gabel and Palmer’s model is a response to Eichenberg and Dalton’s model of economic voting, which argues that objective economic conditions will influence support for European integration. While Eichenberg and Dalton argue that favourable economic conditions will generate support for integration, Gabel and Palmer believe the assumption that citizens will evaluate the EC on the basis of the national economic situation is inappropriate, since EC policy is one of several factors which will influence the domestic economy. They argue that it therefore seems unlikely that citizens will hold the EC responsible in the event of economic problems in the country, but argue that evaluations of one’s personal economic situation will function as proxies for how they view the national economy. Therefore, Gabel and Palmer hypothesised that support for EC membership would be correlated with the benefits individuals associate with it, which are related to macro-economic factors as well as towards the perceived benefits for oneself as an individual.

Gabel’s test applications of the hypothesis emphasise and test the effects of different predictors which are claimed to indicate whether individuals will expect costs or benefits from integration. In the first formulation of the hypothesis, Gabel and Palmer test for the effects of macro-and micro-economic factors, such as the country’s trade deficit with the EU, the nation’s death toll in the Second World War (related to concern with security), and socio-economic characteristics, which are argued to be proxies for individual competitiveness on the European labour market. The tested predictors were education, farmers, income and place of residence. The justifications for the choice of predictors were that the more highly-educated would be enthusiastic

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33 Often referred to in the literature as ‘cognitive shortcuts’ – factors that individuals use as substitutes for relevant information about consequences of integration, see Tverdova and Anderson, p. 189, for a deeper explanation of the hypothesis. Another justification for voter’s use of shortcuts lies in the fact that the public generally are little informed and concerned about the EU; see Gabel 1998c, p. 939, which can be argued to work as an underlying reason for simplifying the issue.
about the opportunities of an open labour market and less fearful of unemployment than the lower educated and therefore be positive towards integration, and farmers were also expected to be positive given the expected benefits from the Common Agricultural Policy. People with higher income are expected to prefer an open fiscal marked and be less dependent on welfare programmes, and therefore be more supportive of EU membership. Finally, place of residence was argued to be a significant variable, since people residing close to borders would be expected to benefit from cross-border interaction, and hence be supportive of integration. The tests of the models applied different sets of variables; Gabel (1998a) and Gabel (1998b) tested for the effects of belonging to different occupational groups – Gabel (1998a) also included unemployment - in addition to income and education. Gabel and Whitten also included individual evaluations of the personal and national economy, in addition to demographic factors, such as skilled and unskilled workers, the urban-rural division, age, gender, education, unemployment and occupational groups. To summarise, the tests which have been carried out on the hypothesis have not identified a hierarchy of variables which follow from the theoretical foundations of the model, but rather have used the model as a theoretical foundation for testing different measures of utilitarian considerations. Therefore, academic support for the model has been reached through a variety of approaches. Moreover, some authors have used the model as a point of departure for case-specific analyses and rephrased the theoretical foundation to better suit the selected cases studies.

The utilitarian hypothesis has been applied by several scholars to explain support for EU membership. McLaren finds that the hypothesis explains an all-European pattern of political behaviour towards the EU,34 also in tests which cross-check with the effect of national identity and satisfaction with the incumbent government.35 A test which does not directly apply the hypothesis, but conducts tests with similar variables, also finds that both personal and national economic performance affect support towards EU membership.36 While testing utilitarian support at the national and regional level through assessing the effect of trade integration, economic growth, inflation, inflation,
budgetary impact of membership on the country/region, and unemployment, Mahler et al. provide support for the hypothesis on both levels.\textsuperscript{37} Moreover, Karp and Bowler suggest that assessment of national and economic circumstances also may be tied to opinions about enlargement, and hence follow a similar line of reasoning when measuring views towards a particular aspect of integration.\textsuperscript{38} The same reasoning has been found to have an explanatory effect in several case studies in Central and Eastern Europe, as explained more thoroughly in section 2.6.

### 2.3.3. Socio-economic explanations

While the utilitarian hypothesis emphasises the effects of socio-economic factors with the justification that they will function as measures of personal competitiveness, a common understanding has long prevailed among researchers that these factors will affect support for integration. Hug finds that socio-economics have an impact in his study of 16 referendums on European integration,\textsuperscript{39} and Wessels finds that the effects of socio-economic factors vary over time, but constitute consistent factors towards choices on European integration.\textsuperscript{40} Also, in the Nordic referendums, patterns have been established to be consistent; Pierce et. al. find a clear geographical centre-periphery cleavage in the Norwegian 1972 referendum,\textsuperscript{41} while Ringdal and Valen find the presence of a clear social and geographical cleavage in the Nordic 1994 accession referendums, in which voters in central areas were more likely to vote yes that those in more peripheral areas. They also found evidence that women, the poor, the uneducated and the less educated were more likely to vote no to EU membership.\textsuperscript{42} Aylott argues that the same social and geographical cleavages were evident in the Swedish 2003 referendum on EMU accession.\textsuperscript{43} Listhaug and Sciarini


\textsuperscript{39} Hug, p. 68.


\textsuperscript{42} Ringdal, K. and Valen, H. (1998), ‘Structural divisions in the EU referendums,’ in Jenssen et. al., To join or not to join, p. 263.

\textsuperscript{43} Aylott, p. 546.
find in a comparative study of the Norwegian 1994 EU referendum and the Swiss 1992 EEA referendum that socio-economic variables do not have the same effects in the case studies; for example, in Switzerland, women were slightly more inclined to vote for EEA membership, while, agreeing with Ringdal and Valen, Norwegian women were more likely to vote against it. Furthermore, Brouard and Tiberj find clear effects of socio-economic characteristics in their study on the French 2005 referendum on the Constitutional Treaty; the no-voters were the farmers, blue-collar workers, public sector employees and the unemployed, and men were more sceptical than women.

2.3.4. Political orientation and left-right placement

Other researchers emphasise the effect of political orientation. To begin with, several authors have found that left-right placement is correlated with attitudes towards the EU, even if the effects differ between case studies. Aspinwall finds that anti-integrationist attitudes will be expressed more on the far left and far right, while the centre will have a more supranational and liberal outlook. However, several studies conducted on Nordic referendums on EU membership conclude that voters on the left of the political scale tend to express more anti-EC/EU attitudes than voters on the right. Listhaug and Sciarini, however, find the opposite to be the case in the Swiss 1992 referendum on EEA membership; voters on the moderate left were more inclined to vote for the Treaty than those in the centre or right on the scale. Qvortrup sees a pattern in the Dutch and French 2005 referendums, where the majority of voters on the political fringes of the system voted against the Treaty. In other studies, the effect is found to be weaker; in a study of the left-right connection to

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44 Listhaug and Sciarini, p. 423ff.
pro/anti-EU attitudes, van der Eijk and Franklin find that there is no coherent connection between these two factors,\(^{50}\) a conclusion similar to that of Aylott, who finds that the lack of elite consensus on the contested issue in the Swedish 2003 EMU referendum could not create a basis for a correlation between left-right placement and voter choice.\(^{51}\)

2.3.5. Values and attitudes

That values matter when voters form opinions to European integration is a common understanding in public opinion research. One early study on values was conducted by Inglehart who developed the ‘value hypothesis’ in 1970, which posited that support for European integration will be associated with stable value orientations which are formed during an individual’s pre-adult years.\(^{52}\) One of the most well-known contributions to research on attitudes to European integration is his hypothesis on materialist vs. post-materialist values, which argues that as economic and material security consolidate, new priorities will enter the electorate, and conflicting values will be formed. Traditional values that are concerned with economic and physical security, ‘materialist’ values, and values that emphasise self-actualisation and intellectual fulfilment, ‘post-materialist’ values, will generate different evaluations of EU membership, according to Inglehart. The former will be more concerned with issues regarded as being the responsibility of the nation-state, and the value change the post-materialists will have experienced will make them ascribe to a more cosmopolitan outlook, and hence be more positively oriented towards supranational governance.\(^{53}\) Even though this theory may be the most frequently cited explanation for citizens’ attitudes towards European integration,\(^{54}\) empirical tests of this theory have been argued inconclusive.\(^{55}\) An example of a study which tests the hypothesis is from Janssen, who tests the theory in a study of four EU countries. The test claimed to


\(^{55}\) Gabel 1998a, p. 336.
find evidence for the thesis that post-materialists are more cosmopolitan than materialists, but while further testing this with regards attitudes to European integration, he finds that the argument only can be verified empirically when the data are cross-checked with cognitive skills. Anderson claims to find that the opposite is the case; post-materialism was found to be statistically significant in only two of the six countries in his study; moreover, the coefficient displayed a negative effect in one of these. Mahler et. al report mixed results from a multi-level analysis which also controls for economic considerations; a linkage was established between post-materialist values and support for the EU when tested on an individual level. When applying aggregate data, however, there was little evidence to support the hypothesis.

Several other studies have investigated causality between value orientations and opinions toward integration. Gabel and Anderson find that European voters display meaningful value structures that are easy to interpret, and that values can be classified into left-right- and supranational dimensions. Other case studies test the empirical effect of specific values, for example those of Carey, Luedtke, and Christin and Trechsel, who test the impact of identity. The former two authors argue that identities are important predictors of choices toward European integration across several case studies, while the latter find a weaker effect in a specific test of Swiss attitudes. De Vreese and Boomgarden test the impact of anti-immigration attitudes, and find they have powerful effects, and Ivaldi finds that anti-establishment attitudes very much contributed to the French rejection of the Constitutional Treaty.

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56 Janssen, p. 456ff.
57 Ibid., p. 458.
58 Anderson, p. 586.
59 Mahler et al., p. 441ff.
60 Gabel and Anderson, p. 30.
65 Ivaldi, p. 52ff.
2.3.6. The elites approach

Another approach to investigate proxies for opinion formation emphasises the role of political elites, and how they will influence people’s attitudes. This assumption has brought about extensive scholarship. However, even if several authors have demonstrated that there is a connection between elite influence and citizens’ attitudes, a consensus on the nature of this relationship has still not been reached. The most common approaches to the effects of elite position focus on the effects of partisanship and the effects of government support.

2.3.6.1. The effect of partisanship

One early study of the effect, conducted by Pierce et. al, noted that in the British 1975 and the Norwegian 1972 referendums on EC membership, partisanship had a clear impact on voter choice, but emphasised that this worked alongside other factors, such as left-right placement and centre-periphery dimensions. Furthermore, the effects of partisanship were also found to be stronger when parties were unified.\(^{66}\) Gabel and Scheve further address the effects of intra-party dissent on voter cue-taking from parties, and argue that this is a critical factor in determining how parties shape public opinion.\(^{67}\) Ray tests hypotheses to explain national, partisan and individual-level variations in the strength of party-voter connection, hypothesising that parties can influence public opinion, but that this is conditional and will depend upon a number of factors, such as issue importance, party unity, and political interest.\(^{68}\) This extensive study, which includes several case studies and controls for differences over time and contexts, provides a strong support for the hypothesis that elite opinion matters, but does not formulate a general theory.\(^{69}\) Another contribution is provided by Tillman, who in a study of the three countries which acceded to the EU in 1995 (Austria, Finland and Sweden), finds that there is an electoral dynamic between citizens and parties over European integration, but that the effect may go in the

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\(^{66}\) Pierce et. al., p. 43ff.
\(^{69}\) Ibid, p. 978ff.
direction opposite that which is normally assumed. When citizens form opinions about the EU, parties try to adapt to these views, and citizens in turn respond by switching their votes to parties which share their views.\textsuperscript{70} This approach is original, since it also considers the possibility that the elite-citizen discourse can be a bottom-up process.

\textbf{2.3.6.2. The ‘second-order election’ school}

While the ‘value school’ emphasises the effects of internal proxies, the ‘second-order-election school’ focuses on how national political cleavages, and support for national elites and government, will influence the views citizens take on European integration. The term was initially developed by Reif and Schmidt in 1980, who argued that the first election to the European Parliament merely took the form of a ‘second-order election,’ where national issues and cleavages dominated the election.\textsuperscript{71} The theoretical assumption was later adopted by scholars who study the referendums on issues concerning European integration, and was transformed in that context to argue that support for European integration will largely be determined by support for the incumbent government, and that voters who are dissatisfied with ruling elites will use the opportunity of such referendums to express discontent with the status quo in politics.

This argument was developed by Franklin et al.,\textsuperscript{72} who through a study of the four referendums on the Maastricht treaty hypothesised that the results can best be understood in terms of domestic party competition and government support. To begin with, Franklin et al. emphasise that support for the actual Treaty was far lower in the three countries who voted (Ireland, France and Denmark) than support for European integration in general, which the authors argue was due to the signals sent by the treaty, which the public interpreted as a signal that European integration was

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developing in a way they were not able to support. The low salience of the issues which parties tried to mobilise support for in the campaigns could be interpreted more as responses to short-term national consequences than actual attempts to rally support for or against the Maastricht treaty, and furthermore, the issues which were raised touched upon deep-seated political orientations and values. This domesticated the Treaty issue and gave the referendums characters of a confidence vote, through which voters used the referendum to express consent with the current government rather than their views on the referendum question. The authors further argue that the fact that the Danes vetoed the Treaty in the first referendum in 1992 and endorsed it in a second referendum in 1993, after concessions for the application of the Treaty had been granted, was explained by the entry of a new government which launched the negotiated Treaty. However, the ‘Franklin thesis’ receives criticism from Svensson, who questions whether Franklin et al.’s reference to the Danish case can hold. Examining five referendums on European integration in Denmark, Svensson argues that there are limitations to the thesis in the Danish case, since referendums, irrespective of the present composition of the government, still indicated that there was consistent support from the public for a deepening of European integration.

Svensson also argues that attitudes to European integration are more related to actual values, which makes explaining referendum outcomes by support for the government flawed. A further study conducted by Siune et al., reaches similar conclusions; the reason that Danes changed their minds from the 1992 to the 1993 referendum was because of the nature of the Edinburgh Agreement, which granted Denmark certain derogations from the Treaty, bringing about a Treaty which appeared less threatening to the public than the original document. The article also asserts that Danes are less susceptible to the use of government/party support as proxies for referendum choices,

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73 Ibid. The argument that the Maastricht referendums took form of confidence votes for the incumbent parties in France, Ireland and Denmark is repeated in Franklin, M.N., van der Eijk, C. and Marsh, M. (1995), ‘Referendum Outcomes and Trust in Government: Public Support for Europe in the Wake of Maastricht,’ West European Politics, 18 (3). The authors claim that the low support for the government in France and Denmark 1992 was reflected in the low support for the Treaty, and that the higher number of ‘yes’-votes in Ireland 1992 and Denmark 1993 reflected the relative popularity of the government.

74 Ibid., p. 456.


76 Ibid., p. 747. See Franklin, (2002), ‘Learning from the Danish case: A Comment on Palle Svensson’s critique of the Franklin thesis,’ European Journal of Political Research, 41 (6), for a response to the critique where the thesis is being moderated in terms of the Danish case, and argues that the ‘Franklin thesis’ is more applicable in issues where voters have no clear preferences.
since they are among the most highly-educated in Europe when it comes to EU matters.\textsuperscript{77}

A further criticism comes from Gabel, who argues that variation in citizens’ attitudes towards integration follows systematic patterns which are more than products of party politics, and that mass attitudes represent independent factors in the integration process. He argues further that even if citizens generally are uninformed about European issues, they still form rather sophisticated opinions on European integration.\textsuperscript{78} Another contribution to the debate is given by Ray. He argues that the general work on referendums supports the Franklin thesis, but that support for the incumbent government also correlates with general opposition to further integration. Since supporters of incumbent parties will consider themselves as ‘winners’ of the current system, they will be sceptical to a deepening of European integration since they prefer to keep the status quo.\textsuperscript{79} Hug provides a conditional support for the thesis in a comprehensive study of 16 EU referendums, and accepts the claim that supporters of incumbent parties are more likely to support European integration, but finds that not all case studies in his tests provided results to support the argument.\textsuperscript{80} Anderson reaches a similar conclusion; in a study where he controls for the effect of several variables, he finds significant effects in only one of the six countries chosen as case studies.\textsuperscript{81} Finally, a specific study on the matter, but with a different angle, is represented by Widfeldt’s examination on whether an elite-citizen divide in issue preferences could explain why the Swedes rejected EMU participation in 2003. The study argues that the referendum on the Eurozone displayed a significant gap between elites and the public; one in three voters in general went against the stance of their preferred party, which according to Widfeldt witnesses an alienation of voters by the elites and which makes the final result resemble a protest vote.\textsuperscript{82}

\textsuperscript{78} Gabel 1998c, p. 114.
\textsuperscript{80} Hug, p. 66f.
\textsuperscript{81} Anderson, p. 586.
\textsuperscript{82} Widfeldt 2004, p. 503ff. Still, Widfeldt does not classify the referendum as a ‘second-order-election’ and is careful to label it an expression of content or discontent with the party system, but choose a less radical stance and argues that it simply reinforces earlier evidence of party decline.
2.3.6.3. Zaller’s model of opinion formation

Zaller provides an alternative approach to studying the elite-public discourse, which is interesting to discuss also in this context; even if the model was not developed in order to study attitudes to European integration, it has been proven by a handful of researchers to explain successfully opinion formation. Zaller’s theory on elite influence is based on the nature of campaigns on ad-hoc issues, and argues that public responses to elite influence will primarily depend on whether political elites convey one unified recommendation, or two (or more) competing messages to the public. In the former case, which Zaller labels a one-way, or mainstream, message environment, elites will be in consensus on the issue and it will therefore not be challenged on an elite level; and in the latter case, classified as a two-way, or polarised, message environment, the divergence within political elites will force people to employ proxies to choose between the options which are communicated to them.

In mainstream message environments, where voters are exposed to only one policy recommendation and where no alternative message exists, Zaller maintains that acceptance of this political communication will depend on the voter's awareness, since only politically aware voters will be able to receive and understand the message which is being conveyed. In other words, the more informed and politically aware the voter is, the more likely s/he is to embrace the opinion which is communicated, and support it.\(^\text{83}\) However, if elites dispute the messages and compete for voters’ support of their respective views, voters will be exposed to competing flows of communication. This will have the effect on the public of 'reminding' them that there are two (or more) policy alternatives which can be chosen, and that the dominant message, normally the government position, may not be compatible with her/his political predispositions. In such a polarised scenario, awareness will have a different effect; it will not be a predictor of whether people support the main recommendation, as in mainstream environments, but will determine whether people understand the recommendations the elites convey to them. Depending on this understanding, people will then filter the available policy alternatives through schemata of political predispositions, and those who find it incompatible with their predispositions will

reject the acceptance of the dominant message. Support for the government position is therefore expected to weaken if the message environment is polarised, and elite divergence will be reflected in public opinion.84

Zaller's model of opinion formation has not been subject to extensive tests, but has proven to be a successful approach to opinion formation in a few studies. It was proven by Marquis and Sciarini to be a consistent predictor of opinion formation in Swiss foreign policy referendums, which also included the 1992 referendum on membership in the EEA. Kriesi and Sciarini also found the model to explain opinion formation regarding issues of foreign policy in Switzerland, while Saglie confirmed that the hypothesis could explain attitudes in the Norwegian 1994 EU membership referendum. Finally, Gabel and Scheve apply the study towards the EU12 and EU15 countries, and find that the model holds an explanatory effect.85

2.4. Case study Central and Eastern Europe – an account of available research

The literature on public opinion in Central and Eastern Europe relies to a great extent upon the same scientific methods as the literature on the old member states and the EFTA outsiders. However, given the differences in the historical and political contexts for EU accession as well as the different processes through which the public have been politically socialised, it has been argued that public opinion takes on characteristics different to those in consolidated democracies. Studying what makes citizens of post-communist countries tick when they evaluate policy alternatives is still a relatively new academic discipline, which has not culminated in the same abundance of material as is the case for the EU15/EFTA member states. The available literature is mostly descriptive, though single case study, comparative and regional analyses have been produced.

84 Ibid., p. 100ff.
Several scholars have emphasised the methodological and conceptual difficulties of studying public opinion in CEE, and argue that appropriate approaches and methods for this research discipline are still to be developed. Tverdova and Anderson argue that mass opinion will necessarily be different in CEE than in the Western democracies, for many reasons; first of all, the amount of information about the EU is lower in CEEC, and citizens hence will form opinions in an environment of low-level information, which implies that the cognitive environment for opinion formation will be different from the EU15 and EFTA. Christin criticises the fact that few scholars have systematically studied views towards European integration in CEE, and that those who have, have failed to take into account different levels of explanation. De Vries and Tillman argue that the ‘import’ of theories of opinion formation from Western Europe has been only a partially successful project, and that it has to be taken into account that the post-communist context in Central and Eastern Europe influences the public opinion process in ways which the ‘Western’ models do not account for, even if the impact and extent of the context is unclear. The practice of assuming the applicability of models developed to explain public opinion in the old member states is further criticised by Guerra, who argues further that studies on public opinion in CEEC which employ combinations of qualitative and quantitative methodologies are missing in the existing literature. In a discussion on the state of referendum studies in Central and Eastern Europe, Taggart and Szczerbiak find that the post-communist accession referendums represent a unique sub-type of referendums on European integration, for many reasons. First of all, the process of attaining membership was long, and linked to post-communist economic, political and social processes. EU membership symbolised a ‘return to Europe’, and achieving accession was not necessarily the achievement of the government which initially called for it. These circumstances made it difficult to create an anti-EU narrative in these countries, as opposed to in accession referendums in the old member states,

86 Tverdova and Anderson, p. 186.
89 Guerra, S. (2008), ‘Familiarity Doesn’t Breed Contempt: Polish Attitudes Toward European Integration in a Comparative Perspective,’ paper presented to the Midwest Political Science Association 66th Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, 3-6 April.
which make the referendum contexts different from previous referendums on European integration.\textsuperscript{90}

\subsection*{2.4.1. Approaches to case study selection}

The previous section noted that most studies which have been conducted on public opinion formation are either single case studies or comparative analyses of countries in regional or political proximity of each other, and research on cases in CEE take on similar formats.\textsuperscript{91} Studies which ‘cross the border’ between the EU15 and the new member states and do comparative analyses across the two blocks are few, and so are studies which treat the EU25 as one single case. Another factor which is evident from the available literature, is that studies which cover a large selection of case studies in new member states are few; studies have mainly focused on one or few cases, which create limited foundations for making generalisations about the region as a whole. However, problems of biased case study selection are often avoided in that authors emphasise that they are not attempting to draw such generalisations, but aim to explore tautologically the case studies only. Nevertheless, comprehensive comparative studies still remain few.\textsuperscript{92}

One note-worthy study which tests for East-West similarities has been conducted by Fidrmuc and Doyle, who investigate whether patterns of support for European integration in the EU15 will be replicated in the new member states. Using 2003 Eurobarometer data for the candidate states (the ten which joined the EU in 2004 and Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey) and 2000 Eurobarometer data for the EU15, the authors test seven hypotheses in order to measure East-West disparities within public opinion.

\textsuperscript{90} Taggart and Szczerbiak 2004a, p. 526f.
opinion trends; such as cognitive mobilisation, utilitarian considerations, partisan alignment, incumbent government support and class partisanship. The results of the study display an overall tendency which signifies that voters in the EU28, perhaps surprisingly, rely on fairly similar cues when forming opinions about European integration. Some general trends can be identified across the countries, such as education, income and positive assessment of one’s economic situation.93 Still, comprehensive studies like this remain few.

2.4.2. An account of explanatory hypotheses and variables

Due to the lack of comprehensive comparative studies, the output from existing research that has brought about useful knowledge of variables often remains limited to one or few countries only. However, some trends in the opinion formation processes have been identified as having impact across several cases, even if scientists do not have the luxury of relying on extensive studies which have been conducted over longer periods of time. A sample of explanatory variables and hypotheses will be explored in the following section.

To begin with, a trend which is specific for Central and Eastern Europe is the identification of the ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ of transition, who have benefited differently from political and economic reform and therefore will have different attitudes towards transition. This division will also be reflected in opposing views towards European integration, and the reasons for the difference in outlook on integration are argued to be structurally rooted in the voters’ demographic positions. Several authors have contributed to the exploration of the hypothesis. Tucker et al argue that EU membership will have different connotations for people in CEE than in the old member states where democracy has consolidated, and that the conditions produced during the transitional period after the fall of communism will determine attitudes towards EU membership. In other words, EU membership will be interpreted according to how people experience the transition. It follows that citizens who feel that the events during the transition period have not benefited their personal situation, or even worsened it, are more likely to oppose the free market. This rejection of the

93 Fidrmuc and Doyle 2004, p. 23ff.
economic system will also lead to a rejection of EU membership, since this will be seen as a guarantor of a market economy in their country. Winners who feel that transition has brought about personal opportunities and improvement will likewise support the free market and hence European integration. The distinction between winners and losers is based upon demographic criteria such as education, living standard and skill levels.94

A larger study by Tverdova and Anderson in six applicant states confirms this pattern, with minor deviations. Basing their argument on data from the Central and Eastern Eurobarometers, the authors agree with Tucker et al that such a division is a meaningful distinction between supporters and sceptics of integration, and find evidence for the claim that individuals who hold positive views towards the market economy and believe that their country is on ‘the right track’ are more positive towards the EU.95 Cichowski’s study of five accession countries argues similarly that winners of economic transition, i.e. those who positively evaluate the economic situation of their household, will be more positive towards EU membership; the same applies for those who support the democratisation process and free-market reforms.96 Szczerbiak also finds this to be the case in Poland, in a particular case study of the causality between socio-economic variables and support for the EU.97 Christin explores a similar argument in his study based upon the 1991-96 Central and Eastern European Eurobarometers, but makes the criticism that the main studies that have been conducted on the causality between citizen’s perceptions of domestic and political realities and attitudes towards the EU have not taken national factors into account, but have only taken an individual-level approach. In an attempt to develop a model which combines these two approaches, Christin hypothesises that the perceived quality of the transition process will have an impact on citizens’ views on European integration in the sense that the lower the performance of the economic and political reforms, the more likely it is that citizens’ views towards EU membership will be positive. The study concludes that individual-and macro-level explanations interact in

94 Tucker et al., p. 557.
95 Tverdova and Anderson, p. 189.
96 Cichowski, p. 1249ff.
the opinion formation process.\textsuperscript{98} Rohrshneider and Whitefield also add extra information to the hypothesis: they agree that citizens’ expected material payoffs will determine views towards membership, but they also find evidence that this factor works alongside ideological values.\textsuperscript{99}

A 1997 study conducted by Kucia on opinion structures in Poland and the Czech Republic identifies another factor which is unique for Central and Eastern European democracies in terms of EU attitudes: a very high number of respondents inform that they support the EU because they see it as a necessity for the future, and that they do not have any other realistic option.\textsuperscript{100} Grabbe and Hughes also report that this perception of not having a choice was general among the public before accession, and that this perceived need to join is explained as being based more upon a psychological need to ‘return to Europe’ than actual expectations of economic gains from EU membership.\textsuperscript{101} However, despite the perceived imperative to join, Kucia’s study also reports that respondents in Poland and the Czech Republic still make cost-benefit calculations and assess the economic and political advantages of joining the EU. It also argued that Czech respondents are well-informed about the EU, which contradicts the general perception of electorates in CEE having little knowledge about the issue.\textsuperscript{102} A comprehensive study by Tverdova and Anderson also argues that there are instrumental causes for support of EU membership, given that patterns of economic voting in CEEC display a utility-driven perspective among voters, who make cost-benefit calculations of EU membership,\textsuperscript{103} as was argued in Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis. This claim receives support from case studies on the accession referendums in Poland and the Czech Republic by Markowski and Tucker; by Hanley in a study of the Czech accession referendum; and by Henderson in a study of explanatory variables in Slovakia.\textsuperscript{104}

\textsuperscript{98} Christin, p. 31ff. However, one weakness about this study is that is was conducted on data which was sampled before accession negotiations opened, hence, the possibility that opinion structures may have changed after the electorate could regard EU membership as a realistic option must be considered.
\textsuperscript{99} Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2006, p. 147f.
\textsuperscript{100} Kucia 1999, p. 143ff
\textsuperscript{102} Kucia 1999, p. 143ff.
\textsuperscript{103} Tverdova and Anderson, p. 190f.
Another observation to be made from the existing literature is that the bulk of the work which has been done so far rarely distinguishes between pre- and post-accession circumstances. Given the fact that accession is a recent event, there is obviously less work conducted on post-accession experiences of membership than there is on expectations and impressions on the benefits and deficiencies of a hypothetical membership. The fact that Euroscepticism has increased over the last years in several CEE countries has received some scholarly attention, but it is mainly oriented towards explaining the phenomena on a party level. Some researchers acknowledge that this is a field which is still to be explored: Rohrschneider and Whitefield suggest that there may be causality between increased Euroscepticism and disappointment about the actual performances of the country after joining the EU. When the countries initially joined, citizens possessed high expectations about improved economic, political and institutional performance, and the authors argue that voters may have become disappointed when they experienced that their ideals were not fulfilled. This experience may constitute a foundation for scepticism towards the European project.

2.4.3. The elite-public connection

Given the fact that the EU debate in CEE was slow to materialise at citizen level, but was conducted largely among elites, researchers within the realm have traditionally assumed that electorates in CEE are heavily influenced by elites, given their brief experience as political actors. Several studies have explored the effects of elite influence on attitudes towards integration, and found that government support and partisanship are important factors in the opinion formation process.

One study which provides useful information on the issue is presented by Tverdova and Anderson. Applying ‘familiar’ variables which traditionally have been used in public opinion research about Western Europe, the authors identify how these factors shape opinions differently between the old and the new member states. First of all,

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107 Grabbe and Hughes, p. 186.
Tverdova and Anderson find evidence to contradict the ‘Franklin thesis’ which argues that support for the incumbent government is used as a heuristic for citizens when they form opinions on integration. The authors argue that since most major parties in post-communist Europe tend to agree strongly about the advantages of EU membership, and since governments generally consist of an abundance of parties, this cannot comprise a meaningful determinant of EU choice; it is rather more likely that people will rely upon the various parties they support. However, Markowski and Tucker claim to find that the opposite is the case; in a study on the Polish accession referendum, they identify a connection between government support and following its recommendation of voting for EU membership. Despite the general tendency to express extremely low confidence in the government, and the similarly extremely high support for EU membership, a correlation could be identified. This factor was also found to work alongside partisanship; party support was a reliable predictor of attitudes. Fowler finds a similar trend in Hungary in a study of the accession referendum, where government supporters were typically more in favour of membership. Moreover, the pattern was evident in comparatively Eurosceptic Estonia; when government support grew with the election of a new president late 2001, so did support for EU membership.

The several studies which examine the effects of partisanship have brought about a widespread consensus that the factor is a reliable predictor of attitudes across post-communist countries. In Cichowski’s study of the five countries which were predicted to be in the first wave of accession, she argues that partisanship was the strongest determinant of opinions to EU membership. Henderson also finds that the party-citizen connection was a predictor of citizens’ votes in the Slovak accession referendum; the latest general elections more or less had characteristics of EU referendums, despite the low contesting of the issue and the strong elite consensus. Mikkel and Pridham find that in both the Latvian and Estonian accession

108 See section 2.3.6.2. for a discussion of the Franklin thesis.
110 Markowski and Tucker, p. 429. Interestingly, the political effects seemed to matter more than traditional demographic variables.
112 Mikkel and Pridham, p. 726.
113 Cichowski, p. 1265f.
114 Henderson 2004a, p. 653.
referendums, trends in public attitudes coincided with parallel developments at elite level, and also suggest that there was close interaction between the two, where parties would respond to citizen attitudes as well as vice versa.\textsuperscript{115} The suggestion that opinion influence may not necessarily be a top-down process is a rare assumption in public opinion studies in CEE; the general understanding is rather that elites will be oblivious to currents within the general public, which makes it unusual to explore whether elites will be influenced from below. Taggart and Szczerbiak suggest in a discussion of the accession referendums that a general trend within the accession states could be identified; the strongest determinants of voters’ choices were the direction, strength and clarity of elite cues, next to underlying mass attitudes. However, the former factor was stronger than the latter.\textsuperscript{116} Rohrschneider and Whitefield argue that issues of integration and how people become acquainted with these will be effected by how elites present them; a polarised message environment effect will generate disparaging views on the perceived benefits of integration, and will in turn effect the weight citizens will ascribe to the various experiences which they will rely on when forming opinions. This argument does not posit that elites will fully determine people’s views on integration, but may affect the strengths of the factors people rely on in the cognitive process.\textsuperscript{117}

Hughes et al. criticise previous studies into attitude formation to European integration for bypassing the levels between national elites and the public and for not taking sub-national elites into account. Maintaining the view that since the party systems in CEE are relatively weak, sub-national elites will play important roles in shaping citizens’ attitudes; which calls for a further examination of the role of regional and local elites. In a study of sub-national elites in Hungary, Slovenia and Estonia, the authors argue that these actors feel disengaged towards the European integration debate, since they see it as mainly an issue of national politics concern. This alienation will in turn constitute a foundation to generate Eurosceptic views among citizens.\textsuperscript{118} Kopecky and Mudde find that Czech local elites consider EU membership a ‘necessary evil,’ since they have little interest in and knowledge of the EU. However, instead of arguing that

\textsuperscript{115} Mikkel and Pridham, p. 728.
\textsuperscript{117} Rohrschneider and Whitefield, p. 153f.
this will influence people’s attitudes, they find rather that local elites distance
themselves from the debate, and will therefore to a little extent influence citizens’
attitudes.119

2.5. Summary and conclusion

This summary of the available literature shows that a vast number of studies have
been conducted on public opinion studies, and that several approaches and studies
have been tested in order to explain the phenomenon. As mentioned in previous
sections, the largest share of the literature is directed towards how citizens in the
EU15 and the EFTA states form opinions towards integration, and the realm of
studies on public opinion in the CEE is an emerging field where approaches and
variables still are being defined.

First of all, several authors have admitted that the available studies still have not
brought about general models which explain public opinion formation across the EU;
it therefore becomes difficult to discuss the existing knowledge about public opinion
formation within the EU as a bloc; one must rather address how hypotheses and
models have been applied across case studies, and the results which have been
produced.

As previously mentioned; the bulk of the work conducted on public opinion issues has
either addressed single or comparative case studies within either the old or the new
member states, and few studies have examined public opinion in the EU as a whole,
or as compared between the old and the new member states. Moreover, the literature
shows that there is no clear answer on what shapes public opinion; the contexts within
which citizens regard European integration differ between case studies, which brings
about different effects of the variables and hypotheses which are being studied.

However, a few factors can be identified as being widely explanatory regarding
opinion formation. Examples of such factors are socio-economic characteristics,
which have been proven to impact on attitudes in the old as well as the new member

European Integration in East Central Europe,’ European Union Politics, 3 (3), p. 305.
states. Some predictors which tend to predict views towards European integration are occupation, education, income, and urban location. Other socio-economic features, such as gender, produce disparate effects. Another factor which matters across the continent is party alignment, which was also a reliable predictor of attitudes in the 2003 accession referendums in Central and Eastern Europe. However, the effect of government support is disputed by researchers; depending on the research methods they applied, the outcomes from the various studies vary. The effect of left-right position, however, has been thoroughly studied in all member states and found to influence attitudes. The effects have been proven to be consistent, yet not similar; the direction of support which left-right position predicts differs between case studies. Another sub-field within the realm which is yet to be fully explored is the effects of values and attitudes. While there is widespread agreement of certain factors which contribute towards opinion formation in the old member states and EFTA, a definition of variables which contribute towards shaping people’s opinions in the new member states is yet to be fully completed. While ideologically rooted attitudes towards democracy and market economy have been found to correlate with attitudes towards integration, studies which include other political and economic attitudes have not brought about a general theory about the effects of endogenous attitudes. More extensive results which test the effects of Inglehart’s ‘cognitive mobilisation hypothesis’ have been produced, but studies on the hypothesis in CEE are not conclusive. A final factor which deserves attention is utilitarian considerations and cost-benefit calculations, which have been proven to be important cues in the opinion formation process, even if studies on this are more extensive in the old than in the new member states. A hypothesis of theoretical proximity which operates with winners and losers of transition has been found to be a reliable distinction between supporters and opponents of European integration in the post-communist states. The former group, which experiences an improvement in their personal situation after reforms began, will be supportive of market economy and also integration, since EU membership is regarded as a guarantor for consolidation of the free market system. Losers will often hold more nostalgic views towards the former system and be critical towards market economy, since they will feel that they have not been able to benefit from the transition process, which in turn generates scepticism towards European integration.
To conclude, the existing research has brought about wide knowledge of the factors and variables which influence people’s attitudes towards EU membership, but as this chapter has demonstrated, there are several approaches which are yet to be fully explored. The available literature on opinion formation in the new member states has admitted that methods to study the phenomenon within the new member states are still being developed and disputed, and researchers still find themselves experimenting with approaches and variables. Given the fact that the contexts within which citizens form opinions are fluid and characterised by unstable party systems as well as economic insecurity – in some countries more than others - research on general political phenomena in the region is a developing field within political science. This subject will be further addressed throughout the thesis, and the difficulties and challenges of studying public opinion in CEE will be returned to in chapter 9.

Chapter 3
Purpose of the thesis, theories, case studies, and methodology

3.1. Aims and introduction

This chapter will present the purpose and backgrounds of the thesis, and will describe the various aspects of the study design as well as the scientific justification of the study. The chapter will begin with an elaboration on how a useful study design can contribute to the available literature, and will discuss how to design an approach which can constitute an original move towards seeking to explain how citizens in Central and Eastern Europe form opinions on European integration. This discussion will be based on the review and discussion of the state of the art in public opinion research in Chapter 2. Based on this discussion, the theories which were selected for research will be presented and justified. Then, the methodology will be outlined with a description of the choice of research methods, data selection, model operationalisation, and the dependent and independent variables. Problems which
were encountered in terms of data selection and the nature of the raw variables will also be addressed, as well as the solutions which were found to the problems. The chapter will function as a reference chapter for the remainder of the thesis, since the research process which produced the results which are presented in chapters 4-8 will be described in this chapter and not in the case study chapters.

3.2. How to add to the existing literature

The examination of previous studies in the literature review in chapter 2 revealed that there are a large number of hypotheses and theories which have been formulated to explain public opinion formation and that the range of available literature brings about extensive scholarship on the subject. This section will discuss how alternative approaches to previously formulated hypotheses can bring about new research.

To begin with, it is clear from the survey of extant approaches in the previous chapter that a fair range of approaches still leave opportunities for alternative explorations. There are few theories and models which have been exhausted for output since there is a lack of consensus between researchers on the parsimony and validity of existing approaches and since few studies have not been subjects of criticism from other researchers, Hence, an attempt to contribute to existing scholarship does not necessarily need to formulate new theories and hypotheses; a well-justified choice of familiar theories may still bring a contribution to existing knowledge, provided that the methodology and choice of case studies demonstrate originality.

There are several arguments which justify the claim that creating new hypotheses for research is not the only option when seeking to create new knowledge within the field. First of all, attempting to create a ‘grand theory’ for opinion formation is a highly extensive and resource-demanding task, and for that reason, attempts at formulating such overarching theories are few. Given the fact that such studies require a large number of data, and in addition involve a large sample of case studies, researchers with limited time and resources often avoid that option and rather attempt to extract information from previously defined theories and models. Given the limited scope of a PhD thesis, it is more feasible to rather aim to complement previous studies by choosing a deductive study design, and attempt to create an original approach
through designing an alternative methodology to test existing models. Such an
approach which explores alternative approaches to theory-testing will form a
contribution to the knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of familiar theories. In
addition, an alternative methodology can also produce descriptive knowledge on
public opinion formation which was not extracted from previous applications of the
chosen theories. In order to define how to maximise the output from such a study,
some conditions for choice of study design can be defined based on a review of
existing approaches. This study argues that if a study meets as many as possible of
these criteria, the possibilities for a useful contribution to research will be increased.

The first criterion poses that the study should explore theories which have not been
subject to extensive tests. In order to test the feasibility of a previously formulated
theory, defining an approach which has not previously been tried will contribute to
demonstrating whether the theory holds explanatory effects. Such an approach can
either be designed with the intention of using different variables to measure the
intended effects, testing at different time periods than previous scholars have done
(alternatively, testing whether the theory holds explanatory effect over time), using
different measurement tools, or alternatively; test the theory in a comparative test with
other theories, in order to establish the degree of explanatory effect of the theory
when cross-checked with other models.

A second path for producing new output is to use case studies which previously have
not been applied in tests of the selected model(s). Even if the first criterion of
applying untested or disputed theories is not satisfied, applying new cases to a theory
will provide a justification of the study in itself, provided that the selected theory can
be justified as being transferable to the selected cases. The study should ideally
include enough case studies to facilitate generalisations to be made from the results. A
study which maximises the number of case studies, alternatively, chooses case studies
which can be justified for comparison, will draw more credible conclusions since it
will have a greater scope for making inferences.

A third point concerns the methodology for model-testing. In addition to the previous
suggestion of applying different variables which fit the theoretical framework of the
model, another approach is to experiment with different methods of measurement. In
quantitative applications, it is interesting to explore whether treating the dependent variable differently in terms of measurement level can bring about useful knowledge, or explore other options, such as testing the theory over time, which was suggested above. Post-estimation analyses which more thoroughly analyse the effects of the selected variables are other useful options to provide more in-depth results if this has not been done in previous applications of the selected theory or model.

However, when attempting to design an innovative approach to test new theories, one must avoid the pitfall of creating ‘theory drift.’ Theory drift occurs when well-reasoned theoretical arguments for the expected effect of predictors in a specific context are lacking, and when formulated assumptions and hypotheses are poorly justified. One possible scenario of theory drift occurs when effects have been proved to be consistent in one context and is expected to hold the same effects in another, and a credible justification on why the same effect is expected to occur in the ‘new’ context is missing. Another example of theory drift is when the theoretical assumption in itself contains flaws, and when it is not thoroughly justified why the expected effect is anticipated. A further example is when the selected independent variables do not measure what the researcher intends to measure. Therefore, valid justifications for the chosen variables and methods need to be presented.¹

3.3. Theoretical framework of the study

The above recommendations were selected as the intellectual foundation for this study. To summarise, in order to contribute to existing research, it was recommended that a study should

- Explore theories which have not previously been subject to extensive tests. It was suggested that the test could apply different variables than which were used in previous tests; apply the test to different time periods or test the theory over time; or apply the theory in a comparative test with other theories.
- Select case studies which previously have not been applied in tests of the selected model(s).

• Demonstrate innovation in terms of methodological approaches, for example by experimenting with different methods of measurement.

In order to design a study which satisfies these criteria, the first hurdle to overcome was to define theories which contain the desired properties. The theories should, in other words, have been little subjected to research or the previous tests on the theories should not be conclusive. This section will explain the choice of theories, and justify why these were regarded as being able to produce contributions to existing research.

Given the large variety of available theories and models, the preceding literature review was the first step to conduct in order to define theories and models which satisfy these criteria. Chapter 2 revealed that several models of public opinion research, such as Inglehart’s value hypothesis and cognitive mobilisation hypothesis as well as the ‘second-order election’-thesis of Marsh et al., have been well explored and documented. However, given the fact that this study wishes to apply models to explain opinion formation in the new member states, it can be argued that ‘old’ models which have been subject to extensive research may still be appropriate for an innovative study, since these have mainly been applied to case studies in the old member states. This leaves more available options in terms of theory selection.

The review of existing research on public opinion formation in the region revealed that there are several disputed approaches which can be chosen for further investigation. To begin with, personal-level characteristics such as demographic position have proved to be explanatory effects in several cases, as well as cognitive factors such as level of knowledge about the EU, have been confirmed to influence support for accession in several studies. Another approach which has explored is the distinction between ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ of democratic and economic transition, which posits that the former group tends to show higher support for European integration than the latter. This reasoning is theoretically within proximity of previously developed studies which measure utilitarian considerations in the forms of short-term cost-benefit calculations as proxies for how citizens view EU membership. Even though many scholars claimed that citizens make such evaluations, this was contradicted by Taggart and Szczerbiak who argued that clarity and strengths of elite cues are stronger determinants of people’s attitudes. As for the role of political elites,

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2 Taggart and Szczerbiak 2004a, p. 526f.
several studies confirm that partisanship matters. However, the few comparative studies which illustrate the effect of elite influence have not included sufficient case studies for making generalisations for Central and Eastern Europe as a bloc.

The preceding chapter further suggested that few theoretical approaches to opinion formation in CEE have been exhausted, or at least have not been studied in a comparative context across the new member states. Given the large number of options, this study suggests that a useful approach will be to test the effects of factors which rely on different theoretical foundations and compare the results from these. Since the discussion above reveals that researchers tend to emphasise either individually rooted factors or the effects of the external environment in scientific writings, it appears that a study which applies models which represent both theoretical foundations could comprise a useful contribution to research.

The choices fell on Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis for its wide scope which tests internally processed cost–benefit calculations and demographics and Zaller’s model of opinion formation for the effects of external environment.\(^3\) The expected fruitfulness by choosing these models is rooted in the knowledge that previous studies rarely have studied the effects of internal and external cuing in the same study and for several case studies. Furthermore, since studies tend to align themselves with either the ‘value school’ or the ‘second-order election school,’ (see section 2.2. of the preceding chapter) it may be scientifically interesting to include models which represent both directions. Therefore, this study will test the effects of theoretically different models, firstly, to see whether the models produce useful results in separate tests, and secondary to discuss whether one approach is more useful than the other. A justification for the choice of the models will follow.

The main reason that Zaller’s model is interesting is that it studies the difference in message environment and whether and how and it matters if people are being exposed to one or two (or more) recommendations from elites. The theoretical reasoning behind the model addresses a relevant question; whether public opinion formation takes on different forms in environments where elites are in consensus, and where

\(^3\) See sections 2.3.2. for a more thorough explanation of Gabel and Palmer’s Utilitarian Hypothesis, and 2.3.6. for Zaller’s model.
they diverge and communicate different choices to citizens. To repeat, in cases of one-way message environments, where people are being exposed to only one message, Zaller assumes that elite communications have such a strong effect that agreement with the conveyed message will depend on whether people understand the matter, hence, whether they are sufficiently aware to respond to the message. Awareness will therefore be a direct predictor of the probability of agreeing with the dominant message since there is no competing message which ‘reminds’ citizens to filter the messages through endogenous values or political predispositions. In two-way message environments, however, diverging elites will alert them to that the dominant message may not be compatible with their political predispositions, and therefore, these will determine which opinions people form. Given people’s short experience as political actors in Central and Eastern Europe, and since Zaller’s model has not at all been applied to case studies in the new member states, the model opens an opportunity for research. Moreover, the theoretical interest of testing the impact of awareness and predispositions, and how these predictors interact, can be justified by the scientific interest in researching whether voters are more swayed by internal awareness or political choices. In addition, the distinction between message environments opens an interesting option to test whether this created contexts for different opinion formation processes in CEE countries where elites were in consensus, and the countries where they disagreed. Another advantage with the model is that it is parsimonious in the sense that it requires relatively little data material and measures few predictors, and can therefore be applied in comparative tests with relative ease. Even if the model does not directly measure the direct causality between elite messaging and opinions, it is still interesting to test since it explores the option that elite consensus or divergence creates different contexts for opinion formation, and it is therefore innovative in terms of theoretical foundation.

As far as Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis is concerned, this hypothesis is particularly interesting to apply when researching public opinion in the new member states which are still undergoing transitions from communism. The suggested distinction of citizens in CEE as either ‘winners’ or ‘losers’ from political and economic reforms and the impact of these positions on attitudes towards democracy,

4 A discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of Zaller’s variable selection will be presented in Chapter 9, section 9.2.1.
market reform and European integration, is interesting to test in a comparative study.\(^5\)

A further argument for choosing the hypothesis is that it also has been subject to scholarly criticism; Taggart and Szczerbiak argued the opposite and claimed that cost-benefit calculations were not predominant determinants of public opinion in the new member states, but found that elite cues produce stronger effects.\(^6\) This claim can be addressed by a study which incorporates theories which test the effects of both phenomena. Finally, Gabel and Palmer, and their collaborators’ tests of the models have explored several different options for testing the model, which informs that the model is relatively flexible; the theoretical assumption opens for choosing a variety of predictors. This makes the model parsimonious, since there is a certain room for manoeuvre when choosing independent variables, as long as they can be justified to test the theoretical assumption and measure the same phenomenon as the predictors which were defined by Gabel and Palmer.

This study will agree with Gabel and Palmer’s critical view towards the effects of macro-economic conditions due to the weak theoretical justifications that such factors will directly influence attitudes towards EU membership, and will therefore estimate the effects of individual-level predictors only.\(^7\) While Gabel and Palmer argue that individual evaluations of one’s own ability to benefit from European integration will function as proxies for objective economic conditions, this argument is accepted since it is theoretically difficult to defend a claim that objective economic conditions will be sufficiently understood by citizens. Secondly, the argument further presupposes that citizens also will hold the EU responsible for the national economic situation, and this assumption cannot be tested since the tests in this study will use two samples which were collected before the countries had acceded to the Community. Therefore, the focus in this study will be on utilitarian evaluations of whether EU membership will benefit the country, and whether such evaluations will influence how people view future integration.

3.4. Operationalisation of Zaller’s model

\(^5\) See Cichowski, Tverdova and Anderson, and Tucker et al.
\(^6\) Taggart and Szczerbiak 2004a, p. 526f.
\(^7\) See Chapter 2, section 2.3.2. p. 11 for Gabel and Palmer’s argument that objective economic conditions may not necessarily influence attitudes towards integration.
The theoretical foundations of Zaller’s model are rooted in the argument that the public opinion formation process will take on different characteristics in environments where elites reach agreement about the relevant issue (which Zaller classifies as one-way- or mainstream message environments) as opposed to when elites disagree (two-way or polarised message environments). In mainstream message environments, awareness about the issue will determine whether people support the message, and the higher awareness people possess, the more likely they are to support the unified elite position. This support will be achieved since the higher aware of the issue citizens are, the more they will be able to understand the issue, and Zaller supposes that there will be a causal effect between awareness and support. In two-way message environments, people will be prompted to choose from two (or more) positions on the issue which are expressed by the elites. In such a scenario, people will be reminded that the dominant message - which in most cases will be the position of the government - may or may not be compatible with their political predispositions, and the existence of opposing cues will force people to choose between the competing messages according to their political predispositions. Awareness will not predict direction of support, but will only determine whether people understand the messages they are being exposed to, and the message will be filtered through their predispositions before they adopt one of the positions which are being conveyed by the elites. In most cases, people will choose to simply adopt the position of their preferred political elites or party.

Hence, Zaller presupposes that the external environment will determine which predictors will influence attitudes towards the selected issue. To repeat, Zaller argues that the predictor which influences opinions will also directly predict support for the government position, but leaves direction of support open if elites are divided. The model can be described graphically as follows.

**Figure 3.1. Zaller’s model of opinion formation**
In order to test these assumptions, this study tested the effects of awareness as well as political predispositions, irrespective of which message environment the case studies are classified as. All predictors were included in every test in order to first of all control for effects which contradict Zaller’s hypothesis: i.e. that political predispositions will influence attitudes in the case studies which are classified as one-way message environments, and that awareness will have an effect on public opinion formation in the case studies which take forms of two-way message environments. Secondly, next to testing whether the predictors have effects on attitudes, the model aimed to predict what kind of attitudes the predictors generate. Even if it is found that awareness is significant, it is also necessary to explore whether Zaller’s assumption that high awareness will automatically predict support for the government position can be verified. It must also be investigated whether an effect of political predispositions also means that respondents take the same view as the political elites they support. The working hypothesis behind the estimated model was therefore that awareness and political predispositions will predict attitudes towards EU membership, irrespective of whether elites agree or disagree on whether EU membership is a good thing for the country. Hence, the model which was operationalised to test the hypotheses assumed the effects of both types of predictors, and did not assume what kind of opinions they will predict. The operationalised model took the following form.

Figure 3.2. Estimated model to test Zaller’s model of opinion formation
The independent variables which will be used in the estimated model will be described in section 3.6.2.4.

3.5. Operationalisation of Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis

To repeat from section 3.3., Gabel and Palmer’s model assumes that people will make cost-benefit calculations when they decide whether or not to think that EU membership is a good thing, and such evaluations will be rooted in their evaluations of their current personal situation and the situation for the country as whole. Positive evaluations of the current situation are expected to correlate with positive views towards accession, and negative evaluations are similarly expected to generate negative attitudes. Also personal competiveness, measured as socio-demographic characteristics, will be used as proxies when people evaluate whether they are able to benefit from integration. For example, people with higher education will theoretically assume that they are in the position to benefit from an open labour market and will feel that this will bring about opportunities for them to excel professionally. Therefore, having a strong socio-economic position is expected to be synonymous with support for European integration, and weak socio-economic positions, for example being rurally based will generate a feeling of being far away from the benefits accession will bring about, and will equally predict lower support for integration. A graphical presentation of the model can look like the following figure.
Figure 3.3. Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis

Independent variables

Evaluation of personal situation

High support for EU membership

Evaluation of national situation

Low support for EU membership

Male
Urban
High income
Higher education
Young
High-skilled

Female
Rural
Low income
Low education
Old
Low-skilled

Good
Bad

Good
Bad
To test the assumptions of the model, the operationalised model took the same format as the figure above. Two criteria were set for verifying the model: first of all, significant correlations between the independent variables and EU attitudes need to be found, and secondly, the actual attitudes they predict have to be in line with Gabel and Palmer’s assumptions. For example, if age is significant, it also needs to predict more EU-positive attitudes amongst the younger cohorts than the older. If older respondents are more positive than young ones, it will contradict the theoretical assumptions.

3.6. Methodology

Given the nature of the study which tests the effects of multiple variables in several countries, the study mainly relied on findings generated in quantitative applications. However, in order to ensure that the selected independent variables can be theoretically justified and that the frameworks for EU accession are fully understood, the available literature on the EU accession process was consulted. This section will provide an account of the methodological path which will be followed throughout the operation of the study.

3.6.1. Qualitative applications

In order to set a framework for the quantitative study, the backgrounds and characteristics of the debates on European integration in the case studies needed to be examined before the quantitative models are estimated. Such a background study was necessary in order to avoid the specification of models which did not satisfactorily measure what they are intended to, and to enable the independent variables to withstand tests of theoretical validity. Therefore, it was deemed necessary to be familiar with the context the models operate within. First of all, the natures of the party systems in the case study countries were examined, to understand the political context of domestic debates on European integration. In order to determine whether the country-wise case studies should be determined as one- or two-way message environments in the part of the study which tests Zaller’s model of opinion formation, studies of elite opinions on European integration and national party systems were undertaken to facilitate an informed decision on whether the message environment
was mainstream or polarised. Since political predispositions was measured as left-right position, which will be more thoroughly explained in section 3.6.2.4, literature on left-right positioning of parties in the country case studies was consulted to cross-check that party placements on the left-right variable in the data sets reflect expert descriptions. Even if the data material on left-right placement should be deemed trustworthy, it was still necessary to check whether there are discrepancies between the data and the literature, and deal with such errors.

3.6.2. Quantitative applications

3.6.2.1. Data selection

The analysis employed data on individual level, and used data sets from the Candidate Countries’ Eurobarometers (CCEB) from 2002, 2003 and 2004, which contain variables which measure awareness and utilitarian considerations. The Eurobarometer data were merged with the Comparative Manifesto II data sets in order to avail of the information on parties’ left-right positioning which exists in the Comparative Manifesto data, which will be more thoroughly explained in section 3.8. The selected data contain surveys which cover three different time periods; the first survey data were gathered in September and October 2002, which was roughly half a year before the first referendums on EU membership; the second chosen survey was collected in May 2003, just before or during most of the referendums;\(^8\) and the final data set was collected from February to March 2004, roughly six months after the final accession referendums in Central and Eastern Europe.

The reasons that the study chose to test the model over several time periods, and why it was decided to test the models in the time period of 2002-2004 was to test the models before, during/after – depending on timing of the national referendums – the referendum campaigns, and a year after the issue had been settled. Conducting the tests in these three time periods, when it should be expected that the issue would differ in terms of salience, will pick up on whether the effects of the selected predictors were stable. Moreover, conducting the tests on samples which were

\(^8\) The only other survey from 2003 which contain the necessary variables is from October-November, which was after all referendums had been held.
collected in such a critical time period will provide stronger support for the conclusions which will be reached after the tests. In addition to this, none of the models which were chosen for this study have been subject for research which compares the effects over time, and previous studies which address the impact of utilitarian considerations in new member states have used pre-referendum data. The data sets, variables and coding procedures will be explained in the following sections.

3.6.2.2. A description of the CCEB

The CCEB was conducted by the European Commission’s Public Analysis Services as a special service to complement the Standard Eurobarometers, which included the existing member states at the time. When CEE countries entered the process of completing membership negotiations the previous Central and Eastern Eurobarometers were replaced by the CCEB in all potential member states including Turkey, Malta and Cyprus. The first surveys were carried out in the autumn of 2001, and the final CCEB was conducted in May 2004, when the ten countries of the first Eastern accession countries joined the EU. After accession, the ten new member states were included in the Standard Eurobarometers.

The main aims of the CCEB surveys were to test general trends over time, such as quality of life, attitudes and trust towards the nation state, national parties and the EU, knowledge of how the EU works and familiarity with the EU institutions and policies as well as attitudes towards other international organisations such as the UN. As with any professionally constructed survey, demographic characteristics were included, such as age, gender, education, location, occupation and income. The surveys contain roughly 1000 respondents per country per wave.

3.6.2.3. Dependent variable

Conceptually, the dependent variable is attitude to the EU. We measured this with the following CCEB variable:
Generally speaking, do you think that (our country’s) membership of the European Union would be/will be: 1) A good thing? 2) A bad thing? 3) Neither good nor bad⁹

Given the fact the answer categories on the dependent variable can be rank-ordered, this thesis used ordinal logistic models. Even if ordinary least squares regression is often advocated to be used on ordered choice variables since the coefficients can easily be interpreted, the weaknesses which arise with using OLS on ordinal dependent variables is first and foremost that the model assumes that the intervals between the choice categories are equal, which posits a risk of producing biased and misleading results. This is particularly true if there are few answer categories. For these reasons, ordered logistic regression is more likely to produce consistent estimates.

But there are also problems connected with the ordered model. A common problem with the model is that it relies on the parallel regression assumption or the proportional odds assumption, which assumes that the effects of predictors is constant across the categories of the response variable. This assumption is frequently violated in ordered models, and may cause estimates to be biased. Stata’s brant¹⁰ command conducts a simple test to control whether the assumption is violated, and when this is the case, alternative models should be considered. A useful alternative is the generalised ordered model (GOLM) which bypasses the parallel regression assumption and can therefore be used as a control model and compared with the ordered models. The disadvantage with the model is that it is less parsimonious. The overview of results easily can appear messy, since the model reports estimates for all response categories minus a reference category. It is therefore less useful to use in practical tests, especially if the tests include many models.

The Brant test and generalised ordered logit models were run as controls for every model which was run in this study, and it was concluded that even if some of the variables in the ordered models were violating the parallel regression assumption, the estimates could still be trusted since the generalised models reported few discrepancies. The generalised ordered logit models largely returned similar results as

⁹ For the surveys which were collected before the referendum, the question is worded ‘would be.’
¹⁰ The Brant test is not built-in STATA command, but an add-on by Long and Freese (2001).
the ordered models, and the discrepancies between the results were sufficiently small to conclude that the interpretations from the ordered models were reliable. This showed that it was not problematic to use ordered logistic regression. The GOLM estimates will presented in the appendices, and for the sake of simplicity, only the 2003 models will be included. To be sure, the discussion in the appendices will also confirm whether there were variables in the 2002 and 2004 models which were significant in one model but not in the other, but will omit variables which differed in significance on only one outcome in the generalised model, unless the same variable repeatedly created discrepancies.

The dependent variable was recoded to facilitate use of ordinal logistic regression. Categories 8 (‘Don’t know/No opinion’) and 9 (‘Refusal’) were coded as missing, and given the low numbers of respondents who chose these categories, the sample size was not significantly reduced when these values were removed. Answering that EU membership would be ‘a bad thing’ was coded 1, answering that it would be ‘neither good nor bad’ was coded 2, and believing that EU membership would be ‘a good thing’ was coded 3.

3.6.2.4. Descriptions of the independent variables

Zaller defines awareness as ‘cognitive engagement’ (with politics) and ‘political attentiveness,’ and argues that they both represent the same phenomenon, but highlights that the academic literature yet has to find consensus on a consistent measure.\(^\text{11}\) While several political scientists use measures such as political participation, level of political interest and media use, Zaller employs scales of political knowledge as the predictor of awareness.\(^\text{12}\) The first group of predictors employs questions which measure the individual’s political, or cognitive, engagement with politics, and consist of two variables; one which asked the respondents to place themselves on a scale on how often they discuss politics, and one question which asks how often they try to persuade others of their opinion when they discuss politics.\(^\text{13}\)

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\(^\text{11}\) Zaller, p. 43.
\(^\text{12}\) Ibid., p. 333f.
\(^\text{13}\) The exact wording for the question on political discussion was When you get together with friends, would you say you discuss political matters? 1) Frequently 2) Occasionally 3) Never 8) DK/no opinion 9) Refusal. The question on persuasion was phrased When you hold a strong opinion, do you ever find yourself persuading your friends, relatives or fellow workers to share your views? Does this happen 1) Often 2) From time to time 3) Rarely 4) Never 8) DK/no opinion 9) Refusal.
The reasons for including these were that they, at least theoretically, could measure level of interest and engagement in politics. The variables were recoded to form ordinal scales with four values of political discussion and five on persuasion.

The second group of predictors investigates the degree to which the individuals pay attention to the EU issue in the media; the first question asked how often the individual watched news on television, and the second asked if the respondent pay attention to news about the EU specifically. These predictors would provide a second measure of interest; one on whether respondents in general pay attention to TV news, and one specific on the degree of attention they devote to information about the EU. The recoding followed the same procedures as the first group of predictors.

Note that the CCEB 2004.1 does not provide a specific question on TV news, but instead asks a question which asks whether the individual uses the TV as an information source about the EU, hence, comparisons between the results from the 2002/2003 and 2004 output must be made with this detail in mind.

The third set of questions controls for knowledge about the EU, and is divided into one question on whether the respondents personally feels informed, whilst a second variable tests the actual knowledge of the respondent based on a set of statements about the EU, which respondents were asked to inform whether were true or false. The variable which measures perceived knowledge may not be justified to be an appropriate measure of awareness since perceived knowledge may not necessarily reflect actual knowledge. However, choosing this predictor can still be justified by the argument that perceived knowledge is a reality for the respondent, and it is also interesting to compare the results produced by this measure with the variable which controls for factual knowledge. The variable was recoded from ten to five categories.

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14 How often do you watch the news on television? 1) Every day 2) Several times a week 3) Once or twice a week 4) Less often 5)Never 8) DK/no opinion 9) Refusal.
15 In general, do you pay attention to news about the following...(the European Union)?, 1) A lot of attention 2) A little attention 3) No attention at all 8) DK/no opinion 9) Refusal.
16 When you are looking for information about the European Union, its policies, its institutions, which of the following sources do you use? Which else? Option 5: Television 1) Mentioned 2) Did not mention 8) DK/no opinion 9) Refusal.
17 Using this scale, how much do you feel you know about the European Union, its policies, its institutions? 1='know nothing at all,' 10='a great deal' 8) DK/no opinion 9) Refusal.
18 'The EU is made of 15 states', 'The European flag is blue and with yellow stars', 'The headquarters of the EU are in Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg', 'The members of the European Parliament are directly elected by European citizens' and 'There is a President of the European Union directly elected by all the citizens, 1) True 2) False 8) DK 9) Refusal.
to create fewer intervals. The variable which measures actual knowledge was coded as a dummy variable, where incorrect answers were coded as 0 and correct answers as 1.

The fourth group measures level of education, and the values are placed on an ordinal scale with no education or primary school as the lowest value, with university education as the highest value. The coding is slightly different for every country depending on the nature of the national education system.19

To add some information to the last group of predictors which tests for effects of left-right orientation, and in addition, a squared term of the variable was included to pick up on eventual curvilinear effects of the left-right measure when regressed on EU attitudes. Since Eurosceptic messages from elites in CEE most commonly are being communicated by parties on the edges of the left-right scale, it was deemed necessary to control for curvilinear effects.

In order to test Gabel and Palmer’s model, three sets of predictors were chosen to measure the effect of utilitarian considerations. To begin with, as was explained in the account of the theory in Chapter 2, a range of independent variables can be used to measure the utilitarian considerations, however, the actual choice comes down to a number of factors. First of all, a limitation is imposed by which variables which are available in the data sets, secondly, the variables which hold the most theoretically plausible measure of utilitarianism must be establish. Most importantly, it must be justified whether that these possess the ability to influence respondents’ views on European integration. Due to the reasons which were explained in section 3.2., this application of Gabel and Palmer’s model will not include objective macro-level economic conditions, but focus on individual-level evaluations of individual and collective costs and benefits of European integration. Given the specific nature of the case studies as new democracies which still are in the process of political and economic transition, the ‘winners-and-losers’ hypothesis will also be taken into account as a tentative theoretical framework which can explain attitudes towards EU

19 An example of how education is measured, coding according to the Polish system: 1) Uncompleted primary school 2) Primary school 3) Basic vocational 4) General and technical secondary school 5) University degree or more.
membership. This is a useful intellectual exercise to conduct when the empirical results are interpreted, given the intellectual proximity between the ‘winners-and-losers’ hypothesis and Gabel and Palmer’s model.

The first group of predictors that were chosen measures evaluations of the status quo, the second group measures expectations from the future, and the final group controls for demographic characteristics. The two former groups address questions which refer to both individual- and national level factors, and the latter is merely descriptive of individuals’ characteristics and employed as measures of personal competitiveness. Even if the latter group of predictors in particular are not new to analysis as predictors of attitudes towards European integration in CEE, they are still necessary to include for theoretical and technical reasons. Gabel and Palmer’s model argues that these will have effect on the dependent variable, and excluding them from analyses may bias the estimates of other effects. Since utilitarian measures can be tested on several levels, it was deemed useful to test cost-benefit calculations as a function of a combination of cognitive evaluations and factual characteristics.

To describe the variables more thoroughly, the first group of predictors that measure evaluations of the current situation includes two questions that concern the personal level, and one the national level. To begin with, satisfaction of life was chosen as a predictor. The variable was recoded with the values reversed, and the negative answers were set to 1 instead of 4 as in the original coding. The next variable also measures life satisfaction but asks the respondent to compare the current life situation to five years ago, and was recoded in the same manner as the previous variable. These variables were chosen to test whether voters associated EU membership with one’s own personal situation and used is as a proxy for forming opinions. The third variable asks about satisfaction with democracy in the country, and was chosen since it is interesting to test in a post-communist context whether those who are satisfied with the political reform process transfer these views onto their evaluations on

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20 ‘On the whole, how satisfied are you with life in general? Would you say you are: 1) Very satisfied 2) Fairly satisfied 3) Not very satisfied 4) Not at all satisfied 9) DK/no opinion X) Refusal
21 Has life improved, stayed the same, or got worse compared to five years ago? 1) Improved 2) Stayed about the same 3) Got worse 9) DK/no opinion X) Refusal
whether the country will be able to meet the challenges from EU membership. The original coding was kept.

The second group of predictors consists of three questions that ask about the individuals’ expectations in the future, one on personal level and two on the national level. The first question asks whether the respondent expects her/his life to improve over the next five years and is chosen for the same reason as the corresponding questions on life satisfaction. This variable in the analysis will additionally measure whether future expectations of life quality is used as a proxy to evaluate individual benefits from integration, as well as evaluations of the status quo. This variable was recoded in reverse order. The next question addresses whether the individual expects that the country will benefit from European integration, and is a dummy variable with a ‘yes-no’ answer. Even if it appears obvious logic that this predictor should produce positive attitudes towards integration, it is still worth testing the effects of the predictor in multivariate analyses. The variable was recoded with 1 as ‘no’ and 2 as ‘yes.’ The final question asks whether the respondent believes EU membership will help the economy, also a dummy variable which is included for the same reason as expectations of country benefits. It was coded in the same procedure.

The demographic predictors were selected according to availability and theoretical interest. The first selected predictor was age which is measured on a continuous level with 15 as the lowest value and 95 as the highest. The reason for including age is related to the assumed ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ dichotomy created by the transition process which makes it theoretically plausible that young people are more likely to be in the former group and the older to the latter. First of all, younger people are about to, or have recently, entered the labour market and may consider themselves more

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22 On the whole, are you…with the way democracy works in (our country)? 1) Not at all satisfied 2) Not very satisfied 3) Fairly satisfied 4) Very satisfied 8) DK/No opinion 9) Refusal

23 Do you expect life to improve, stay the same or get worse in the next five years? 1) Improve 2) Stay about the same 3) Get worse 9) DK/no opinion X) Refusal

24 Taking everything into consideration, would you say that (country) could get advantages or not from being a member of the European Union? 1) Yes, it could 2) No, it couldn’t 9) DK/no opinion X) Refusal

25 CCEB 2002.2 and 2003.2 ask: Thinking about the enlargement of the European Union to include new European countries, including (country), do you tend to agree or disagree with the following statements…? c) Being a member of the European Union would help the (nationality) economy 1) Tend to agree 2) Tend to disagree DK/no opinion X) Refusal. CCEB 2004.1 asks: What does EU membership mean to you personally? 2) Economic prosperity 1) Mentioned 2) Did not mention DK/no opinion X) Refusal.

26 Which was also argued in Tucker et al.
able to advance professionally, while older people may fear that such chances have passed or that they are unable to compete with younger entrants into their professions. What is more, older people in CEE countries are more likely to possess nostalgic views towards the past while the young tend to express opinions which are more pro-reform/market economy; the available literature has demonstrated that nostalgia for the past tends to correlate with Euroscepticism. The raw variable was kept to be able to control for the linear effects of age, and a squared term was added to control for curvilinearity. The next variable which was chosen was income, for some of the reasons mentioned previously; it is theoretically plausible that those with a higher income will be more positive to EU membership, not only if we accept the ‘winners’ and ‘losers’-dichotomy, but also since it can be argued that those with a higher income will be more likely to benefit from European integration due to their resources. Integration may benefit their workplace in terms of investment or it may provide them with opportunities to avail of services in other EU countries, to name a few. The original coding was kept. The third variable measures urban/rural location. This variable has also proved to be a relative consistent predictor of attitudes towards EU membership, and is theoretically interesting since it can be argued from the ‘winners/losers’-typology that those with an urban location may experience that they are more central to the integration project, and those with a rural location may feel more peripheral to politics and foreign policy in general. The original coding was kept. The fourth variable is education, which, even if it was used in the application of Zaller’s model, was chosen to be used in this model as well. The reason for this is that the variable can be argued to be a valid measure of competitiveness as well as awareness and secondly, it was deemed to be an important proxy by Gabel and Palmer. The final variable is unemployment, which was a compromise which was reached after experiments with a general occupation variable. Since such a measure

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27 See, among others, Grabbe and Hughes.
28 Would you say you live in a…? 1) rural area or village 2) Small or middle-sized town or 3) large town 9) DK/No opinion X) Refusal.
29 This was early argued by Johan Galtung in the development of a centre-periphery model, which identifies distance to policy-making as a question of social distance. The hypothesis argues that those who experience greater distance to politics and the central economy will be more likely to reject integration into international co-operation projects. See Galtung, J. (1964) 'Foreign Policy Option as a Function of Social Position,’ Journal of Peace Research, 3-4.
30 What is your occupation…? 1) Responsible for ordinary shopping or looking after the home, or without any current occupation, not working 2) Student 3) Unemployed or temporarily not working 4) Retired or unable to work through illness 5) Farmer 6) Fisherman 7) Self-employed professional (lawyer, medical practitioner, accountant, architect...) 8) Owner of a shop, craftsman, other self-
must encompass a large number of answer categories in order to reflect the multiple professions respondents in a random sample are likely to possess, the Eurobarometers listed 18 categories from which the respondent could choose. This created a variable which was technically impossible to use in its initial format, since the raw variable does not create a meaningful scale to use in a regression model. Moreover, treating the categories as dummy variables was excluded since the respective answer categories contained too few observations when the sample was sorted by country. Several approaches were experienced with before a final choice was made. It was first attempted to transform the variable into ordinal level with as few categories as possible, which merged occupational categories which theoretically can be classified under the same value label. However, rank-ordering professions is a controversial task; first of all, perceptions of professional hierarchies differ, and secondly, such divisions can be based on a number of factors; social, hierarchical, income-based, education-based, or relations to employers/employees, to name a few. Therefore, it was attempted to apply a typology of professions on a hierarchical (and hence ordinal) scale developed by Erikson and Goldthorpe with the specificities of the available data taken into account.\(^{31}\) The typology was based in a three-fold dichotomy which first divides professions by the relations to other employees or employers, and further distinguishes between their position and skill level. However, since the Eurobarometer data also contain information on non-professionally active respondents, these also had to be placed into the typology, and were done so by level of activeness. For that reason, being unemployed was set to as the lowest category, followed by housewives/husbands, retired people, then students, followed by the various professional categories based on Erikson and Goldthorpe’s schema. However, this categorisation did not produce any meaningful results for interpretations; the logic that professions could be scaled based on relations to employers and skill level did not appear to produce a meaningful scale to measure attitudes towards EU

\(^9\) Business proprietor, owner (full or partner) of a company 
\(^{10}\) Employed professional (employed doctor, accountant, architect) 
\(^{11}\) General management, director or top management (Managing directors, director general, other director) 
\(^{12}\) Middle management, other management (department head, junior manager, teacher, technician) 
\(^{13}\) Employed position, working mainly at desk 
\(^{14}\) Employed position, not at desk but travelling (salesmen, driver) 
\(^{15}\) Employed position, not at a desk, but in a service job (hospital, restaurant, fireman, policeman) 
\(^{16}\) Supervisor 
\(^{17}\) Skilled manual worker 
\(^{18}\) Other (unskilled) manual worker, servant 
\(^{19}\) Never did any paid work 
\(^{99}\) N/A.

membership either. Hence, an attempt to fully test the impact of profession was concluded to not lead to useful results and therefore, only unemployed/employed was included in the analysis, since it was the category which contained the largest number of observations. Choosing this variable can justified by the theoretical logic that unemployed citizens will experience that the transition process has not benefited their own personal situation, and they will therefore be critical towards European integration since they may fear that opening up the labour market will further jeopardise their opportunities for entering the labour market. Choosing this variable also corresponds to the ‘winners-and-losers’ dichotomy between citizens who experience that they have benefited or lost out from the transition process. Including this measure will provide some information about the effects of having or not having stable employment.

A final comment is that this study chose not to use gender as part of the test. The reason for this is that it is extremely difficult to interpret effects of gender on attitudes towards the EU. Even if many studies on structural divisions between supporters and opponents of accession have found an effect of gender, and that women tend to be more Eurosceptic than men, it is hard to state whether women are more Eurosceptic by nature of their gender, or if the scepticism may be linked to other priorities which tend to occupy women more than men. An example is the study by Ringdal and Valen et al., who found in their study of the Nordic 1994 accession referendums that the reason that women tended to be less likely for vote for membership than men could be the reason that being female often correlates with working in the public sector, where employees tended to fear a decline of public sector jobs if the country(ies) joined the EU. This was a plausible explanation for Euroscepticism among Nordic women, since the public sectors are large employers in those countries. Hence, including gender in the tests can create collinear effects with other predictors, for example low income, which in addition to the difficulty in interpreting the results render it safest to exclude gender as an isolated measure.

### 3.6.2.5. Fitting the models


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Zaller’s and Gabel and Palmer’s model were tested as a sequence of nested models which gradually increased the number of independent variables, in order to be able to make comparisons between models. The information this was expected to bring, was whether increasing the number of variables improved the model fit, and to identify ‘problematic’ variables which obstruct the models. In order to make qualified judgements on model fit, likelihood-ratio tests were conducted between the models as more variables were added. The likelihood-ratio statistics informed whether adding more variables produced a model which better explained outcomes on the dependent variable. If the model which contained more predictors did not pass the likelihood-ratio test, the model with fewer predictors had higher explanatory capabilities, the variables which were added could be identified as problematic. The R² which were reported in the models provided another measure on whether the models were able to explain the activity on the dependent variable, and were also interpreted. Finally, before the models were fitted, the data sets were be reduced to cases which did not have missing data on the independent variables, in order to ensure that cases were not dropped as more variables are added. This was necessary to ensure that the tests were not run on different data sets, which would entail that the models cannot be compared.

Zaller’s model was tested through five models according to the group classification of variables which were presented in the preceding section. The first model tested the variables which measure political interest; discussing politics and persuading others during discussions, and the second added the variables which measure habits of using the media; watching TV news and paying attention to news about the EU. The third group controlled for knowledge about the EU through the variables which measure self-perception of knowledge and actual knowledge; the fifth group contained education only, since it is a measure which theoretically should make a difference towards EU attitudes; and the final group was left-right position and left-right position squared.

After running the models, predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a good thing were calculated. To do this, the data were dropped and replaced with dummy data sets which contain 1000 cases for each country data set, where values were generated for each variable, including left-right position and left-
right position squared. Extra cases were created for each party with their respective left-right value, which made it possible to generate predictions for supporters of the various parties. Then, the values on a selection of the most interesting independent variables were set to low, medium and high, which enabled the data to create the probabilities for ‘groups’ of people depending on their level of awareness. After running the predictions, the three lines for awareness were graphed on the left-right scale and the scale of probabilities, which go from 0 to 1, with the predictions for party supporters scattered on the lines for awareness. The graphs were created to illustrate the effects which were generated in the regression tables, in addition to showing the differences in probabilities between party supporters by level of awareness.33

However, it had to be decided whether the respective case studies should be treated as one-or two-way message environments in order to decide under which theoretical framework the results were to be interpreted. As has been explained, Zaller’s model assumes that the opinion formation process will be determined by whether elites are in consensus or disagreement, and whether they convey one or two messages to the public. Making such a distinction was not clear-cut and certain criteria had to be established in order to ensure a standard classification of case studies.

A first problem when applying Zaller’s model to case studies in Central and Eastern Europe is his assumption that when elites agree on a given issue they will convey one message only, and that when elites disagree they will communicate two (or more) messages. The fluid contexts around which EU membership was discussed in the Visegrád countries did not always fit with this assumption and it was necessary to decide upon what should be emphasised when classifying message environments.

To treat the case studies separately; it was a relatively easy task to gather enough evidence to support a claim that the Czech Republic and Poland were two-way message environments. There was presence of soft and hard Euroscepticism in both countries, and Eurosceptic/Europhobic political elites actively campaigned against

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33 However, since tests showed that discussing politics and persuading others during discussions rarely were significant, they were left out of the prediction exercises, since including almost consistently non-relevant variables would generate a false impression on the graphs about the effects of awareness.
accession before the referendum. In Slovakia and Hungary, however, elite positions were in some cases ambiguous. Even if no parties were explicitly against accession - the common understanding was that being against EU membership was equivalent to being against progress - there were several parties that had certain reservations about EU membership, most frequently about the accession criteria. This may suggest, given Zaller’s condition that elites need to fully agree on a given issue for it to be a one-way message environment, that these case studies should constitute two-way message environments. On the other hand, Zaller’s model also provides the criteria that elites need to convey a counter-message to the dominant message; since no such clear message was articulated in either case it would be difficult to argue that the message environments in these two countries were polarised. In Slovakia, all of the parties joined in the yes-campaign, hence, people were only exposed to one message. In Hungary, the no-campaign, which was fronted by the right-populist Justice and Life party, was very small-scale. Moreover, it had a limited outreach since the party is considered a pariah party, and they also failed to provide a clear-cut dichotomous message to the official recommendation to vote yes, since they only wanted to postpone accession to the EU, not prevent it. Hence, in neither Slovakia nor Hungary were people exposed to two opposing messages which are incompatible with each other, which is necessary for an environment to be classified as a two-way message environment. Moreover, the model supposes that people need to be exposed to two conflicting messages for it to be filtered through their political predispositions, and it may be difficult to argue that such an effect could occur in the Slovak and Hungarian cases with so low presence of a no-message.

Hence, when determining the message environment, it was decided that the nature of the communication from elites to the public on the EU issue would determine how the message environment was classified. Less emphasis was put on the actual elite positions, since it was regarded that it is less important what elites actually thought than it was what they communicated to people. Elite opinions are little useful unless people get an opportunity to be aware of them, and for these reasons, the existence of one, or two, elite recommendations before the referendum became the decisive factor when classifying the message environment. For these reasons, the initial impression that Slovakia and Hungary were one-way message environments was kept, and the Czech Republic and Poland constituted the two-way message environments.
The model sequencing for the tests of Gabel and Palmer’s model were also specified according to the groups of predictors which were listed in the preceding section. The first group of predictors control for evaluations of the current situation: satisfaction with one’s personal life situation, life situation compared to five years ago and satisfaction with democracy. The second group tests for future expectations: if s/he expects one’s personal situation to improve in the next five years, if s/he thinks that EU membership will bring advantages for the country, and whether EU membership will bring economic prosperity for the country as a whole. The variables which measure demographic characteristics were added first in a separate test and then included to the final model. The reasons for the choice of testing demographics separately are first of all that the single effects of socio-demographic position are interesting to investigate before controlling with other factors. Secondly, demographic factors will pick up a range of differences which may affect the outcome, and can be tied to a number of theoretical perspectives, which should be applied in separate tests to control for effects in case other variables render them insignificant. Needless to say, if found to be insignificant when tested with other predictors, socio-demographic characteristics are not very reliable determinants of attitudes, however, this does not necessarily mean that there is no effect, but what it does tell us, is that something more important that demographics were tested for. Another reason to devote extra attention to demographics, is that it is difficult to measure the actual causality behind eventual correlations between socio-economic factors and the dependent variable. For example, a person with a high income may be more likely to vote for EU membership not necessarily because s/he has an high income, but it may be related for other factors; s/he may be professionally mobile and desire the projected opportunities of working abroad, s/he may be interested in investing abroad or wish that their children will have the opportunity to study abroad, to give a few suggestions. Hence, the effect can have been created by other factors than theoretically anticipated. Finally, there are risks of collinear effects between demographic predictors, which require extra attention to demographic variables and that they are selected and interpreted with caution. The fourth model includes all predictors in the previous models.

3.7. Case studies
This study has chosen to limit the applications to a restricted number of cases, in order to be able to conduct more thorough analyses than would be possible if all CEE countries which recently have joined the EU were included. Selecting fewer cases allows for a stronger focus on the tests by leaving time and space for more thorough research into the selected cases, and it therefore appears more feasible to choose a limited number of cases, and supplement with control studies which have been subjected to more limited testing. The selected cases were the Visegrád countries, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland, with the remaining four 2004 entrants, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia as control studies.\(^{34}\) The reasons for choosing the Visegrád countries were related to the relative ease in conducting comparative research on a group of countries which have several features in common. To begin with, the Visegrád countries share several historic memories. They were parts of the Habsburg Empire – with the exception of some parts of today’s Poland –, then, they all came under communist rule in the late 1940s. They simultaneously experienced peaceful ends to non-democratic rule and Soviet influence in 1989 when gradual transition to democracy and market economy began. Moreover, the countries have undergone the most successful transitions to democracy in the region – in addition to Slovenia – even if Slovakia was lagging behind until 1998 under a semi-authoritarian regime. These factors make these four countries very suited for a comparative study for reasons of conceptual clarity; since comparisons can be made with more ease.

Naturally, the three Baltic States share similarities as having been parts of the Soviet Union and could therefore have been included in a comparative study, but given these similarities, it would have been difficult to supplement these three with other comparable cases in a study of public opinion, given their post-Soviet contexts. Moreover, making generalisations for the region based on three cases only can certainly be criticised. Slovenia is also a very unique case since it broke away from the Yugoslav federation, where it had felt dominated by Belgrade, and therefore tricky to compare to other cases. Hence, the Visegrád countries appear as being the most suited case studies for comparative analyses and interpretations are to be made.

\(^{34}\) Another reason that the thesis chooses not to study the countries which joined in the last accession wave in 2007, Romania and Bulgaria, is because the countries did not have referendums on accession.
However, despite the apparent similarities between the Visegrád countries, they are still not a politically homogenous group of countries and the context environment around EU accession did differ between the cases. First and foremost, not all of the four countries were originally set for joint accession negotiations. The Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary were placed in the first group of countries to negotiate accession, along with Slovenia and Estonia, given their perceived status as front-runners in transition. Slovakia was lagging behind in terms of political and economic reform, and was set to conduct negotiations at a later stage along with Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Bulgaria. The Slovak problem was related to the autocratic style of rule by the Mečiar government, which held office until the 1998 elections, as well as the poor performance of the economy. This factor did not only create a different context for Slovakia’s accession to the EU, but also brought about a different domestic political dynamic, which in turn can be expected to generate a different environment for the public opinion process.

Another highly important reason for choosing these cases from the post-communist EU members is that the four countries constitute suitable case studies for the application of Zaller’s model. A pre-selection study found that the domestic political debates and discourses were sufficiently different within the bloc to represent Zaller’s dichotomy of message scenarios. As will be more thoroughly explained in the separate case study chapters; Poland and the Czech Republic were polarised message environments where some political elites contested EU accession, and Slovakia and Hungary (the conclusion was reached for the latter after careful considerations, see Chapter 7) were mainstream environments where elites were largely in consensus about the matter. In addition to this, the Baltic States and Slovenia were all mainstream environments which was a further reason not to select these countries as the main case studies; since Zaller’s model could only have been tested for cases of elite consensus and therefore would not have been fully explored. To be sure, the reason for not choosing Bulgaria and Romania was that these countries did not have accession referendums.

Even if the Baltic States and Slovenia were assumed to be less parsimonious for application of the models than the Visegrád countries, they were still deemed suitable as control studies to add information on whether the models can be generalised to the post-communist EU entrants. Even if the tests for the control studies were less extensive, such supplementary control cases provide further information about the explanatory effects of the models. Naturally, testing the models to relatively similar case studies only informs whether the models are applicable in the selected cases and say little about their general applicability. Therefore, the control cases were included in order to find whether the conclusions from the main case studies could be supported by additional tests.

3.8. Problems with preparing the data and solutions

Even if there are several advantages of working with the CCEB, problems were encountered when the data were prepared for the analyses. This section will account for these problems and how they were solved.

The largest problem with the CCEB is that not all questions are asked consistently in every survey, which can cause problems for studies which employ tests at different time periods. In some cases, the same question can be asked, but be differently phrased and/or coded differently, a problem which in some cases can be overcome by recoding the variables, but which still can make it theoretically risky to use in comparative studies if the phrasing of the question can be argued to create different connotations for the respondent. This led to the fact that some variables which would have been interesting to include in the analysis could not be included since they did not exist in all three data sets.\(^{37}\) Despite these shortcomings, the selected data sets included sufficient variables to facilitate tests of the selected theoretical models, but the CCEB lacked a consistent measure of political predispositions. In the 2002-2003

\(^{37}\) Examples of such questions were ‘Are you satisfied with the national economy,’ and ‘Are you satisfied with the current political situation in (country)?’ These questions were not asked in all three survey, which is the reason that satisfaction with democracy was selected as a measure of political content.
editions of the CCEB, political choice was measured as a function of party choice (with national parties listed in the country-specific surveys), but in the CCEB from 2004 onwards, respondents were instead asked to place themselves on a left-right index which was scaled from 1 for extreme left and 10 for extreme right. Using these variables would make it impossible to make comparisons between the findings produced from predispositions. In order to allow for left-right orientation to function as a measure of political predispositions, several steps were taken to create such a feasible variable. A solution was found by using party data for Central and Eastern Europe from the Comparative Manifesto Data set II (Mapping Policy Preferences II), a research project which carried out analyses of parties manifestos from the EU, CEE and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries from 1990-2003, and coded these on a left-right scale based on their opinions on various issues. Hence, the MPPII was merged with each of the three CCEB, and sorted by country and party.

However, further recoding of the MPPII’s left-right variable needed to be done to create a more intuitive variable to use in the post-estimation analyses, which aim to test for differences of effects of awareness between voter groups. This will be explained in section 3.5.3.3. The raw variable rile which measures left-right position is continuous and does not allow for intuitive interpretations since the values go from 0 to infinity. It would be particularly difficult to decide which value(s) would represent the centre and to define the boundaries between left and centre, centre and right. Secondly, some parties have more than one observation (which means that more than one party manifesto were analysed) and therefore contained several values so the variable had to be manipulated to become more parsimonious to work with. The first change which was made was to collapse the data set by country and the mean of rile and sorted by party. Then, the mean of rile was further altered to create a more

38 Left-right placement was preferred over party choice as a measure of predispositions since it is a more parsimonious measure. If one would choose to work with party choice only, many difficulties would emerge. Given the high numbers of political actors in CEE countries, the constant change in coalitions and party factionism which often results in the formation of new parties (and their often short-lived existence), this measure will not only be difficult to work with technically due to the large number of parties and the small numbers of supporters for some of these, but will also be little useful for comparison between the case studies.

39 Given the large number of parties in CEE and the short existence of some of these, not all parties had corresponding values in the MPPII data set and the CCEB and vice versa. The MPPII also contains data on several parties/coalitions which had ceased to exist before 2002, therefore, these parties were excluded from the analysis.
intuitive scale. First, mean of percentage vote was created, then, _rile_ was multiplied with the percentage of votes divided with the mean of percentage of votes, which created an interim variable _rile1_. Sorted by country, a further interim variable _meannrile_ was created by the function of the mean of _rile1_. Subtracting _meannrile_ from the original variable _rile_, the variable _rilescore_ was created, which is weighted by vote, contains one mean observation per party and centres ‘centre’ (or average value) orientation at 0, with negative values denoting left-of-centre orientation and positive values right-of centre orientation.

Even if a more intuitive scale of left-right positioning was created for parties, working with left-right placement in Central and Eastern Europe is still not an easy task. Parties may not necessarily align themselves along the left-right scale according the traditional divisions, such as market economy/social protection, secularism/anti-secularism dichotomies, to name a few.40 Therefore, the party placements produced by the Mapping Policy Preferences Data set II were cross-checked with the academic literature on parties in the Visegrád countries to ensure that the values given to each party would correspond to experts’ party descriptions. These analyses showed that the _rilescore_ values which were given to parties which could be classified as belonging to party families appeared to correspond to the profiles of the parties and were comparable across the cases. For example, communist parties were placed to the extreme left of the scale; the Czech Communist Party was ascribed an extreme value of -23.20, while the Slovak Communist Party got a lower value of -10.86. However, the difference is justifiable, given the parties’ diverging natures.41 Nationalist and right-populist parties such as the Hungarian Justice and Life Party and the League of Polish Families were given high positive values, and liberal and social-liberal parties, such as the Hungarian Democratic Forum while the Slovak Party of the Hungarian

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40 The academic debate on left-right positioning of parties in Central and Eastern Europe still has not reached a consensus on what structures party competition, and whether a traditional left-right axis is meaningful to operate with or whether it needs to be refined to suit the specificities of the region. For discussions of the parsimony of operating with left-right positioning of CEE parties, see Evans, G. and Whitefield, S. (1998), ‘The Structuring of Political Cleavages in Post-Communist Societies: the Cases of the Czech Republic and Slovakia,’ _Political Studies_, 46 (1); Miller, W.L., White, S., and Heywood, P. (1998), ‘Political Values Underlying Partisan Cleavages in Former Communist Countries,’ _Electoral Studies_, 17 (2).

41 This difference is not surprising, given that the Czech communists have always been resistant to internal reform while the Slovak communists have taken on a less hard-line communist position. The Czech Communist Party made attempts at reform in 2004, so the values for the party would maybe be less extreme if the survey was done at a later stage.
Coalition were given values closer to zero. This party group was consistently clustered around the neutral/centre category. To give an example, the Czech Freedom Party has a value on \textit{rilescore} on -5.26, and the qualitative studies on the party confirm that this placement does not deviate from the academic descriptions of the party which suggests that the party may advocate typical left-of-centre policies but not ‘left enough’ to be characterised as a left party. The same was the case for parties placing right-of-centre, for example the Independent Smallholder’s Party in Hungary, which scored 3.34. For comparison, the nationalist-populist Hungarian Party of Justice and Life scored 15.23. After studying the data set and parties’ score on \textit{rilescore} and comparing with the literature, it surfaced that it was natural to distinguish moderate centre-left parties and Communist or left-populist parties at the value of -10. Liberal and pro-market centrist parties were consistently scoring between -10 and 10 with the secular/morally progressive parties scoring below zero and morally conservative parties scoring above zero, with a few exceptions. Furthermore, since populist and nationalist parties always scored higher than 10 on \textit{rilescore}, it became justifiable to also distinguish centre and right at +10.

However, one ambiguity arose when it came to the placement of social democratic parties. The Czech Social Democratic Party was placed relatively far left with a value of -13.27; in Slovakia, the Party of the Democratic Left scored -11.64; and the ‘new’ Social Democrats, Smer, was placed centre-right with 5.13. In Hungary, the Socialist Party placed far centre-left with -9.27; and in Poland, the Alliance of the Democratic Left scored -9.22. This led to that the moderate left parties in the first two cases were placed in the left category, and in the latter three cases placed in the centre. However, the moral progressivism of the Czech social democrats makes it justifiable to place them on the left, despite their pro-reform and pro-market outlook; their secular outlook may as well pull the party towards the left, though not the extreme left. The Party of the Democratic Left is divided between modernists and those who feel nostalgia for the old regime, and the electorate consists of many voters who feel they have ‘lost out’ from the transition process which may cause the party value to be pulled to the left. Smer’s flirtation with populism and its ‘Third Way’ style of social democracy make the party take on more centre-rightist values than the other moderate socialist party in Slovakia. The Hungarian Socialist Party, despite its name, may also be considered a left party, even if it is pro-market and internationalist. If placing the
party in the centre makes the left space empty, it may still be justifiable since Hungary does not have a radical left party. In Poland, the left-populist and economic protectionist Samoobrona became the only party to be placed at the left since the ‘Third Way’ ideology and pro-market/pro-reform orientation of the Alliance of the Democratic Left makes it logical to place the party in the centre.

The Civic Platform in Poland stood out as the only party which deviated drastically from its expected value. The party has since its formation had a liberal and pro-market outlook but has over the course of the years developed a critical rhetoric on the transition process and advocated more conservative Christian values, and is currently the dominant force right-of centre in the country.42 This would anticipate a score slightly higher than 0, but the rilescore variable gave it the value of -16.10. It was first assumed that the party programmes which were used for collection of the Mapping Policy Preferences II data were dated before the party changed its moral position to a more conservative outlook; when it was advocating morally progressive and secular values and that this had caused the extreme position. However, after consultation with experts on Polish politics,43 this possibility was rejected and it was therefore suggested that an unidentified error had caused the deviation. The consulted experts strongly recommended changing the assigned value and move the party to the centre of the scale. Obviously, changing values in a data set which has been created by others is a difficult task, especially if the necessary material is not available. Another vital consequence of fundamentally changing values in a data set, is that it questions the reliability of the data set as a whole. However, the controls for all other parties confirmed that their placements on rilescore corresponded to the academic descriptions of the parties’ position and the experts who were consulted on Civic Platform also held the view that there was no need to question the scores for the other Polish parties. It therefore appeared justifiable to accept that this was the only error in the data which needed to be corrected and to change the value for this party only. An intellectual exercise was therefore undertaken to try to estimate the party’s position on rilescore and according to the literature, it appeared that some of the party’s policies would place it left-of-centre, and some to the right-of-centre. For example, the party’s

42 As of July 2009. Given the fluid nature of Polish politics, the party’s dominant position may be subject to change.
43 Personal communication, Professor Frances Millard, University of Essex, 3 April 2009 and Dr. Simona Guerra, University of Nottingham, 4-5 April 2009.
increased critique against the transition process would suggest a score under zero, and its economic liberalism, Catholic values and conservative social policies, such as opposition to gay marriages and abortion, would suggest positive values. Therefore, in addition to the academic consensus that the party belongs to the centre/centre-right, it was initially assumed that the party should be placed somewhere close to zero was confirmed. Comparing the Civic Platform to the other centre parties in Poland, which were, from left to right, The Alliance of the Democratic Left, the Freedom Union, the Law and Justice Party and the Polish Peasant’s Party, brought about a proposition that the party should be placed between the Freedom Union and Law and Justice. To begin with, the Civic Platform is more morally conservative than the Democratic Left and less conservative than the Law and Justice Party and the Peasant’s Party. Further, it shares economic liberalism and an urban electoral base with the Freedom Union, but is slightly more nationalist-oriented, which is connected with rightist orientations in CEE. It is also is less economically protectionist than the Law and Justice party. Therefore, the median value of centrist parties (-3.067565) was calculated and changed in the data set to be the new value for the Civic Platform, which was found to be the most parsimonious way to find a ‘compromise’.44

Finally, in order to merge the data set to ensure that the party variables were matched, a new variable party was created in all three CCEB which is the value label for parties in the MPPII. Then, the codes for every party which should be included in the analysis were changed to match the code they had been assigned in the MPPII. The new variable assigned the value -1 to all parties which either did not exist in both data sets or were excluded from the analysis to keep the respondents who would have chosen one of these categories in the new data set.45 The CCEB data were sorted by party and then merged with the MPPII also by party.

3.9. Summary and conclusion

44 If this value should be subject to criticism, it must be emphasised that it is of less importance to find the absolutely ‘correct’ value for the party than to place the party in the correct party group. This analysis only distinguishes between left, centre and right; therefore, any value within the ‘centre’ bounds of the scale will create roughly the same results.
45 The parties which did not exist in both data sets were parties which did not exist in 2002-2004, either because they had dissolved or had merged with other parties.
To conclude, this study attempts to examine relatively unexplored aspects of the public opinion formation process in the new member states through applications of Zaller’s model of opinion formation and Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis. By conducting such a study, this project does not aim to describe fully which factors influence this process but to investigate parts of this process in order to contribute to existing research which addresses these phenomena. The study is limited to the selected case studies, which are the Visegrád countries (the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary), with the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) and Slovenia as control cases.

By choosing the above-mentioned models, the study hopes to investigate several aspects. The first model explores whether the nature of the message environments creates different cognitive processes for citizens when they make up their minds about the issue. Zaller argues that awareness of the matter alone will generate support for the government position in environments where the elites are in consensus and that political predispositions will determine which choice people will take when elites communicate two messages since they will be reminded that the issue may not be compatible with their political values. The selected case studies represent both categories of message environments, which is necessary to fully test the model. The second hypothesis which was selected for research was Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis, which argues that citizens will make cost-benefit calculations on whether they will individually benefit from European integration, as well as whether it will be good for the country as a whole. These calculations will be rooted in individual evaluations of the situation as well as individual level of personal competiveness on the labour market. Since this hypothesis is theoretically linked with the previously developed ‘winners-and-losers’ typology of CEE citizens, and also has been contested, it was deemed useful to include it in this analysis.

This chapter has further presented the methodology of the study, and has provided descriptions and justifications for all the scientific choices which were made. Issues and problems which arose when the study was designed, which were mostly related to selection of data and variables, have been explained as well as the solutions.
Chapter 4
The Czech Republic

4.1. Aims and introduction

This chapter will present the applications of Zaller’s and Gabel and Palmer’s models to the Czech case study, and attempt to explain public opinion formation in the country before, during and after the referendum with the help of the selected models. In order to set the framework, the chapter will begin with a quick review of events since the 1989 Velvet Revolution, which will be followed by a description of the party system, the parties’ stands on European integration, and the referendum campaign.

While the revolutions spread over Central and Eastern Europe in 1989, the turn came to Czechoslovakia in November and December the same year. Mass protests began by students were soon joined by other members of the public and brought about the resignation of most of the Presidium of the Communist Party. Drawing upon former democratic traditions from before the Communist takeover in 1948, the protestors demanded the abolishment of Marxism-Leninism and the return to a multi-party democracy. Negotiations brought about the resignation of President Husák and the creation of a non-Communist-dominated government, and opened for free elections.
under a system of proportional representation in multi-member districts.\(^1\) Dissident playwright Václav Havel, who had been imprisoned several times since the late 1970s for his oppositional activities and for being a symbol of Czechoslovak opposition, was released and elected as the first democratic president in Czechoslovakia since 1948.\(^2\)

In the 1992 elections, the right-of-centre Civic Democratic Party (ODS), which advocated economic reform and a limited role for the state, emerged as the winning party in the Czech lands, whilst the left-of-centre Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) gained a plurality of the Slovak votes, after having advocated greater Slovak independence and challenging the government’s economic programme. Knowing that the threats to the existence of a common state were evident, party leaders Václav Klaus of the ODS and Vladímir Mečiar of the HZDS negotiated a peaceful break-up of the federation, which came into force in 1993.\(^3\) The non-dramatic Velvet Revolution and subsequent division of Czechoslovakia was followed by a transition process that has been characterised as one of the most successful among Europe’s post-communist countries. Several scholars have argued that the Czech Republic has made greater progress in the democratisation process than many of its CEE counterparts, and often is ascribed to its positive advantage of a historical legacy of democracy and democratic institutions.\(^4\) This has made commentators claim that the Republic has experienced a rapid and relatively successful transition to democracy due to its previous experience of a functioning democratic state, and that it was sufficient to simply renew, as opposed to construct these structures from scratch.\(^5\)

A 'Return to Europe' was seen as an imperative after the break with communism among elites and the general public alike, and was held to be a prioritised case for the

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first Czech government under the ODS and Prime Minister Klaus. Diplomatic relations had been established between the European Community and Czechoslovakia already in 1988, followed by the signing of the Europe Agreement in 1991, and when the separation from Slovakia was a fact, it was widely regarded within the Czech Republic that it had a higher chance of joining the EU without Slovakia. Even if the country’s status as a front-runner in the transition process granted the Republic a place among the first countries to commence negotiations of EU membership, the Commission criticised the Republic in the late 1990s for being slow to adopt certain parts of the Acquis Communautaire and undertake necessary reforms to prepare for accession. Criticism was also voiced that the Republic had not done enough to improve the situation of the Roma community in the country. The Commission’s 2000 Report on the progress of the Czech Republic was a blow to the high expectations of Czech politicians, stating that the country was lagging behind Poland and Hungary in terms of transition to a market economy. Still, economic progress had been relatively successful despite several setbacks, and the Czech Republic was formally invited to join the EU at the summit in Copenhagen in December 2002, the same month as Havel’s tenure as President ended, a symbolic gesture from Brussels that the country was on the right track for EU membership.

Czech citizens were traditionally highly supportive of EU membership, and European integration was linked with democracy, market reform and Czech identity. In a 1996 survey, 46.2% of the sample said they clearly would vote for Czech membership, while 29.9% would vote against it. Qualitative surveys in 1997 showed that EU membership was seen as a part of the necessary development for the Czech Republic and a way of breaking with the past, and that not joining would harm the country. There was also a common belief that the country was not economically strong enough

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8 Rovna, p. 114ff.
9 Linden and Pohlman, p. 317.
10 Lyons, p. 524.
11 Ibid, p. 193. Note that the only CEE country in this survey to display a lower yes-figure was Estonia and Latvia, while the electorates in Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia were more positive.
to stand outside. However, the early excitement about the European project was followed with declining support among the masses as accession became a reality, which in comparison with the other accession countries was comparatively low. Between 1999 and 2003, Czechs were the least supportive of EU membership in Central and Eastern Europe along with Estonians and Latvians, even if support increased during the campaign preceding the accession referendum. Common Czech anti-EU sentiments have been ascribed to fears of immigration, loss of identity and economic decline, while extremist attitudes such as anti-German attitudes also are evident, especially in the regions bordering Germany and Austria.

4.2. The political actors

4.2.1. The development of a party system

The initial phase after the Velvet Revolution was characterised by the appearance of several actors on the political scene, who all were trying to consolidate their positions in a political battlefield where most political choices were made within the communist/anti-communist framework. On one side, there were the liberal and reformist movements who had emerged after the Revolution fronted by the Civic Forum (OF) under Václav Havel, which emerged just after the 1989 demonstrations along with its Slovak ally Public Against Violence (VPN). On the other side, there were remnants of the old regime, in the form of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM). In this respect, despite elections, some of the present forces were still embedded in the former system and represented a regime-society divide. This polarised system was to give way to new political cleavages and divisions which

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12 Kucia, M. (1999), 'Public Opinion in Central Europe on EU accession: The Czech Republic and Poland', Journal of Common Market Studies, 37 (1), p. 147f. The author also found that the respondents were well informed and realistic about accession.
emerged throughout the 1990s, and caused a more fragmented political arena as initial umbrella movements disintegrated and left the scene for new actors to enter.\textsuperscript{18}

Developments since the initial phases have led to relatively stable cleavages and conflict lines which imply that the system is gradually stabilising.\textsuperscript{19} In fact, along with Hungary, the Czech party system is widely known to be the most stable in post-communist East Central Europe. Left-right competition has since the early 1990s evolved around a socio-economic conflict concerning post-communist marketisation and reform more than historically rooted conflicts, and has been concluded by several studies to be an important issue dimension for citizens and parties alike.\textsuperscript{20} Issues concerning the market liberalisation/ populism dichotomy have contributed to structuring belief systems and left-right placements.\textsuperscript{21} In addition to the left-right dimension, a second dimension of libertarian-versus-authoritarian attitudes has been identified as playing a significant role for voter’s choices.\textsuperscript{22} At present, the party system is stable, with only five parties operating at the national level since 1998.\textsuperscript{23}

Over the course of time, the two dominant actors in Czech politics have emerged in form of the Social Democrats (ČSSD) on the centre-left and the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) on the right as a culmination of this left-right polarisation of politics and consolidation of a two-bloc system,\textsuperscript{24} and the competition between these two have defined the developments in Czech politics since 1989. While the ODS was the emerging victor from the first elections in 1992 when the Communists were the strongest oppositional forces, the Social Democrats grew stronger and developed a clearer alternative on the left during the government period. This period also saw that smaller political groupings which lacked clear organisational bases and failed to


\textsuperscript{23} Linek and Mansfeldova 2006, p. 23.

\textsuperscript{24} Hanley 2004c, p. 2f.
capture a specific voter base disintegrated and were unable to re-enter parliament in 1996. This contributed to consolidate the emerging polarised two-block system. Similarly, as minor parties collapsed, the popularity of the ČSSD increased since the new ‘acceptable left’ had proved a popular alternative to the government. The ČSSD was the absolute winner in the 1998 elections, however, unsuccessful attempts at negotiating a ČSSD-led centre-left coalition on one side and an ODS-led centre-right coalition on the other led to negotiations between party leaders Miloš Zeman of ČSSD and Václav Klaus of ODS. Despite large political disparities, they agreed upon an opposition agreement which meant in practice that the ODS would neither instigate nor support a ČSSD minority government, but neither would they give their support in the event of a vote of no confidence against it. The following year, the opposition agreement was amended to a ‘tolerance pact’, in which the ODS would passively accept the ČSSD government in exchange for parliamentary positions. The following elections in 2002 also created a ČSSD-led coalition government, which despite several ministerial changes managed to stay in government during the full four-year period, though cabinet changes occurred twice throughout the period; the 2004 EP election in 2004, in which the ODS was the clear winner, brought about Prime Minister Špidla’s decision to resign both as Prime Minister and ČSSD leader, knowing that he had little support from the electorate and within the party. The new cabinet, fronted by the young Stanislav Gross, did not survive for long either; a corruption scandal forced him to step down in April 2005. He was to be succeeded by Jiří Paroubek. Meanwhile, while the Social Democrats struggled to maintain government continuity, the ODS was successful in the 2003 presidential election, which saw Václav Klaus replace Václav Havel as the country’s symbolic leader. After two governmental periods as an opposition party, the ODS returned to power in the 2006 elections following a heated campaign during which ODS and ČSSD top

28 Linek, L. (2005), ‘Czech Republic’, European Journal of Political Research, 44 (7/8). p. 985ff. Špidla was then nominated as the first Czech representative to the European Commission.
figures frequently traded accusations of corruption. However, after losing a non-confidence vote in March 2009, during the Czech EU Presidency, Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek decided to step down and transfer power to an interim technocrat government led by Jan Fischer.

4.2.2. The political parties

After the fall of communism, the role of the Civic Forum changed as their prime goal had been achieved. Due - among other reasons - to internal divisions and ideological incongruence, the party disintegrated into three elements. Only the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) under the leadership of Václav Klaus proved able to remain a stable force in Czech politics, and the other two factions were relatively short-lived; the Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA) and the Civic Movement (OH), which both disintegrated not long after the split from Slovakia. The ODS, which was formed by anti-communist, pro-market right-wing OF deputies, was an early advocate of strong pro-market policies, a position that without the over-hanging burden of the less developed Slovak economy proved plausible to the Czech public and led to its success in the 1992 elections. The party has always identified itself as a Western-style conservative party, and has been classified as a liberal, cosmopolitan and secular centre-right party defined by issues of post-communist transformation. The party has traditionally been identified with former Prime Minister and current President Václav Klaus, a self-professed Thatcherite who led the party until 2002 when he stepped down as party leader to stand as presidential candidate. Klaus has continually emphasised the need of market-led economic reform and radical de-communisation, but is most famous, or notorious, for his controversial statements, especially on the European Union, which has given a Eurosceptic flavour to the party. After the defeat in the 1998 elections and despite the secular and cosmopolitan profile of the party, Klaus’ neo-liberal and conservative outlook has increasingly taken on a nationalist flavours, shown by his efforts to defend Czech national interests against demands

33 Hanley 2004b, p. 29.
35 Hanley 2004c, p. 5.
from the EU, to revise the ‘Beneš decrees’ and open the economy for labour immigration from less developed post-communist countries. The profile of the party was also perceived to change after his resignation as party leader, when he was replaced with Mirek Topolánek, a more pragmatic character of less personal authority than his predecessor, and who also seemed to lack a clear political vision. After the 2002 elections, the party has been struggling with internal divisions and ideological disunity. Still, the party has monopolised the Czech right, and before the 2006 elections, the party promised that it would introduce a ‘blitzkrieg’ of economic and social reform with the Christian Democrats if elected, including further liberalisation of welfare policies.

The main issues of contention between the ČSSD and the ODS have centred upon privatisation and the role of the state in economic life. The division of the policies between the parties reflect the differing interests of the social classes which emerged during the transition, and have provided the dominant representatives of the left and right with social foundations. While the ODS is a relatively new formation, the ČSSD is the successor of the former Czechoslovak Social Democratic party, which was founded in 1898 and forced to merged with the Communist party in 1948. It is now known as a standard European social democratic party, which supports a social market economy, secularism and European integration. The ČSSD is a typical centre-left party, which has been characterised as a ‘catch-all-party’ with a wide field of activity and which is representing no particular narrow interests group. Much of the success of the social democrats has been ascribed to their strategy of

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37 Hanley 2004c, p. 5. The Beneš decrees which expelled all Sudeten Germans and Magyars from Czechoslovakia after World War II on instruction from President Beneš led to renewed disputes in 2002, when some German and Austrian politicians were threatening to veto Czech EU membership unless the Czech Republic annulled the decrees. Klaus’ demand of a separate clause in the Accession Treaty which guaranteed that the issue would not be revised was met with dismissal from the then Commissioner of Enlargement, Günther Verheugen. See Nagengast, E. (2003), ‘The Beneš Decrees and EU enlargement’, European Integration, 25 (4), p. 340ff.
38 Hanley 2004b, p. 32.
39 Hanley 2006, p. 3.
41 Matějů, and Vlachová, p. 250.
selling its policies as an alternative to the ODS, while it has largely ignored other parties. Criticising the ODS for wanting to import ‘inhuman liberal-conservative’ policies into a country where there is no tradition for these, they have successfully portrayed its main opponent as an extremist right-wing party, which is reflected in the hostility ČSSD-voters hold towards the Civic Democrats. This has in turn generated stronger responses from the ODS, who have become increasingly aggressive in their rhetoric against the ČSSD than in the early years of Czech democracy, and contributed to sharpen the polarised nature of Czech politics between left and right. Furthermore, the promises of pursuing an economic policy that was neither as liberal as the of ODS and not as radical as that of the Communist Party, helped the party gain less radical voters who had previously supported the extreme left.45 Being fond of accusing the ODS of corruption, the Social Democrats have not been free from revelations of similar activities; in addition to those mentioned in the previous section, the party was swimming in shallow waters after the disclosed ‘Bamberg affair’ where party leader Zeman allegedly had offered prominent state positions to a group of Czech-Swiss businessmen in exchange for campaign funding in 1995.46

Catholic social interests and issues between church and state, which are other lines of conflict in Czech politics after the split from Slovakia but of weaker magnitude, have been maintained by the Christian and Democratic Union - Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-ČSL), the result of a 1992 merger between two religious parties struggling to maintain popularity,47 partially due to their perceived associations with the old regime.48 The party has since gained relative electoral success through their emphasis on religious values and the restitution of Church property.49 To compete with the ODS-ČSSD dominance of the party system, they joined forces with the Freedom Union-Democratic Union (US-DEU), in the Coalition of Four (‘Štyrkoalice’) for the 2002 elections.50 The US-DEU, is another merger, and was made from a splinter group from the ODS which left the party before the 1998 elections due to internal disagreements about the future course of the party, and as a

45 Vlachová 1997, p. 50ff.
47 Evans and Whitefield, p. 121.
48 Hanley 2004b, p. 29.
50 Evans and Whitefield, p. 121.
protest against Klaus’ leadership style. The party is a rather small, pro-European free-market liberal party, which strongly advocates pro-European policies and has been placed to the right of the centre. The Coalition was relatively short-lived, and the two groups ran separately in the 2006 elections when the US-DEU failed to get any seats.51

A notable distinction between the Czech political scene and most other CEE post-communist countries is that the post-communist successor party has not been very successful.52 The Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia has received various labels from observers, such as an 'anti-system party', 'traditional mass party', ‘semi-loyal opposition party’, and 'sub-cultural party'. Electoral support has been relatively low apart from in the 2002 election when it managed to mobilise 18.5 % of voters. This can be ascribed to its conservative outlook and refusal to reform or modernise its ideological base. Following a cleansing of non-communist members in 1993, it has prioritised advocating conservative communist ideology and done little to adapt to changing streams among the electorate, even if a reformist faction does exist within the party. The party today finds itself struggling to mobilise voters, especially among the younger sections of the electorate.53

Two smaller and parties whose performances in elections have been inconsistent, but still draw support from sections of the electorate, are the Union of Independents/European Democrats (SNK-ED) and the Party of Greens (SZ). The SNK was founded in 2000 to help various mayors take part in regional elections, and adopted a liberal-conservative platform, while the ED was formed by the former Mayor of Prague, Jan Kasl, to contest local elections in 2002.54 The parties ran as a coalition in the 2004 European elections, when they successfully polled 12 per cent of the votes, but suffered from problems of internal disagreements and did not manage to get enough votes to get seats in the 2006 elections. The SZ has been a small party since it was founded in 1990, and consists of former liberal deputies with an ill-defined platform which constitutes a mix of ecological, central and populist policies.

51 Hanley 2006, p. 4ff.
52 Kaldor and Vejvoda, p. 69ff.
54 Hanley 2004b, p. 33.
A reform process after 2002 created a more streamline libertarian and ecological ideology, which enabled the party to enter parliament independently for the first time in 2006.\textsuperscript{55}

\section*{4.3. Party positioning on European integration}

\textit{‘It is not the EU which wants to get into the Czech Republic!’}\textsuperscript{56}

The widely held view that a 'return to Europe' was seen as an imperative after the break with communism was initially shared by political elites in the early 1990s. President Havel very much personalised the quest to re-gain the Czech Republic’s ‘natural’ place in Europe; in the West, not in the East. However, divisions between the President and Prime Minister on the matter quickly emerged. While Havel as the moral leader of the Czech nation began to campaign for EU accession already in 1990 on an ethical platform which emphasises the need to prevent war and shared European values, Klaus became known as a soft Eurosceptic. While he supported integration for economic reasons, he also voiced concerns about loss of Czech sovereignty and the conditions for EU entry.\textsuperscript{57}

Several studies argue that the Czech political scene quickly became ‘Europeanised,’ given the early entry of the European issue to the Czech political agenda.\textsuperscript{58} However, the initial consensus began to unravel as negotiations were underway and it was evident that accession would not be without costs; elite approaches grew increasingly ambiguous and displayed disparaging opinions among the political parties as accession began to seem a reality.\textsuperscript{59} The question of EU accession developed to

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\textsuperscript{55} Hanley 2006, p. 3ff.
\textsuperscript{56} Former EU commissioner for Foreign Relations Hans van den Broek, responding to Václav Klaus’ criticism of the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy at the World Economic Forum in 1995. Quoted in Kopecký and Učeň, p. 167.
\textsuperscript{57} Linden and Pohlman, p. 316.
\textsuperscript{58} De Vries and Tillman, p. 14.
\textsuperscript{59} Kopecky and Mudde 2002, p. 298.
\end{flushleft}
become a source of elitist division, a trend which consolidated in the mid-1990s.\textsuperscript{60} However, even if smaller parties such as the Communist party has exploited the issue of EU membership, the issue has not become a strong dividing cleavage in Czech politics. Even though critical elites began to question the issue as accession approached, no major internal disagreements on the issue disrupted the relatively smooth accession to the EU.\textsuperscript{61} This stands as a contrast to the knowledge that the Czech party system includes both hard and soft Eurosceptic parties.\textsuperscript{62}

1. The Civic Democratic Party

Though the party early advocated that EU membership would bring about advantages, party leader Klaus over time began to adopt a 'Thatcherite' position on the issue, which led to several clashes between Klaus, who was then Prime Minister, and President Havel, who early after the Velvet Revolution had embraced EU membership as an expression of shared European values. When the ODS led the first government of the independent Czech Republic, it pursued pro-European policies with the aim of preparing the country for accession, and was the party which submitted the Czech membership application in January 1996. The party traditionally held the view that the Czech Republic, being a small economy, never had an alternative to joining the EU, and Klaus argued early in 1998 that it would be ‘essential’ for the country to join the EMU.\textsuperscript{63}

Having said that, the official position of the party has not always been reflected by the party’s main front figure. Though claiming that he is not an outright Eurosceptic, but

\textsuperscript{60} De Vries and Tillman, p. 14.
\textsuperscript{62} Linden and Pohlman, p. 317. The distinction between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ Euroscepticism was developed by Taggart and Szczepanik to distinguish between Eurosceptical parties by their degree of criticism towards the European Union and/or European integration. ‘Hard’ Eurosceptic parties oppose the European Union or their country’s EU membership as a whole, often on an ideological basis, and parties which conditionally support their country’s membership in the EU based on unrealistic accession criteria also belong to this category. ‘Soft’ Eurosceptic parties do not reject EU membership in principle, but are critical to certain aspects or policies of European integration and/or their country’s accession criteria, and therefore oppose to EU membership. As this classification has been adopted by several political scientists in research reports on party positions to European integration in CEE, this study will continue to use the term to classify levels of opposition to the EU by parties in the Visegrad countries. For a thorough explanation of types of party-based Euroscepticism, see Taggart and Szczepanik (2002) and Szczepanik, A. and Taggart, P. (2001), ‘Parties, Positions and Europe: Euroscepticism in the EU Candidate States in CEE,’ Sussex European Institute Working Paper no. 46.
\textsuperscript{63} Kopecky and Učen, p. 167.
a ‘Eurorealist,’ Klaus has never been never shy in expressing concerns over the projected negative effects EU membership would have on Czech politics, and early on portrayed himself as a leader who sought to protect Czech sovereignty from dissolving in the EU like a ‘lump of sugar in a cup of coffee.’ Some of his statements reflected a more populist than ‘realist’ stance to the EU, as his many controversial comparisons between the EU and the Soviet Union, and his famous statement that ‘the former dominance from the Soviet Bloc has now been replaced by that of the EU.’ Moreover, the now President has on several occasions compared the Common Market to the COMECON, and his decision of not joining the May 1 2004 celebrations which marked the Republic’s accession to the EU was interpreted as a ‘gesture which was widely understood as a polite and historically resonant way in telling the Euro-elite where to go.’ Klaus also re-engaged with the contentious Beneš decrees issue in the 2002 controversy about the case of the expelled Sudeten Germans, arguing that the decrees were unacceptable from today's view, but also was unwilling to allow for compensations to be given to former expellees, which signalled that not all accession criteria were acceptable for the President. Arguing that unless the Commission inserted a separate clause in the Accession Treaty which guaranteed that the decrees were never to be annulled or revised, Klaus explained that unless such a guarantee was given, he was unsure whether he could ‘call on citizen to vote yes to the EU in a referendum.’ Manifestos which were circulated before the EU referendum confirmed that the party backed Klaus’ ‘Euro-realist’-stance, affirming its preference for strong trans-Atlantic ties, as well as rejection of a federal Europe and suggested extension of qualified majority voting.

2. The Social Democratic Party
The ČSSD had stated early on that it viewed the EU as a venue to complete the European Social Democratic project, and soon after Czech independence was gained, party programmes stated that the party held unambiguously positive attitudes towards

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65 Nagengast, p. 342.
66 Strong, p. 5ff.
68 Baun et al., p. 258.
accession. Being keen to frame itself as an alternative to the perceived Eurosceptic view of the ODS, the party seized the opportunity after its victory in the 1998 elections to speed up reforms and legislation in to prepare for EU accession. Moreover, the ČSSD-led government after the 2002 election held meeting the criteria of the Lisbon strategy and preparing for EMU accession as key priorities, and its economic policies emphasised privatisation, economic growth and budget balance. The successes of these policies were varied, but signalled that the Social Democrats were aiming for accession as early as possible. However, as is common practice in Czech politics, party leaders do not always adhere to party platforms; in 2002, the then Prime Minister Miloš Zeman of the ČSSD sided with ODS’ Klaus in a staunchly non-conciliatory response to political forces in the European Parliament, Austria and Germany who claimed that the Beneš decrees needed to be repealed in order to allow for Czech accession. Labelling the Sudeten Germans as ‘Hitler’s fifth column,’ Zeman used the issue to tap into anti-German sentiments in order to gain votes at the 2002 national election, which signalled that old hostilities against its largest neighbour were still present within the elites of the party.

3. The Coalition of Four

The Eurosceptic declarations from the ODS appeared to have fostered almost unconditionally positive attitudes towards the EU from the two right-of centre parties, the KDU-ČSL as well as the US-DEU. As opposed to the Social Democrats and the ODS, the smaller parties in the centre did not actively take part in the referendum campaign, but expressed unambiguous support for European integration. The Christian Democrats (KDU-ČSL), which stated its support for EU membership already in the 1992 elections, and the Freedom Union (US) also made it clear at an early stage of the debate that they were in favour of future enlargement. The party emphasised the opportunities joining the single market would provide for the Czech Republic, and also how it constituted its own security identity. These views, however, have been said to have been produced as responses to the sceptical profile of the ODS

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71 Nagengast, p. 340.
72 Hanley 2004a, p. 692f.
73 Baun et al., p. 256.
than as results of actual ideological reasonings.\textsuperscript{74} The 2002 joint program of the Coalition emphasised the need for Czech participation in the EU, their support for a federal Europe, Schengen and EMU, and even went so far to express hopes that the Commission would in time transform into a European government.\textsuperscript{75}

4. The Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia

The most critical party towards European integration has always been the Communist Party, which has maintained a general view that the Czech Republic will not be able to influence the development of the EU on an equal basis. The party was initially positive towards Czech integration, provided the Republic would join on a ‘non-discriminatory’ basis,\textsuperscript{76} but later developed a more Euro-sceptic, though not dismissive, rhetoric on accession. The party has repeatedly argued that there is a need for democratisation of the EU system,\textsuperscript{77} holding the view that the European institutions lack transparency and are detrimental to the interests of European citizens. The party’s projected fear of loss of sovereignty as part of the EU has at times taken on nationalistic undertones; party leader Vojtech Filip (as of June 2009) has criticized the EU’s regional dimensions, claiming that the ‘Europe of the Regions’ is a threat to each country’s sovereignty. The party has also voiced its concerns over the extent to which Czech representation in the European institutions will grant the country opportunities to influence EU policies.\textsuperscript{78} However, despite having criticised the EU for being a tool for multinational capital to further exploitative policies, as well as claiming that the integration process is dominated by German interests, the party still never recommended that the Republic should not join – it has always argued that accession to the EU was desirable, but emphasised that this accession should happen only if the country joined with the ability to influence in an enlarged EU.\textsuperscript{79} However, the issue has been one of contention between the hard-liners and neo-communist strands of this party, hence, this ‘soft no’ to European integration has come out as a result of a compromise between the conflicting factions within the party.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{74} Kopecky and Učeň, p. 168.
\textsuperscript{75} Baun et al., p 259f.
\textsuperscript{76} Baun et al., p. 258.
\textsuperscript{78} Dough and Handl, p. 332.
\textsuperscript{79} Kopecky and Učeň, p. 169.
4.4. The campaign

By mid-February 2003, four months before the referendum, EU accession had become a dominant theme on the Czech political agenda. The official 'Yes'-campaign, led by the Foreign Ministry, had a budget of 200 million crowns (approx. 6.25 Million Euro), and was largely based upon conventional advertising on television, in the printed press and on billboards. It also set up an information line and an online information source which recommended a yes-vote. Other civil organisations, political parties, the Catholic Church and the Trade Union Confederation (ČMKOS) joined the campaign, as well as pro-NGOs at local and regional levels. Former President Havel figured prominently in the media campaigning for accession, as did the ČSSD, the KDU-ČSL and the US, though the latter two were less active. The ODS took on a more ambiguous view, first of all claiming that a pro-EU campaign was not necessary, since most of its members supported membership anyway, and president Klaus sent mixed signals to the public with reference to his 'Eurorealist' view.\(^\text{81}\) He also clearly expressed his reservations by the statement: ‘5.1 to 4.9. This is the strength and weakness, respectively, of my yes.’ However, the ODS released a statement at the eve of the referendum, in which it urged people to vote for accession, along with the centre parties and the ČSSD.\(^\text{82}\)

The 'No' campaigns were fronted by a loose alliance of various right-wing groupings, some of which had neo-conservative and anti-German outlooks. Due to limited funding, the strategy was to develop local grass-root networks of different groups and intellectuals, who largely argued that the EU was too bureaucratic, and aimed to draw on nationalist and anti-foreign-domination sentiments. The KSČM was more divided and ambivalent, however campaigning against the EU was not a priority on central party level, but was mainly led by local party groupings.\(^\text{83}\) The party released a statement before the referendum in which it stated that it ‘could not recommend people to vote for EU membership,’ which was rejected by several officials at party

\(^\text{81}\) Hanley 2004a, p. 698ff.
\(^\text{82}\) Baun et al., p. 262.
\(^\text{83}\) Hanley 2004a, p. 703ff.
elite level, which reflected the internal split on the issue.\textsuperscript{84} None of the anti-campaigns drew strong support.

The final result showed that 77.33 per cent of the voters who had participated in the referendum supported accession; the turnout of 55.21 per cent was slightly lower than that of the preceding 2002 general election. The yes-votes represented 41.73 per cent of the total electorate, which displayed the lowest yes-vote in any accession referendum in CEE except Hungary.\textsuperscript{85} There was little variation between the various demographic groups of the population; support was highest in Prague and lowest in the Liberec region in Northern Bohemia, a region with several economic and social problems, dominated by support for the radical left and extreme right. Urban-rural differences were marginal, and support was unsurprisingly highest among the young and more surprisingly among the over 60s. The higher educated were more likely to vote for EU membership than those with only primary education.\textsuperscript{86} Party alignment seemed a stronger determinant of support or rejection; while supporters of the ODS, ČSSD and the centre parties had overwhelmingly supported membership, only 37 per cent of Communist voters had voted yes.\textsuperscript{87}

4.5. Zaller’s model of opinion formation

4.5.1. The message environment

Following the descriptions of the stands taken by political parties in the Czech Republic and the direction of the campaign, it appears evident that elites were not in full consensus on the EU issue. The first step which needs to be taken before an application of Zaller’s model can be commenced, is to determine the nature of the message environment, since the theoretical foundations differ depending on whether elites convey one or two messages to the public. The Czech Republic was deemed to constitute a polarised message scenario, since there were elites who actively questioned aspects of EU membership and the conditions of accession, especially the

\textsuperscript{84} Baun et al., p. 263.  
\textsuperscript{85} Hanley 2004a, p. 706f. For comparison, the yes-votes in the other CEE countries were as follows: 93.71 \% Slovakia, 83.80 \% in Hungary, 77.45 \% in Poland, 66.83 \% in Estonia, 89.6 \% in Slovenia, 67.5 \% in Latvia and 91.1 \% in Lithuania.  
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., p. 708.  
\textsuperscript{87} Baun et al. p. 264.
Communist Party and the Civic Democrats. It appears logical to assume that the messages from the Eurosceptic elites would have the ability to influence some people to vote no to EU membership since they regarded certain conditions of accession as unacceptable, which basically meant that unless these were changed, they would regard accession to the Union as undesirable. Therefore, it was obvious that people were presented with two opposing messages from the elites, and had to make a choice between mutually excluding elite opinions.

To repeat the assumptions of the model: Zaller assumes that when elites diverge on a given issue, political predispositions will determine whether people support the government position or the alternative message. The existence of two messages will cause a ‘cognitive mobilisation effect’ in which people filter the competing messages through a schemata of predispositions. Awareness of the issue will determine whether people understand the messages which are being conveyed, but not whether they will support the dominant or opposing message. Hence, we would expect Czech respondents to rely on political predispositions when they formed opinions about EU membership.

In order to test the model, variables which measure awareness and political predispositions are tested towards the dependent variable, which asks whether the respondents think that EU membership will be a bad thing, a neither good nor bad thing, or a good thing. The tests are conducted in sequences which gradually increase the number of independent variables, beginning with variables which measure awareness, with the final group of variables being left-right position and a squared term to control for curvilinearity. Likelihood-ratio tests which compare the models to the previous estimation have been conducted in order to reveal whether an increase in variables add more information to the dependent variable. In addition to the regression models, as a graphical model of how awareness and left-right position determine values towards EU membership have been created, which shows the predicted probabilities of believing whether EU membership will be a good thing if values of selected predictors of awareness are set to low, medium and high, depending on the values respondents have on left-right position scattered by party. The models and graphs for the three time periods will be presented and compared, and finally, the
results will be discussed in an analysis which evaluates the explanatory capabilities of Zaller's model.
4.5.2. Results

Table 4.1. Testing Zaller’s model, Czech Republic, 2002. Odds ratios.\(^{88}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
<th>Model V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Log likelihood</strong></td>
<td>-497.55255</td>
<td>-469.4337</td>
<td>-447.61735</td>
<td>-443.90354</td>
<td>-419.80911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>McFadden’s R(^2)</strong></td>
<td>0.0045</td>
<td>0.0608</td>
<td>0.1064</td>
<td>0.1118</td>
<td>0.1601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prob&gt;Chi(^2)</strong></td>
<td>0.1043</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LR test</strong></td>
<td>0.1043</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0198</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Often discuss politics</strong></td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Persuading others of opinion</strong></td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Watching EU news</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Watching TV news</strong></td>
<td>.76*</td>
<td>.75*</td>
<td>.76*</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge (self-reported)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actual knowledge</strong></td>
<td>1.20*</td>
<td>1.17*</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Left-right position</strong></td>
<td>1.32*</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Left-right position(^2)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.04**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=517
*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

\(^{88}\) Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 16.28%, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 32.10%, ‘A good thing’ 51.62%.
The regression estimates from the 2002 survey, which was conducted 8-9 months before the referendum, showed that very few of the predictors which measured awareness produced significant effects. With the exception of self-reported knowledge and watching EU news, which both strongly signified positive EU attitudes, other variables failed to produce consistent significance across the model, moreover, all predictors declined in effect when new variables were introduced. Actual knowledge, education and watching TV news, which produced negative odds for believing that EU membership was a good thing, were only significant before left-right position was controlled for. Discussing politics and persuading others during discussion were not significant in any model, and the poor performance of these variables were evident in the likelihood-ratio test and the Prob>Chr², which reveal that adding these variables did not produce a better model than a model which did not contain any predictors. The significant effect of political predispositions and the weak curvilinear effect of left-right positioning suggested that the most EU-positive respondents were located in the centre, with partisans on the extreme left being the most critical, which was most likely an effect of the high presence of communist voters in the sample. The R² was relatively low before left-right positioning was introduced, and the LR rests show that the models were consistently more reliable than the previous models which contained fewer predictors.
Figure 4.1. Predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing, by awareness and left-right position, Czech Republic 2002. Scattered by party.

When plotting the probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a good thing by low, medium and high values of watching TV news, watching EU news, self-reported knowledge actual knowledge and education, a nuanced picture emerges. The positive effect of awareness and left-right position on attitudes towards the EU is being confirmed, given the large differences in probabilities between the levels of awareness. The graphs confirms that no respondents with low awareness of the EU issue held positive views towards the issue irrespective of party position, and that medium aware respondents with the exception of KSČM partisans all were positive towards membership. This graphs also suggests that there are little differences between Green party and Civic Democrats partisans, with the latter being the overall most EU-positive respondents, even if the regression model suggests that there is a curvilinear effect of left-right position. However, this adds the extra information that a value on the extreme right would denote a declining effect on the dependent variable,
if such a party existed. The next table and graph will model whether there were different effects at work when the issue was at its most salient.

Table 4.2. Testing Zaller’s model, Czech Republic, 2003. Odds ratios.89

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-504.75033</td>
<td>-470.65873</td>
<td>-451.71448</td>
<td>-441.68843</td>
<td>-394.62864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s R²</td>
<td>0.0040</td>
<td>0.0713</td>
<td>0.1087</td>
<td>0.1285</td>
<td>0.2213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi2</td>
<td>0.1287</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR test</td>
<td>0.1287</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
<td>2.12**</td>
<td>1.71**</td>
<td>1.66**</td>
<td>1.45**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV news</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.58**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position²</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=567

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

89 Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 11.96 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 33.59 %, ‘A good thing’ 54.46 %.
The effects of awareness in May 2003 were significantly stronger than the year before, which may have been a result of the increased salience of the issue, and that voters to a greater extent had begun to mobilise cognitive factors before the referendum. Also in this model, discussing politics and persuading others during discussions did not achieve significant effects in any model. EU news predicted high odds for a positive view on accession, which also was the effect of higher education. As in the 2002 sample, watching TV news had a negative effect, but here it was significant throughout the models. While self-reported knowledge was significant in 2002 as well as in this model, actual knowledge was also significant and strongly predicted affirmative attitudes towards membership. As for political predispositions, left-right position as well as the squared term were significant, and introducing these variables lifted the overall model to hold a far higher overall explanatory effect than in the 2002 model. The values of the R² and the became acceptably high to suggest that the final model picked up a valid share of predictions on the dependent variables, and the likelihood-ratio tests reveal that the models consistently improved when adding more variables, with the exception of the first model which did not explain the outcome better than an empty model. The following graph will illustrate the how awareness and left-right position interacted.
The graph shows that the effects of awareness had changed from 2002, and that the differences between the levels of awareness was smaller in the effect it had on the dependent variable. Even if low being little aware still produced lower probabilities for believing that EU membership was a good thing than being medium or high aware, in 2003, most low aware respondents had probabilities over .5, except Communist and Social Democrats. The fact that there was a smaller difference between the groups of awareness could be related to the negative effect of watching TV news, which could have ‘pulled’ the lines closer. The difference created by positioning on the left-right position is slightly higher, with low and medium aware Communist and Social Democrat supporters being a little bit more positive than in 2002.
Table 4.3. Testing Zaller’s model, Czech Republic, 2004. Odds ratios.90

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
<th>Model V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-596.77827</td>
<td>-591.44318</td>
<td>-573.72121</td>
<td>-567.56989</td>
<td>-549.56621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s $R^2$</td>
<td>0.0062</td>
<td>0.0151</td>
<td>0.0446</td>
<td>0.0548</td>
<td>0.0848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob$&gt;\text{Chi}^2$</td>
<td>0.0247</td>
<td>0.0004</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR test</td>
<td>0.0247</td>
<td>0.0011</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0005</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.74**</td>
<td>.72**</td>
<td>.78*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>1.18**</td>
<td>1.19**</td>
<td>1.16**</td>
<td>1.14*</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news on TV</td>
<td>1.43**</td>
<td>1.35**</td>
<td>1.31**</td>
<td>1.25*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.58**</td>
<td>1.48**</td>
<td>1.40**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.41**</td>
<td>1.31**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position$^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.99**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=604

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

90 Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 19.10 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 31.19 %, ‘A good thing’ 49.72 %.
The most apparent change from the 2003 model was that the overall explanatory effect of the model significantly declined, and more resembled the statistical properties of the 2002 model; given the lower log-likelihood and $R^2$, the models were less successful in explaining attitudes to the EU in the Czech Republic two to three months after accession than the 2003 model. One change was that there was an effect to be taken from the first two variables: in the last three models, those who often discussed politics were more likely to be critical towards EU membership than believing it was a good thing. Persuading others during discussions produced positive odds, but the variable was not significant in the final model. Those who watched EU news on TV were still positive towards membership, and the same was the case for those who believed themselves to be knowledgeable about the EU, as well as those with higher education. Actual knowledge, on the other hand, was not significant in any model. The effect of left-right position was not significant, only the squared term; however, this does not necessarily mean that there is no information to be taken from the left-right variable; it simply means that by adding the squared term, a more significant effect than rilescore alone was controlled for. We can therefore still rely on information from the left-right measure, which again revealed that the most EU-positive respondents were located in the centre.\textsuperscript{91}

\textsuperscript{91} When the model was fitted without the squared term, rilescore was significant.
The graph shows that awareness made a larger difference than in the previous year, and the intervals between the levels were larger. All respondents with low values on the awareness variables were not likely to believe that EU membership would be a good thing. Medium aware respondents were overall more negative than in 2003, with voters who supported centre parties tipping over the .5 threshold and Social Democrats and Civic Democrats being close to the .5 value, and Communists still being negative. Freedom Union, Green Party and Christian Democrats supporters were the most positive in this sample, and low and medium aware Social Democrats were less positive than this group, but more positive than ODS partisans.

4.5.3. Discussion

When these results are interpreted within the framework of Zaller’s model, it appears at first glance that opinion formation can be explained to a certain extent by the
theoretical assumptions; however, there are a few factors which need to be examined before we can reach a conclusion.

To begin with, the effects of predispositions need to be examined more closely. The regression tables reported that left-right positioning had a stable effect on attitudes, and the odds ratios were relatively unchanged across the samples with a ‘peak’ in 2003 with odds ratios of 1.05. What is more, the squared term was significant and negative in all three samples, and revealed that support for the EU was highest among centrist partisans, followed by rightist and leftists as the least supportive group. This effect was not unexpected, given the Eurosceptic position taken by the Communists and Václav Klaus of the Civic Democrats, and that the ‘hardest’ Eurosceptics were the Communists. Similarly, the parties in the centre were strongly for membership from the outset of the EU debate, and the figures also reveal that their voters seemed to have become slightly more convinced in 2003 than they were in 2002, which was possibly a reflection of a mobilisation process during the referendum. These results confirm Zaller’s hypothesis for polarised message environments: that predispositions will be determinants of attitudes, but the results also revealed that awareness played a role in the opinion formation process.

To investigate this more thoroughly, the effects of awareness need to be further studied. To begin with, several variables which measured awareness were significant over all times of sampling, but more so in 2003 than in the other years, which also may be an effect of a pre-referendum mobilisation of proxies. This may simply suggest that the ‘need’ for cognitive proxies was highest during the time of the referendum, and that the general interest was lower when the issue was less salient. Watching EU news and self-reported knowledge were the most consistent variables across the models, which revealed that being sufficiently interested to pay attention to news on the EU in the media and that perceiving oneself as knowledgeable about the issue were the most reliable predictors of positive views, also before and after the campaign. It was interesting to find that perceiving oneself to be knowledgeable was more important than actually being knowledgeable, which only was significant in 2003. However, as was suggested in Chapter 3, perceiving oneself to have knowledge about a certain issue does reflect the reality which the respondent experiences, so this measure should not be dismissed as an inappropriate measure of interest. As for
participation in discussions; the fact that the habit of discussing politics was only a reliant predictor in 2004 after predispositions were controlled for is difficult to interpret. Most notably, the fact that this predictor produced negative odds also revealed that those who were very actively engaged in the issue also were likely to hold negative views towards accession, which suggested that EU-critics were very likely to express this in conversations. Persuading others during discussions was not an overall valid predictor of attitudes towards EU membership, which slightly contradicts the certain effect of discussing politics. When it came to the media assumption, it was surprising to see that watching TV news implied negative attitudes in 2003 as well as in 2002 before left-right positioning was controlled for. A more thorough study of the news that was transmitted on Czech TV needs to be conducted before valid explanations for this can be suggested, however, it may be a reflection of divided opinions among political leaders, and that this was channelled through the media. The media would naturally be the prime source for accessing elite opinions, and to use a Zallerian rhetoric, respondents were ‘reminded’ of the fact that an alternative choice existed through TV news. This could be an explanation for the negative effect of this predictor. However, why respondents who watched more TV would be swayed in the negative direction, while those who paid attention to EU news specifically held odds for being positive towards accession is a different task to investigate. Again, a more thorough investigation of the information which was available on Czech TV is necessary to fully explain why this was the case. However, it is possible that the term ‘TV news’ may prompt the respondent to refer to all kinds of news on television, also on non-related issues such as trivial entertainment and local news, which can make the results of this variable difficult to interpret, and the negative effect can be coincidental, or correlation without direct causation on the dependent variable. To continue, the effect of education supported the existing knowledge that increased level of education will increase support for the EU, apart from in 2002 when it proved not to be significant. To sum up, it appeared from these results that there was scant support for a claim that the most cognitively engaged, but not necessarily the most knowledgeable, were likely to regard EU accession with favour, and that a mobilisation effect took place as the country approached the referendum.
However, before making conclusions about the explanatory capabilities of Zaller’s model for two-way message environment, the graphs of predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a ‘good thing’ must be studied. Four consistent patterns are important to note. To begin with, the graphs confirmed that increasing awareness would predict increasingly positive attitudes towards EU membership, with the differences between low, medium and high aware respondents being larger in 2002 and 2004 than in 2003, when even most of the low aware respondents would support EU membership, except Communist partisans and possibly Social Democrats, who were close to the .5 divisor. Even if the actual level of support increased with awareness, it appeared that respondents were more likely to reflect party positioning on the EU issue than be swayed by their level of awareness in 2003. However, this claim can be questioned, given the high level of support from ODS partisans: given the critical remarks from Vaclav Klaus, one would expect the supporters of this party to be more critical than voters in the centre, even if they should still be expected to be positive. In fact, ODS partisans were slightly less rejoicing towards EU membership in 2004 when the issue was no longer salient.

The smaller differences between the levels of awareness in 2003 and the other years may suggest that there urgent nature of the EU issue made people respond to the issue differently than when the matter was less important. It appeared that the priority of securing EU membership was met with a higher level of consensus, and that this concern affected people to a greater extent than in the other years. It is possible that people who had previously been critical towards the EU were swayed in the positive direction by the increased urgency of the matter, and that only low and medium aware Communists, who represent extremist positions, would continue to voice scepticism. This confirms the assumption that issue salience will have an effect on people’s opinions towards the issue which is at stake.

It remains to be examined whether the results provide evidence for Zaller’s model that political predispositions will determine people’s attitudes towards the EU issue, and that awareness will play a smaller role. Since the regression tables and graphs show that there was evidence that both variables which measured awareness and political predispositions would have an impact on attitudes, it appears difficult to either support or reject the model. While the 2002 and 2004 graphs clearly show that both
types of variables made a difference on the outcome, the 2003 graph reveals that awareness created small differences, which makes it tempting to rather rely on political predispositions. However, this would be a flawed assumption to make, since more variables which measured awareness were significant in 2003 than the other years. Moreover, not all voters behaved ‘as expected’ in 2003: the high level of support from even low aware ODS supporters suggests that the party’s critical remarks on the EU issue were not met by similarly EU-negative views in this group, which was explained in the previous section to be a result of the urgent nature of EU membership. This questions also the effect of party positioning, but only to a certain extent, since Communist voters were in line with party position, unless they were highly aware of the EU issue.

To make a conclusion from the findings, it appears that levels of awareness and political predispositions impacted on attitudes towards the EU, but the effects were not consistent across the years. Even if the 2003 figures showed that awareness created smaller differences between the low, medium and highly aware respondents in 2003, they still had an effect on the dependent variable, which one should not expect according to Zaller’s model. It must therefore be concluded that the results in this tests did not fully confirm Zaller’s model, even if political predispositions made a difference, since they did not predict the outcome alone. It must also be noted that issue salience made a difference in the sense that respondents, irrespective of awareness and party placement (except Communists), became more positive before the referendum. This suggests that the specific context within which EU membership was evaluated generated higher consensus on the EU issue. Hence, the theoretical assumptions of Zaller’s model may have been met to a greater extent when the issue was urgent than when it was not. In 2002 and 2004, it was more evident that awareness predicted attitudes towards European integration, but was modified by political predispositions.

Therefore, Zaller’s model was not able to fully explain public opinion formation in the Czech Republic. The assumption of the model was confirmed in the sense that predispositions would predict attitudes, but the fact that awareness had the ability to impact on EU attitudes contradicted the theoretical assumptions. It appears logical to suggest that Zaller’s model should be defined to assume an interaction between
awareness and predispositions, even for a case study like the Czech where elites were not in agreement about the issue. High message intensity and issue polarisation will apparently not make people form opinions on a basis of political predispositions only, and therefore, Zaller’s model failed to adequately explain the opinion formation process in the Czech Republic.

4.6. Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis

This next section will investigate the effects of utilitarian proxies, in accordance with the methodological procedures which were explained in the previous chapter. To repeat the assumptions of Gabel and Palmer’s model, we expect citizens to make cost-benefit calculations when they form opinions on EU membership and personal competitiveness, measured as socio-demographic features, to determine whether people feel that they will benefit or not from European integration. People who feel that they are able to compete within the Common Market and benefit from it, will hold more positive views towards European integration than those who feel that they may lose out personally from integration. After the results for the variables for the three years of sampling have been presented, a discussion and a conclusion which evaluates the parsimony and explanatory capabilities of Gabel and Palmer’s model will follow.
### 4.6.1. Results

Table 4.4. Testing Gabel and Palmer’s model, Czech Republic 2002, odds ratios.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-320.65246</td>
<td>-194.26875</td>
<td>-352.44615</td>
<td>-191.48016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s $R^2$</td>
<td>0.1733</td>
<td>0.4991</td>
<td>0.0913</td>
<td>0.5063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi$^2$</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR test</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.4722</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>1.62**</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td></td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>2.00**</td>
<td>1.74**</td>
<td>1.61*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>2.94**</td>
<td>2.02**</td>
<td>1.98**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td>1.78*</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.94**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>71.58**</td>
<td>71.40**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>4.62**</td>
<td>4.16**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td>.90**</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age$^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00*</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.64**</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.23*</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.68**</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td></td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=412

*Significant at the 0.05 level  ** Significant at the 0.01 level
With the exception of satisfaction with life in the second and fourth model, all the predictors that measured utilitarian evaluations were significant and predicted high odds for believing that EU membership would be a ‘good thing.’ To begin with, comparing one’s own situation to five years ago and satisfaction with democracy produced notably higher odds in the first model than when other predictors were controlled for. Evaluation of one’s own situation in five years was only significant at the .05 level, but expectations of economic prosperity and particularly advantages from membership for the country were extremely strong predictors of positive attitudes. As far as demographics were concerned, when tested separately; age predicted that views would grow increasingly negative as respondents got older; urban respondents were more positive than rural counterparts, and income and education predicted a positive effect. However, all socio-demographic characteristics lost significance when utilitarian evaluations were controlled for in the final model, when the latter produced even higher odds than before socio-demographics was added to the model. Particularly noteworthy were the extremely high odds for believing accession would be a ‘good thing’ if one expected benefits for the country, and also expectations of economic prosperity produced solid predictions. The next table will investigate whether which effect the variables produced on EU attitudes when the country was approaching the referendum.
Table 4.5. Testing Gabel and Palmer’s model, Czech Republic 2003, odds ratios.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-458.12425</td>
<td>-319.10541</td>
<td>-500.82769</td>
<td>-315.06533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden's R2</td>
<td>0.1649</td>
<td>0.4183</td>
<td>0.0807</td>
<td>0.4256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi²</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR test</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.2323</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>1.95**</td>
<td>1.70**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.61**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.93**</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>2.76**</td>
<td>1.58**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.56**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.66**</td>
<td>1.69**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.89**</td>
<td>6.55**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.15**</td>
<td>2.13**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td>.87**</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age²</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00*</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td></td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.98**</td>
<td>1.39*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td></td>
<td>.50*</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=573

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level
The tables suggest that Czech respondents to a greater extent availed of utilitarian proxies as the issue came closer to being settled by a referendum. To begin with, satisfaction with life became significant, but life situation compared to five years ago was only significant in the first model. Satisfaction with democracy remained a strong predictor of attitudes towards EU membership. The extremely high odds for believing that EU membership would be a good thing produced by expecting advantages for the country in the 2002 model were not evident in 2003; the effect of this factor had decreased significantly, but the odds still remained very high. Expecting economic prosperity also produced lower odds than in 2002, and situation in five years remained significant. The third model which measured demographics reported that only unemployment, age, age squared, and education were significant; the former two demonstrated negative effects while age squared had odds of 1.00, which did not change the effect of age at all. Increasing level of education, however, meant that a positive effect on EU attitudes. In the final model, all utilitarian variables, with the exception of individual situation compared to five years ago, were significant and produced high and positive effects, even if the odds ratios were overall slightly lower than in 2002. As for demographics, only education remained significant, while the negative effect of age and unemployment from model III was not evident when all predictors were controlled for. The lack of effect of demographics also made the fourth model not pass the likelihood-ratio test against the second model.
Table 4.6. Testing Gabel and Palmer’s model, Czech Republic 2004, odds ratios.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-461.92998</td>
<td>-352.86253</td>
<td>-476.77446</td>
<td>-342.58168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s $R^2$</td>
<td>0.1265</td>
<td>0.3327</td>
<td>0.0984</td>
<td>0.3522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi$^2$</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR test</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0022</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfaction with life</strong></td>
<td>1.76**</td>
<td>1.53**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.40*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.74**</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>2.17**</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>4.47**</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.54**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>2.53**</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.28**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td>.88**</td>
<td>.91*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age$^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.23**</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.54**</td>
<td>1.32*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td></td>
<td>.42*</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=524

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level
In the first model, all three variables produced significant odds for positive views on accession; however, in the second model, one’s situation compared to five years ago and satisfaction with democracy lost explanatory effect. Expectations of life situation in five years was not significant, while expectations of country advantages and economic prosperity if the country joined the EU were still significant, even if the odds in this model were also lower than in 2003. As for demographic characteristics: age still produced a negative effect, income became significant for the first time, and education remained a predictor for positive EU attitudes while being unemployed predicted negative attitudes. However, when all predictors were included, few variables survived the significance tests; the only variables which still were significant, were satisfaction with life, expectations of country advantages, and expectations of economic advantages from EU membership, age and education. even if the $R^2$ of the final model had also decreased from the 2003 equivalent, it passed the likelihood-ratio test against the second model, which revealed that including socio-economic characteristics increased the overall fit of the model.

4.6.2. Discussion

Even though the tables suggested some commonalities in terms of relevance of proxies, and a pattern emerged that measures of utilitarian attitudes were more reliable proxies for attitudes than demographics, a few differences between the effects of predictors were to be detected over time. To begin with, macro-level considerations produced lower odds with time, especially expectations of country advantages, whose odds decreased drastically from 2002 to 2004. Also the odds produced by satisfaction with democracy and expectations of economic prosperity decreased in strength. As for evaluations and expectations which concerned one’s individual well-being, the pattern was diverse: comparing one’s situation to five years ago as well as in terms of future expectations produced highest odds in 2002, while satisfaction with life produced its highest odds in 2003. Moreover, in most cases, socio-demographic variables lost explanatory effect in several cases when more variables were added to the model. However, age and education were significant in the final model in 2004 and 2003-4 respectively, so some information could be extracted from these predictors. These findings form the impression that Czech attitudes towards integration were formed as functions of both individual and collective utilitarian considerations, but that
collective concerns were stronger than individual ones, particularly when the issue was less salient than just before the referendum, when more predictors were significant. This could have been an effect of the campaign, which may have prompted people to evaluate EU membership on how it would impact on several levels and ‘reminded’ voters that the EU issue could influence one’s personal life and well-being as well as the country as a whole.

Still, it was somehow surprising to find that the effects of demographics were not more powerful predictors of attitudes. The effects of age and education were consistent when demographics were tested separately, though significant only in the final model in 2004 and 2003-4. Income was significant in the third model in 2002 and 2004, and the urban-rural divide in 2002, but also not in the final model. Unemployment was significant with negative odds in the third model in 2003-4, but also this predictor did not remain significant when all variables were tested in the final model. According to Gabel and Palmer’s model, and the ‘winners-and-losers’ dichotomy within East Central European electorates, demographics should be able to function as proxies for cost-benefit calculations, and more variables would have been expected to be significant if the theories were to adequately explain Czech public opinion formation. However, the effects of demographics should not completely be excluded, even if these sometimes disappeared when utilitarian evaluations were introduced. To begin with, education proved a relatively reliable predictor of EU attitudes, and the figures informed that highly educated respondents were consistently positive towards European integration. The prospect of professional opportunities may be the reason for the positive effect of education; the highly educated would naturally be regarded as a group which would profit from access to an enlarged labour market, and such a group would not have reasons to fear increased labour immigration from less developed member states. The negative effect of age could be similarly be explained by an assumption that older respondents may have been more likely to feel threatened by the prospect of opening up the Republic to a pan-European labour market, and that younger cohorts envisioned personal opportunities through access to the common market. The positive effect from income in two separate tests of demographic characteristics could have been related to the lack of fear, or the expectations of opportunities from integration among those with high incomes. Another factor which represented the relative influence of considerations relating to
competitiveness were suggested by the effect of unemployment before attitudes were controlled for, when this factor predicted negative attitudes towards integration than if one were not employed. It is likely to assume that those who were in need of employment would anticipate higher competition on the labour market from work-seeking immigrants if the country joined, an assumption which sounds to be likely in the Czech Republic, which is regarded as one of the strongest CEE countries economically and which already experienced labour immigration pressure from less developed countries before accession. The once-off effect of the urban-rural predictor, also in the third model, reported that rural residents were more negative than urban dwellers, possibly because this group will have lesser access to the opportunities presented by an open labour market; secondly, rural residents will often experience larger distance to central policy-making, and will often react to central policy initiatives with rejection. \(^92\) Thirdly, those who are located in rural areas will often also be less educated and have lower income than urban residents; hence, the demographic characteristics which are tested here will often overlap. Hence, some missing effects could be due to collinearity with other predictors. Moreover, the fact that predictors sometimes lost effect when utilitarian evaluations were controlled for, should not be interpreted as evidence that the effect of demographics were too weak to ascribe some credibility to the hypothesis that socio-economic differences will constitute proxies for cost-benefit calculations. The results here rather suggested but that something more significant than socio-economic structures had been added to the model. A certain mobilisation effect of individual competitiveness could therefore be detected, which could suggest that the EU issue tapped into individual considerations to a certain extent.

To conclude, the Czech case provided fair support for Gabel and Palmer’s model, but with certain reservations. To begin with, the utilitarian hypothesis expects empirical results from individual- and collective-level considerations, while these tables suggested that some differences were to be detected; Czechs were mostly inclined to evaluate EU accession according to whether they deemed it would benefit the public.

\(^{92}\) That rural respondents, who often have lower education and income, as well as social status, will experience that they are in a peripheral position towards politics since political decisions usually are made in central areas, and therefore will reject policy initiatives framed by policy-makers, was argued in a theoretical framework by Johan Galtung. See Galtung, J. (1964) ‘Foreign Policy Option as a Function of Social Position,’ Journal of Peace Research, 3-4.
even if individual cost-benefit calculations were present to a lesser extent. Moreover, the relatively weak impact of demographics questioned whether the logic holds that personal competitiveness would be a consistent predictor of attitudes towards integration in this case. Needless to say, there is the possibility that there are spurious variables at work which influence the model qualities, and that using other measures of utilitarianism, if such variables were available in the data sets, would have produced a different outcome. Another reason for the lack of significance of such factors can, of course, be related to the fact that post-referendum exit polls showed that most people, irrespective of demographic characteristics, were most likely to support EU membership anyway; hence, the differences produced by demographics may be so small that the models were unable to pick up on them. To conclude, this case study partially produced support for Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis, but called for a refinement of the model to specify a hierarchy of the selected predictors to assume that collective-level predictors will be more important in the opinion formation process than measures of personal cost and benefits from accession.

4.7. Summary and conclusion

The background research on the party positions on EU membership and the messages political elites conveyed to the public revealed that Czech policy-makers were divided on the issue, and the country was therefore treated as a two-way message environment for the test of Zaller’s model of opinion formation. After running the regression models and calculating the predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a ‘good thing’ and graphing them by levels of awareness and predispositions, it was concluded that opinion formation in the Czech case could only partially be explained by Zaller’s model. While predispositions, as expected, were predictors of attitudes, the fact that high awareness proved to predict positive attitudes towards accession for all voter groups with the exception of Communist supporters, it appeared that when awareness increased, so did the level of support for EU accession, but that political predispositions had a modifying effect. Hence, since awareness and predispositions interacted, the distinction between opinion formation processes in one-versus two-way message environments seemed to be where Zaller’s theory went
wrong in explaining the Czech case, since the opinion formation process appeared to contain elements of both scenarios.

As for Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis, this model was also confirmed with reservations. While utilitarian cost-benefit calculations which concerned the country as a whole were proved to be consistent predictors of attitudes towards EU membership, personal-level evaluations were less important proxies, but still produced a secondary effect. As for demographic characteristics, these were, with the exception of age and education, not reliable predictors of EU attitudes. This contradicted Gabel and Palmer’s assumption that personal competitiveness, measured as demographic characteristics, will function as proxies for calculations of whether EU membership will benefit the individual. A certain effect of demographic variables could be detected before other variables were controlled for, which does not fully exclude this assumption, but rather suggests that introducing the other predictors controlled for something more important than demographics alone. This called for a refinement of the model to establish a hierarchy of predictors.

The reserved confirmations about the validity of the models does not, however, exclude that the applications of the models have generated useful information. The tables presented in this chapter have still produced knowledge about the behaviour of the selected predictors in the Czech Republic. A more thorough account of the explanatory effect of the models, criticism of the theoretical assumptions and suggestions on how to modify the models will be provided in Chapter 9, after the results from the other case studies have been presented and compared.
Chapter 5
The Slovak Republic

5.1. Aims and introduction

This chapter will present the applications of Zaller’s and Gabel and Palmer’s models to the Slovak case study, and will attempt to explain public opinion formation in the country before, during and after the referendum through using the selected models. The chapter will follow the same outline as the preceding chapter, and will begin with a quick review of events since the Velvet Revolution and the subsequent division of Czechoslovakia, which will be followed by a description of the party system, party positions on European integration, and the referendum campaign.

After the end of communist rule and the peaceful break-up of the Czechoslovak federation, the newly independent Slovak republic embarked on a rocky road towards democratisation and market economy which went through several dramatic overhauls before the country finally joined the EU. While the Czech Republic quickly appeared to embark upon a relatively successful path towards developing a democratic multiparty system, in Slovakia, the remnants of the past appeared harder to shake off. Slovakia’s political past is characterised by mixed experiences. As part of the newly-founded Czechoslovak foundation, Slovakia gained a democratic tradition. But while its Czech neighbours were resilient to the authoritarian nationalism that gained increasing support in some Central European countries in the 1930s, such parties gained influence in Slovakia before and during the Second World War. Moreover, after the end of communism, Czechs looked at the previous communist regime with overwhelmingly negative connotations, but Slovaks held different views towards democracy.\(^1\) The traditions of authoritarian rule were evident in the rise of Vladimír Mečiar from 1990 onwards, who rose to prominence in the newly independent state and held a firm grip on politics as the head of an authoritarian government which gave Slovakia the position as the ‘black sheep of the Višegrad family.’\(^2\) His party, Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) initially promised to soften economic

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\(^1\) Rupnik, p. 18f.
reform and find a solution to the national question, but Mečiar was more concerned with enforcing strict party discipline and seeking to deplete the powers of the presidency in order to strengthen his powers as Prime Minister than reforming a nation. In addition to establishing mechanisms to shield him from sources of accountability, Mečiar omitted political and legal responsibility by a stance control of the media, police, prosecutors and even some judges. By 1995, the democratic environment was in such a bad state that the European Union and the United States issues statements of concern, and most importantly, his half-way commitment to democracy and European integration led to the country being demoted from the first wave of EU and NATO candidate countries. The temporary exclusion from the first round of accession was justified by Mečiar’s disregard for the constitution and minority rights, with a reference to the Roma and Hungarian minority, as well as the lack of stable political institutions and the government’s misuse of the police and secret service. The EU’s decision to delay negotiations shocked the electorate and was one of the factors that contributed to Mečiar’s fall in 1998.

The 1996 referendum on a directly elected President led the opposition to unite against Mečiar. Part of this opposition unification led to the formation of the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK). Next to high dissatisfaction with the Prime Minister, the other crucial factor which prompted the opposition to unite were signals from the European Union that EU membership could not be negotiated unless the country improved its democratic record. The 1998 elections saw the victory of the SDK with Mikulaš Dzurinda as Prime Minister, who also formed a coalition after the 2002 elections. After 1998, political and economic innovations were the key policy priorities of the governments: trade was liberalised, state enterprises were privatised, and fiscal reforms stabilised the economy and brought the country closer to meeting

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8 Malová and Rybář, p. 106.
9 Baer, p. 97.
10 Krause 2003, p. 72.
the convergence criteria for the Economic and Monetary Union. Most importantly, Dzurinda embarked upon a path to mend the relationship with Western institutions, which enabled Slovakia to be considered for EU membership. Despite these successes, Dzurinda’s popularity waned, and he lost the 2006 elections to the dynamic Robert Fico and Smer-Socialna Demokracia (Direction-Social Democracy). Fico has continued to reform politics to eradicate the negative legacies of Mečiar, and also oversaw Slovakia’s entry to the EMU in 2009 as the second post-communist country to adopt the common currency.

5.2. The political actors

5.2.1. The development of a party system

The early political debates in the country after independence were very much dominated by Mečiar’s leadership as the ‘founder of the Slovak nation’, who framed the pre-Velvet divorce political debate to mainly concern the question of supporting or opposing Slovak independence. Standard party disagreements on policy from his opponents within the HZDS were by default met with accusations of treasonous intentions, which allowed Mečiar to consolidate his position as the dominator of the political agenda. The HZDS’s focus on nation-building after the 1994 elections made economic and political goals subordinate to that priority, and thus prevented the emergence of clear political cleavages within the party system. When the HZDS lost power in the 1998 election, politics was still characterised by the pro/anti-Mečiar-divide; in fact, the only unifying issue which kept the new government coalition together was their opposition to the latter. However, after the demise of Mečiar’s regime, an economic left-right division on the party level has become more evident.

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12 Krause 2003, p. 69.
15 Shepherd, p. 153.
16 Rupnik, p. 37.
17 Shepherd, p. 165ff.
Another factor which delayed the development of a stable party system in Slovakia was the fact that the political choices on offer alternated quickly, and that political actors and coalitions often were relatively short-lived, or at least be subject to internal defections and factionism. Despite Dzurinda’s, and later Fico’s, moves to remove Slovakia away from the ‘Mečiar factor,’ factionism is still a prominent part of Slovak political life. Several powerful elements in Slovak politics have emerged as splinter groups from other parties. Mečiar’s Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), with originally was breakaway faction from Public Against Violence (VPN), the Slovak counterpart to the Civic Forum (OF).\footnote{Millard 2004, p. 53} Former Prime Minister Dzurinda left the Christian and Democratic Union (KDH) to inaugurate the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKÚ).\footnote{Williams, K. (2000), \textit{Slovakia after Communism and Mečiarism}, London: University of London, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, p. 52.} Smer is a result of a breakaway faction from the ex-Communist Party of the Democratic Left (SDL).\footnote{Haughton 2003, p. 68.} And the Party of the Hungarian Coalition is a merger of three groupings which united under the Hungarian umbrella.\footnote{Rybář, M. (2002), ‘Party System Instability and the Emergence of New Parties in Slovakia,’paper presented to the PhD Summer School of Political Parties and Party Systems, Keele University, UK, 9-20 September 2002, p. 9.} The level of fragmentation in Slovak politics is illustrated by the fact that there were 21 parties to contend for votes in the 2002 elections, of which six managed to achieve the five percent threshold.\footnote{The Slovak Statistical Office, available at \url{http://www.statistics.sk/nrsr_2006/angl/obvod/results/tab3.jsp}}

However, after the 1998 elections, party policies became more clear-cut, and a division between left and right emerged. Parties in Slovakia, with the exception of the HZDS and the Hungarian ethnic parties, were increasingly appealing to the electorate on ideological platforms, particularly the parties on the left, which signalled that a party system based on ideological structures has begun to take shape.\footnote{Millard 2004, p. 111.} Pro/anti-Mečiar-divisions also became more blurred, and parties started to offer clearer political alternatives.\footnote{Ibid., p. 69.} The plurality of parties began to cluster right of centre; the HZDS, the SDKÚ and the KDH, while the Slovak National Party (SNS) triumphs on the far right. After the 2006 elections, Smer became the dominant left-of-centre alternative when the Communist Party (KSS) did not manage to enter parliament. The
position of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK) is more ambiguous, given that it runs on an ethnic foundation.\textsuperscript{25} However, defining Slovak parties according to their placement on a left-right scale can be a difficult task due to the lack of cohesion of opinions within parties and the wide dispersal of party appeals.\textsuperscript{26} However, the party system has taken on a more bi-polar nature post-1998.\textsuperscript{27}

As far as the civic response is concerned, the Mečiar years were characterised by passive resistance and little citizen initiative to influence the unhealthy state of the country’s democracy. The lack of civic engagement has been explained by the lack of political trust, a remnant from the communist past when political institutions generally were mistrusted, as well as by a feeling of helplessness towards political developments.\textsuperscript{28} Other observers argue that despite a lack of democratic traditions and the fact that Slovaks did not display the same contempt for authoritarianism as neighbouring Central and East European states, the authoritarian rule during the Mečiar years led to Slovaks regarding the issue of democracy with greater care; the importance of political freedoms as well as respect for minority rights, political culture and rule of law started to become emphasised in the discourse among the intellectual elites.\textsuperscript{29}

5.2.2. The political parties

The party which initially dominated the short history of politics in the independent Slovakia and which sat the scene for the early developments post-independence was the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) and its leader Mečiar. In the first elections after the Velvet divorce in 1992, it campaigned on a program which advocated more gradual reforms and concern for those who suffered from the process of marketisation. Most prominent was the charisma of its leader, who was the personification of the party ever since the Velvet Revolution.\textsuperscript{30} However, the party

\textsuperscript{26} Krause 2000, p. 32.
\textsuperscript{28} Baer, p. 105.
\textsuperscript{29} Bútora et al., p. 55f.
\textsuperscript{30} Haughton and Rybář 2004, p. 118.
lacked a clear ideological platform; in fact, their voting base was identifying more with the leader that with the actual policies of the party, which were hard to dissect.\textsuperscript{31} After the loss in the 1998 elections and the clear signals from the opposition and civil society that the semi-authoritarian policies of Mečiar had made the party increasingly unpopular, the party has made half-hearted moves to reform, or at least to re-brand itself as a centre-right party, and has embraced EU and NATO membership, with certain Eurosceptic undertones.\textsuperscript{32}

The strongest and most consistent opponent of the HZDS was traditionally the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH), which draws support from a largely Catholic electorate. The party, under the previous leadership of Mikulaš Dzurinda, was the leading force in the coalition which replaced Mečiar in 1998 and replaced him with Dzurinda. The party has retained a strong appeal, even if the conservative outlook has been suggested to have harmed the party in the ballots among the more liberal voters, but has also drawn steady support from the Catholic electorate, given its clear focus on ‘purity’ in its Catholic appeal.\textsuperscript{33} This conservative outlook was also the reason for the party’s defection from the government coalition in 2006, due to disagreements over a suggested law which would enable professionals to refuse to carry out tasks which would conflict with their religious beliefs.\textsuperscript{34} The party is a member of the European Democratic Union and the European Union of Christian Democrats.\textsuperscript{35}

The Party of the Democratic Left (SDL), originally hindered by its image as the communist successor party,\textsuperscript{36} prioritised in the early years after independence to separate itself from its legacy while many voters still associated the party with its communist past.\textsuperscript{37} In the early 1990s, reform-friendly party elites attempted to fast-track party reform in order to make it a credible social democratic party inspired by

\textsuperscript{31} Shepherd, p. 151.
\textsuperscript{32} Haughton 2003, p. 70.
\textsuperscript{33} Haughton and Rybár 2004, p. 118ff.
\textsuperscript{34} Rybár 2007, p. 699.
\textsuperscript{36} It changed its name in 1989 from the Communist Party of Slovakia (KSS) to facilitate this decoupling. The original KSS must not be confused with the current KSS, which was formed after 1989 and the ‘new’ Communist party.
the ‘Third Way’ of social democracy and the German SPD, which created internal polarisation between modernisers and conservative socialists, of which the latter was the strongest faction. The party has traditionally focused on socio-economic issues, such as finding a Slovak version of a mixed economy, social justice, employment and reform, aiming to develop a platform which was compatible with the Socialist International (SI). In turn, the lack of unity and policy continuity brought about the disintegration of the party after it failed to enter parliament in 2002.\textsuperscript{38} The party subsequently became a part of Smer in 2005.\textsuperscript{39}

A splinter from the KDH which entered the political scene in 1999 was the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKÚ), which was founded by Dzurinda who left the KDH due to internal disagreements.\textsuperscript{40} Campaigning on a more moderate religious profile than that of the KDH, the party promised the Slovak people a ‘new union of directions, streams and personalities.’ Declaring itself centre-right and the guarantor of Slovakia’s accession to the EU and NATO, the party was the leading figure in the 2002-2006 government, also this time under the leadership of Dzurinda.\textsuperscript{41} Since attempts at forming a government coalition after the 2006 elections were unsuccessful, internal tension has continued to split and weaken the party,\textsuperscript{42} however, it has established itself as a reliable actor in the party system.

Another new party to develop on the right in 2001 was the vehicle for media mogul Pavel Rusko (named the ‘Slovak Berlusconi’), under the flag of the ‘Alliance of the New Citizen’ (ANO).\textsuperscript{43} Signalling intentions to pursue Christian and democratic policies, the party profile was mainly centered around the leadership of Rusko, who used his ownership of the TV Channel TV Mariza to present positive portrayals of the

\textsuperscript{39} www.sdl.sk, accessed 20 September 2009
\textsuperscript{40} Williams, p. 52.
\textsuperscript{41} Haughton and Rybář 2004, p. 125ff.
\textsuperscript{43} Williams, p. 52.
party and its leader. The party became a part of the 2002 government coalition, but disintegrated in 2005 due to a dispute over the leadership style.

Another attribute of the Slovak party system is the success of parties representing the 11 percent Hungarian minority; parties which emerged after 1989 to advocate the rights of the minority have enjoyed consistent support from their electorates. Three small Hungarian parties merged into the Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK) to enter the 1998 and 2002 Dzurinda governments, and it is difficult to define a placement for the party on the left-right scale, even if it is a member of the European People’s Party (EPP). The party advocates traditional values such as family, nation and tradition, but also argues for economic redistribution to more rural and less developed areas, where most of its electorate resides, which makes it difficult to explicitly label the party as a centre-right formation.

A smaller party which has continued to cling on to its position on the political agenda is the ultra-right Slovak National Party (SNS), which supported the HZDS in forming a government after the 1992 and 1994 elections. With a nationalist platform and an ideological justification based upon the external image of the Czech oppressors in the early 1990s, the focus of the party was gradually geared towards Hungarian and Roma minorities, with a racist outlook towards the two other ethnic groups in the country. The party still only represents a minority of voters, but was taken in by Fico in the Smer-led coalition 2006 and remains a junior partner of the current government.

The populist left saw a new addition in 1999, when now Prime Minister Fico, formed Smer (Direction), a social democratic alternative to the Party of the Democratic Left, which Fico initially represented in parliament. His charisma gained him high popularity before the 2002 elections, and running on an anti-establishment platform, Smer entered parliament in 2002 at the expense of the SDL, and subsequently won

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45 Rybář 2007, p. 699.
46 Williams, p. 52.
47 Haughton and Rybář 2004, p. 115f.
48 Shepherd, p. 153f.
51 Millard 2004, p. 70.
52 Krause 2003, p. 69.
the 2006 elections. The party later re-branded itself as Smer-Tretia Cesta (Direction-Third Way), quoting Blair’s and Schröder’s ‘Third way’ as inspiration. The party still enjoys significant support: a February 2008 opinion poll showed that almost half of the respondents would have voted Smer if there had been an election the next day.

A smaller, but not insignificant force in Slovak politics is the Communist Party of Slovakia (KSS), which was largely marginalised until it managed to enter parliament in 2002, basing its success on the discontent of the Eastern electorate with the current government’s socio-economic policies. Although formed after the Velvet Revolution, it has on several occasions lamented the overthrow of the former system and has expressed ideologically-based criticism of the democracy-building process. As a result the party has become isolated in the party system. However, referring to the fact that the Velvet Revolution did not come about as a result of unpopularity of the Communist Party in Slovakia - the strongest anti-communist forces were in Prague - there is still an ideological space for a communist party in Slovakia, hence, its potential importance must not be overlooked. Still, the party failed to enter parliament at the 2006 elections.

5.3. Party positioning on European integration

Intellectually, Slovak associations with Europe are more ambiguous that those in the Czech Republic. Whereas the Czech intellectual discourse early emphasised its natural position in Europe, Slovakia’s definition was, and is, more ambiguous; Lubomir Luptak, a leading Slovak historian, characterised Slovakia as being ‘at the border between North and South, East and West’. Whereas the vital issue for Slovak politicians traditionally was whether the EU wanted Slovakia, after the 2002 elections, the question gradually changed to be whether Slovakia would get what it

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56 Bútora et al, p. 54.
57 Rupnik, p. 27f.
wanted from the EU. Inter-party skirmishes and domestic political issues had previously taken precedence over the issue of European integration and pushed the issue into the shadows. Hence, due to the priority question of changing the course of Slovak democracy and unseating Mečiar, a de facto debate on EU membership at elite level only commenced a year before the referendum. Due to the delayed process of Europeanisation of the political debate and the fact that this process really consolidated only around the time of accession, the EU issue, when it did emerge, had a strong impact on the Slovak party system. The reformist elites which displaced Mečiar in 1998 and 2002 all declared their support for EU membership, with the left-of-centre parties being somehow more reserved than the right-of-centre. The post-1998-debacle was characterised with high consensus and no organised opposition to EU membership among elites - opposition to Europe was widely regarded as being politically extremist - with the main inter-party competition being based around the question of which party was most capable of securing EU membership. However, only a few months after accession, party positions on European integration began to surface as ambiguous, which reflected internal party disagreements and lack of party cohesion. A recent study argues that party polarisation on the EU issue has become high over the years, and that Slovak parties increasingly distinguish themselves from each other on the EU issue. However, this tendency is not echoed among the public; the EU issue is not salient on public level, and cohesion on the issue is high. Moreover, Slovakia differs from the neighbouring countries in the fact that Euroscepticism did not increase as negotiations were undertaken and as the reality of EU membership became evident, another reflection of the lack of public debate about the EU.

1. The Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS)

Being the party which the opposition blamed for not prioritising meeting the criteria for EU accession in the first place and for being responsible for Slovakia’s demotion

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58 Haughton 2003, p. 85.
59 Grabbe and Hughes, p. 192.
61 Fisher et al., p. 990.
from the first group accession countries, the HZDS did still on an early stage advocate advantages of EU membership, even if these were seen more as instrumental than political given the expected economic advantages of EU membership. However, as the governing party, the HZDS showed more interest in Moscow as an ‘alternative’ address than Brussels, even though these priorities were more disguised under economic policies than being the official rhetoric, and an anti-Western outlook could also be found in the party’s links with Milosevic’s Socialist Party of Serbia. Moreover, the party has tended to attract support from voters who have been characterised as being the groups who had ‘lost from transition,’ the elderly, rural dwellers, the less educated – groups who would be more sceptical to reform, and also to the idea of opening up Slovakia to Europe. However, while in power, the HZDS kept Europhobic preferences in check due to the political necessity of working towards accession, but as soon as the party had gained opposition status, Mečiar was free to stir up anti-EU emotions among his supporters. The ‘reform path’ the party embarked upon in 2000 stated that the party was an unambiguous supporter of EU membership, however, its place on a European agenda was not deemed credible in all circles; its application to the European Democratic Union was rejected the same year due to the party’s past.

2. The Christian Democrats (KDH)

The party has always supported entry, but with a soft tone of scepticism; it made it clear early that it did not just want Slovakia to join ‘for the sake of joining,’ and launched the slogan ‘not just enter, but also participate.’ Soft Euroscepticism dominated the party’s programme since 2000, though its reservations towards EU membership could not be classified as hard-line and anti-European; it has been more sceptical to aspects of integration and the integration process. For example, the party

64 Ibid.
69 Pridham 2002b, p. 22.
70 Haughton 2003, p. 85.
voiced concern whether EU legislation would intrude on Slovak family and immigration legislation.\textsuperscript{71} However, under Dzurinda’s leadership, the party set as its main priority to meet the criteria for membership and to mend the country’s difficult relations with Brussels; after days of becoming Prime Minister, Dzurinda travelled to Brussels to form common strategies to get the country back on track for negotiations.\textsuperscript{72} Still, a certain antipathy to Western liberalism and Catholic confessional values has accompanied soft Eurosceptic policies,\textsuperscript{73} often with a nationalistic flavour.\textsuperscript{74}

3. The Party of the Democratic Left (SDL)

The post-communist SDL also officially supported EU membership, but, as most other Slovak marginal parties, experienced internal splits on the issue. The official position of the party was that it shared the social democratic vision of the EU and regarded EU membership as a guarantor of reform, and this positive view on accession did not change after the conservative socialists took control over the party; the party stated clearly in its 2002 election programme that it prioritised EU accession.\textsuperscript{75} However, selling pro-European policies to a backward-looking grass-root, which also regarded the post-communist reform process with scepticism, was a difficult task. Still, the internal divisions did not culminate into larger splits within the party, possibly due to the old-fashioned tradition of party discipline. Perceiving the integration project as one which is more likely to benefit the ‘winners’ of the transition process, internal forces have voiced scepticism to the general notion of EU membership bringing about advantages.\textsuperscript{76}

4. The Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKÚ)

The SDKÚ has always been a firm supporter of EU membership, both ideologically and strategically. One of the party’s main arguments in its anti-Mečiar rhetoric was the criticism that it was the HZDS which was responsible for the country’s demotion

\textsuperscript{71} Rybář 2007, p. 700.
\textsuperscript{72} Pridham 2002a, p. 215.
\textsuperscript{73} Pridham 2002b, p. 23f.
\textsuperscript{75} Handl and Leška, p. 115f.
\textsuperscript{76} Henderson 2001, p. 21f.
from the first wave of accession candidates, and in the 2002 election campaign, Dzurinda went for re-election through running on a platform which held that the party, being the ‘pillar of continuity,’ was the only party which could guarantee Slovakia’s accession to the EU.\textsuperscript{77} Since then, its stance has remained unchanged; it has been the only party to offer unconditional support for EU membership post-2002.\textsuperscript{78}

5. The Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK)

Due to the feeling that the interests of the Hungarians are being better protected under an international umbrella than within an isolated Slovakia, the SMK has traditionally regarded European integration positively, a trend which is typical among ethnic parties in CEE.\textsuperscript{79} Having been suffering under Mečiar’s anti-Hungarian policies and hostility towards Slovakia’s largest ethnic group, EU membership early presented itself as a promising alternative, especially since that one of the reasons that Slovakia was initially excluded from accession negotiations was the treatment of minorities.\textsuperscript{80} Believing that EU membership would mean a change from previous discriminatory policies, the support within the Hungarian minority has always been higher than average.\textsuperscript{81}

6. The Slovak National Party (SNS)

Despite having voted for accession negotiations in 2000 and being a formal supporter of EU integration, the party has emphasised the ‘need to look East as well as West’ due to ‘our undoubted relation with the Slavic nation.’ The party’s former chairperson, Anna Malikova, stated that the party clearly opposed European federalism, which witnesses that the party contains elements of soft to hard Euroscepticism.\textsuperscript{82} As its two coalition partners in the 1994-1998 government, the party’s grass-root is divided on the issue, with just under half of the voters supporting membership, and the other being either indifferent or opposed.\textsuperscript{83}

\textsuperscript{78} Haughton 2003, p. 85.
\textsuperscript{79} Pridham 2002b, p. 14f.
\textsuperscript{80} Pridham 2002a, p. 218ff.
\textsuperscript{81} Henderson 2001, p. 18.
\textsuperscript{82} Pridham 2002b, p. 22f.
\textsuperscript{83} Henderson 2005, p. 8.
7. Smer

Although Smer never has been outright against EU membership, the party had since its entry to the political agenda taken on characteristics as a soft Eurosceptic party. Fico used the issue of EU membership to criticise his opponents for their uncritical approaches to securing Slovak membership, and claimed that the government had been too quick to close the accession negotiations, even arguing that several chapters ought to be re-opened. One of the party’s billboards during the 2002 campaign showed a row of naked posteriors over the slogan ‘The EU but not with bare bottoms.’ Fico has later become notorious for his EU-sceptic rhetoric, having uttered that if Slovakia was Norway, Iceland or Switzerland, ‘I would definitely shout out with pleasure ‘no’ to the EU.’

8. The Communist Party of Slovakia (KSS)

Just as its colleague on the left, the KSS took on a position of supporting membership in principle, but added certain reservations towards to this stance and suffered from internal splits on the issue. The party had earlier advocated that accession to the EU was desirable provided that the country was ready, but still recommended a yes-vote before the accession referendum. However, the party’s reservations culminated into the party being the only in Parliament which voted against the accession Treaty after the referendum, which was a strategic vote which enabled the party to attempt to gain support from a claim that they were the ‘sole defenders of Slovak national interests from the bureaucrats in Brussels,’ while knowing that the Accession Treaty would be ratified anyway due to the high consensus in Parliament. Arguing that the country was not ready for membership when it joined, the party has later built a soft Eurosceptic rhetoric on the concern whether ‘socialism can be built in Slovakia inside the EU.’

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84 Henderson 2005, p. 20.
85 Haughton 2004, p. 81.
86 Haughton 2003, p. 85.
87 Haughton, 2004, p. 81f.
5.4. The campaign

Due to the delayed entry of the EU issue to the Slovak political agenda, the emerging consensus among elites was reflected in civil disengagement from the issue, and the common understanding that the EU would be good for the country prevented a debate to emerge among citizens. Moreover, the high voter mobilisation which took place before the 1998 and 2002 elections was not evident in the campaign leading to the referendum, which is the reason why the situation was described as a ‘consensus without a discourse.’ Following the political parties, the majority of voters largely expressed that they were strongly in favour of membership; the only exceptions were voters who supported the HZDS and its previous coalition partners, of which only half of the electorates supported accession, while supporters of the post-1998 government displayed more positive views towards integration. Another apparent divide between the supporters and opponents of European integration was demographic; those who could be classified as transitional ‘winners,’ such as young people, the higher educated and urban populations, were highly likely to vote in favour of accession. Differences between people who held nostalgic views about the past and those who supported further reform was also evident; the former group displayed more sceptical views towards European integration than the latter, a familiar pattern which was evident in several other CEE countries.

Given the fact that none of the previously held referendums in the independent Slovakia had managed to attract more than the necessary 50 percent for the referendum to be valid, concerns were present that the final outcome would be an unrecognised ‘yes’ vote, and that the no-camp would avail of this technicality and invalidate the result from abstention. Given the high anticipation of a yes, the campaign preceding the referendum ended up being uncontested one; there were simply no strong forces who actively campaigned for a no-vote. The yes-camp

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90 Henderson 2003, p. 3.
concentrated more on getting the vote out than attempting to convince people to vote yes. What is more, all parties joined in the campaign.

The final result from the 16-17 May referendum displayed the highest yes-vote in an accession referendum ever; 93.71 percent had voted for EU accession. The turnout marginally achieved the required level with 51.46 per cent valid votes, which was regarded as evidence that opponents of accession had done exactly what had been expected and stayed home to try to invalidate the vote.

5.5. Zaller’s model of opinion formation

5.5.1. The message environment

Following the descriptions of the positions taken by the political parties on the EU issue and the direction of the campaign, it appears that there was little elite division on the issue, and that elite contestation emerged after the referendum. Given the lack of an organised no-campaign and that opposition to membership was largely considered to represent extremist opinions and a rejection of progress, it appears safe to assume that Slovakia was a one-way message environment. Even if there were marginal forces who were opposing the government position, they were unable to present an alternative message that was seriously regarded by voters. Also the fact that the message intensity was relatively low, and that the EU issue entered the political arena late, limited the agenda for opposition groups to mobilise before the referendum and further argue that the environment was mainstream. It can safely be assumed that the constituency for the non-EU advocates was limited and that rather few of the respondents in this sample absorbed these messages. Therefore, this analysis will apply Zaller’s model according to the assumptions for a one-way message scenario.

To repeat the assumption, if people are exposed to one message only, politically aware respondents are assumed to be likely to support the government position, since those who understand the message also will be more prone to support it. Hence, the

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92 Henderson 2003, p. 5ff.
94 Henderson 2004a, p. 666.
level of support should be expected to be weaker for the low aware, and we would also expect little differences if awareness is sorted by political predispositions. Following the same methodology as the previous chapter, the models for the three time periods will be presented, and will be followed by a graphical representation of the predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing, by level of awareness and political predispositions, demonstrated by left-right position and scattered by party.
5.5.2. Results

Table 5.1. Testing Zaller’s model, Slovakia, 2002. Odds ratios.\(^95\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
<th>Model V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-530.51533</td>
<td>-493.54406</td>
<td>-485.40191</td>
<td>-485.16781</td>
<td>-471.38585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s R(^2)</td>
<td>0.0112</td>
<td>0.0801</td>
<td>0.0953</td>
<td>0.0957</td>
<td>0.1214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi(^2)</td>
<td>0.0025</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR test</td>
<td>0.0025</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0003</td>
<td>0.4938</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>1.14*</td>
<td>1.20**</td>
<td>1.17*</td>
<td>1.17*</td>
<td>1.16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
<td>2.22**</td>
<td>1.94**</td>
<td>1.92**</td>
<td>1.91**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV news</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.29**</td>
<td>1.27**</td>
<td>1.25*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.15*</td>
<td>1.15*</td>
<td>1.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position(^2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^95\) Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 5.19 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 31.63 %, ‘A good thing’ 63.17 %.
The results from the survey which was conducted 7-8 months before the referendum reported mixed effects of variables which measured awareness. Persuading others of one’s opinion, paying attention to EU news, and knowledge; self-reported and actual, produced stable and positive effects in all five models, but watching TV news, discussing politics and education did not influence attitudes towards accession. The overall effect of the model improved when the left-right variable and the squared term were introduced even if these were not significant, but the $R^2$ of the final model was still relatively low. The fact that left-right orientation did not have any impact on attitudes may have been a result of the high consensus among political parties, which also was the case among respondents in the sample where the distribution was skewed towards the positive answer. The graph of predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing will provide a more nuanced presentation of the effects.

**Figure 5.1. Predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing, by awareness and left-right position, Slovakia 2002. Scattered by party.**

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96 The effects of self-reported knowledge were questioned twice in the control models. See Appendix A for a discussion on the explanatory effect of this variable.
The graph confirms that variables which measure awareness created very large differences between the low, medium and highly aware respondents. Party and left-right placement created small differences, particularly between the centre parties, which could be the reason that the variable was not significant in the regression table when left-right position was tested together with awareness. The only party which stands out is the Christian and Democratic Union, whose supporters were notably more supportive of EU membership than the other voter groups. The difference between SDKÚ- and other party supporters were largest among the low aware, while the highly aware respondents in this group were extremely likely to believe that EU membership would be a good thing and other party supporters were not far behind. The following figures will investigate whether there were differences in effects of awareness and left-right position in 2003.
Table 5.2. Testing Zaller’s model, Slovakia, 2003. Odds ratios.\(^{97}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
<th>Model V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-768.16264</td>
<td>-402.14481</td>
<td>-385.12271</td>
<td>-382.93942</td>
<td>-365.28926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s (R^2)</td>
<td>0.0170</td>
<td>0.0635</td>
<td>0.1032</td>
<td>0.1083</td>
<td>0.1494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Prob&gt;\chi^2)</td>
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<td>0.0000</td>
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<tr>
<td>LR test</td>
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<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0367</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>1.22**</td>
<td>1.19*</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
<td>2.40**</td>
<td>1.96**</td>
<td>1.88**</td>
<td>1.78**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV news</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td>1.69**</td>
<td>1.53**</td>
<td>1.46**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.25*</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.05**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position(^2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=594

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

\(^{97}\) Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 5.44 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 30.15 %, ‘A good thing’ 64.41 %.
The 2003 survey was carried out in May, the month of the referendum, and even if it would be plausible to assume that a mobilisation of proxies would have found place, only two predictors of awareness were significant. Self-reported knowledge made an even stronger impact than in the previous year, and watching EU news produced slightly lower odds for positive attitudes, but was still significant. Education had a positive effect before left-right position was controlled for, and the higher R² from the fourth to the fifth model reveals that the overall model was substantially improved, and the final model also had stronger explanatory capabilities than in 2002. The most interesting factor in this model was that left-right orientation began to matter; the effect was linear with the odds increasing the likelihood of regarding membership with favour when moving from left to right. The following graph will illustrate the effects more thoroughly.

**Figure 5.2.** Predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing, by awareness and left-right position, Slovakia 2003. Scattered by party.
Also in 2003, level of awareness made a large difference on the likelihood of believing that EU membership will be a good thing, but the difference in this figure is that the linear effect of left-right positioning was sufficiently significant to have been picked up by the regression estimates. All low aware respondents on the left and in the centre had negative probabilities for believing that EU membership was a good thing, and the gap between SDKÚ-supporters and other voters was evident: even low aware SDKÚ-partisans were likely to believe that EU membership would be a good thing. While all of the highly aware respondents were located on the positive side of the .5 divisor, medium aware respondents on the left were still not likely to hold positive attitudes towards EU membership. Let us now see whether awareness and predispositions had the same effect the year after the referendum.
Table 5.3. Testing Zaller’s model, Slovakia, 2004. Odds ratios.98

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
<th>Model V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-554.36646</td>
<td>-552.7774</td>
<td>-531.79255</td>
<td>-522.25887</td>
<td>-497.32164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s R²</td>
<td>0.0002</td>
<td>0.0031</td>
<td>0.0409</td>
<td>0.0581</td>
<td>0.1031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi²</td>
<td>0.8868</td>
<td>0.3315</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR test</td>
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<td>0.0746</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td>1.66**</td>
<td>1.56**</td>
<td>1.55**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.49**</td>
<td>1.37**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.06**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position²</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=594

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

Nine to ten months after the referendum when accession was safely in sight, the models again showed that predictors of awareness had little impact on attitudes.

98 Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 10.37 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 42.28 %, ‘A good thing’ 47.36 %.
towards EU membership. The first two models, which tested the effects of discussing politics, persuading others during discussion and watching EU news on TV provided no information towards the dependent variable, which was also evident from the likelihood-ratio tests. While actual knowledge was not significant, the effect of self-reported knowledge had increased from the year before; so had the impact of left-right position, though only marginally. Another change which had occurred was that education made a difference in the positive direction, and also when political predispositions were introduced in the final model. Introducing left-right position also drastically increased the $R^2$ of the model. The following graph will illustrate the effects of awareness and left-right position.

**Figure 5.3. Predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing, by awareness and left-right position, Slovakia 2004. Scattered by party.**

The graph informs that there were large differences between the EU attitudes of low, medium and highly aware respondents also in 2004, but that medium aware respondents were less likely to believe that EU membership would be a good thing.
than in 2003. The only respondents in this group who were over the .5 threshold were SKDÚ partisans. The scepticism on the left was evident by the fact that only highly aware respondents in this voter group were positive towards accession. Also note that the probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a good thing increased more sharply when moving from left to right on the line for highly aware than medium and low aware, which suggests that those who were very aware of the EU issue to a greater extent reflected the linear effect of left-right position. The following section will summarise the results and discuss whether the Slovak case study met the assumptions of Zaller’s model.

5.5.3. Discussion

When interpreting the results within the framework of Zaller’s model, it appears at first glace that opinion formation is not well explained by the model. However, the results need to be more thoroughly analysed before reaching a final conclusion. The most apparent information we get from the results is that factors which measure awareness were overall little significant towards Slovak attitudes towards EU membership. However, the low impact of awareness over the models and time periods was not complemented by a consistent effect of left-right position, since the variable was not significant in 2002, when more variables which measured awareness were significant. The graphs illustrated that when values of awareness were set to the lowest, medium or highest levels, a difference between levels of awareness could be noted, but it must be taken into account that many of the variables were not significant, and that only self-reported knowledge was significant across the models.

In addition to this, the models and graphs show that there were differences between left-, centre,- and right-voters, even if the intervals between parties were generally small. Therefore, the effect of political predispositions must not be excluded either for 2003 and 2004. It is possible that the knowledge of an upcoming referendum would mobilise respondents to view the EU issue politically, and if this is the case, it happened despite that fact that EU-negative political actors were not prominent during the campaign. This may suggest that people were aware of EU-sceptical elements within the parties they supported, and that they did not need to be reminded of it during a campaign to respond to it. However, the effect of partisanship did not bring
about consistently negative attitudes among supporters of EU-critical parties, which may either be explained by a positive effect of awareness, or that no parties were explicitly against EU membership, just critical. Therefore, supporters of such parties, such as the Movement for Democratic Slovakia, should not necessarily be expected to be against membership, just less supportive than for example Democratic and Christian Union partisans, which the tests reported. That supporters of left-parties were less convinced than supporters of centre-parties and the Democratic and Christian Union, however, the graphs display some surprising results, for example that Movement for Democratic Slovakia-supporters were slightly more positive than supporters of the very EU-positive Hungarian Coalition and that supporters of the Slovak National Party were even more positive. In addition, also supporters of very EU-positive parties who had low, and in some cases medium, scores on awareness generally had low probabilities of believing that EU membership would be a good thing. Hence, it appears that awareness, when it mattered, had an ability to predict attitudes towards the EU, but interacted with political predispositions, even if respondents did not necessarily fully reflect party positions. However, the inconsistent effects of all predictors suggest that one may have to look to other models to fully explain how Slovaks formed opinions on EU membership, even if some information could be extracted from the results.

It remains to be discussed why the predictors were not consistently significant. This may be a reflection of the consensus among parties and citizens that EU membership was an imperative for progress, or may suggest that there were other variables than those which were employed in this analysis which shaped public opinion. It is possible that the low level of dispute over the issue made people make up their mind without actually engaging with it, and that the answer to the question was so clear that people did not question this consensus. Then urgent nature of EU membership may be a factor which rendered individual-level features and attitudes less important, and the high consensus on EU membership which also was reflected by the skewed distribution on the dependent variable in these sample will make it difficult to trace the factors which have the ability to create different opinions on EU membership.

To conclude, Zaller’s assumption that awareness alone would predict whether people supported EU membership was not confirmed by the Slovak case: the results found
that awareness had a certain effect, but was modified by political predispositions. The findings suggest a refinement of Zaller’s hypothesis which assumes that level of awareness predicts support for the dominant message, but that the level of support will interact with political predispositions – even if the alternative message is weak and little present in the campaign. This would suggest that voters will still be able to call upon the views held by their preferred political elites and respond to it, even if a counter-message is less available than the dominant message. This may also suggest that the importance Zaller’s model ascribes to message environment may be exaggerated, at least as far as the Slovak case is concerned. This will be further discussed in Chapter 9.

A final food for thought is that it may be possible that Zaller’s model does not suit the Slovak case; but it may also be likely that Slovakia did not constitute a suitable case-study for an application of Zaller’s model. First of all, the circumstances for the debate were chaotic; accession negotiations began as a result of a government change, which for many signified a change from an unacceptable political situation, and the EU issue was for many coupled with this desire for progress and a final good-bye to authoritarianism. Moreover, the nature of the political system in the country is fluid, political options are unstable and appear unclear, and in addition to these factors, political alienation is high in Slovakia. Zaller’s model may be better suited to apply to a stable democratic system, where the differences between the political parties are clearer, and where the issue is treated for what it is and not connected to issues which are as pressing as the Slovak desire for internal change. The results in this section suggest that patterns of political behaviour were difficult to identify, which may have been a reflection of the chaotic nature of Slovak politics. However, after the results from the other case studies have been presented and discussed in Chapter 9, this issue will be further addressed.

5.6. Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis

While the previous section tested the effects of external influences, the following section will investigate whether Slovaks made utilitarian considerations when they formed opinions about EU accession. The procedures for analysis were explained in Chapter 3 and are the same as was applied in the previous case study. First, the
models for the three times of sampling will be presented, followed by a discussion and a conclusion which evaluate the parsimony and explanatory capabilities of Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis.
5.6.1. Results


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Log likelihood</strong></td>
<td>-375.57339</td>
<td>-274.13329</td>
<td>-392.54186</td>
<td>-266.51981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>McFadden’s R2</strong></td>
<td>0.0756</td>
<td>0.3252</td>
<td>0.0338</td>
<td>0.3440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prob&gt;Chi²</strong></td>
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<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Likelihood-ratio test</strong></td>
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<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0186</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfaction with life</strong></td>
<td>1.32*</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Life compared to 5 years ago</strong></td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfaction with democracy</strong></td>
<td>2.48**</td>
<td>1.80**</td>
<td>1.81**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situation in 5 years</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.42*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Country advantages</strong></td>
<td>31.64**</td>
<td></td>
<td>33.64**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic prosperity</strong></td>
<td>2.52**</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.47**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age²</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban-rural</strong></td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td>1.26**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>1.38**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.37*²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unemployed</strong></td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td>.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=577

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

²Note that education was not significant in the generalised ordered model, so this must be taken into account when interpreting the overall results.
In the first model, the regression estimates report that satisfaction with life and democracy were significant and predicted positive attitudes towards accession, while life situation compared to five years ago was not significant, and remained so in the next models. However, when adding the three measures of future expectations, life satisfaction lost explanatory effect, and the odds from satisfaction decreased from the first model. Positive expectations of one’s own life situation in five years strongly correlated with a positive view on accession, while holding the belief that membership would benefit the country produced extremely high odds for supporting integration. Also faith in economic advantages for the country was a strong, and positive, predictor of attitudes. As for demographic characteristics, only income and education were significant in model III. The final model passed the likelihood-ratio test against the second model even if only education was significant of the demographic variables. In addition, satisfaction with democracy, evaluation of one’s situation in five years, beliefs in country advantages, and economic prosperity from EU membership were significant.
Table 5.5. Testing Gabel and Palmer’s model, Slovakia, 2003, odds ratios.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-417.10298</td>
<td>-297.07338</td>
<td>-455.30195</td>
<td>-289.87071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s $R^2$</td>
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<td>0.3803</td>
<td>0.0503</td>
<td>0.3954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi$^2$</td>
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<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood-ratio test</td>
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<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0251</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>1.32*</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.47**</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td></td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>3.08**</td>
<td>2.02**</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.05**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.23**</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.09**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.42**</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.50**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age$^2$</td>
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<td>1.00</td>
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<td>Urban-rural</td>
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<td>1.11</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.25**</td>
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<td>1.33$^{100}$</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.57**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.32*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.92**</td>
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N=602  
*Significant at the 0.05 level  ** Significant at the 0.01 level

$^{100}$ The generalised ordered model did not return a significant effect of income, hence, the variable should be treated with caution.
The 2003 model confirmed the patterns from 2002 that life satisfaction and the view that life had improved over the last five years were only significant before the second group of predictors were added to the model. Satisfaction with the current state of democracy was again a consistent predictor, and produced even higher odds for a positive view on accession than in 2002. As for the second group of predictors, life expectations in five years was not significant in any model, the belief that membership would bring advantages to the country was significant and highly positive, and even if the odds which the variable produced was not as extremely high as in 2002, the predictor still created higher odds than any other variable. Expectations of economic prosperity produced higher odds for believing that EU membership would be a good thing than in 2002, and both variables increased in strength when all predictors were included in the final model. Age became significant with a negative effect, but only when demographics were tested separately, while the effect of income and education remained significant into the second model. In the final model, unemployment became significant and produced high and positive odds for believing that membership would be a ‘good thing.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
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<td>-380.71993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s R2</td>
<td>0.0865</td>
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<td>Prob&gt;chi2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood-ratio test</td>
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<td>0.0197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>1.34**</td>
<td>1.26*</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.87**</td>
<td>1.61**</td>
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<td>1.59**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>1.74**</td>
<td>1.15</td>
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<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.30*</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.36*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>4.77**</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.76**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>3.11**</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.00**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age2</td>
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<td>1.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
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<td>Income</td>
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<td>1.08</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.33**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=610

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level
The 2004 models showed that more of the predictors from the two first groups were able to produce effects towards EU attitudes. Life satisfaction was significant also when future expectations were controlled for, but not in the final model, and holding the belief that one’s life had improved over the last five years remained a strong predictor throughout the model sequences. Another change from the previous models was that satisfaction with democracy was only significant in the first model, while the effect did not carry through until model IV. As for future expectations; optimism towards future life quality regained significance, and those who anticipated advantages for the country and the economy were still overwhelmingly positive. When socio-economics were tested separately, the urban-rural division, income and education were significant, but when all variables were grouped together in the final model, only education retained its explanatory effect.

5.6.2. Discussion

The models report that Slovaks clearly made utilitarian evaluations when they formed opinions on European integration, however, the selected predictors did not return equally stable results, which needs to be further examined. First of all, the predictors which measured evaluations of the personal situation; satisfaction with life, evaluations of one’s own situation compared to five years ago and future expectations of quality of life, were not consistently significant. None of the individual-level predictors were significant in the final model in 2003 just before the referendum, in fact, satisfaction with life was not significant in the final model in any year of testing. Expectations for one’s life situation in five years were significant in 2002 and 2004, and retrospective evaluations of life quality were only significant in the final model in 2004. However, the predictors which referred to macro-level evaluations were consistently significant and produced high odds for regarding integration with favour. The variable which produced the highest odds for believing that membership would be a ‘good thing’ was believing that EU membership would benefit the country as a whole, which may not be surprising, given the obvious logic between expectations of benefits and supporting EU membership. Still, it should be noted that the extremely strong effect of this predictor in 2002 decreased drastically the following years. That those who were satisfied with the current democratic conditions also were more likely to regard integration as desirable coincides with the knowledge that nostalgia for
communism normally correlates with rejection of participation in the open European market and its institutions, which represent ‘Western’ democratic structures, and is therefore also not surprising. However, it is interesting to note that the effect of this predictor was strongest during the referendum campaign, which may be a reflection of the increased politisation of the integration issue. It is equally note-worthy that this evaluation was not regarded as equally important when the issue had been settled; satisfaction with democracy was not significant in 2004. The trend was similar for the effect of expectations of economic prosperity, which was substantially higher during the campaign. The figures may be interpreted to reflect a mobilisation of macro-level expectations and evaluations when respondents were in the process of making up their mind as they found themselves approaching the day of the vote.

The effects of demographic characteristics as a group were inconsistent. Education was the most reliable of the socio-economic characteristics and was significant in all three final model, income was significant before utilitarian evaluations were controlled for, and urban-rural and age were significant in 2003 and 2004 respectively, but in the third model only. Moreover, in the 2003 model, unemployment was significant in the final model and strongly predicted positive attitudes towards EU accession. This suggested that even if effects were inconsistent, individual competitiveness played a certain part when attitudes were formed, and even if demographic variables usually lost significance when utilitarian evaluations were added to the model, the effect of socio-economic factors could not completely be excluded. When cost-benefit evaluations rendered demographic characteristics insignificant in the final models, it simply meant that factors which were more important than demographics were included, but significant demographic measures from the preceding model still provided some information. The fact that higher income and education predicted more positive views towards accession, and that age and rural location had negative effects, coincided with the ‘winners-and-losers’-typology of CEE voters which posits that those who are likely to have benefited from transition also are likely to regard EU integration with favour. However, the positive effect of being unemployed suggested that ‘losers’ may also have expected to benefit from accession, which contradicted the thesis; these ‘losers’ may have hoped that European integration could improve their situation. This result may not be surprising; since Slovakia at the time of polling was in dire need of economic improvement,
which also concerned the opportunities at the labour market. Therefore, the unemployed may have connected EU membership with opportunities to seek work in more developed states.

Moreover, it cannot be excluded that the general low impact of demographic factors may be due to their statistical properties; first of all, the high consensus on EU membership in the country could have caused the differences between demographic groups to be too marginal and random to be detected in a multivariate analysis. This may be the reason that many of the demographic predictors were not significant, even before utilitarian evaluations were controlled for.\footnote{\textsuperscript{101}} Hence, the varying effects of demographics again suggest that collective considerations were the strongest determinants of attitudes towards accession before and during the referendum campaign.

Finally, it should be noted that the effects of macro-level evaluations and expectations were lower in 2004 than in the previous years; satisfaction with democracy was not significant at all, and the odds for positive views on accession from expecting country advantages and economic prosperity were lower than during the referendum. This suggested that Slovaks to a greater extent employed measures of collective utilitarianism when they evaluated pros and contras of EU membership when they were in the process of making a final decision for the referendum, and that these considerations became less important when the issue had been settled.

To conclude, the Slovak case provided generous support for Gabel and Palmer’s hypothesis that utilitarian considerations will function as determinants of views towards European integration, but the results reported that a hierarchy of predictors could be detected. The mobilisation of evaluations of the common good, especially before and during the referendum campaign, suggested that Slovaks set the common interests before individual concerns when they formed opinions on integration. The changes in the effects of predictors in 2004 suggest that integration was to a slightly larger extent viewed in terms of individual interests when accession was about to

\footnote{\textsuperscript{101} Bivariate tests of demographic predictors showed that the variables were significant, but significance consistently decreased when more variables were added. The models were also run with tests for collinearity by including interaction terms, e.g. between income and education, but these did not produce significant effects.}
become a reality, but individual concerns more worked alongside collective interests than overrode them. Therefore, the support for Gabel and Palmer’s model was not unconditional; the timing of evaluations mattered, and the effects of predictors displayed a clear hierarchical pattern. Still, the utilitarian hypothesis proved to be sufficiently explanatory to accept that the theoretical framework was well able to explain Slovak public opinion to European integration, but the results here suggest that the model should be re-defined to specify a hierarchy of predictors.

5.7. Summary and conclusion

The tests for Zaller’s model of opinion formation and Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis led to different results: while Zaller’s model was neither fully confirmed nor rejected, Gabel and Palmer’s model was accepted with certain modifications.

Zaller’s assumptions that awareness will predict support for the dominant message in mainstream message environments was not confirmed by the regression estimates, which informed that variables which measured awareness only were significant predictors of EU attitudes to a limited extent. However, some effects were present, and the graphs of predicted probabilities, which sorted level of awareness by predispositions, informed that the probability of believing that EU membership would be a ‘good thing’ increased with awareness, across all voter categories. However, since there were differences between partisans in terms of support, and since these also reflected the positions taken by the respective political parties, there appeared to be a certain effect of partisanship, which should not be the case if Zaller’s assumptions were met. The regression tables also showed that left-right position mattered in 2003-4, which confirmed this pattern. Therefore, awareness and political predispositions appeared to work alongside each other in the opinion formation process, but it is difficult to say which whether one of these factors was more important for respondents than the other. Hence, opinion formation developed as a function of both awareness and political predispositions, and a re-definition of Zaller’s hypothesis was suggested.

As for Gabel and Palmer’s model, the results were easier to interpret. The results from the regression tables informed that utilitarian evaluations were important proxies for
Slovak respondents when they formed opinions on EU membership, however, considerations which concerned the common good produced higher odds and were more often significant than cost-benefit calculations which concerned oneself individually, particularly when the issue was at its most salient. Demographic characteristics were less reliable predictors of attitudes, but some information could be taken from income and education, and partially age, urban-rural and unemployment, even if demographic measures only were significant in the final model on a few occasions. Gabel and Palmer’s model was therefore concluded to well explain attitudes towards EU membership, with the reservation that a hierarchy of predictors could be established. Hence, the model was suggested to be re-defined to specify that some predictors will be more important than others. The discussions on the theoretical foundations of the models and suggested modifications will be returned to in chapter 9.
Chapter 6
Poland

6.1. Aims and introduction

This chapter will present the results and the conclusions which were reached after Zaller’s and Gabel and Palmer’s model were applied to the Polish case study. The chapter is outlined in the same way as the previous chapters; the chapter will begin with a quick review of the events after the fall of the communist regime, and will be followed by a description of the party system and the political parties, party positions on European integration and the referendum campaign, before the results of the tests of Zaller’s and Gabel and Palmer’s model respectively will be presented. Due to the large number of political parties which emerged after 1989 and the highly complex nature of the party system, the chapter will focus on the parties that were elected into Parliament in the 2001 elections and which participated in the political debates which preceded Polish accession to the EU.

Poland’s move to democracy began in the 1970s when the economic crisis and increasing public dissatisfaction with the incumbent government under the Polish Communist Workers’ Party (PZPR) led to a wave of strikes that challenged the political elites. By 1989, the communist regime faced a terminal political crisis. The pressure for change from the powerful trade union Solidarity (Solidarność) and its leader Lech Wałęsa led to the Round Table negotiations between the democratic opposition, the government and the Catholic Church, which concluded agreements between the communist leadership and Solidarity and formalised that the country would embark on a program of political, social and economic reform. In addition, a majoritarian electoral system was to be introduced, and provisions were set for semi-free elections in June, in which 65 percent of seats were to be reserved for the government while the remaining seats were to be open for contestation. However, neither the government nor the opposition envisioned that the communist party would lose power in those elections. Even if the communists had succumbed to pressure from the opposition to reform, they still anticipated being able to form a government and succeed in future elections after having pleased the opposition by including them.
into the system of ruling.¹ Solidarity gained all but one seat in the Senate, and the communist party was incapable of forming a new government. The task was entrusted to Solidarity, and a new government was formed under the leadership of Taduesz Mazowiecki. Lech Walesa was subsequently elected President the following year, which signalled that communist domination of Poland was over.² The Prime Minister made the unambiguous statement that ‘we are separating the past with a bold line,’ making it clear that Poland was ready to leave the communist legacy behind and begin a process of transition,³ which symbolically was followed by the disintegration of the communist party.⁴

Despite a promising start for the newly democratic nation, it proved difficult to establish continuity of leadership: a feature which was to become characteristic of Polish politics. Lack of internal unity made it difficult for Solidarity to establish itself as a stable governing force, and the pressing economic situation in the country generated growing discontent with the government and the transition process. At the outset of political and economic transition, many people had no clear notions about how it would affect them, but it was widely believed that Poland would develop into a prosperous economy in a period of two-three years. As people found themselves worse off in the first years of reform the early enthusiasm began to wane and was replaced by nostalgia for the pre-reform economic arrangements. The widely shared consensus among policy-makers was that reform was the way forward, but the question in dispute was how to go on about such a restructuring.⁵ However, the economy was to make improvements; towards the end of the 1990s, Poland was the fastest growing economy in Europe.⁶

However, problems were still on the horizon as negotiations with the European Union proved to be a long haul, and reaching agreement about the conditions of accession proved to be difficult. While the European Commission was positive towards the

⁶ Paczynska, p. 575.
progress the country had made in managing political and economic reform and adapting to EU norms, the internal political temperature began to heat up over the issue of EU accession by 1998. To begin with, the government had problems appointing negotiators to send to Brussels, and the government’s ambitions of securing beneficial pre-accession aid were set back when applications for economic assistance were rejected. The previous undisputed consensus over EU accession, which had not involved a great debate on the conditions and consequences of Polish membership, began to unravel as negotiations continued. When it became evident that EU accession would involve economic and social consequences and that Poland would not be able to accede without making concessions, such as opening up for sale of land to foreigners, the issue increasingly began to affect the party system and forced reactions from parties. Political rhetoric over the issue increasingly focused on the negative aspects of the entry conditions, and divisions emerged between camps which were willing to give in to demands from Brussels and those who advocated a tougher stance in negotiations the accession terms. However, despite the internal political debacle and decrease in public support, the popular President Aleksander Kwaśniewski achieved his main goal of overseeing Polish entry to the EU on May 1, 2004.

6.2. The political actors

6.2.1. The development of a party system

Post-1989 democratic politics in Poland has witnessed the formation and collapse of political parties and coalitions with remarkable regularity, and Poland is a very illustrative case to justify Peter Mair’s claim that ‘...the very notion of an emerging party system may well be a contradiction in terms.’ The cleavage structures of Polish party competition have been ascribed to structures which have been identified as specific to the Polish context. Voting in the country has neither been driven by societal structures nor interests, and political divisions are centred around the political

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and cultural cleavages that crystallised after 1989. These are mainly expressed by forces who supported Solidarity and those who supported the old regime. Leftist values have been associated with anti-clericalism, secularism, women’s rights and rejection of ‘de-communisation,’ which denotes the importance of religion and attitudes towards reform. Despite the fluctuating nature of the party system, the emergence of dominant cleavages allowed observers in the 1990s to comment that Poland was gradually developing a cleavage system similar to Western Europe.

In addition to the unconsolidated party system and high voter volatility (in fact, the highest in the Visegrád countries) each election has been preceded by a change in the electoral rules, which further contributed to sustaining the fluid party system. The first national assembly, Sejm, which was elected after a free election in 1991 under a system of proportional representation, consisted of 29 different parties and labels. In order to rectify the situation with too many parties in the Sejm, a 5 percent threshold to enter parliament was introduced. A new electoral law was introduced in 1993 was designed to de-fragment the party system and was expected to favour the larger parties. The aims were successfully met; the number of parties and groupings were reduced to six after the 1993 elections, which also marked the beginning of the waning support for the increasingly fragmented Solidarity, as the elections were won by the post-communist Alliance of the Democratic Left (SLD). The prominence of the communist/anti-communist cleavage was evident in the 1997 election campaign, where the main polarisation around the left-right axis centred around the perceptions and evaluations of the communist past, as well as moral and cultural issues. The main opponents and representatives of this cleavage were the SLD and the newly founded

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14 Millard 2004, p. 52f.
15 Benoit and Hayden, p. 9.
Solidarity Electoral Alliance (AWS), which had been formed out of a faction of Solidarity.\(^{17}\)

The 2001 elections saw new actors emerge onto the stage. On the one hand, the centre-right emerged with two new strong contenders to the AWS: the traditionalist-conservative Law and Justice party (PiS), and the liberal-conservative Civic Platform (PO).\(^{18}\) On the other hand, two new radical-populist and Eurosceptic forces had entered Polish politics: the right-wing League of Polish Families (LPR) and Self-Defence (Samoobrona-SRP) on the left.\(^{19}\) Since then, most of the instability of the party system has occurred on the centre-left of the party system. In 2004, several SLD and UP deputies broke from their parties to form a new social democratic alternative in the form of Social Democracy of Poland (SdPI), which was followed by Prime Leszek Miller’s Minister’s resignation and the end of the success of the post-communist left.

Another era began in Polish politics after the 2005 elections, when the PiS won in the ballots after leading an effective campaign on anti-corruption and socio-economic issues.\(^{20}\) With the presidential elections just around the corner, for which the PiS had nominated Jarosław Kaczyński’s twin brother Lech Kaczyński, the PO tried to pressure Jarosław Kaczyński into taking the post as Prime Minister, hoping that a fear of the country being led by two twin brothers would damage Lech Kaczyński’s presidential ambitions. However, Jarosław resigned from his candidacy and Lech emerged victorious from the presidential contestation. Due to disputes between the party leader and the Prime Minister, Lech appointed Jarosław as head of government the following year,\(^{21}\) which marked the beginning of Poland’s infamous ‘twinocracy’ rule. The 2007 elections again marked a right-wing turn in Polish politics, when the

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\(^{19}\) Szczerbiak 2002, p. 59ff.


\(^{21}\) Szczerbiak 2007, p. 216ff.
Civic Platform emerged as victorious after having gained extensive support from urban voters who feared the growing authoritarianism of the PiS.  

6.2.2. The political parties

When providing a summary of political parties in Poland which have emerged since 1989, it is natural to begin with the first democratic party to enter the Sejm; the politicised trade union Solidarity. Being the leading force to bring about the demise of the former regime, it initially enjoyed wide support as the main anti-communist force in the country. However, when the communist party had dissolved itself and the Soviet empire had collapsed, Solidarity lost the rallying point around which the party’s initial support had been built, and the party suffered the same destiny as many other protest formations in CEE; it gradually disintegrated. As the party lacked a clear political platform apart from ‘de-communization’ and reform, it became difficult to sustain internal unity and public support. The party was divided already in 1990 over the presidential candidacies of Wałęsa and Mazowiecki, and also struggled to agree on essential issues during preparations for the election. The internal bickering between the two prominent characters led the party being divided into a pro-Wałęsa camp under the Centre Agreement (PC), and the Citizen’s Movement-Democratic Action (ROAD) which supported Mazowiecki (his party later organised themselves under the Democratic Union party (UD)). The PC formed a government after the election, which only lasted six months until they ceded power to the UD. The party later dissolved into several smaller parties and groupings which clustered on the centre-right, which increasingly fragmented the policy space. The most prominent of Solidarity’s successors was the Solidarity Electoral Alliance (AWS) which was formed in 1996 of various right/centre-right parties and post-Solidarity groupings, and won the 1997 election after having run on a platform which focused on moral issues such as family and nation values, while drawing on references to

23 Chan, p. 2.
24 Millard 2004, p. 52f.
26 Millard 2004, p. 52f.
previous anti-communist struggles. Before the 2001 elections, several AWS deputies left the party to form new groups to contest the election, among them the Civic Platform (PO) and the League of Polish Families (LPR). The AWS’s fate was sealed after the loss in the elections, and it subsequently was dissolved.

After the AWS had failed to capture the interests of centre-right voters, new actors entered the stage. Post-2001, the centre-right has been dominated by the Civic Platform and the Law and Justice Party. The Civic Platform was founded in 2001 by, among others, the then Freedom Union (UW) Sejm deputy Donald Tusk along with a group of ‘Gdańsk liberals,’ a liberal opposition faction with roots in the communist era. The group was advocating the benefits of market economy before the fall of the communists, but by the mid-1990s as reforms were well underway, they began to develop a more critical discourse on the transition process. Tusk has later argued that a political ‘vain class’ of 100 000 people had assumed power and created a corrupt political system which was only beneficial to the few. Seeking to establish a synthesis of traditional Catholic values and economic liberalism, the party represents conservative social policies, and opposes abortion and gay marriages. The other right-of-centre force to benefit from the disintegration of the left after and public dissatisfaction with the incumbent and previous governments was the Law and Justice (PiS) party, which is backed by conservative elements of the Catholic church. Blaming the country’s problems on the continued existence of communists in the political establishment and their alliance with the Solidarity leadership, its policies favour investment in health care, public housing, and education, combined with a strong law and order policy as well as social conservatism. The party successfully fought the 2005 election campaign on a platform where they framed the electoral choice as a choice between liberals and ‘solidarists.’ Having initially been perceived as a conservative party with nationalist-populist leanings, this campaign marked the drastic shift of the PiS’s image to more radical-nationalist and populist-socialist.

Another contender on the right, albeit smaller and less influential, is the Freedom Union (UW), also a post-Solidarity formation. Its voter base is largely supportive of

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28 Szczerbiak 2004, p. 64.
29 Szczerbiak 2004, p. 66ff.
30 Rae, p. 75.
31 Rae, p. 75f.
market reforms, tend to be young, urban ‘winners’ of transition and belong to the intelligentsia in the public and professional sectors. The party is mainly perceived as a pro-EU and pro-reform centre-right party, however, it has not been able to secure seats in parliament after the 2001 elections, after a large share of its electorate ‘defected’ to the Civic Platform.

Further to the right, the religious-conservative League of Polish Families (LPR) has monopolised the religious vote. The party has been characterised as ‘religious-fundamentalist,’ ‘radical-right,’ and as the most far-right party in the Sejm. It is divided on the traditional left-right axis as far as socio-economic issues are concerned, and its electorate is mainly rural, based around agricultural workers. Its government-critical, xenophobic-populist platform has proved to be a successful appeal to women, the elderly and devout Catholics.

The only contender which has been a consistent player on the political agenda since 1991 without having undergone changes and splits has been the post-communist Polish Peasants’ Party (PSL), which also had the experience of being in government in coalition with the SLD and the SLD-UP. The party’s policies have traditionally opposed economic reforms and favoured state subsidies to farmers and state-owned firms. It is also sceptical about foreign capital and investment, particularly in rural businesses and agriculture, and argues for a protectionist economic policy. Not having been able to find a strategy to appeal to the varying interests of peasant

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33 Jackson et al., p. 48f.
35 McManus-Czubińska et al., p. 7.
37 McManus-Czubińska et al., p. 3.
42 Jackson et al. p. 48.
smallholders and large-scale farmers, the party has found it difficult to sustain consistent support.\footnote{Millard, F. (1999), \textit{Polish Politics and Society}, London: Routledge., p. 96.}

Moving to the actors left-of-centre; the dominant force on the left after 1989 was the Alliance of the Democratic Left (SLD), which mainly consists of former deputies from the communist party. Initially opposing reform and economic reconstruction, the party has moderated its anti-reform platform gradually,\footnote{Jackson et al. p. 48} taking inspiration from the ‘Third Way’ of social democracy as adopted by more established West European counterparts.\footnote{Buras, p. 86ff.} Their success lasted only until late 2003, when internal disunity and corruption scandals led to several SLD parliamentarians to break away from the coalition and establish Social Democracy of Poland (SdPI), bringing an end to the success of the communist successor party.\footnote{Buras, p. 84f.} Another important actor left of centre is Self-Defense (Samoobrona), which has been characterised as Poland’s other radical-populist expression along with the LPR. Its profile has been subject to various interpretations; after the 2001 elections, the BBC characterised the party as a ‘populist, left-wing’ party, while the Economist depicted the party as belonging to the ‘far right.’\footnote{McManus-Czubińska et al., p. 3.} The party seeks to account for the part of the rural electorate which it regards as having lost out from economic reform and is not represented by the PSL, and its ideology is strongly anti-communist and anti-Solidarity. Surveys suggest that support for Samoobrona coincides with opposition to privatisation and foreign capital, as well as nostalgia for the pre-1989 regime.\footnote{Czernicka 2004, p. 12f.}

6.3. Party positioning on European Integration

Along with the first steps of political and economic reform followed enthusiasm about European integration, which was widely shared by policy-makers and the public during the first years of transition. For example, Eurobarometer polls conducted in the 1990s showed that Poland displayed one of the highest levels of support among the CEE candidate states. However, as mentioned in the introduction, as negotiations over the conditions of accession revealed that Poland had to make more concessions than were initially expected, and as accession became a realistic alternative for the future, public support began to decrease. Studies indicated that patterns of support steadily diminished among voters irrespective of left-right orientation, with some small differences; voters who supported parties on the left were slightly more likely to support membership than those with partisan alignments in the centre and on the right. Also structural factors created divisions; those who perceived themselves as ‘losers’ from the transition process were more likely to be Eurosceptic since they felt vulnerable to the challenges European integration was perceived to represent. This also concerned citizens who relied on welfare provisions, older, less educated and rural voters, who became more critical to integration with other European countries. There were differences as well between citizens who worked in the private and state sector, in which the latter were more negative to European integration given perceived threats to official positions. However, despite this increased scepticism, the majority of Poles still expressed support.

As mentioned in the previous section, The Polish national assembly did not contain any Eurosceptic elements before 2001, when the LPR and Samoobrona were elected to the Sejm. This evolution in party representation sparked a process in which parties increasingly used the EU issue to distinguish themselves from each other, especially as the accession criteria became more difficult to meet. Still, outright

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Euroscepticism has been limited to non-standard peripheral parties that seek to offer alternatives to the incumbent government, although larger parties have also voiced concerns over aspects of EU membership and/or the accession criteria.57 A 2008 study argues that party competition on the EU issue is high in Poland, and that the issue is highly polarised, a tendency which is also reflected amongst the public.58

1. The Solidarity Electoral Alliance (AWS)

Even if the Alliance officially always supported EU membership through the slogan ‘A Europe of sovereign nationalities as a Europe of Fatherlands,’ it was more divided on the issue than the official party policies expressed. The belief that Polish participation in building a ‘united Europe based on Catholic values’ was not shared by all components of the party. For example, the Confederation for a United Poland (KPN) believed strongly that Poland would be treated as a ‘peripheral country destined for exploitation if the country joined the EU, and suggested that Poland should be focusing more on developing good relations with neighbours in Central and Eastern Europe.59 Claiming that the party was no longer able to protect Polish national interests, some of its members created a more radical Eurosceptic group called the Polish Agreement (PP), which rejected membership as a whole.60 The AWS’s platform remained ambiguous as to how it viewed EU accession.61

2. The Civic Platform (PO)

The liberal PO has traditionally been firmly in favour of European integration, and along with the SLD has been the most consistently pro-European party.62 However, despite this staunchly pro-European stance, the party ‘warned’ during the negotiations leading to the proposed European Constitution that there ‘was a need to better defend Polish national interests’ and launched the famous slogan ‘Nice or dead’ when the country was debating the proposal for the Treaty. Similarly, the party criticised the

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60 Neumayer, p. 152.
61 Blazyca and Kolkiewicz, p. 133ff.
government for being too ‘soft’ in its negotiations with Brussels and advocated a ‘hard line’ in the negotiations for the terms of accession. Despite these critiques, the party has not been placed in a category as a ‘soft’ Eurosceptic party, and is regarded as a stable Europe-friendly force within the increasingly Eurosceptic Poland. Still, the party remains divided on certain issues of integration such as the European Constitution, which it generally avoided taking a stance on.

3. Law and Justice (PiS)

The PiS also supports EU membership in principle, but has been labelled a ‘soft’ Eurosceptic party due to their critical remarks on several aspects of European integration, particularly in relation to the Polish accession process. Its support of EU membership has always been conditional. In particular Lech Kaczyński has courted notoriety for his controversial statements on the European Union, such as expressing fears of ‘German hegemony of Europe,’ and recurring reminders of crimes committed towards Poles during the Second World War. Initially having recommended people to vote against accession in the referendum due to the conditions of accession which the party criticised ‘not to allow’ Poland to become a member on an equal basis, the party leadership changed course shortly before the voting day and recommended a yes-vote. However, the party sustained its commitment to an intergovernmental ‘Europe of the Nation States,’ which reflected the internal federo-sceptic sentiments. Still, when accession became a reality, the party interpreted the result as a ‘destiny’ which was to be accepted, and adopted a more pragmatic view on membership. Despite this view, the party later opposed the Constitutional Treaty.

4. The Freedom Union (UW)

63 Riishøj, p. 517ff.
65 Taggart and Szczerbiak 2002, p. 29.
68 Riishøj, p. 517.
Being perceived as the most pro-European of all Polish political parties, the UW’s early party programmes had concentrated heavily on technical recommendations about how Poland would best be able to prepare for negotiations and accession, rather than on justifying why the party viewed membership as necessary for the country.71 The UW set the issue of accession at the core of Poland’s foreign policy in the 1990s, and when the AWS-UW coalition re-gained the government position in 1997, the party promised that it would ensure that Poland would meet the conditions necessary to be able to fulfil the accession criteria, and that it would make up for the slow pace of reform overseen by the previous government.72

5. The League of Polish Families (LPR)
The LPR is one of two parties in Poland to have been classified as ‘hard’ Eurosceptics,73 and it opposes EU membership on ideological and nationalistic ground. Its main concern has been the fear that EU membership could threaten Polish Catholicism and bring secular influences,74 and its xenophobic-populist rhetoric emphasises the threat to Polish identity and cultural values if the country joined.75 However, even if the party was actively campaigning against the proposed EU constitution and EU accession before the country joined, just a few days after the referendum the party accepted defeat and slightly modified its official view on membership. Party leader Roman Giertych argued that the party should change its profile to become more EU-compatible, and presented a new slogan: ‘LPR for Poland within the EU.’76 Still, the LPR’s representatives in the European Parliament are members of the Independence/Democracy group together with representatives from the UK Independence Party, Lega Nord and hard Eurosceptic parties.77

6. The Polish Peasants’ Party (PSL)

71 Hausner, p. 112.
72 Blazyca and Kolkiewicz, p. 133ff.
74 Guerra, p. 8.
76 Minkenberg and Perrineau, p. 49.
77 Gaisbauer, p. 65.
As an official supporter of European integration and initially an enthusiastic one, the PSL has added certain reservations to its endorsement of EU membership. The party early raised concerns about accession, such as the trade imbalance between the EU and Poland and the future of Polish agriculture as part of the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy. Before negotiations commenced, the party expressed hopes that Poland would be given special treatment in terms of financial support for restructuring of the agricultural industry, hopes that were not met, and which led to the PSL threatening to leave the governing coalition. It later expressed in its 2000 program that ‘the integration with the European Union may offer Poland perspectives of a wide development provided it is a strategic integration serving national interests,’ which reflected fears within the party that Poland would become a ‘second-category’ member. The party remains divided on the advantages of EU membership.

7. The Alliance of the Democratic Left-Labour Union (SLD-UP)

The SLD-UP has traditionally expressed unambiguous support for the EU. Being the dominant force in this coalition after the 2001 election, the SLD used the EU campaign to distinguish themselves from Solidarity’s ‘Europe of Fatherlands’-slogan, and popularised the slogan into a new twist: ‘Europe as the Fatherlands of Fatherlands.’ Three things distinguish the policies on the SLD from other Polish parties: the party emphasises strong pro-Atlantic/European orientations as well as the need of maintaining good relations with the East, and early expressed a belief that Poland could act as an intermediary between West and East. In line with these policies, the SLD and former President Kwaśniewski (1995-2005) always held securing speedy Polish access to the EU as its main goal while in government. Similarly, the UP early outlined a social democratic vision of a unified Europe, and stated that it believed that the EU would not only become a ‘community of states, but a community of regions and citizens.’ However, the party also emphasised that it considered that it was necessary for Poland to secure beneficial entry conditions.

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78 Neumayer, p. 140.
79 Hausner, p. 112.
80 Millard 1999, p. 95.
81 Czernicka 2004, p. 9f.
82 Riishøj, p. 517.
83 Hausner, p. 111.
84 Blazyca and Kolkiewicz, p. 136.
85 Hausner, p. 113.
8. Samoobrona (SRP)

Self-Defence has been characterised as the second hard Eurosceptic party in Poland next to the LRP. Although these parties are often mentioned simultaneously in descriptions of Polish party-based Euroscepticism, Samoobrona’s rhetoric is far less radical than the LPR’s. While Samoobrona does not oppose EU membership in principle, its critique has been more directed towards particular provisions of the accession agreement, which it argued were not favourable for the country. It also expressed concerns over the timing of Polish accession, and argued that the country was not ready to join when it did. In its 2003 party program, the party argued that they supported ‘The Europe of Nations, supported by Charles de Gaulle and Margaret Thatcher, and promoted by Pope John Paul II (….) We oppose transfers of sovereignty to the supranational level.’ Party leader Andrzej Lepper has used a rhetoric on EU membership which is comparable to Václav Klaus in the Czech Republic and declared himself to be a ‘Eurorealist,’ which makes the party’s stance on EU membership somewhat ambiguous. For some observers, the party’s opposition to EU membership is entirely pragmatic and not linked to xenophobic nationalism, referring to Lepper’s claims that the party is not opposed to EU membership as such, but the conditions of Polish entry.

6.4. The campaign

In order to secure a yes-vote to Polish EU accession on referendum day 7-8 June, the government launched an official yes-campaign in March with the purpose of providing information about the EU. The campaign was supported by a large group of organisations, including the Catholic Church, and President Kwaśniewski figured prominently as the main political figure and face of the campaign. In addition, the opposition parties joined in the campaign: the PO launched the slogan ‘Europe-our

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87 Napieralski, p. 49f.
chance—Europe—our-home’ while the PiS, despite its Eurosceptic elements, encouraged people to vote yes to achieve ‘a strong Poland in the European Union.’ The PSL also recommended a yes-vote, even though this recommendation was less convincing given the party’s previous critique of the agreements which had been reached during the accession negotiations. The LPR launched a no-campaign, through which it presented the European Union as a ‘German-led project’ constructed for rich countries to occupy Poland, and launched slogans such as ‘Yesterday Moscow, tomorrow Brussels.’ Samoobrona took on more moderate undertones in its no-campaign; while it stressed that the party was not explicitly against EU membership, it continued to criticise the conditions on which Poland joined and expressed concerns that land would be bought by foreigners and that farmers would be forced out of business. However, the no-side suffered from a lack of access to the media and was less prominent in the public sphere. Nor did the no-side manage to provide a plausible alternative to EU membership; and in addition to the support for accession from the well-liked President, Pope John Paul II also endorsed the yes-campaign, which did not enable Euroscepticism to become a decisive force.

In the referendum, 77.4 percent of voters voted for accession. This was not a convincing victory for the yes-side, as the turnout was only 58.9 percent, and the registered votes represented only 45.3 percent of the population. Exit polls informed that there was a strong link between voting behaviour in the referendum and the 2001 general election, and that voters who supported Eurosceptic parties also largely voted no. The polls also informed that partisanship was a stronger cleavage between yes-and no-voters than socio-economic characteristics. Although voters from any demographic group were more likely to vote yes than no, certain patterns could still be noted. For example, there was a tendency that the less educated and rural populations were less likely to vote for than higher educated and urban voters. Moreover, there was a geographical division present within the country; support was

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91 Czernicka 2005, p. 13f.
92 Wilga, p. 18ff.
93 Czernicka 2005, p. 16ff.
95 Ibid., p. 154.
97 Henderson 2004b, p. 160.
higher in the Western and Northern regions. A declining linear effect of partisanship could also be identified; with the exception of Samoobrona partisans, supporters of parties on the left were the most pro-European, while voters on the right were the most negative, in particular supporters of the LPR.98

6.5. Zaller’s model of opinion formation

6.5.1. The message environment

The evaluation of the party positions on European integration and the nature of the pre-referendum campaign unambiguously suggest that Poland should be treated as a two-way message environment in an application of Zaller’s model. While the standard parties recommended their voters to endorse EU membership and dominated the campaign, Samoobrona and the LPR were presented a contradictory message, despite possessing fewer resources than their opponents to influence the campaign. Even if the Eurosceptic parties appealed to a smaller constituency than the pro-EU parties, they still had the ability to appeal to a share of the electorate as parliamentary parties that enjoyed substantial support. While Samoobrona’s message to voters was more ambiguous, the LPR provided a clear alternative to the government position: Poland should not join the EU. The Eurosceptic parties also appeared much more internally unified on the matter than some of the pro-accession parties, which further contributed to clarify the message from the counter-campaign. For these reasons, there is little uncertainty over the nature of the Polish message environment, and the case study will be analysed in the framework of Zaller’s model for polarised message environments.

To repeat the assumptions for the model: when elites convey conflicting messages, political awareness will only predict respondents’ ability to understand the message(s) they are being presented, and will therefore not predict direction of support. The choice of message to endorse will depend on respondents’ political predispositions; and the higher the awareness of the issue, the more respondents are likely to agree with their preferred political elites. The methodology for the test and the variables

98 Jasiewicz, p. 37.
which will be applied are familiar from the previous case studies; the models for the three time periods will be presented, followed by the graphical representation of the predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing by level of awareness, left-right position and the specific placement of party supporters. The results will be summarised and compared in a concluding discussion on the applicability of Zaller’s model.
### 6.5.2. Results

Table 6.1. Testing Zaller’s model, Poland, 2002. Odds ratios.\(^{99}\)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Log likelihood</strong></td>
<td>-937.82111</td>
<td>-382.18479</td>
<td>-364.42699</td>
<td>-359.16138</td>
<td>-348.60202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>McFadden’s R(^2)</strong></td>
<td>0.0115</td>
<td>0.0503</td>
<td>0.0944</td>
<td>0.1075</td>
<td>0.1338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prob&gt;Chi(^2)</strong></td>
<td>0.0099</td>
<td>0.0503</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LR test</strong></td>
<td>0.0099</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0012</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Often discuss politics</strong></td>
<td>1.32**</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Persuading others of opinion</strong></td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Watching EU news</strong></td>
<td>1.90**</td>
<td>1.50**</td>
<td>1.50**</td>
<td>1.49**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Watching TV news</strong></td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge (self-reported)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actual knowledge</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Left-right position</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.96**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Left-right position(^2)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.99**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=460
*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

\(^{99}\) Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 10.41 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 31.89 %, ‘A good thing’ 57.70 %.
Most of the selected predictors produced consistent results and proved to be well able to predict attitudes towards EU membership in 2002, and the likelihood-ratio tests and increasing \( R^2 \) reported that the model fit improved when more variables were added. With the exception of discussing politics, persuading others during discussions and watching TV news, all predictors were significant at the .01 level. Watching EU news, self-reported knowledge and actual knowledge produced high odds for positive attitudes towards accession, also when political predispositions were controlled for. As anticipated, the negative odds produced by left-right positioning and the negative squared term revealed that supporters of centre parties were more positive towards EU membership than those on the extreme left and right, with the rightists being the most negative. The following graph of predicted probabilities will explain the effects of awareness and party position more in detail.

Figure 6.1. Predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing, by awareness and left-right position, Poland 2002. Scattered by party.
The graph illustrated that awareness made a large difference on the probabilities of believing that EU membership would be a good thing, as well as the curvilinear effect of left-right positioning. All low and medium aware voters had probabilities under .5, and highly aware respondents all had high probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a good thing. The difference in probabilities by party support was lowest among the low aware, while the differences between the extreme left and right versus centre was larger among the medium and highly aware. The following table and graphs will illustrate whether the effects of awareness and left-right position were different when the issue was its most salient.
Table 6.2. Testing Zaller’s model, Poland, 2003. Odds ratios.100

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
<th>Model V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>McFadden’s R²</strong></td>
<td>0.0266</td>
<td>0.0851</td>
<td>0.0921</td>
<td>0.1037</td>
<td>0.1666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prob&gt;Chi²</strong></td>
<td>0.0266</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LR test</strong></td>
<td>0.0007</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.1500</td>
<td>0.0120</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Often discuss politics</strong></td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Persuading others of opinion</strong></td>
<td>1.26*</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Watching EU news</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Watching TV news</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge (self-reported)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actual knowledge</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Left-right position</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Left-right position²</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=365

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

100 Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 7.07 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 27.20 %, ‘A good thing’ 65.72 %.
Also in 2003, the predictors which measured the effects of political discussion and persuading others during discussions produced no information on the dependent variable. Except from persuasion which was significant in the first model, the predictors did not produce significant effect at all. A change from the previous models was that watching TV news was significant in a positive direction, which may have been caused by the increased salience of the issue and because it appeared more frequently in the media than in the previous year. Watching EU news and TV news were the only measures of awareness that were significant across all models, even if they were only significant at the .05 level in the final model. None of the measures of knowledge were significant, which is the reason that the third model did not pass the likelihood-ratio test against the second model. Moreover, education was significant in the fourth model, but not in the final model. The effect of left-right position remained unchanged; negative with a negative curvilinear effect, and the final model appeared very credible given the solid model statistics from the $R^2$. The effects will now be illustrated graphically.
Figure 6.2. Predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing, by awareness and left-right position, Poland 2003. Scattered by party.

The graph reflects a remarkably high effect of awareness and the curvilinear effect of left-right position. A difference from the 2002 graph was that medium aware voters of centre parties had become positive, and the increase in probabilities of low aware respondents when moving from left to centre was higher than in 2002, while the curve of probabilities again went downwards when moving into the right. The difference in probabilities is again higher among the medium and highly aware than the low aware, who had similar probabilities irrespective of party position. However, the effect of awareness must be interpreted with caution, as only two variables were significant in the regression estimation. The following table and graph will examine whether the effects of awareness and predispositions had changed a year after the issue had been settled.
Table 6.3. Testing Zaller’s model, Poland, 2004. Odds ratios.\textsuperscript{101}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
<th>Model VI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-492.75558</td>
<td>-491.14300</td>
<td>-485.39735</td>
<td>-485.37505</td>
<td>-466.36156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s $R^2$</td>
<td>0.0069</td>
<td>0.0102</td>
<td>0.0218</td>
<td>0.0218</td>
<td>0.0601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi$^2$</td>
<td>0.0322</td>
<td>0.0178</td>
<td>0.0006</td>
<td>0.0014</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR test</td>
<td>0.0322</td>
<td>0.0725</td>
<td>0.0032</td>
<td>0.8328</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>1.19*</td>
<td>1.20**</td>
<td>1.15*</td>
<td>1.15*</td>
<td>1.17*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news on TV</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.38**</td>
<td>1.38**</td>
<td>1.31**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.97**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position$^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.99*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=486

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

\textsuperscript{101} Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 19.44 \%, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 37.07 \%, ‘A good thing’ 43.48 \%. 
The effects of the predictors also underwent some changes after the issue had been settled. In the final survey in 2004, persuading others of one’s opinion and self-reported knowledge were the only awareness-related predictors that provided consistent explanatory effects; and all other predictors failed to achieve significance in any model. Left-right orientation was still a reliable predictor and remained unchanged, apart from a slight increase in the odds with .01, and the squared term was only significant at the .05 level. The $R^2$ was low for every model, including the final estimation, and the fourth model fails to pass the likelihood-ratio test against the previous model. The following graph of predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing will illustrate the effects of the predictors more clearly.

Figure 6.3. Predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing, by awareness and left-right position, Poland 2004. Scattered by party

The graph displayed that awareness still had a positive effect on EU attitudes, but also that the difference between the levels was smaller than in 2002-3. Moreover, in this sample, low and medium aware respondents were more positive towards the EU than
in the previous years, even if low aware respondents still had probabilities under .5. Moreover, all medium aware respondents who supported centre parties were over the .5 divisor for being likely to believe that EU membership would be a good thing. A larger difference seemed to have been created by partisanship: irrespective of awareness, people who supported Samoobrona or the League of Polish Families on the extreme left and right were not likely to hold positive views towards accession irrespective of level of awareness, as well as low and medium aware supporters of the Polish Peasant’s Party.

6.5.3. Discussion

When summarising the findings and attempting to evaluate whether Zaller’s model can explain opinion formation in the Polish case study, there are several factors to take into account. To begin with, factors of awareness unquestionably impacted on the attitude formation process, however, to an inconsistent degree. More of the variables which measured awareness were significant in 2002 than in the referendum year, when only paying attention to EU news and watching TV news were significant. In 2004, the only predictors which produced significant odds were persuading others while discussing politics and as self-reported knowledge. However, political predispositions provided stable and reliable predictions of direction of EU attitudes during all times of sampling, and produced a negative and curvilinear effect, which informed that the most positive respondents were to be found in the centre of the left-right scale as expected. The graphs, however, showed that the differences between groups of awareness were larger in 2002 and 2004, but the curvilinear effect of left-right position was largest in 2004, when voters on the extreme right and left were not likely to believe that EU membership would be a good thing even if they scored high on awareness. Moreover, low aware respondents in general were more positive towards EU membership in 2004 than in the previous samples, even on the extreme left and right, though they still had probabilities under .5. This reveals that awareness created smaller differences over time and that political predispositions increasingly created differences within the sample on how respondents viewed EU membership.

The fact that factors of awareness gradually lost explanatory effects from the 2002 to the 2003 and 2004 tables, is a noteworthy finding which allows for a number of
possible explanations. One possible reason for the change in effects was that the cognitive process changed with message intensity; as the increased debate increased in 2003 and the issue became more urgent, this urgency could have been reflected by the lack of impact of endogenous proxies. Alternatively, the change of circumstances within which the issue was discussed may have prompted respondents to use other cues than awareness when they were in the process of forming a final decision. Another possible explanation is that the high politisation of the issue made awareness become subordinate to partisanship, and that the differences in attitudes between respondents who produced lower versus higher level of awareness were so small that the regression estimation was unable to pick up on them, while the graphs illustrated that levels of awareness created notable differences on EU attitudes, even if these were smaller in 2004.

The strong effect of left-right positioning spoke for itself; the curvilinear effect of the variable in the regression tables reflected the negative positions taken by the parties on the extreme left and right, which was confirmed by the graphs. Again, it must be noted that highly aware supporters on the extreme left and right were positive towards EU accession in 2002 and 2003, but appeared to demonstrate more party discipline a year after the issue had been settled when they were given low probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a good thing. Hence, in 2002-3, awareness tipped the extremist over the .5 divisor, but not in 2004. If this was a result of party loyalty is difficult to state for sure, but the effect of partisanship cannot be ruled out.

These findings suggest that increasing awareness indeed had the ability to increase the level of support for EU accession, but the level of support was modified by political predispositions, sometimes to the extent that highly aware respondents would not be likely to believe that EU membership would be a good thing if they supported a party which held that view. The slight increase in effect of left-right position could be a reflection of increased politisation of the EU issue and that this was complemented by lower impact of awareness.

The results therefore provide a nuanced impression of the effects of awareness and political predispositions, and the assumptions from Zaller’s model that predispositions alone should predict which views Poles held towards EU accession were not met. The
fact that high awareness predicted support for accession across the spectrum of respondents irrespective of political orientation, with the exception mentioned above, suggested that awareness alone was a reliable predictor of EU-positive attitudes, but that the differences in support between low, medium and highly aware respondents would vary, as well as to how negative/positive EU attitudes produced by awareness. The extent to which party choice modified support was also not consistent: the results suggest that the impact of party choice was more stable in the centre of the left-right spectre than on the extreme left and right. Therefore, the effects of both awareness and predispositions were evident, and it is not possible to state from the results whether awareness was a more important factor in the opinion formation process than the other or vice versa. The results more point in the direction that awareness and predispositions interacted, and that Zaller’s assumption that political predispositions alone will determine the opinion formation process must be rejected.

To summarise, the Polish case did not confirm Zaller’s model for two-way message environment, but rather suggests that a refinement of the model to assume the effects of awareness and predispositions would be necessary to more adequately explain public opinion formation in Poland. Even if the knowledge that the EU was of a highly political nature in Poland was confirmed by the results, it still appears that awareness about the matter would play a certain role in determining EU attitudes. It appears that there were factors at work when Poles formed opinions on EU membership which Zaller’s model was unable to explain, and the model was therefore not confirmed by the results from the Polish tests.

6.6. Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis

This section will present the results which were produced when Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis was tested on the Polish case. The procedures for analysis follow the same outline as the previous chapters as well as the descriptions in the case studies; the models for the three times of sampling will be presented and complemented with an evaluation of the explanatory capabilities of Gabel and Palmer’s model in the Polish case.
6.6.1. Results

Table 6.4. Testing Gabel and Palmer’s model, Poland 2002, odds ratios.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-413.89331</td>
<td>-286.97533</td>
<td>-418.95699</td>
<td>-285.23842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s $R^2$</td>
<td>0.0413</td>
<td>0.3353</td>
<td>0.0296</td>
<td>0.3393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi$^2$</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0003</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood-ratio test</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.7474</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.30**</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>1.79**</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td>1.53**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.54**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>40.82**</td>
<td></td>
<td>48.56**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>1.91**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.87*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age$^2$</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.42**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=491

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level
The predictors in the first group which measure the effects of current evaluations were significant in the first model. With satisfaction with life had no effect, believing that life had improved over the last five years and held positive views about the quality of democracy were also positive about European integration. However, when more variables were added, none of the first three predictors remained significant. All predictors in the second group were significant; positive expectations for one’s own life situation in five years and the belief that EU membership would bring about economic prosperity predicted positive view on accession. Predictably, the belief that membership would bring advantages to the country produced extremely high odds for believing that EU membership would be a ‘good thing.’ Testing for demographics in model III informed that the odds for regarding integration with favour increased with education, which was the only of the demographic variables which was significant. When running all predictors in the final model, all demographic variables became insignificant, so did the three first predictors, however, the predictors which measured expectations survived the test; the positive odds produced by expectations of country advantages even increased. Note that introducing the demographic variables made the final model not pass the likelihood-ratio test against the second model, and the $R^2$ hardly increased even if six more variables were added.
Table 6.8. Testing Gabel and Palmer’s model, Poland 2003, odds ratios.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-686.46068</td>
<td>-360.78627</td>
<td>-505.4775</td>
<td>-253.0816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;chi²</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s R²</td>
<td>0.0465</td>
<td>0.3835</td>
<td>0.0384</td>
<td>0.3873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfaction of life</strong></td>
<td>1.30**</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Life compared to five years ago</strong></td>
<td>1.28*</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfaction with democracy</strong></td>
<td>1.79**</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Life expectations in five years</strong></td>
<td>1.43**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.60**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Country advantages</strong></td>
<td>9.47**</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.78**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic prosperity</strong></td>
<td>1.67*</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age²</strong></td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban-rural</strong></td>
<td>1.30*</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td>1.10**</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>1.24*</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unemployed</strong></td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=528

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

The first three predictors which measured current evaluations were significant only in the first model, which again produced strong positive predictions for believing EU
membership would be a ‘good thing.’ Life expectations in five years remained a strong predictor of EU attitudes, which expectations of economic advantages was not significant in the final model, which it was in 2002. The odds produced by anticipating country benefits had also drastically decreased, but remained very high. The tests of demographic variables alone showed that the urban-rural divide, education and income caused positive effects on EU attitudes; those who lived in cities were more likely to support membership than respondents living in smaller towns and villages, and higher income and education again produced odds for regarding integration with favour. Also in this estimation, demographics failed to predict attitudes towards accession when utilitarian evaluations and expectations were controlled for; expectations for future life situation and country advantages were the only predictors which were significant in the full model, and the effect of positive expectations of life situation on EU attitudes was even stronger than in the second model. Also here, the second and fourth models produced the most solid test statistics.
Table 6.9. Testing Gabel and Palmer’s model, Poland 2004, odds ratios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-582.68592</td>
<td>-396.84473</td>
<td>-610.04715</td>
<td>-393.48677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s $R^2$</td>
<td>0.0753</td>
<td>0.3703</td>
<td>0.0319</td>
<td>0.3756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;$chi^2$</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood-ratio test</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.3479</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>1.40**</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.45**</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>1.98**</td>
<td>1.42**</td>
<td>1.45**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td>1.82**</td>
<td>1.91**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>6.74**</td>
<td>6.60**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>2.01**</td>
<td>2.14**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.95*</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age$^2$</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.16**</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.38**</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=602
*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level
Again, testing the model on a different time of sampling produced few differences. Satisfaction with life, improvement in life situation over the last five years and satisfaction with democracy were significant and positive in the first model, but in the 2004 estimation, satisfaction with democracy remained significant throughout the models. Positive expectations towards life in the next five years, country advantages from EU membership and economic prosperity were similarly strong predictors for a positive view on accession and kept their significance into the final model. Moreover, even if the odds from country advantages continued to decrease, they remained very high. All three significant demographic variables from the third model, age, income and education, lost significance in the final model. Moreover, introducing demographic variables in the final model produced no extra information on the dependent variable, in fact, the fourth model did not pass the likelihood-ratio test against the second model.

6.6.2. Discussion

The models indicated that Polish respondents employed utilitarian considerations when forming attitudes on EU accession, but the results also indicated a distinction between the types of considerations, and their degree of importance in the opinion formation process. To begin with, all three models informed that the most reliable proxies were the second group of predictors which measured evaluations of what to expect in the future, and that evaluations of the current situation were not as significant as what people projected to happen in the future. First of all, beliefs that one’s personal situation would improve over the next five years predicted a positive view on EU accession, which can be explained by a positive belief in either one’s own competitive capabilities on the employment market, or that these respondents would not regard accession to a larger economic market as a threat to one’s personal situation. Secondly, holding the view that accession would give advantages to the country was also an extremely strong predictor in positive views on accession, which, despite the obvious logic that it should predict support for European integration, still was interesting to test in combination with other views; since utilitarian considerations on the macro-level are not theoretically more relevant than those which concern oneself as an individual. Thirdly, respondents who expected that membership would bring about economic prosperity for the country were highly positive to
accession, except from in 2003 when this effect was not significant, which very likely was a result of discontent with the current economic situation.

As for the predictors that tested the effects of evaluations of status quo; they were only significant before expectations were controlled for in the second model, with the exception of satisfaction with democracy in 2004, when the predictor retained its explanatory effect in the final model. However, the effects of the predictors in the first model should not be completely excluded: introducing more predictors simply meant that more relevant variables were introduced. To begin with, the effects of satisfaction with one’s own life situation as well as beliefs that it had improved over the last five years could be related to the improvements in the Polish economy from the late 1990s, even if it still was unstable. Hence, those who felt they were best equipped to handle the current situation would also believe that their life situation would not be threatened by integration, and possibly also expect that they would benefit from it, which constitute utilitarian considerations in line with the ‘winners-and-losers’-typology. The same logic can be applied to the effect of faith in the current state of democracy, which suggests that respondents who believed that Poland was on the right track politically also believed that the country would be able to take on the political challenges from membership. Still, the fact that the second group of variables rendered current personal evaluations and even satisfaction with democracy insignificant, with one exception, suggested that future expectations overrode the effect of evaluations of status quo. However, theoretically, the process of forming expectations will normally take its point of departure in the current situation; it appears illogical and as a rare event that a person who is unsatisfied with life and believes it has become worse will be convinced of an improvement if the country’s foreign relations will change. Likewise, it should follow that a person who does not have faith in the state of democracy would assume that the country would be able to handle the challenges of integration. Hence, these predictors are theoretically expected to overlap during the opinion formation process, which is another reason for not totally excluding the effects of the predictors in the first group.

As for demographic factors, few of these produced explanatory effects. Only income was consistently correlated with views on EU membership except for in 20024, education was significant in all samples, the urban-rural factor in 2003 and age in
2003-4, but none of these predictors retained explanatory effect in the final models. This coincided with previous studies on public opinion formation in Poland, which also found that effects of socio-demographic variables disappeared when normative evaluations were controlled for.\textsuperscript{102} However, it was still worth noting that demographic factors played a more important role in determining attitudes towards accession in 2003 than in other years; a possible reason for this could be the increased intensity in campaigning and issue salience as the country approached voting day. For example, negative messages on EU accession could have been more likely to reach rural populations before the referendum and mobilised sections of the population. However, given the lack of significance of demographic variables in the full models, the personal characteristics which comprise an individual’s competitive skills on a European labour market did not significantly predict attitudes towards European integration.

To conclude, the findings in the model provided partial support for Gabel and Palmer’s hypothesis. Poles did, to a certain extent, make cost-benefit calculations when forming attitudes towards accession, but a hierarchy of predictors was also evident from the results. The effects of future expectations were overall consistent, except for expectations of economic prosperity in 2003, and in most cases rendered measures of personal competitiveness and evaluations of the current situation insignificant. This signified that Poles put more emphasis on what could be expected if Poland joined the EU, and to a lesser extent used the current situation as a measure on how EU membership would impact on the country, and oneself individually. This may be a reflection on high expectations from EU membership, and possibly unrealistic ones. However, due to the low impact of socio-economic characteristics, the ‘winners-and-losers’ typology did not produce a meaningful intellectual framework for explaining public opinion formation when tested together with normative measures of utilitarianism. To conclude, the utilitarian hypothesis provided a useful framework for testing public opinion formation in the Polish case, but suggested a refinement of the hypothesis to include a hierarchy of predictor if it is to effectively predict Polish views on EU accession.

\textsuperscript{102} See Jasiewicz, p. 43f.
6.7. Summary and conclusion

The background research on party positions on EU membership indicated that Polish political elites were visibly divided on the issue, and since two ‘hard’ Eurosceptic parliamentary parties had voiced their view during the pre-referendum campaign the country was treated as a polarised message environment for the test of Zaller’s model. After running the regression models and calculating the predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a ‘good thing’ and graphing them by left-right position, it was concluded that opinion formation in the Polish case could only be partially explained by Zaller’s model. The anticipated effect of predispositions was confirmed, however, when levels of awareness and predispositions were sorted and probabilities for holding positive attitudes on EU membership were calculated, it became evident that awareness alone was able to predict positive attitudes towards accession for all voter groups, but that political predispositions had a modifying effect. Supporting Eurosceptic parties, here represented by Samoobrona on the extreme left and the League of Polish Families on the extreme right, lowered the probabilities of believing that EU membership would be a good thing, but highly aware supporters of these parties still held positive probabilities towards believing that EU membership would be a good thing, except in 2004. Hence, since awareness and predispositions interacted, the distinction between opinion formation processes in one-versus two-way message environments seemed to create a flawed fundament for studying Polish opinions towards EU membership, because the opinion formation process appeared to contain features of both scenarios. It was therefore suggested that Zaller’s model should be refined to take both types of variables into account if it should be better suited to explain how Poles formed opinions on EU accession.

Meanwhile, Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis was confirmed with certain reservations. While cost-benefit calculations of what the country as a whole could expect from EU membership were proved to be consistent predictors of attitudes towards EU membership, personal-level evaluations were less important proxies, even if these predictors produced a certain effect. Demographic characteristics were, with the exception of the occasional effects of income, age, education and urban-rural location, not reliable predictors of EU attitudes. This contradicted Gabel and Palmer’s assumption that personal competitiveness will be employed as proxies for calculating
whether EU membership will benefit oneself individually. Occasional effects of demographic variables could only be detected before other variables were controlled for, which indicates that introducing the other predictors controlled for something more important than demographics. This suggested that Gabel and Palmer’s model should be refined to establish a hierarchy of predictors.

Despite the lack of ambiguous confirmations about the validity of the models, useful information on how Poles formed opinions on EU membership within the tested time period has still been provided. Moreover, exploring whether the selected predictors can explain opinion formation has brought about knowledge about these sub-sets of proxies, and knowing whether effects could be excluded in some cases does provide background information for future studies into the models. A more thorough discussion of the models and their theoretical assumptions, as well as suggestions on how to improve the models, will be provided in Chapter 9.
Chapter 7
Hungary

7.1. Aims and introduction

This chapter will address the results and findings which were reached after Zaller's and Gabel and Palmer's model were applied to the final case study in the Visegrád countries, Hungary. As for the previous case studies, the chapter will begin with a short account of events since the beginning of the transition process and a review of the EU accession process, which will be followed by a summary of the party system and party positions on European integration, before the results from the tests of the models will be presented and discussed.

Hungary’s departure from a communist economic and political system in the late 1980s was the final outcome of a series of events which gradually had reformed the communist system. The 1956 Hungarian revolution had led to the introduction of economic reforms which were unique in a communist context, which were followed by the liberalisation of political control in the 1970s. In the 1985 elections, people were allowed to nominate candidates of their own choosing, which enabled the entry of a new parliament which was more independent of the regime than previous assemblies. As this legislature possessed the willingness to support the opposition’s struggle for continued system change, the Hungarian Socialist Worker’s Party was forced to cede power to the opposition and resign as the first communist government in Central and Eastern Europe. This allowed for a pluralist system to emerge,¹ and a pure parliamentary system with a weak presidency was introduced.² The National Roundtable Committee revised the previous electoral law and introduced a complex mixed system of proportional representation and absolute majority, and the first free elections were to be held in 1990.³

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³ Racz, p. 108.
While there was a clear consensus among political elites after the fall of communism that democracy and market economy was the way forward, the actions of elites were not immediately met with a civic response.\textsuperscript{4} The low turnout of 65 percent in the first elections may be ascribed to the mode of end of communism, which happened through negotiation and lacked public mobilisation. The new regime was built by elites in opposition to the previous regime and was not open to public scrutiny.\textsuperscript{5} However, the lack of public involvement can also be explained by the complexity of the new electoral system, which made it difficult for voters to anticipate the outcome from the vote.\textsuperscript{6} In addition, voter apathy and impatience with the slow pace of the democratic electoral process made several voters stay at home.\textsuperscript{7} Mass participation in Hungarian politics is still missing; large sections of the population have opted out of the political process, which has led to several by-elections failing to reach the required minimum turnout for the election to be legally valid.\textsuperscript{8} Still, as will be explained in this chapter, conflict dimensions in Hungarian politics has stabilised in a left-right pattern with parties offering clear political alternatives. In a comparative post-communist context, the process towards party system consolidation has been remarkably gradual and stable.

As for the issue of European integration, many Hungarians felt that Hungary was the most Western country among the newly democratised CEE countries, and that its natural place was in Western, not Eastern Europe, as least politically. This notion brought about a common understanding that EU membership was a logical step on the way to shake off the communist past and re-gain the country’s ‘natural’ place in European politics. The issue entered Hungarian politics already in 1989, when political elites began to use references to Europeanisation and Westernisation as a means to secure legitimacy. The country was also the first CEE country to establish official contacts with Brussels and redirect trade towards Western Europe, and Hungarian governments in the 1990s all conducted policies with a focus on preparing

\textsuperscript{4} Millard 2004, p. 50.
\textsuperscript{5} Millard 2004, p. 74.
\textsuperscript{6} Racz, p. 110f.
\textsuperscript{8} Millard 1992, p. 27.
for EU membership. ⁹ Given the pressing nature of EU accession, questions of transition, reform and EU membership became increasingly intertwined as governments frequently ‘blamed’ the necessity of conforming to EU standards as the reasons for sometimes unpopular policy decisions. Issues over adjustment to EU standards became subjects to extensive domestic political debates as parties gradually developed different visions about the EU and expectations towards EU membership. ¹⁰

The relative success in political and economic restructuring awarded Hungary status as one of the front-runners in the transition process, which enabled the country to be included in the first group of countries to negotiate EU accession. However, also for Hungary, negotiations were not completed without controversies. Issues such as sale of land to foreigners and free movement of workers brought about internal discontent with the concessions the country was expected to make; some of which were regarded as unacceptable. Another heavily debated issue was the question over the status of ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia and Romania if the country joined the EU, as many parties feared that these people would be unable to easily enter their home country if Hungary joined the EU before Slovakia and Romania. ¹¹

Despite internal disagreements over the technicalities of EU accession and the nature of the entry requirements, ‘hard’ opposition to EU membership was absent from the party system. The public, on the other hand, responded to the events by becoming more critical to membership as accession approached. Like other CEE states, Hungary experienced a decline in public support for EU membership by the mid-1990s as it became evident that preparations for accession would not be without consequences. However, public opinion turned in the more positive direction in 1997 when the Commission issued its report on Hungary which gave the country high marks for its progress in the transition and Europeanisation process. The recommendations from the Commission also coincided with an improvement in the country’s economic situation, which helped generate EU support. In 1997, 60 percent of citizens said that

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¹¹ Slovakia was initially not part of the first group of countries to negotiate accession due to the slow pace of political and economic reform. See chapter 5 for a more thorough explanation of the Slovak EU accession process.
they were in favour of EU membership as opposed to only 33 percent the year before.\textsuperscript{12} Still, at the turn of the century, bitter feelings and ambiguities about what to expect from EU membership emerged in the population, and support steadily declined back to the low levels of the mid-1990s.\textsuperscript{13} In February 2004, three months before the country finally joined the EU, only 45 percent of Hungarians believed that EU membership was a ‘good thing.’\textsuperscript{14}

7.2. The political actors

7.2.1. The development of a party system

Along with the Czech Republic, Hungary is largely regarded as being the most successful post-communist state in terms of party system consolidation,\textsuperscript{15} even if party identification and trust in the political parties have been low since the outset of free elections.\textsuperscript{16} In terms of stability of leadership, Hungary is also the most stable case in Central and Eastern Europe: all governments since 1990 have survived the terms, which is rather extraordinary for a post-communist country. Hungarian politics in the 1990s was dominated by six parties - often referred to as the ‘big six’ - and only one of these has later dissolved. Only one additional party has entered the party stage after the 1990 elections, which reflects that Hungary’s party system is also comparatively very stable in terms of political actors.

Three of these parties made the core of the Opposition Roundtable; the Magyar Democratic Forum (MDF) which was established in 1987 as the first opposition party, and the two liberal parties, the Alliance of Young Democrats (Fidesz) and the Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz). In addition to these three, the post-communist successor party, the Socialist Party (MSzP), has played a consistently important role in politics as the continuation of the re-branded Communist Party. Another important political actor was the historically rural based Independent Smallholder’s and Citizens

\textsuperscript{12} Ágh 1999, p. 847f.
\textsuperscript{13} Fowler 2004a, p. 640.
\textsuperscript{14} European Commission, Candidate Countries Eurobarometers 2004.1, February-March 2004.
\textsuperscript{15} Pridham 2007, p. 567.
\textsuperscript{16} Bielasiak 1997, p. 40.
Party (FKGP), until it lost its parliamentary seats in 2002.\textsuperscript{17} An additional early player was the Christian Democrats (KDNP), which sought to represent the Christian segment of the population but was dissolved in 1997.\textsuperscript{18} The ‘newest’ addition to the party system is the far-right Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIEP), which was formed in 1993 by radical expellees from the MDF. Hungarian politics has gradually stabilised into a two-block pattern, with Fidesz and MDF as the dominant forces on the centre-right and SzDSz and MsZP on the centre-left.\textsuperscript{19}

The Democratic Forum emerged victorious in the 1990 elections after having run on a platform of reform and gradual integration into the European Community, which enabled it to form a government with the Christian Democrats and the Independent Smallholders’ party.\textsuperscript{20} The MDF was unable to renew the success in the second parliamentary elections in 1994, as public discontent with the results of economic reforms was expressed by new-found support for the former communists, who returned to power. However, also this government failed to secure public support, as it introduced even more austere reforms to move forward with privatisation, which resulted in mass strikes and demonstrations.\textsuperscript{21} Even if the government had inherited the responsibility for an economy which was growing, increasing investment, production and living standard has been achieved at the expense of a soaring budget deficit and increasing public debt which threatened the country with economic collapse. The government continued to reform through a ‘shock therapy’ programme of which some of the measures were to cut government expenditure and propose private pensions and health insurance, which led to losses of jobs and rising costs of living. Even if the economy as well as support for the governing party picked up a year before the 1998 election, the lack of potential coalition partners for the Socialists allowed Fidesz to form a new government with the Independent Smallholders’ Party and the Democratic Forum.\textsuperscript{22} However, since Hungarian voters had developed a consistent pattern of always regarding the incumbent government with suspicion, the

\begin{footnotes}
\item\textsuperscript{17} Sitter and Bakke, p. 246.
\item\textsuperscript{18} Millard 2004, p. 50f.
\item\textsuperscript{19} Sitter and Bakke, p. 246.
\item\textsuperscript{20} Racz, p. 114ff.
\end{footnotes}
2002 elections saw the Socialist-Free Democrats coalition surprisingly gaining more seats than the Fidesz-MDF. Moreover, the latter two were left as the only opposition parties, as none of the smaller parties managed to exceed the threshold for representation. This further consolidated the bipolar nature of the party system, but also narrowed the size of the playing field. The 2006 elections enabled an incumbent government to stay in power for the first time since free elections were introduced, after an election campaign which mainly centred on economic issues.

The development of political cleavages has been a gradual and comparatively stable process, and structural divisions emerged already during the campaign preceding the 1990 elections. The most prominent issue dimensions were centred around individual freedoms, minority rights, nationalism, an economic cleavage, an urban/rural cleavage concerning the privatisation of state-owned land, as well as a religious cleavage on Christian values and separation of state and church. In addition to parties aligning around these issues, each party was emphasising particular issues. Political commentators have observed that even though the ideological profiles of the parties were difficult to establish during the 1990 election, by the next election, parties had become more distinguishable by ideology even if actual programmes often were lacking. By the late 1990s, the party system was largely consolidated, and the previous communist-anti-communist division in politics had become increasingly irrelevant as the post-communist MSZP had freed itself from the communist past and turned into a credible social democratic party. This created a more traditional left-right division of politics, and political divisions began to resemble the cleavages as defined in Lipset and Rokkan’s cleavage model. The 2002 elections were deemed to be a reflection of the increasingly evident left-right polarisation of Hungarian politics, which had become more visible as Fidesz had adopted an increasingly nationalist-populist platform. While in government, Fidesz’ previously liberal outlook changed into an emphasis on welfare issues and solidarity with people who had ‘lost out’ of

25 Rasz, p. 112.
the transition process, as well as anti-privatisation policies. Meanwhile, the Socialists had begun to advocate ‘Third Way’ economic policies and economic integration.28

7.2.2. The political parties

Despite anti-communist sentiments in the population at the outset of free elections, the successor Socialist Party (MSzP) initially made no attempt to distinguish itself from the communist party in terms of ideology. On the contrary, it retained its Marxist foundations and advocated ‘correct’ relations with the Soviet Union and stated that it was in no hurry for Hungary to leave the Warsaw Pact, and attempted to merge these priorities with European integration and market reform.29 However, as most post-communist parties in CEE, the party gradually softened its socialist platform and began to look towards European models of social democracy which enabled its success in the 1994 elections.30 During the ruling period of 1994-1998, the party was advocating pro-Western and radical pro-reform policies, which accompanied the party’s transformation into an ideologically coherent social democratic mass party.31 Like most socialist parties in Central and Eastern Europe, the MSZP has adopted the ‘Third Way’ ideology of liberalism and democratic socialism, and has undergone a successful reform to become a catch-all party which aims to incorporate class politics with market orientation with an appeal across several social strata. It is a member of the Socialist International.32

The Alliance of Young Democrats, or Fidesz, is the main formation on the Hungarian centre-right, which changed from a protest party to a contender for government status during the 1990s.33 Its origins go back to a student group which met at an unauthorised summer camp in 1985 to discuss the current political situation, and which proceeded to form a political party in 1988. The party was originally the expression of an anti-communist force among the youth and had restricted

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29 Racz, p. 114.
30 Millard 2004, p. 50f.
33 Hanley 2004b, p. 3.
membership to people under 35, and when it entered parliament in 1990, it was to the surprise of many observers. Viktor Orbán, the party leader from 1993, was keen to change the party’s image as a social protest movement and a ‘generation party’ into a standard party, and engineered a shift in the party’s radical and alternative policy outlooks to more conservative and nationalist priorities, which led to the departure of the more radical elements of the party to the Alliance of Free Democrats. 34 Defining itself since 1993 as ‘national-liberal’ rather than liberal, 35 the party’s platform has gradually developed a traditionalist-conservative flavour, while the party seeks to retain elements of its social-liberal values to sustain a position as a centre-right catch-all party. The changes in party profile included renaming the party to Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party. 36 While observers have classified the party as an ‘Eastern right-wing’ party which is associated with anti-modernism, chauvinism, social and cultural conservatism, however, Fidesz labels itself as a ‘national’ party, 37 which looks to the Polish Law and Justice Party as a ‘model for all right-wing forces’ in CEE. 38 After the electoral defeats of 2002 and 2006, the party has aimed to combat internal disunity by broadening its appeal to represent more diverse subcultures and ideologies. 39

The position of the Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ) is also ambiguous, as it has positioned itself on the left on social issues and on the right in economic matters, while stating that its party platform is liberal. The party has demonstrated a pragmatic strategy on coalition partners, since it has been a junior partner in every Socialist government and also sat in the Fidesz-led governing coalition from 1998-2002. 40 Framing itself as a pro-market party with its ideological bases in social democracy and liberalism, the party advocates limited state intervention, increased scope of legally guaranteed individual freedoms, and European integration instead of special ‘Hungarian’ solutions to economic problems. 41 It is economically liberal and opposes

34 Lomax, p. 111ff.
35 Hanley 2004c, p. 4.
36 Lomax, p. 111ff.
37 Korkut, p. 681.
38 Korkut, p. 682ff.
40 Benoit, p. 124.
welfare benefits if they increase the budget deficit, and also advocates the introduction of a flat tax-regime; policies which it shares with the MDF. Observers have classified the party as a ‘Western right-wing party’ and which is associated with values as secularism, liberalism, individualism and capital-friendliness.\footnote{Korkut, p. 681ff.}

The conservative Democratic Forum (MDF) has been able to enjoy the support of consistent voters,\footnote{Millard 2004, p. 112f.} and is the oldest anti-communist force in the country. Originally a pro-reform party which rejected any form of extremism and emphasised the building of a political culture, it also includes Christian democratic, liberal and populist traditions. The party also combines a pro-integration outlook with advocating the rights of Hungarians living outside the national borders.\footnote{Racz and Kukorelli, p. 260.} While the party was in office between 1990-1994, it was hesitant to introduce radical economic changes such as rapid liberalisation of prices and trade, but later changed its economic policies to focus on competitiveness and efficiency and embraced economic liberalism. It is the second major party on the right after Fidesz, which it frequently criticises for conducting populist policies.\footnote{Korkut, p. 680ff.}

The Independent Smallholders’ Party (FKGP), which was the most popular party before the communist takeover in 1949, has since 1989 moved to the right of centre and developed a nationalist platform with an emphasis of promoting Hungarian interests abroad.\footnote{Benoit, p. 124ff.} The party’s national policies draw upon historic doctrines and perceptions of Hungarian ethnic superiority over other minorities in the country, and regard the Hungarian nation in terms of ethnicity, not of geographical borders.\footnote{Fowler, B. (2004c), ‘Nation, State, Europe and the National Revival in Hungarian Politics: The Case of the Millennial Commemorations,’ Europe-Asia Studies, 56 (1), p. 62ff.} Its agrarian-oriented policies has opposed the sale of Hungarian farmland to foreigners, and the party’s social voter base mainly consists of elderly, rural residents with links to private agriculture.\footnote{Fowler 2004b, p. 85.} However, the party lost parliamentary representation after the 2002 elections as its relations with Fidesz, its coalition partner between 1998-2002, had become increasingly hostile, and the quest to form new partnerships proved
unsuccessful. In addition to these problems, the party was riddled with internal defections and disunity and was troubled with scandals concerning allegations of corruption. The party has not been able to return to parliament.49

The newest addition to the party system is the Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIEP), a break-away faction from the Hungarian Democratic Forum and the only political actor which emerged after the 1990 elections. Its platform is anti-communist, anti-Semitic, anti-homosexual and nationalist, and the party has managed to monopolise the radical-populist right since the mid-1990s.50 Having been classified as an ‘old-fashioned, nationalist party,’ the MIEP focuses on national interests and economic and political independence, and argues that Hungary does not need to choose between ‘Western’ or ‘Eastern’ values, but that a ‘Hungarian’ model of political and economic development must be pursued.51 The party also refuses to recognise the 1919 Treaty of Trianon which settled the borders after World War I and wishes to re-gain Hungarian territory which was ceded to Romania, Ukraine and Slovakia by the Treaty.52 In terms of socio-economics, the party puts emphasis on achieving goals as full employment, and wants to introduce an upper limit on incomes and to re-nationalise privatised assets.53 However, the party started a downward trend in 2002 when it failed to re-enter parliament, a failure which was repeated in the 2006 elections.

7.3. Party positioning on European integration

Even if a discourse on EU membership began early after the fall of communism, the actual technicalities over accession and EU policies were little debated in the parliament in the early 1990s. Moreover, since economic issues and other problems which characterised the transition process overshadowed issues of European integration, the process of adapting Hungary to EU norms was slow to be complemented by Europeanisation of the Hungarian polity. Consensus on the issue

49 Benoit, p. 124ff.
50 Benoit, p. 125.
52 Minkenberg and Perrineau, p. 43ff.
was high among citizens and elites alike, and the question of accession was not contested during the first years of democratic transition.54

However, the uncontested view that there was no alternative to EU membership began to be questioned in the late 1990s, and the surfacing of party ideologies was complemented with a development of elite views on integration.55 In the early 1990s, the domestic political discourse had remained on a general level and focused on symbolic arguments around Hungary’s expected ‘return to Europe,’ but the discourse changed as accession negotiations had commenced. Parties increasingly began to differ on their views towards negotiation strategies, as well as what sort of Europe they wanted Hungary to join.56 Even if all parties supported the end goal of membership, with the exception of the Justice and Life Party which took on a hard Eurosceptic position (which gradually softened), differences could be noted in parties’ attitudes to the EU, mainly in terms of how they viewed the Union ideologically. The Socialists regarded the EU as a completion of a European socio-economic project based on the principles of social democracy, while the liberal parties considered the EU in terms of simple socio-economics.57 Still, in 2000, all six parties in parliament including the MIEP signed a joint declaration that they were committed to accession as fast as possible, which indicated that the degree of consensus on the issue was unusually high, even for Central and Eastern European countries.58 This united support for EU membership was a contrast to the normally polarised party system.59

1. The Socialist Party

As the Socialist party wanted to distance itself from its past and reform towards becoming a more widely appealing social democratic party, the MSZP early argued that it regarded European integration as a vehicle to ‘catch up with Europe,’ which complemented the ‘moderniser’ stance the party took on when it entered government

54 Ágh 1999, p. 843f.
57 Navracsics, p. 11.
in 1994.\textsuperscript{60} Having adopted a strong commitment to securing Hungarian accession, the
party emphasised the social democratic and welfarist nature of the Union, and
supported a supranationalist and federalist union.\textsuperscript{61} It issued a policy document as
early as 1994 which stated that a voluntary cession of sovereignty of Central and
Eastern European states would imply a ‘divorcing of national and state frameworks,’
which would secure greater stability in the region and for a new approach to the
national question.\textsuperscript{62} Former Socialist Prime Minister Gyula Horn has called for a
transfer of more powers to the European level, and stated that he wished to transform
the EU along with a type of ‘German-style’ federalism. While it was in opposition
between 1998-2002, the party strongly criticised the Fidesz-led government’s
negotiation strategy for being too ‘aggressive,’ and argued that it caused ‘unnecessary
conflicts.’\textsuperscript{63} However, next to its commitment to securing European integration, the
party also has emphasised the need to cultivate strong ties with Russia and the former
USSR states.\textsuperscript{64}

2. Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party
Fidesz stated in its earliest election manifestos that integration with Western Europe
was one of the party’s prioritised political goals, and confirmed in its 1994 election
platform that they believed integration was a precondition to achieve a competitive
market economy and that it would stabilise the Central and Eastern European region
and protect minorities.\textsuperscript{65} However, as party policies gradually shifted from a liberal to
a national-conservative platform, the party modified its initial endorsement of
membership and introduced a platform before the 1998 elections which emphasised
the need to secure national interests in the accession process and advocated a harder
stance towards Brussels in the negotiations. During the negotiations, Prime Minister
Orbán became (in)famous for his statement that ‘there is life outside the EU,’ which
made observers compare his rhetoric on the EU to that of Václav Klaus of the Czech
Republic. Orbán also made it clear that his party wanted to join a ‘Europe of the
Nations,’ and that it preferred intergovernmental decision-making to qualified

\textsuperscript{60} Batory 2002a, p. 534.
\textsuperscript{61} Navracsics, p. 11f.
\textsuperscript{62} Batory 2001, p. 19.
\textsuperscript{63} Batory 2002b, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{64} Racz and Kukorelli, p. 261.
\textsuperscript{65} Batory 2001, p. 18.
majority decisions. However, Fidesz cannot be classified as a hard Eurosceptic party. Orbán’s critical statements about the EU were more interpreted as reflections of disappointment about the speed of the accession process than opposition to the end goal of integration. The party’s treatment of the EU issue as a way of securing economic interests rather than a means in itself is a reflection of the party’s move across the ideological spectrum from the mid-1990s. When prompted by the Socialist party to clarify his position on EU membership before the referendum, Orbán answered with a clear ‘yes.’ However, Orbán’s position has remained somehow ambiguous, and he has later argued that EU accession had harmed the country.

3. The Alliance of Free Democrats

The Free Democrats was the most Euro-enthusiastic of the political parties in the 1990s and was an early advocate for the view that joining the EU, preferably as soon as possible, was the only way to modernise the country. The SZDSZ is possibly the party which has been most committed to European integration in its rhetoric: in its 1998 election programme, the party listed ten political issues which it meant should be prioritised in the future, and placed EU membership at the top of the list. While it rejects the notion of the Socialists that the EU is a pan-European welfare project, the SZDSZ rather sees the EU as evidence of the wisdom of free market trade and economics, and regards the Union as a symbol of the superiority of Western over Eastern values. Furthermore, it considers the EU as a guarantor of democratic order, deepening of the market economy and increased living standards, views which are compatible with the Democrats’ commitment to economic liberalism.

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66 Batory 2002b, p. 4f.
67 Batory 2002a, p. 533f; Batory 2001, p. 18f.
69 Korkut, p. 683.
70 Navracsics, p. 12.
71 Batory 2002a, p. 534a.
72 Navracsics, p. 12.
73 Batory 2001, p. 20.
4. The Democratic Forum
The MDF regards European integration normatively as a natural continuation of Hungary’s return to Europe where it historically belongs, and was another early proponent for the view that EU accession should be achieved as soon as possible. Ideologically the MDF regards the EU more as a foundation of ‘Europe of the Nations’ than as a supranational structure, and stressed during negotiations that accession would only be desirable if it was under the terms of this perception. A view it shares with the Smallholder’s party is that representing the interests of Hungarians in other countries should be a prioritised issue, and argued that the matter should take precedence over EU accession when Hungary was concluding agreements with the neighbouring countries over the status of Hungarians outside the country’s borders. However, when it joined the Fidesz-led coalition in 1998, it became too dependent on the dominant party to independently formulate policies, and fully backed Fidesz’ negotiation strategies vis-à-vis Brussels. Despite moderate populist leanings, the party’s commitment to integration has remained unambiguous.

5. The Independent Smallholders’ Party
As the motto of the Smallholders’ says; ‘God, Fatherland, Family,’ the FKGP had endorsed EU membership as a foreign policy objective, but not without criticisms of the accession process. The Smallholders’ sided with Fidesz in its claims that it was necessary to take a ‘tough’ stance towards Brussels during negotiations, and expressed a fear over potential dangers of premature accession. To please its stable agrarian constituency, the party emphasised a need to protect the rights of the rural population, while it justified its support for EU membership on expectations of substantial financial transfers if the country joined. It is also this consideration which made the party fiercely criticise the prospect of foreigners being allowed to own land in Hungary, which they unconditionally opposed under the slogan ‘The Motherland is not for sale.’ It also frequently criticised the liberal parties for expressing support for ‘shameless supranationalism,’ which resembled a flirtation with populism. However, even if the FKGP had expressed fears that early accession

74 Navracsics, p. 13.
75 Batory 2002a, p. 533.
76 Batory 2001, p. 16.
77 Batory 2002a, p. 536.
78 Batory 2002b, p. 5.
would threaten Hungarian national identity, it still arrived at an ambiguous pro-EU stance while holding economic support from the EU as a condition for accession.79

6. The Hungarian Justice and Life Party
Before accession, the MIEP was the only party which did not only question the conditions of accession, but EU membership in itself.80 With an ideological platform which argues distinctive Hungarian solutions to development and national independence, the MIEP regarded European integration as a threat to these goals and frequently criticised other parties to be ‘traitors’ to Hungarian independence.81 Its skepticism towards European integration, and also NATO membership, was based upon claims that the Hungarian nation needs to be defended from its own cosmopolitan elite and foreign influence of any form, as well as from a ‘colonisation of Western powers and global financial interests.’82 Yet, at a parliamentary debate in 1999, the party clarified that it did not rule out membership, but suggested to postpone a final decision and return to the question from a ‘strengthened position’ in up to as much as 20 years.83 However, when it was confirmed that Slovakia would be able to accede to the EU despite the initial signals from Brussels that Slovakia would not join along with the other Visegrád countries, the party softened its critique of membership. The party’s u-turn on the issue was symbolically expressed on the eve of the referendum when it issued a statement that it supported Hungarian EU membership.84

7.4. The campaign
In late 2002, the four parliamentary parties, the Socialists, the Free Democrats, Fidesz and the Democratic Forum decided to join forces to achieve the common goal of securing EU accession on referendum day. They organised a joint travelling roadshow which travelled around the country to explain the electorate why they should vote yes 12 on April.85 The yes-camp was strengthened by the participation of the President, the Foreign Ministry, major employers’ and business associations, trade unions, the

79 Batory 2001, p. 15f.
80 Batory 2002b, p. 3.
82 Batory 2002a, p. 532.
83 Batory 2001, p. 15.
84 Minkenberg and Perrineau, p. 46.
85 Fowler 2004a, p. 643.
mainstream press and media, as well as the main organisations which represented Hungarians living abroad. In order to decouple the issue from the government, the Prime Minister’s office created an agency to run the campaign, the EU Communication Public Foundation (EUKK). The campaigning included mailings to households, a telephone hotline and organised events, as well as media and billboard advertising.86

The only party to campaign on a critical platform was the Justice and Life party, which was supported by the World Federation of Hungarians and a number of smaller groupings. The campaign took on right-wing connotations as the campaign rhetoric sometimes was mixed with general right-wing themes, such as anti-Semitism, anti-capitalism and anti-immigration and Anti-Americanism. The latter issue was particularly salient as anti-American sentiments had been boosted by the public opposition to the war in Iraq, and the issue often overshadowed the EU-campaign. The no-campaigners emphasised that they did not oppose ‘Europe’ as such, but rejected its current form and/or the terms of accession.87 However, the lack of public funding limited the possibilities for a successful outreach, and the campaign mainly tried to spread its message via flyers, rallies, the right-wing media and the Internet. The yes-campaign did not engage with the no-camp, and neither did it seriously consider the possibility of a no-vote at all.88

During the campaign, Eurosceptic rumours and gossips began to emerge within the popular discourse to the surprise of political leaders, who were at that time busy fighting internally on how to run the campaign. Some newspapers began to publish columns which investigated possible negative outcomes from membership and portrayed the negotiations as a war between ‘us’ and ‘them.’ These columns were not only printed in tabloids, but also in serious newspapers. However, the newspapers did not actually critically examine the pro-accession arguments of the government,89 which questioned the substance of this rhetoric. On the other side, the EUKK aimed to reduce such fears by answering people about their concerns about the impact of

86 Fowler 2004d, p. 5f.
87 Fowler 2004a, p. 644.
88 Fowler 2004d, p. 7
89 Hegedűs, p. 8f.
accession on jobs, wages, pensions and prices, which may have helped to generate support for the yes-camp.\textsuperscript{90}

The referendum result revealed that 83.8 percent had voted for EU accession, but the turnout was as low as only 45.6 percent. This amounted to only 38 percent of the population, which was to remain the lowest turnout and population vote in any CEE accession referendum. None of the regions reported a majority vote against accession, but there was regional variation in terms of turnout.\textsuperscript{91} The low electoral participation was suggested to mainly be a result of the lack of contestation, and secondly that people’s increasingly cynical attitudes towards the political system had impacted on how they regarded the EU.\textsuperscript{92} Most likely, non-voters consisted of poorer, rural and less educated voters who saw no personal benefits from accession, in addition to some angered right-wing voters who did not want to contribute to a victory for the government. Still, 81 percent of respondents in an exit poll reported to be pleased with the result,\textsuperscript{93} which revoked suspicions that a silent and Eurosceptic population was hiding behind the low turnout. Another suggested reason for the low turnout was that the one-sided nature of the campaign increased the partisan nature of the issue against the will of the government, which contributed to reducing the turnout since people did not want to support the government.\textsuperscript{94}

7.5. Zaller’s model of opinion formation

7.5.1. The message environment

When studying party positions on European integration and the nature of the campaigns which were preceding the referendum, it becomes evident that the most difficult aspect of applying Zaller’s model to the Hungarian case is to determine whether it was a one-or a two-way message environment. Since a no-message was present as an alternative to the dominant government position, it should be assumed

\textsuperscript{90} Fowler 2004d, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{92} Taggart and Szczersiak 2004a, p. 574.
\textsuperscript{93} Fowler 2004d, p. 10.
\textsuperscript{94} Fowler 2004a, p. 644.
that the message environment was polarised. However, there are certain problems with this assumption, since this opposing message was slightly ambiguous. It has to be borne in mind that the Justice and Life party did not oppose EU membership in principle, but only argued for a postponement of the decision. It can therefore be argued that the message from the MIEP did not constitute a dichotomy to the official recommendation to vote yes, since they did not fully oppose membership. This questions whether the message environment contained two messages which were fully incompatible. Secondly, even if the Justice and Life Party had preached to its constituency that supporting membership would be synonymous with betraying Hungary’s national interest, the party still changed its mind in the eleventh hour and recommended people to vote yes. Hence, even if the presence of a Eurosceptic message was undeniable, the degree of opposition from the MIEP and its final turnaround makes the opposing message appear slightly weak. This questions whether the existence of a Eurosceptic message alone would be sufficient to characterise Hungary as a polarised message environment. If comparing the Hungarian to the clearly polarised Czech and Polish case studies, whose anti-campaigners appeared to rest on harder Eurosceptic platforms, it is evident that the soft Euroscepticism of the Hungarian no-campaign did not convey a such a clear opposing message as was done in the Czech and Polish campaigns. Hungary more seemed to be a borderline case which took on characteristics of both mainstream and polarised cases.

The most tempting choice would be to treat Hungary as a ‘one-and-a-half’-way message environment and avoid the potential pitfalls of making the wrong choice of message environment, but Zaller’s model does not allow for a combination of the assumptions of the two different message environments which excludes this option. However, based on the above discussion, it appears that there are more arguments in favour of deductively treating Hungary as a mainstream case, since the no-camp was inconsistent in its messaging and failed to present a dichotomous choice to the dominant message. Secondly, its presence and appeal was marginal, and neither did it possess the resources to effectively convey its position. Therefore, it appears evident that citizens in reality were not exposed to an alternative to the government position, which makes it more natural to classify Hungary as a mainstream than as a polarised environment. However, it must be admitted that Hungary constitutes a grey case
within the Zallerian context, but the nature of the model compels to make a choice between the two message scenarios.

To repeat, in a mainstream message environment, awareness will determine whether people understand and endorse the government position, and political predispositions are expected to have little impact on attitudes. Following the same methodology as the previous case-studies, the models will be presented and compared, followed by graphs of the predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing by level of awareness and left-right position, and finally, the discussion and conclusion will address whether opinion formation in Hungary could be explained by Zaller’s model.
7.5.2. Results

Table 7.1. Testing Zaller’s model, Hungary, 2002. Odds ratios.95

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
<th>Model V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-443.36837</td>
<td>-425.40372</td>
<td>-418.31407</td>
<td>-418.30803</td>
<td>-407.75391</td>
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<tr>
<td>McFadden’s $R^2$</td>
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<td>0.0616</td>
<td>0.0853</td>
</tr>
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<td>Prob&gt;Chi$^2$</td>
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<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0008</td>
<td>0.9125</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
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<td>.81*</td>
<td>.76*</td>
<td>.82*</td>
<td>.78*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>1.18*</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
<td>1.88**</td>
<td>1.68**</td>
<td>1.68**</td>
<td>1.66**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV news</td>
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<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
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<td>1.50**</td>
<td>1.50**</td>
<td>1.49**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
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<td>.95</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.93**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position$^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.99**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=651
*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

95 Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 5.99 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 20.92 %, ‘A good thing’ 73.09 %
The results from the 2002 tests revealed that roughly half of the selected predictors were significant. To begin with, discussing politics was not significant in the first two models, but became significant in the second model when media consumption was introduced and produced negative odds towards believing that EU membership would be a ‘good thing.’ Persuading others during discussions was on the other hand significant in the first model, but lost significance when media consumption was controlled for. Watching EU news and self-reported knowledge were strong predictors of positive attitudes towards EU membership. Actual knowledge about the EU, watching TV news and perhaps surprisingly, education, were not significant. Left-right position produced a declining effect, which is not surprising since the pro-European Socialist Party was placed to the left of the scale and the EU-negative Justice and Life Party was located at the extreme right. However, the significant squared term of left-right revealed that there was a slight negative curvilinear effect of the predictor, which signified that the most positive voters were located in the centre. The overall explanatory effect of the model strongly improved when left-right position was controlled for, but the $R^2$ remained low. The graphical presentation of the effects of awareness and left-right position will provide a more nuanced picture.
Figure 7.1. Predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing, by awareness and left-right position, Hungary 2002. Scattered by party.

The graph illustrates the positive effect of awareness and negative effect of left-right position, but adds some useful extra information. First of all, all low aware respondents were unlikely to believe that EU membership would be a good thing, while medium and high aware, with the exception of supporters of the Justice and Life Party, were over the .5 divisor to hold positive probabilities. It also informs that the declining effect of left-right position would begin with supporting the Democratic Forum and decrease drastically if respondents were so far located to the right that they supported the Justice and Life party, which reflects the curvilinear effect of left-right position. Moreover, moving from being low to medium aware of the EU issue made a larger difference in probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a good thing than moving from medium to high. The following table and graph will illustrate whether the effects of awareness and predispositions were different in 2003.
Table 7.2. Testing Zaller’s model, Hungary, 2003. Odds ratios.96

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
<th>Model V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s $R^2$</td>
<td>0.0072</td>
<td>0.0637</td>
<td>0.0707</td>
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<td>0.0398</td>
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<td>Often discuss politics</td>
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<td>.98</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.93</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
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<td>1.09</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
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<td>2.11**</td>
<td>2.01**</td>
<td>2.00**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV news</td>
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<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.26*</td>
<td>1.23*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

N=648
*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

96 Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 6.73 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 23.93 %, ‘A good thing’ 69.34 %.
97 Note that the generalised ordered model returned no effect of education, which makes it necessary to treat the significant effect here with caution.
The 2003 survey was conducted just a month after the referendum, when the issue was still fresh in mind for respondents. Some changes had occurred in the model from 2002: discussing politics and persuading others during discussions were not significant in any models, watching EU news produced even higher odds for a positive view on accession than during the preceding year, while TV news was not significant. Moreover, self-reported knowledge produced odds in the positive direction, but actual knowledge was not significant. A change from the 2002 model was that education became significant in the final model and predicted pro-European attitudes, and the odds also increased when predispositions were controlled for. However, it has to be taken into account that the generalised ordered model returned no effect of education, so the predictor has to be treated with caution. Another notable difference from the 2002 model also occurred in odds produced by left-right position, which decreased quite strongly and predicted a linear and negative effect when moving from left to right. The squared term was not significant, which ruled out the curvilinear effect of left-right positioning which was evident the preceding year. The graph of predicted probabilities will illustrate the effects of the predictors more thoroughly.
Figure 7.2. Predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing, by awareness and left-right position, Hungary 2003. Scattered by party.

The shape of the curve illustrates how the probabilities of believing that EU membership will be a good thing declined sharply when moving to left to right, which created a different curve than in 2002 when the effect of left-right positioning was curvilinear. The decrease was particularly drastic for medium aware respondents: while supporters of the Socialist Party held probabilities close to .9, supporters of the Smallholder’s Party had probabilities close to .5, and Justice and Life Party had probabilities close to .1. While low aware Socialists were close to the .5 divisor, all other low aware counterparts had low probabilities, and Justice and Life-supporters were the only medium and high aware respondents to hold negative probabilities towards believing that EU membership would be a good thing. The results for 2004 will reveal whether these patterns prevailed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
<th>Model V</th>
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<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
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<td>-543.49939</td>
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<td>Left-right position$^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=580

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

A year after the issue had been settled, a few changes had occurred in the effects of the selected predictors. Discussing politics, education and watching EU news on

---

*98 Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 16.07 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 34.53 %, ‘A good thing’ 49.40 %*
television did not retain significant effects, actual knowledge about the EU and persuading others during discussion became significant for the first time, and self-reported knowledge remained significant. Left-right position again predicted a negative effect on attitudes when moving from left to right on the scale, however, the odds ratios were higher than in the previous year, which informs that the declining effect was less drastic than in 2003. As in 2003, the squared term of left-right position did not produce any information. The overall explanatory effect of the final model was even lower than in 2002. The graph will further illustrate the effects of the predictors.

**Figure 7.3. Predicted probabilities for believing that EU membership will be a good thing, by awareness and left-right position, Hungary 2004. Scattered by party.**

![Graph showing predicted probabilities]

While the graphs confirms the effect of awareness which were noted in the regression tables, they calculation of predicted probabilities shows that the declining effect of left-right position stops with the Smallholder’s Party, and the curve again increases
when moving to the extreme right and the Justice and Life Party. This should at first glance suggest that there was a certain curvilinear effect of the left-right variable. However, the reason that the difference was not picked up on in the regression table could be that there only were five respondents in the 2004 sample who informed that they supported the Justice and Life Party, and that the effect was too marginal to influence the regression estimation. The placement of this party’s supporters on the graph should therefore be overlooked. The graph also illustrates that the intervals between low, medium and highly aware respondents still large, and that all respondents had lower probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a good thing than in 2002-3. In fact, medium aware respondents except Socialists were closer to the .5 divisor, while they were clearly over in 2002-3, except Justice and Life-supporters.

7.5.3. Discussion

A summary of the results from the figures revealed that the results produced several patterns which must be taken into account when discussing the explanatory capabilities of Zaller’s model. The results will be summarised and discussed.

To begin with, the figures in the regression estimates revealed that awareness played a certain role for Hungarians when they formed opinions towards EU accession. However, in terms of consistency of impact of the variables, only self-reported knowledge was a consistent predictor over time while other variables produced less consistent results. The first impression of these results is that the lack of consistent effects is disappointing; we would assume stronger and more stable effects of the selected predictors if Zaller’s model for one-way message environment was to adequately explain opinion formation in Hungary. However, the graphs could inform that there were clear differences between low, medium and high aware values on the variables which measured awareness, and that intervals between these were large, especially between low and medium aware respondents. Except from in 2004, also medium aware respondents would hold positive probabilities towards believing that EU membership would be a good thing, but these results need to be treated with caution, since few of the variables which measured awareness were significant in the regression estimations.
If comparing the explanatory powers of awareness to predispositions, left-right positioning was consistently significant and revealed that the odds for believing that EU membership was a good thing decreased when moving from left to right on the scale. The effect was also slightly curvilinear in 2002, which signified that voters who sympathised with parties located to the left of the scale also were slightly more negative than voters in the centre. The graphs of predicted probabilities confirm this pattern: irrespective of awareness, supporters of the far-right Justice and Life Party would be the most negative towards EU membership. The 2004 graph, which showed that they would be more positive than centre-voters, should be overlooked since there only were five Justice and Life-supporters in the sample.

However, it is still worth discussing whether the positions taken by the Justice and Life Party and its campaign, even if the theoretical framework for mainstream message environments rejects the effects of campaigns and political predispositions. If we disregard the theoretical assumptions and assume that the campaign should have an effects, it is difficult to anticipate which views Justice and Life-partisans should hold towards EU membership, since the party did not strictly campaign against accession as such, but only for a postponement and additionally changed its mind just before the referendum. However, the fact that Justice and Life supporters were negative towards the EU across all tests suggest that there was an effect of party choice and that the EU-critical outlook of the party swayed its voters in the negative direction. It is also interesting to look at the decreasing support from Fidesz-voters, which could have been an effect of the progressively more negative rhetoric of Fidesz, particularly from party leader Órban.

However, to return to the effects of awareness, the graphs of predicted probabilities complemented the regression estimations, which revealed that respondents who scored high on variables on awareness also were more likely to support it. The fact that only low aware voters were likely to report negative attitudes around the time of the referendum, again point in the direction that this factor was a strong predictor of positive EU attitudes, even if it is worth noting that the medium aware respondents became more negative towards EU accession with time, to the extent that all medium aware respondents held negative probabilities towards believing that EU membership would be a good thing in 2004. However, while awareness cut across partisanship in
its ability to explain positions on European integration, this did not explicitly suggest that this factor was more important than predispositions, since there was a certain difference between partisan groups. If Zaller’s model adequately predicted attitude formation in the Hungarian case, this difference should not have been expected, and the significant and negative effect of left-right position makes it impossible to exclude the effect of predispositions. This makes it logical to accept the tentative assumptions that party messaging had a certain effect, and that predispositions modified the support for EU membership which was generated by awareness, with the reservation that few factors which measured awareness were significant.

It therefore must be concluded that Zaller’s model cannot fully explain public opinion formation in the Hungarian case, if the case is treated as a mainstream message environment. Even if awareness proved able to predict positive attitudes towards the EU, more awareness-related variables would have been expected to be significant, if Zaller’s model for one-way message environments would adequately predict how Hungarians formed opinions on accession. Instead, it was more likely that awareness and predispositions worked alongside with each other, in the sense that high awareness to a certain extent predicted support for accession, but was modified by predispositions. The latter factor was sufficiently strong to make supporters of the EU-critical Justice and Life Party hold negative views towards accession, in addition, Fidesz-voters reflected the increasingly negative outlook of the party and became less convinced about EU membership with time. A modification of Zaller’s model which takes into account the hypotheses from both message scenarios and assumes that political orientation and level of awareness will interact in the opinion formation process would have better modeled public opinion to EU membership in Hungary.

However, next to discussing whether Zaller is suitable for Hungary, it can also be discussed whether Hungary is suited for an application of Zaller’s model. Since there were certain ambiguities in terms of the nature of the message environment, it may not be a case which fits the Zallerian dichotomy of elite messaging. This can also constitute a critique towards the general applicability of the model, and suggest that it is not widely applicable, but limited to cases where the message environment is either completely one-way (which would be rare for democracies), or where the two opposing camps were equally strong. Of this is the case, it limits the number of case
studies for an application for Zaller’s model, particularly in CEE. Therefore, this study calls for a refinement of Zaller’s model to include assumptions for message environments which are neither polarised nor mainstream, as well as a modification of the foundational theoretical underpinnings of the model.

7.6. Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis

This section will investigate whether Gabel and Palmer’s model can successfully explain public opinion formation in Hungary, and the tests will be carried out according to the same methodology as the previous case studies. After the results have been presented, a discussion of the results will follow, and finally, a conclusion which evaluates the explanatory capabilities of Gabel and Palmer’s model.
### 7.6.1. Results

**Table 7.4. Testing Gabel and Palmer’s model, Hungary 2002, odds ratios.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-346.70181</td>
<td>-260.9702</td>
<td>-373.55833</td>
<td>-255.08248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s $R^2$</td>
<td>0.0813</td>
<td>0.3085</td>
<td>0.0101</td>
<td>0.3241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi^2</td>
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<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.2664</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR test</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0607</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.67**</td>
<td>1.42*</td>
<td>1.44*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>2.26**</td>
<td>1.86**</td>
<td>1.88**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age^2</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.25*</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=570

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level
In the first model for 2002, a few distinct patterns can be reported. Believing that one’s personal situation had improved compared to five years ago and satisfaction with democracy were significant and strongly predicted positive attitudes towards EU membership, while satisfaction with life was not significant. The first model did not hold an overall strong explanatory effect according to the test statistics, but adding the predictors which measure future expectations raised the model quality significantly. While the expectations of advantages for the country and economic prosperity if the country joined the EU were significant, and country advantages created very high odds for believing that EU membership would be a good thing, expectations about life situation in five years was not significant. As for demographic characteristics, only education achieved the required level of significance when the demographic variables were tested separately, but the effect disappeared in the final model which included all variables. Even if the final model produced a high $R^2$, it was only slightly higher than the second model, and the likelihood-ratio test between the models revealed that introducing demographics in the final model did not improve the model fit. Only four predictors were significant: one’s own situation compared to five years ago, satisfaction with democracy, country advantages and economic prosperity. Moreover, the odds these produced for believing that EU membership would be a good thing were higher than in the first models. The next model will present the results from the estimation on the 2003 sample.
Table 7.5. Testing Gabel and Palmer’s model, Hungary 2003, odds ratios.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-466.62752</td>
<td>-332.62943</td>
<td>-547.27604</td>
<td>-323.7024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s $R^2$</td>
<td>0.0755</td>
<td>0.3424</td>
<td>0.0283</td>
<td>0.3600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi$^2$</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR test</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0066</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>1.51**</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td>2.31**</td>
<td>1.61**</td>
<td>1.48*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age$^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.24*</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=670

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

99 The generalised model did not return significant effects of age on any outcome; hence, this variable must be treated with caution.
The model for 2003 revealed that a few changes had occurred: while satisfaction with life did not achieve the desired level of significance, comparing personal life situation compared to five years ago lost significance in the second model, and satisfaction with democracy was a strong predictor of positive attitudes towards accession in all models. The second group of variables returned significant effects of expectations of one’s own life situation in five years and advantages for the country if Hungary joined the EU, but the latter variable did not produce as extremely high odds as it did the preceding year. Expecting economic prosperity if the country joined the EU was not significant in any model, which is was the preceding year. The most notable change from 2002 was that demographic characteristics made larger impacts on attitudes in model III. To begin with, age produced a positive effect, with a negative squared term which revealed that the most positive were the medium aged respondents in the sample. Urban-rural location, income and unemployment were not significant, which but education produced positive odds. In the final model, only satisfaction with democracy, positive evaluations of one’s personal situation in five years, country advantages and age were significant, and the $R^2$ was high.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-575.08566</td>
<td>-421.22108</td>
<td>-602.99367</td>
<td>-417.17266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s $R^2$</td>
<td>0.0881</td>
<td>0.3321</td>
<td>0.0438</td>
<td>0.3385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi$^2$</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood-ratio test</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.2311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>1.27**</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.67**</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfation with democracy</td>
<td>2.05**</td>
<td>1.58**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.63**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life situation in 5 years</td>
<td>1.55**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.63**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>5.19**</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.12**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>2.14**</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.14**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.93**</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age$^2$</td>
<td>1.00*</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>1.46**</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=634

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level
The last of the models produced slightly different results than the other estimations. Satisfaction with life was significant for the first time, but only in the first model, which also was the case with the predictor which measured respondents’ evaluations of life situation compared to five years ago. Satisfaction with democracy continued to be a consistently reliable predictor of positive attitudes towards integration. While expectations about one’s own life situation in five years produced lower odds for positive attitudes on accession than the year before, the effect of country advantages continued to decrease, while economic prosperity was again significant at the .01 level. These three variables also remained significant in the final model. As for demographic characteristics, only age and the urban-rural division were significant. Age produced a negative effect on attitudes as respondents got older, and the urban-rural dimension suggested that the most positive respondents were living in larger cities. None of the demographic variables remained significant in the final model, where only satisfaction with democracy, expectations about life situation in five years and expectations of country advantages and economic prosperity from EU membership held explanatory capabilities. The final model also did not pass the likelihood-ratio test against the second model, but had a high $R^2$.

### 7.6.2. Discussion

The initial impression from the results is that Gabel and Palmer’s model provided a useful framework to study public opinion formation in Hungary, but the figures also reported that the effects were not very consistent, particularly for demographic characteristics. To begin with, the figures produced in this study suggested that measures of personal life situation were less reliable indicators of EU attitudes than general utilitarian considerations. Satisfaction of life did not influence opinion formation at all, comparing one’s own situation to five years ago was only significant in the final model in 2002, while the five years outlook on life situation was a strong predictor of EU attitudes in 2003-4, but not significant in 2002. Hence, evaluations concerning one’s personal situation varied in terms of explanatory effect, but did influence attitudes on accession to a certain extent since they generally were significant before all variables were tested together. The fact that these predictors usually lost significance when other predictors were controlled for did not mean that
the effect of these should be excluded, but simply revealed that they were less important as proxies for attitudes than other variables.

Macro-level considerations were more reliable proxies and created more consistently high odds for regarding membership with favour, and especially expectations of country-wide advantages produced extremely high odds for positive views on EU membership. Expectations of economic prosperity created lower, but still high odds for viewing accession positively, but were not significant in 2003. Even though that is theoretically logical to expect effects of the latter predictors, it is still interesting to note the difference between individually rooted considerations and evaluations of losses and benefits for the collective and find that the latter effects were stronger. Satisfaction with democracy was also a strong indication of attitudes, which complemented the previous findings from research into public opinion in CEE which have previously demonstrated that people who support democracy also are more likely to support European integration, since EU accession tends to be coupled with political progress.

The tests for differences in attitudes by socio-economic divisions showed that these explained attitudes towards EU membership only to a limited extent, as only age retained significance in the final model in 2003. When demographic factors were tested separately, age produced positive odds in 2003 with a negative squared term, but negative odds in 2004 with a squared term of 1.00. Hence, in 2003, odds for believing that EU membership would be a good thing was highest among the middle-aged, but were expected to decrease as respondents got older the following year, but this variable was not significant in the final model. To deal with the results from the separate tests of demographics: education and urban-rural were significant in 2003 and 2004 respectively, which predicted higher odds on the dependent variable for the higher educated and urban dwellers. Even if these predictors only were significant before attitudes were controlled for, they still suggest that there was a certain effect of socio-economics, but not sufficiently strong to argue that socio-economic differences significantly had impact on people’s attitudes towards EU membership. However, the general low effect of socio-economics may have reflected the high support for membership which was in the country around the time of the referendum, which may have caused support to cut across socio-economic cleavages. Still, the lack of effect of
demographics does provide useful information to the Hungarian case, since exit polls on the referendum could not provide accurate descriptions of demographic differences due to the low turnout. However, the effects of the demographic characteristics which were significant when demographics were tested separately should not be completely excluded even if they lost significance in the final models. The loss of significance simply meant that by including other factors, something more important than demographics was controlled for.

To summarise, attitudes and evaluations seemed to constitute the most consistent determinants towards EU attitudes, and collectivist considerations were slightly more reliable predictors than individual concerns. This suggested that Hungarians were mostly concerned about how EU membership would affect the country as a whole, and that cost-benefit calculations on whether EU membership would benefit the common good were most important for people. This provided credibility towards Gabel and Palmer’s assumptions that people will make utilitarian evaluations when they form opinions on European integration, with the reservation that there is a difference between the types of utilitarian considerations which were employed. Still, the results in this study suggested that Gabel and Palmer’s model provided a useful framework to study opinion formation in Hungary, but that the model would have more adequately predicted Hungarian attitudes towards accession if the model had specified a hierarchy of predictors.

7.7. Summary and conclusion

The tests of Zaller’s model and Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis brought about the conclusion that both models provided useful theoretical foundations to study public opinion formation in Hungary, even if the models were not fully confirmed. While Zaller’s model failed to effectively predict how Hungarians formed opinions on accession, Gabel and Palmer’s model was endorsed with a slight reservation about the theoretical expectations of the model.

The tests of Zaller’s model found that awareness-related variables predicted attitude formation to a certain extent, but that it was slightly disappointing that the only predictor which was significant over time was self-reported knowledge. However,
left-right placement was a stable predictor of attitudes, and revealed that respondents who placed themselves at the right end of the scale were more negative towards EU accession than respondents in the centre-left and centre. The discussion of the results concluded that it was difficult to fully embrace Zaller’s model for mainstream message environments, since it appeared that an effect of political predispositions was evident. Even if the tables which sorted awareness by predispositions reported that level of support increased with awareness, there was a difference in support between supporters of the pro-European centre parties and the EU-sceptic Justice and Life Party at the right, which should not have been the case if Zaller’s model would correctly predict how attitudes were formed. While it was difficult to decide how EU-sceptic it would be likely to assume that MIEP voters should be if they were influenced by partisanship and the campaign, the fact that it made a difference to support the MIEP versus the centre parties constituted sufficient evidence that partisanship mattered, which, as mention above, also was proved in the regression models. Hence, it was concluded that awareness and predispositions worked alongside each other, and that awareness predicted support for accession, but was modified by predispositions. A modification of Zaller’s model to take into account the hypotheses from both message scenarios was therefore suggested.

As for Gabel and Palmer’s model, the results were more straightforward to analyse and to interpret. While variables which measured cost-benefit considerations towards the common good were more reliable predictors of attitudes than variables which were associated with personal benefits, demographic characteristics produced relatively weak results. Only education was significant in the final model in 2003, while a few other predictors proved to create differences in attitudes only before assessment of the current situation and future expectations were controlled for. This led to the conclusion that socio-economic cleavages had a rather weak influence on attitudes towards EU membership, which complemented the results of variables which measured individually rooted proxies, even if the latter proved to have stronger impact. Therefore, Gabel and Palmer’s model was proved to predict how Hungarians formed opinions on European integration, with the reservation that a hierarchy of proxies could be established. It was finally suggested that the model should be re-defined to take such a hierarchy into account. The explanatory capabilities of the models, their theoretical strengths and weaknesses, and how the models could be
improved to better predict opinion formation in the Visegrád countries will be more thoroughly discussed in Chapter 9.
Chapter 8

Control cases: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia

8.1. Aims and introduction

This chapter will apply the models to the four selected control studies in order to explore further whether Zaller’s model of opinion formation and Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis can explain public opinion formation in Central and Eastern Europe. As was explained in Chapter 3, the control studies are the four other post-communist countries which acceded to the European Union in 2004; Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia. To repeat, including control studies for comparison will add to the initial findings on the applicability of the models, and will further allow for more general inferences to be made from the outputs produced by the Visegrád cases.

For the matter of simplicity, the step-wise models will not be presented for the control studies, only the full models for the three time periods. The reasons for this are that it would have been a too extensive task to run and interpret coefficients for these case studies in addition to the main ones, and it would further require a deeper qualitative background search, which would have been too time-consuming. This would also have been unnecessary since these cases are only included for the matter of controlling the initial results and not for full investigations. As in the main studies, Zaller’s model will first be tested and analysed, and will be followed by Gabel and Palmer’s hypothesis. The chapter will be rounded up with a short summary of the findings.

8.2. Zaller’s model of opinion formation
8.2.1. Estonia


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>2002&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>2003&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>2004&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-433.01927&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-514.76894</td>
<td>-557.70154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi²&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s R²</td>
<td>0.0788</td>
<td>0.0839</td>
<td>0.0382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.77*</td>
<td>.81*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.22**</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
<td>1.62**</td>
<td>1.53**</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV news</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td>1.59**</td>
<td>1.61**</td>
<td>1.35**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>1.18*</td>
<td>1.15*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>1.03*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=478</td>
<td>N=551</td>
<td>N=558</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

---

<sup>1</sup> Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 16.63 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 45.70 %, ‘A good thing’ 37.67 %.

<sup>2</sup> Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 17.37 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 45.39 %, ‘A good thing’ 37.24 %.

<sup>3</sup> Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 22.95 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 42.30 %, ‘A good thing’ 34.75 %.
In Estonia, the predictors created a fragmented pattern; the only predictor which proved consistent over time was self-reported knowledge, while paying attention to EU news only mattered in 2002 and 2003 and lost significance after the referendum had been held. It may be interpreted from the latter that those who were attentively following the issue were more likely to regard membership with favour when the issue was salient, but this factor did not matter anymore when the issue had been settled. As for actual knowledge, the effect of this variable entered as the referendum was close and remained significant also the year after, hence, the opposite effect of watching EU news. However, it is interesting to note that the predictors which measure the effects of discussing politics and persuading others during discussions were significant in 2003 only. In most other case studies, the odds of these predictors have tended to lose significance when the other variables were controlled for, but in the Estonian case, it made a difference to participate in discussions and be prone to persuade others during debates. It therefore appears that a certain mobilisation of cognitive factors did find place, especially when the issue was salient.

What is most noteworthy from is model is the lack of significance of the left-right variable, apart from in 2004. This differed from the Visegrád case-studies where left-right positioning was consistently significant. It may be a reflection of the fact that Estonian parties were largely in consensus about the advantages of EU accession; none of the mainstream parties questioned the perceived necessity of Estonian accession to the EU.\(^5\) Even if some parties had expressed some concern about certain aspects of accession, such as the Reform Party which feared membership would slow down economic growth, and the People’s Union which was unsatisfied with the projected funding for Estonia under the Common Agricultural Policy, all parties recommended voters to endorse membership in the referendum campaign. This also included the previously Eurosceptic Centre Party, which shifted its stance on the EU when it entered government in 2002.\(^6\) The only outright Eurosceptic parties were fringe parties, such as the Social Democratic Labour Party - the successor to the Communist Party - which feared adverse effects of EU accession on social solidarity as well as for Estonia’s national interests. On the right-wing side there was the

\(^5\) Mikkel and Pridham, p. 723.
\(^6\) Ibid., p. 720.
Estonian Independence Party, which promoted a doctrine of ‘Estonia as a neoautarkic geopolitical space’ based upon ideas of Estonian ‘exceptionalism’ as being located between the East and West. Opposition was also voiced by the Christian People’s Party, a marginal party without representation in parliament. However, the EU-sceptic parties were largely absent from the campaign, and the no-campaign was relatively weak. Despite the elite consensus, Estonian electorate is one of the most Eurosceptic electorates in the new member states and that the yes-votes in the referendum represented only 42.60 percent of the population (66.83 percent of voters, 64.04 percent turnout). It is therefore worth paying extra attention to the variables which were significant in the model; they did, with the exception of discussing politics, produce clear effects in the positive direction when significant.

If the assumption is made that these findings represent an electorate which formed opinions within a largely one-way message environment, it appears that the Estonian case provided some support for Zaller’s model, since the effects of awareness were more consistent than those of political orientation. The variables which measure awareness were particularly relevant in 2003, which suggested that forms of awareness were mobilised during the months preceding the referendum.

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8 Mikkel and Pridham, p. 736f.
9 Estonia contains the lowest yes-figures among the EU8 in the CCEB 2002.2 and 2003.2 data sets.
### 8.2.2. Latvia


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>2002&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>2003&lt;sup&gt;11&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>2004&lt;sup&gt;12&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-562.7021</td>
<td>-505.31094</td>
<td>-501.23732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi²</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s R²</td>
<td>0.0556</td>
<td>0.0636</td>
<td>0.0692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV news</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td>1.04*</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.17**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position²</td>
<td>1.01**</td>
<td>1.01**</td>
<td>1.02**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=558 N=539 N=521

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

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<sup>10</sup> Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 23.48 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 36.63 %, ‘A good thing’ 39.89 %.

<sup>11</sup> Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 16.20 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 42.49 %, ‘A good thing’ 41.31 %.

<sup>12</sup> Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 23.00 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 40.47 %, ‘A good thing’ 36.43 %.
The effects of awareness were inconsistent in the Latvian cases. The variables which measured how often respondents discussed politics and persuaded others during discussions, watching TV news and education were not significant at all. Watching EU news was only significant in 2002, the two measures of knowledge mattered in 2003; actual knowledge was also significant in 2002 and self-reported in 2004. It appears from these tables that little explanatory effect can be ascribed to factors of awareness, with the exception of knowledge about the issue in 2003. The weak results of awareness suggest that this proxy was secondary to left-right orientation which was significant over the whole time period, with the exception of in 2003 when only the squared term of left-right was reliable. Still, the variable did not create large differences between respondents, given the very low odds ratios.

Following the most common patterns for parties in CEE before the accession referendums, most Latvian parties supported EU membership. An exception was the communist-inclined Latvia’s Socialist Party which remained anti-integrationist as the only non-fringe party. As for other parties which previously had expressed criticism towards accession to a new Union after recently having re-gain sovereignty from the Union with the Soviets, reservations towards membership were modified as the referendum date approached. The left-wing Human Rights in United Latvia which represents the interests of the large Russian minority had originally voiced scepticism towards accession, but changed its mind throughout the campaign, even if it still stressed the importance of creating a Union which included all minorities. The right-wing, semi-populist For Fatherland and Freedom also changed its position, with the reservation that it opposed European federalism. The no-side was more or less absent from the agenda during the referendum campaign, where the yes-side was superior in terms of organisation, expertise and funds. The yes-forces had also gained an advantage early in the campaign over the marginalised no-forces. Hence, also Latvia should be treated as a one-way message environment according to Zaller’s dichotomy.

---

14 Mikkel and Pridham, p. 723f.
To begin with, party affiliation was significant and produced positive odds, while, as mentioned above, awareness mattered less. Hence, hypothesising that awareness alone would determine support for EU membership will be flawed according to the findings in the tables, which report that political predispositions were more reliable predictors. This is interesting to note, given the high presence of neutral values on the dependent variable in the samples, which report that a plurality of respondents leaned towards the undecided category. However, the odds ratios for the impact of left-right position were low. Hence, few of the predictors which, according to the Zallerian logic, should be predicting how attitudes were formed in a one-way message environment did not hold explanatory effects in this case. Since political predispositions were more consistent than awareness, even though the effect was weak, a rejection of Zaller’s model in the Latvian application is in order.
### Lithuania


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>2002(^{15})</th>
<th>2003(^{16})</th>
<th>2004(^{17})</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-317.58275</td>
<td>-223.62183</td>
<td>-338.79563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi(^2)</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s R(^2)</td>
<td>0.1419</td>
<td>0.1259</td>
<td>0.0716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
<td>1.46**</td>
<td>2.19**</td>
<td>1.55**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV news</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td>2.01**</td>
<td>1.85**</td>
<td>1.32*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td>1.26**</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.17**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position(^2)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>1.01**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=393</td>
<td>N=371</td>
<td>N=396</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

\(^{15}\) Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 13.70 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 34.02 %, ‘A good thing’ 52.28 %.

\(^{16}\) Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 8.18 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 22.02 %, ‘A good thing’ 69.80 %.

\(^{17}\) Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 12.93 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 31.13 %, ‘A good thing’ 55.94 %.
The Lithuanian case reported that awareness as a category had very weak effects on EU attitudes. Discussing politics and persuading others during debates failed to satisfy the criteria for significance for all three time periods, so did watching TV news and education. Actual knowledge only mattered in 2002, and the only two variables which were significant over time were self-reported knowledge and paying attention to EU news. Note that the effect of the former declined over the years, while the effect of EU news made a significant jump from 2002 to 2003 before it declined again, which may be a reflection of the fact that the issue was at its most salient in 2003. Most likely, there was more EU news in the media to consume in this time period as well. The Lithuanian case did not bring about an effect of left-right position either, apart from in 2004.

If comparing party attitudes in Lithuania to its Baltic neighbours, party-based Euroscepticism was even rarer than in Estonia and Latvia; only the Centre Party and the Peasant’s Party, two minor parliamentary actors, expressed soft Euroscepticism. The marginalised non-party groupings which campaigned for a no-vote preceding the referendum were affiliated with the extreme right, and were virtually unknown to the public. Also here, the yes-campaign easily overshadowed the poorly organised and divided no-side.\footnote{Kietz, D. (2006), ‘What Accounts for National Divergence: the Baltic Parliaments in EU Affairs,’ Constructing Europe Working paper no. 513416, p. 7f.} This may have contributed to a passive consensus on the matter, alternatively, other factors than those which are tested in these models seemed to have determined attitude formation. However, left-right position had impact on attitudes a year after the referendum, which may suggest that party affiliation and views on EU membership could have become intertwined with time.

The fact that the models were relatively solid provided more reliability to a rejection of Zaller’s model, which inevitably must be the outcome of this test. The results suggest that alternative explanations for attitudes to EU accession must be explored to provide knowledge on the Lithuanian case study. Zaller’s model cannot explain attitude formation in Lithuania since so few predictors were significant.
8.2.4. Slovenia


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-377.15089&lt;sup&gt;19&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-300.00825&lt;sup&gt;20&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-490.74886&lt;sup&gt;21&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi²</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s R²</td>
<td>0.1277</td>
<td>0.0731</td>
<td>0.0303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
<td>1.48**</td>
<td>1.62**</td>
<td>1.33*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV news</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td>1.56**</td>
<td>1.47**</td>
<td>1.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td>1.31**</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.32**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.29**</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position²</td>
<td>1.00**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=455</td>
<td>N=452</td>
<td>N=518</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level

<sup>19</sup> Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 12.73 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 40.30 %, ‘A good thing’ 46.98 %.
<sup>20</sup> Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 6.07 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 33.23 %, ‘A good thing’ 60.70 %.
<sup>21</sup> Distribution on the dependent variable: ‘A bad thing’ 13.14 %, ‘Neither good nor bad’ 43.68 %, ‘A good thing’ 43.17 %.
The Slovenian case also produced inconsistent results. Only two predictors were significant in all tests: watching EU news and self-reported knowledge. In addition to these, actual knowledge was significant in 2002 and 2004, and education in 2002. Left-right position did not have any effect on attitudes, since the only significant measure of left-right position was the squared term in 2002. The overall low explanatory effect of the models gave little findings to interpret; the only interesting though not surprising result was that watching EU news had strongest impact in 2003, which could be a reflection on an effect of the campaign.

Also in Slovenia, the political elites were unified in their pro-European stances. All parties except the marginal self-proclaimed ‘Eurorealist’ Slovenian National Party had signed an agreement in 1997 to co-operate in the country’s accession to the EU. The only other party to oppose membership was the New Party, which did not achieve enough votes to acquire seats in parliament in the 2000 elections. The government-led campaign before the March referendum took more form of an information campaign than one which was designed to persuade citizens to vote for membership, and it was strongly supported by the political parties. The no-campaign was not synchronised and badly organised, and as the referendum on NATO membership was held on the same day, anti-EU groupings and NGOs focused more on this issue while knowing that their views on EU accession reached only a small audience.22

This makes it logical to characterise also Slovenia as a one-way message environment. While the effects of predispositions can be rejected, it also becomes difficult to confirm that awareness-related variables were sufficiently strong predictors to accept Zaller’s model for mainstream message environments. Two predictors only did not provide substantial evidence for the theory, even if the lack of impact of predispositions makes it possible to argue that awareness was more important than predispositions. Still, they were not sufficiently powerful in scope to constitute support for Zaller’s model. Hence, the model must also be rejected in this case due to insufficient evidence, while there also is no evidence to claim that the

hypotheses under the two-way message scenario would have explained attitude formation better.

8.3. Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis

This section will apply the tests of Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis, and the findings and discussions will be presented in the same mode and order as was done for the tests of Zaller’s model. Again, for the sake of simplicity, only the full models will be presented for discussions.
### 8.3.1. Estonia


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-392.9683</td>
<td>-432.32085</td>
<td>-422.08354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi²</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s R²</td>
<td>0.3169</td>
<td>0.3089</td>
<td>0.3589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>1.40*</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>1.39*</td>
<td>1.30*</td>
<td>1.35*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life situation in 5 years</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.46**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>35.79**</td>
<td>1.49**</td>
<td>6.10**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Prosperity</td>
<td>1.71**</td>
<td>7.78**</td>
<td>3.71**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age²</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=555</td>
<td>N=607</td>
<td>N=623</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the 0.05 level
** Significant at the 0.01 level
In Estonia, more information was to be taken from the predictors which concerned future expectations than the current situation. The only variable from the first group which was significant was satisfaction with democracy, which was a consistent proxy over the whole time period even if it was significant at a .05 level only. Satisfaction with life failed to pass the significance test, and life compared to five years ago was only significant in 2003. Life expectations in five years was only significant in 2004, and expectations of advantages for the country from EU membership produced remarkably high odds for positive attitudes towards accession, especially in 2002. The case was the opposite for expectations of economic advantages, which produced higher odds in the referendum year than the year before or after. None of the predictors which measured demographic characteristics were significant and contributed to explain variance on the dependent variable.

These figures suggest that Estonians only applied utilitarian considerations to a certain extent when they formed opinions on European integration. Moreover, utilitarianism in this case took form of measures of expectations for what is good for the society as a whole, and individual considerations were less important when citizens formed opinions on EU membership. In addition, attitudes to EU membership correlated with views on democracy, which corresponds with the knowledge that voters in CEE who supported system change also supported integration. Attitudes were to a lesser extent influenced by individual-level factors, at least the individual-level variables which have been applied in this model. Still, it is notable than none of the factors which measure individual competitiveness and economic position could explain attitudes to EU membership, which contradicts the logic of the winners-and-losers typology of CEE citizens. Therefore, it must be concluded that macro-utilitarian factors constituted reliable predictors of attitudes towards integration in Estonia, that individual cost-benefit calculations were less important and that demographic differences did not have any impact on people’s attitudes towards the EU. This partially provides support for Gabel and Palmer’s model in the Estonian case.
8.3.2. Latvia


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-305.18944</td>
<td>-405.81749</td>
<td>-427.89375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi²</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s R²</td>
<td>0.3950</td>
<td>0.3638</td>
<td>0.3406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.57**</td>
<td>1.87**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life situation in 5 years</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.38*</td>
<td>1.42*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>129.02**</td>
<td>7.86**</td>
<td>5.33**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Prosperity</td>
<td>1.59*</td>
<td>2.29**</td>
<td>2.27**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.64*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age²</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.00**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>1.32*</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>.77*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>99.</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=468  N=623  N=611

*Significant at the 0.05 level
** Significant at the 0.01 level
In Latvia, there was a minor pattern in the results which was worth noting. To begin with, satisfaction with life and life compared to five years ago were not at all significant, but satisfaction with democracy was significant, apart from in 2002. The same was the case for life expectations in five years, but only at the .05 level. Expectations of country advantages produced extremely high odds for positive attitudes towards accession in 2002, but decreased drastically in strength the following two years. The effect of expecting economic prosperity was at its strongest in 2003, and logically produced positive attitudes towards accession. As for demographics, little information was to be taken from the variables; age was significant with a negative effect in 2004, which reveals that attitudes toward EU membership became more negative as respondent became older. The effect of urban location was positive in 2002, insignificant in 2003 and negative in 2004, which suggests that urban dwellers had become increasingly sceptical to accession as it had become actual. Alternatively, rurally located respondents could have complemented this decline by becoming more optimistic towards the EU with time to the extent that they surpassed urban respondents in Euro-optimism. Exploring the reasons behind such a radical change is difficult, however, it does point in the direction that the constituency which supported membership changed form when accession had become a reality, which is not unusual in Central and Eastern Europe.

Latvians seemed to share their priorities with their Estonian neighbours: considerations of the common good were more important than factors relating to individual cost-benefit calculations, whether these were determined by actual evaluations or socio-economic position. However, it is noteworthy that also Latvians to a greater extent employed country benefits as a proxy a year before the referendum, but not during the campaign. This obvious proxy which at first seemed to be a factor which outweighed other considerations, decreased drastically in strength as the referendum campaign was underway. This suggests that there were omitted variables which contributed to weakening the effect of the predictors, and that the model failed to completely explain attitude formation.

The Latvian case therefore provided support for Gabel and Palmer’s model with the reservation that there were differences between types of utilitarianism. Cost-benefit
calculations on behalf of the collective were more reliable explanatory variables than individual considerations. Therefore, Gabel and Palmer’s model is confirmed with the specification that a hierarchy of variables could be established also in the Latvian case study.
8.3.3. Lithuania


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-190.81375</td>
<td>-106.7604</td>
<td>-305.24226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi²</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s R²</td>
<td>0.4602</td>
<td>0.5587</td>
<td>0.4647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.57*</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>1.55*</td>
<td>1.53*</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life situation in 5 years</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.70*</td>
<td>1.67**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>124.55**</td>
<td>30.66</td>
<td>11.28**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Prosperity</td>
<td>3.17**</td>
<td>3.23**</td>
<td>4.29**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age²</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>.42*</td>
<td>.51*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=405 N=564 N=603

*Significant at the 0.05 level
** Significant at the 0.01 level
Also the Lithuanian case responded to the test of Gabel and Palmer’s model with producing inconsistent results. To summarise the results: satisfaction with life failed to achieve the desired level of significance, and life compared to five years ago also struggled to find statistical credibility as it only achieved a .05 significance level in 2002. Satisfaction with democracy was significant at the .05 level, apart from in 2004. The case was the opposite for life expectations in five years, which was significant in 2003 and 2004. Country advantages produced exceptionally high odds for a positive view on accession in 2002, lost significance in 2003, and made a comeback in 2004 with much lower odds than in the first model. Expecting economic prosperity from integration was the only variable which was a consistent predictor of attitudes, while the odds slightly increasing with time. Neither did the socio-economic variables provide useful information of sources of attitudes with the exception of unemployment, which had a negative effect on attitudes towards integration in 2003 and 2004.

The findings suggest that there was a certain impact of utilitarian considerations when Lithuanians formed opinions on EU membership. Most noteworthy was the fact that expectations of country advantages were extremely highly correlated with EU attitudes in 2002, but became insignificant during the year of the referendum, which in a comparative perspective was unusual. Even if expectations of economic prosperity from EU membership were significant in all times of testing, the fact that satisfaction with democracy and country advantages were not consistently significant suggests that also macro-level considerations were not fully consistent proxies for EU attitudes. While individual considerations and evaluations and socio-economic position had very little effect on EU attitudes, it can be concluded that Gabel and Palmer’s model only explained public opinion in Lithuania to a limited extent, but still provided some information about variables which influence public opinions toward EU membership.
8.3.4. Slovenia

Table 8.8. Testing Gabel and Palmer’s model, Slovenia, 2002-2004, odds ratios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-381.32753</td>
<td>-386.30807</td>
<td>-507.42504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;Chi²</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s R²</td>
<td>0.2782</td>
<td>0.2362</td>
<td>0.2143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life situation in 5 years</td>
<td>1.59**</td>
<td>1.50**</td>
<td>1.75**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>18.79**</td>
<td>4.27**</td>
<td>2.94**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Prosperity</td>
<td>2.52**</td>
<td>3.06**</td>
<td>2.36**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.50*</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age²</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>1.03²</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.28**</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=551</td>
<td>N=620</td>
<td>N=670</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the 0.05 level
** Significant at the 0.01 level

²³ Note that the squared term of age was significant in the control model, which changed the interpretation of the negative effect of age as the odds from the ordered model were 1.16.
The predictors returned more consistent results in Slovenia. While the first two variables, life satisfaction and life compared to five years ago, were not significant with the exception of the latter in 2004, satisfaction with democracy, life expectations in five years, country advantages and economic prosperity produced consistently high odds for positive attitudes toward EU membership. Country advantages produced remarkably high odds for positive views on membership in 2002 - if not as extreme as in the other cases – but the odds decreased during the following years while remaining significant. Age and education were significant in 2002 only and predicted positive views on accession. To have a positive effect is not an unusual effect of education, but is so for age; the common knowledge is that younger cohorts are more positive to EU accession than the older.

The figures suggest a familiar pattern in forms of support. While the individual-level factors would play a secondary role when opinions were formed, cost-benefit calculations in a collective perspective were slightly more superior proxies. The low impact of characteristics of economic competitiveness witnesses that such factors, if employed at all, would not be able to influence attitudes to the extent of collective utilitarianism. There was a connection between regime support and integration through the importance of satisfaction with democracy, but this correlation disappeared when the issue had been settled. Still, the overall model qualities are not impressively high, which suggest that there were omitted variables at work and that one has to apply additional variables when seeking to explain how Slovenians formed opinions towards integration. It can therefore be concluded that utilitarianism took form of solidaric cost-benefit calculations of whether EU membership would benefit Slovenia more than whether it would benefit individual Slovenes, and that measures of individual socio-economic position were only employed to a minor extent. Hence, also this case study puts forward a suggestion that the model could be re-defined to specify a hierarchy of variables.

**8.4. Summary and conclusion**

The tests of Zaller’s model to the control cases achieved very little success. Since the consensus on EU membership was high in all countries, they were all treated as one-way message environments and Zaller’s model for mainstream elite messaging was
selected as the theoretical framework to the cases. While some support for the model was reached from the Estonian case, the tests of the model on the Latvian and Lithuanian studies concluded that the model should be rejected for one-way message environments. The Slovenian case study brought about little information. The effects of awareness were too marginal to create support for the model, and since political predispositions were not significant either, the model would not have been more successful if the message environment in was treated as polarised. Therefore, Zaller’s model had little explanatory effect on how Baltic and Slovenian citizens formed opinions towards integration between 2002-4, with a slight exception of Estonians.

As for Gabel and Palmer’s model, the applications brought about the information that considerations of the common good were more important in the opinion formation process than factors relating to individual cost-benefit calculations, whether these were determined by actual evaluations or socio-economic position. The effects of individual-level factors were less consistent, and demographics had little or no effect. This suggested that utilitarianism when defined as solidaristic cost-benefit calculations were more reliable predictors of EU attitudes than the other groups of predictors, and even if the applications of Gabel and Palmer’s model brought about useful information, the model was only partially confirmed. As the main case studies, the results call for a modification of Gabel and Palmer’s model to specify a hierarchy of predictors.
Chapter 9
Comparative analyses and discussions

9.1. Aims and introduction

This chapter will aim to tie the results which were found in the case study chapters together and to provide answers to the research questions which were outlined in the introduction. The chapter will begin with an overall summary of the results which were found in the separate applications of Zaller’s and Gabel and Palmer’s models respectively, and the conclusions which were reached in the case studies will be discussed in a comparative perspective. This section will aim to examine the extent to which the models were able to explain public opinion formation in the Visegrád countries, and the results from the control cases will be included in a discussion which evaluates the explanatory effects of the selected models. Based on this discussion, the chapter will discuss the theoretical foundations of Zaller’s and Gabel and Palmer’s models, and examine the generality and parsimony of the models with a specific focus on the new member states as case studies. This section will also address whether the models proved to be transferable from case studies in the EU15 to the post-communist member states. The chapter will also include suggestions for alternative approaches to investigate the explanatory powers of the models. The chapter will first treat the models separately, and will begin with Zaller’s model, before Gabel and Palmer’s hypothesis is examined. The fourth section will compare the models, and will examine whether the output, theoretical frameworks and parsimony of the models differed, and aim to establish whether one model can be preferred over the other. Finally, a summary of the chapter will be provided.

9.2. Zaller’s model of opinion formation: summary and discussion

The overview of the conclusions which were reached from the case study applications reported Zaller’s model was only able to explain the opinion formation processes partially. To begin with, irrespective of whether the cases were classified as one-or two-way message environments, the overall impression was that factors of awareness appeared to be important proxies in the opinion formation process, but also that
predispositions were consistent predictors of attitudes towards EU membership. Even if awareness proved to increase the probability for believing that EU membership would be a ‘good thing,’ predispositions had a moderating effect on support, and supporting Eurosceptic parties generally lowered the probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a good thing. This trend was established in all case studies. In the control studies, the model received some support from the Estonian case, was rejected in the Latvian case as political predispositions were stronger determinants of attitudes than awareness, and was also rejected in the Lithuanian and Slovenian cases due to insufficient evidence.

When looking at the case-wise results, a pattern was established which showed that both awareness and predispositions were significant, but the performance of the variables and outcomes varied slightly. In the polarised cases, the Czech Republic and Poland, both reported clear effects of awareness, even if more variables were significant in the Czech than in the Polish case. The effects over time also differed between the case studies; in the Czech Republic, respondents applied factors of awareness to a greater extent during the referendum year than in the other years, which was suggested to be an effect of high issue salience and the upcoming referendum. In fact, the model which produced the strongest effects of measures of awareness when compared to all other case studies was the Czech model for 2003. These results were accompanied by the significant effect of left-right positioning, which produced positive and curvilinear odds, informing that the most EU-positive respondents were located in the centre, and that the most negative were located at the left. The graphs of probabilities showed that there were large differences in probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a good thing if respondents had low, medium or high scores on awareness, but the differences between the levels of awareness were smaller in 2003 than in 2002 and 2004, when fewer variables were significant, which was slightly paradoxical. It also confirmed the effects of left-right position in the regression tables and reported that only highly aware Communist supporters had positive probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a good thing. One remarkable finding was that even low aware supporters of centre and right-parties had positive probabilities in 2003, which suggests that predispositions had stronger impact, despite the strong significance of variables which measured awareness. The high support from people who supported the Civic Democratic Party
was also commented on, since party leader Vaclav Klaus had voiced EU-scepticism, however, since the party was not against membership and its voters tend to be young and urban, EU-support from this group may not be surprising anyway. In Poland, variables which measure awareness had the strongest performance in the 2002 model, and it was suggested that the fact that awareness became less important in 2003-4 could possibly have been an effect of the highly political nature of the EU question. In addition, left-right position was significant and created negative odds with a negative squared term, which informed that respondents who were located in the centre were the most positive. Also here, the predicted probabilities created large differences between levels of awareness in the likelihood of believing that EU membership would be a good thing. The effect of left-right position was also confirmed, and the effect was particularly strong in 2004, when supporters of Samoobrona and the League of Polish Families had negative probabilities on the dependent variable even if they had high scores on awareness, as opposed to in 2002-3, when high awareness tipped them over the .5 divisor.

As for the mainstream cases; in Slovakia, more variables which measure awareness were significant in 2002 than in 2003, when predispositions became significant, which they were not the preceding year. Also here, when graphing the predicted probabilities, large differences in probabilities for holding positive views on accession were evident between the respective levels of awareness. This effect was suggested to be a reflection of the increased politisation of the issue. However, it was interesting that the probabilities did not always reflect party positions on the matter: the linear effect of left-right position made supporters of the EU-critical Movement for a Democratic Slovakia and the Slovak National Party had slightly higher probabilities than supporters of the very pro-European Hungarian Coalition. In Hungary, no particular mobilisation of measures of awareness was to be detected during the referendum campaign; and the effects of the predictors varied over the years, but produced relatively low effects on attitude formation overall. The effects of predispositions changed slightly over the time period: while it was negative and curvilinear in 2002, the squared term was not significant in 2003-4. The graphs of predicted probabilities for 2002 informed that supporters of the party which was located most left, the Socialist Party, were less supportive than supporters of the Democratic Forum, and the curve declined when moving further right on the scale. In
2003, the effect was more drastically declining when moving from left to right, and all supporters of the extreme right, represented by the Hungarian Justice and Life Party, had negative probabilities for believing that EU membership was a good thing, even if they scored high on awareness. The 2004 regression estimates also returned negative effects of left-right position.

To examine the variables which measured awareness: with the exception of watching TV news in the Czech Republic, all predictors which measured awareness predicted positive attitudes towards EU membership. However, the positive effect of awareness should not necessarily have occurred in the two-way message environments, the Czech Republic and Poland, according to Zaller’s hypothesis. Zaller’s model assumes that awareness will only predict whether respondents understand the preferences of their preferred elites, and not be a direct determinant of support for EU membership, which was the case in both countries, though to a greater extent in the Czech case than the Polish. This effect shed doubt over the explanatory power of Zaller’s model. In the mainstream message scenarios, Slovakia and Hungary, awareness also proved to predict positive attitudes towards EU membership, but generally, fewer variables were significant than in the Czech Republic and Poland. To repeat, in Slovakia, awareness was not significant to the same extent in 2003, when predispositions became significant, as it was the preceding year. The weakened impact of awareness when the issue became salient suggested that Zaller’s assumption that this measure alone would predict support was not confirmed. The possibility was present that the prevailing consensus may have deemed cognitive factors irrelevant, or that the impact of predispositions overrode awareness to a certain extent. However, the fact that awareness mattered in 2002, when predispositions did not, suggests that such awareness had played a role in the process - and when they did, they predicted positive attitudes towards accession – but that other factors appeared to matter more than awareness before the referendum. Naturally, a third explanation could simply be that one may have to look for alternative explanations to adequately explain opinion formation. The case was relatively similar for Hungary, where more predictors of awareness would have been expected to be significant if awareness alone would adequately predict whether people supported the government position. Also here, it may have been factors other than awareness which explained how Hungarians formed
opinions on European integration; and as was evident in the models, predispositions were also consistent predictors of attitudes.

When addressing the effects of predispositions, some notable differences emerged when comparing the two polarised cases, the Czech Republic and Poland, to the mainstream cases of Slovakia and Hungary. First of all, overall support for EU membership was slightly lower in the polarised cases.\textsuperscript{1} Secondly, the effects of predispositions were curvilinear, which reflected hard (Poland) or hard/soft (Czech Republic) Euroscepticism on the extreme left and right. The patterns of support were also confirmed by the graphs of predicted probabilities. The stability of predispositions in the two countries suggested that respondents clearly coupled the issue with party choice, and the fact that this effect was evident also in the 2002 samples reflected that people had made these choices before the referendum campaign. This further suggested that the existence of a campaign which offered two different choices on EU membership was unable to change the views of those who already had aligned with their preferred parties’ recommendation; the message had already been filtered through respondents’ set of political values before the elite messages intensified during the campaign. However, this may not be surprising; in both countries, the EU issue had entered the arena soon after the fall of communism, and the party system in the Czech Republic was Europeanised several years before the question actually came to a vote. In Poland, this was also the case, but before 2001, when the League of Polish Families and Samoobrona entered parliament, Eurosceptic positions had been argued by ex-parliamentary parties. However, even if the parties were not previously represented in the Sejm, their ability to appeal to, and influence, the views of the electorate cannot be excluded. In this respect, the stability of the effects of predispositions confirms the political nature of the EU question. Again, even if political predispositions were capable of influencing attitudes to the EU, the outcome varied, as was evident in the lack of support for EU membership by even highly aware Samoobrona and League of Polish Families’ supporters in 2003, and by the high probabilities for EU-support among Civic Democrats in 2002-3, which was even higher than for respondents who supported centre parties. This makes it difficult

\textsuperscript{1} Percentages of respondents who believed that membership would be a ‘good thing’ in 2003: Czech Republic 54.46 \%, Poland 64.41 \%, Slovakia 65.72 \% and Hungary 69.34 \%.
to generalise how and why predispositions affected attitudes, but it can safely be stated that certain patterns of support could be established with a few discrepancies.

In Slovakia and Hungary, the effects of predispositions were slightly less stable. To repeat, the predictor was not significant at all in Slovakia in 2002, but began to matter in 2003. The positive odds stated that the most Eurosceptic respondents were located on the left, which was represented by the Democratic Union, the Party of the Democratic Left and the Communist Party, however, the difference in probabilities between party supporters for believing that EU membership would be a good thing was small, with the exception of supporters of the Democratic and Christian Union who were given significantly higher probabilities than other respondents. In Hungary, the effects were consistently negative, with a squared term in 2002, which reported that supporters of the Justice and Life Party at the extreme right were less EU-enthusiastic than the supporters of centre parties, with the curve increasing from Socialist supporters to Democratic Forum’s supporters, before it decreased rapidly in 2002. The negative effect of left-right position was stronger in 2003 than in the other years. The graphs of predicted probabilities also reported that centrists became less EU-enthusiastic over time, and that even highly aware MIEP partisans had negative probabilities in 2003-4. This could possibly have been an effect of the changed elite messages, even if the no-campaign by the Justice and Life Party had very little resources and a very limited outreach, and the effect of the increasingly EU-negative rhetoric of Fidesz cannot be ruled out either. Hence, in Slovakia, and to a certain extent, in Hungary, the presence of an upcoming referendum appeared to have given the issue a more political nature than it had a year before and after the referendum, since respondents seemed to have called upon political predispositions when the issue was at its most salient. In other words, the existence of political messages appeared to have been met with a citizen response, but it is crucial to note that this happened without the existence of two competing political messages and in an environment of low information, a statement which is true particularly for Slovakia. This suggests that Zaller’s condition of intense and polarised political messaging for an issue to be connected with political predispositions was contradicted by these cases; respondents were still aware of the views taken by their political elites, even if the consensus on the issue was high and that EU-sceptical messages were available to a very limited
extent. This may pose a challenge to Zaller’s claim that respondents will not be able to demonstrate resistance to a dominant message in a one-way message environment.

To sum up, the findings confirmed and contradicted the hypotheses of Zaller’s model. If the model was unconditionally confirmed, the predictors which determined the public opinion process would be generally the same in the mainstream and polarised case studies respectively – awareness or political predispositions - but they rather were significant predictors of EU attitudes in all cases. Assuming that predispositions only would matter in polarised message environments and awareness in the mainstream cases, therefore seemed too simplistic, given the interaction of the variables. The Czech case appeared to provide the strongest support for Zaller’s model given the scepticism on the left which echoed party positions, but the lack of scepticism on the right suggested the opposite. Still, the strong ability of awareness to predict positive attitudes towards the EU, which was evident from the regression tables, should not have been expected in a two-way message environment. The Polish case appeared in the first case to produce support for Zaller’s model, where awareness mattered little in the referendum year, while predispositions had a clear effect. However, after studying the graphs of probabilities, it became difficult to argue that predispositions mattered more than awareness, since the tables informed that awareness made a difference in the positive direction, also for supporters of the EU-sceptic left and right; even if they were less positive than centre-voters who represented EU-positive parties, again with the exception from 2004 when even high aware extreme leftists and rightists were awarded negative probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a good thing. In other years, predispositions seemed to modify awareness to the extent that highly, and in some cases, medium aware supporters of Europhobic parties only would be less positive to EU membership than supporters of pro-European parties, but they were held positive probabilities. This trend was more visible in the Polish case than the Czech case, since highly aware Czech Communist had probabilities over .5 for believing that EU membership would be a good thing. The Slovak 2002 model appeared to generate support for Zaller’s model, since awareness was significant and predispositions were not, but the pattern changed in the following years, when fewer variables which measured awareness were significant and predispositions were. However, predispositions were not capable of making highly aware supporters of EU-sceptical parties hold negative views
towards accession: even if moving from left to right increased the probabilities, there were large differences between the levels of awareness in terms of probabilities for believing that EU membership would be a good thing. Also in Hungary, disappointingly few variables which measured awareness were significant, and there was evidence that there was a modifying effect produced by predispositions. However, in this case, the effect of party orientation was sufficiently strong to convince highly aware Justice and Life-partisans to be negative towards membership in 2004.

Hence, all cases, irrespective of message environment, showed that predispositions would modify attitudes which were created by awareness. However, the actual nature of this interaction, and how predispositions would modify awareness, is difficult to establish. In some model, awareness appeared to predict expected outcomes, and in other models, predispositions seemed to generate attitudes which would be in line with theoretical expectations based on the position of their preferred party on the EU issue. Moreover, Zaller’s polarisation hypothesis would predict that predispositions would create larger differences between partisan groups in the polarised cases, but this was not the case. Moreover, partisan groups were also not closer to consensus in the mainstream cases. Even if overall support for EU membership was lower in Poland and the Czech Republic than in Slovakia and Hungary, which confirmed Zaller’s assumption that support for the government position will be lower when elites diverge, the results suggested that the actual message environment was not as important as what is assumed in Zaller’s model. This calls for a different approach to study the impact of message environments on public opinion formation.

This discussion suggests three possible ways of modifying the model. Either the distinction between message environments should be reconsidered, which seems the easiest solution if the model is to become applicable to a wider range of case studies. However, this would radically alter the nature of the model. Therefore, a search for additional variables which explain the difference between polarised or message environments should be undertaken. Alternatively, region-specific factors, such as low political trust and political disenchantment, which would include omitted factors in the Central and Eastern European debates on EU accession, could be taken into account. The problem with this choice is that such an alteration would further narrow
the generality of the model, and change the nature of the hypotheses to concern one specific sub-set of democracies. However, the discussion of which additional variables which would improve the model is beyond the scope of this study, but remains a suggestion for how to further improve the model.

9.2.1. Theoretical foundations and applicability to Central and Eastern Europe

The fact that the results in these case studies revealed that awareness and predispositions interacted and produced similar patterns in the opinion formation process irrespective of message environment generates reasons to question certain aspects of the theoretical foundations of Zaller’s model. This section will present a critique of the intellectual underpinnings of the model, and will also search for arguments against such a critique when appropriate. The degree to which the model is applicable to case studies in the new member states will also be examined in order to establish whether the model proved to be applicable, even if it was not developed to study public opinion formation within a post-communist context.

To begin with, the most obvious critique which the case studies provide towards Zaller’s model is the dichotomy between one- or two-way message environments, which did not form a useful theoretical foundation for the model’s application to the Visegrád countries or the control cases. Even if the distinction between elite consensus and polarisation in principle should constitute a fruitful foundation for research, since it theoretically sounds plausible that citizens take cues from political messages, the results did not significantly reflect a difference in elite positions. On the contrary, the variables which Zaller expects will determine public opinion formation crossed the distinction between message environments. The lack of results does not argue that public opinion will be determined by the same factors irrespective of whether elites disagree or agree, but may rather suggest that Zaller’s choice of predictors did not succeed in explaining the difference in opinion processes between mainstream and polarised message environment in this study. It also suggests that alternative explanations and predictors need to be investigated in order to fully examine how public opinion is influenced by differences between message environments.
However, it is worth elaborating upon the reasons for the mixed success in the applications of the model. The conditional support for the model can either be related to flaws in the model itself, or alternatively, can have been caused by lack of suitability of the case studies.

To begin with the former assumption, critical voices may argue that Zaller’s emphasis on single types of variables to determine opinion formation may cause difficulties, theoretically as well as practically. Secondly, even if the variables which Zaller relies on can be argued to be theoretically valid, the fact that they are expected to have impact only within certain message environments could arguably increase the theoretical possibility for unsuccessful verification. On the other hand, relying on narrowly chosen variables avoids conceptual stretching, which can be put forward as a defence of Zaller’s model. Moreover, operating with a limited set of variables within a conditional setting may be deemed acceptable as a trade-off against conceptual lack of clarity, and also makes the model easy to apply, since the application depends on few available variables in the data set. A further defence for the applicability of the model is that the valid nature of the predictors can bring about useful information about aspects of the opinion formation process, even if it fails to fully explain how opinions are formed. Moreover, even if the theoretical assumptions were not met by the results, useful information has still been produced since the knowledge that these factors can be excluded is a contribution to research. For these reasons, Zaller’s model can still be argued to be a valid model to apply in a research project which explores public opinion formation.

As for the theoretical assumptions; to argue that political awareness will determine understanding of a cueing message appears plausible, and was confirmed in Zaller’s own applications of the model. However, the assumption further presumes that understanding automatically equals support unless people are reminded that the message may not be compatible with their predispositions, and this proposition can be criticised. Other studies argue that schemas of political values are internalised within people’s minds from early youth,² and if this option is explored, it can be argued that people do not need such ‘reminders’ to be alerted to a possible incompatibility.

between a message and one’s political values. The tests conducted in this study brought about the knowledge that respondents in one-way message environments allowed for predispositions to interact with awareness, despite the lack of a ‘reminder’ that they had to filter the message through political values. Excluding the effect of values with the sole justification of a lack of external cueing can be criticised as under-emphasising people’s ability to critically examine a matter without being prompted to do so. However, the assumption that awareness will determine whether voters understand their party’s recommendation is difficult to dispute; those who engage with a political issue and normally align themselves with certain political elites should also be likely to understand which position the latter take, if this position is clear. This assumption was still questioned by some of the results in the case studies, which suggested that those who were aware of the issue also were able to disagree with their elites, since the results established a pattern which revealed that if respondents demonstrated high engagement with the EU issue, they were more likely to support it irrespective of left-right placement. When highly aware respondents’ and parties’ views were in consensus, it appeared to be a result of the coincidence that the party happened to support EU accession: highly EU-aware supporters of Eurosceptic parties also would support accession, with a few exceptions. However, it is also difficult to justify an argument that those who understood the issue would support it because they ‘knew’ that it would be good for them, since such an assumption relies on a normative perception that EU membership necessarily will be a good thing, as well as the criteria that respondents fully understood the consequences of EU membership. Hence, the underlying reasons for causality between awareness and support for EU membership are difficult to fully explain without further examination into the matter. Such a study would be beyond the scope of this task, since the aims of the study did not encompass an exploration of the effects beyond those which could be (un)confirmed by Zaller’s model.

The model for polarised case studies can be similarly criticised for putting too much emphasis on the effect of elite recommendations. It excludes the possibility that people can disagree with their preferred elites on ad-hoc issues, and also depends on constant continuity of elite ideology. A further problem is that the model supposes that parties always will choose political options which are compatible with their ideology. In addition, elites often change their minds on political issues or convey
inconsistent messages about the matter. Furthermore, it can be difficult to establish whether a single issue is (in)compatible with party ideology. The ideological compatibility of for example moral and economic issues with party profiles may be less complicated to establish, but the EU issue encompasses a large number of policy areas, and a party position to support/not support EU membership will often contradict parts of the party’s ideological platform.³

A further problem is that it can be difficult to determine whether a case falls under the category of a one- or a two-way message environment, since it may be difficult to establish for certain whether the political elites are in full agreement or disagree. In democracies with multi-party systems, elites rarely reach full consensus on political issues, and case studies will often be ‘grey’ cases in this respect. Examples of cases of perfect consensus are rare, and the Slovak and Hungarian cases which were selected here were justified to be one-way message environments due to the lack of well organised ‘No’-campaigns which offered a dichotomous alternative to the dominant message since a criterion had to be chosen to distinguish between message environments. To defend Zaller’s empirical evidence for the model, his tests were conducted on ad-hoc issues in American politics, many of which were subject of political debates in the 1970s. The two-party system of the USA may constitute a more appropriate case study for testing the model, where elite contestation, or lack of such may be easier to establish. Moreover, citizen participation was lower in the 1970s, according to several authors,⁴ which can be a justification for the choice of fewer variables which are expected to influence public opinion formation. However, if the criterion of defining the nature of the message environment limits the selection of case studies, it constitutes a critique towards the generality and parsimony of the model. The same argument of lack of parsimony can also be directed towards the difficulty of determining which category is the most appropriate to place ‘grey-zone’ case studies in. This may also lead to rejection of the model, not because the

³ In Zaller’s defence, his tests of the models concern more straightforward and normatively loaded issues such as supporting the Vietnam War, however, if the EU issue is too complex to apply to the model, it constitutes a critique towards the generality of the model. See Zaller 1992, p. 100ff for the tests of the two-way message model.

theoretical underpinnings are flawed but since the initial categorisation of message environment could have been wrong.

An advantage of the model is that it is well designed for comparative research. Comparative tests of the model do not necessarily require that the case studies are relatively similar in terms of for example political systems, but it only requires that the countries represent one-and two way message environments. These tests proved that the model was able to bring about useful information despite the apparent problem with the distinction between message environments, but this also constituted interesting knowledge: that message environment may not always matter. The reservation that the control cases did not provide the desired evidence for support or rejection of the model must be born in mind, and the conclusions must be limited to the Visegrád countries only. This suggests that the model is well suited for comparative tests and that there are possibilities for making inferences from the findings in this study, but that these are not unlimited. The theoretical assumptions of Zaller’s model, though they were only partially confirmed, formed a useful foundation for a deductive exercise which brought about findings which suggested a more nuanced formulation of the model, in addition to the empirical knowledge which was uncovered.

To turn the focus of the discussion from whether Zaller’s model contains the necessary properties to explain public opinion formation in Central and Eastern Europe, it is worth discussing whether Central and Eastern European countries are appropriate cases for tests of Zaller’s model. Some possible criticism towards applying the model to these case studies will be elaborated on in the following paragraph.

A first point concerns whether the political contexts in the new member states within which the EU issue was discussed allow for determining whether case studies constitute one-or two-way message environments. Given the complex natures of the political discourses on European integration in Central and Eastern Europe, the characteristics of the message environments may be too blurred to constitute well-suited foundations for applications of Zaller’s model. Moreover, since the party systems in the Visegrád region still are in fluid states, political options are rarely
static, and several parties have changed or modified their position on the EU issue. However, the results in this study found consistent effects between party choice and EU attitudes irrespective of the defined message environment, again with the exception of some of the control cases. This may suggest that the sometimes blurred elite positions in the selected countries may not be a problem in itself: the problem may rather be related to the point of departure of the model which requires a classification of the message environments, which becomes difficult to do when elite messages are not clear, as well as the theoretical assumption that citizens in one-way-versus two-way message environments will rely on different proxies when they form opinions.

Moreover, the EU issue, as previously explained, is a highly complex matter, particularly in the new member states and maybe especially before accession, and may therefore be/have been treated in different ways than in the old member states. Elites and citizens frequently emphasised normative aspects of the issue which were difficult to contest, such as ‘returning to Europe’ and ensuring political and economic progress, which was very urgent. Becoming an EU member was also associated with a guarantee that a return to ‘old ways’ would be made impossible. Hence, it cannot be excluded that this feeling of having no option may have created the effect that awareness about the EU was equivalent to awareness about the urgency of the matter, and not the matter itself. Therefore, respondents may not only associate the EU with the EU itself, but the extremely important issues which it symbolises.

On the other hand, the argument in the previous section which claims that the simplicity of the model assumptions and the variables it proposes makes the model general also apply in the discussion on whether it can be used in tests on case studies in the new member states. The properties of the model make it easy to transfer between case studies, and even if political predispositions and awareness, in this case on the EU issue, may take on slightly different natures in post-communist than in consolidated democracies, they are still valid predictors to test. If thorough explanations about the country-specific contexts which surround the issue are included in the interpretations, differences in actual meanings of the predictors may not be a problem. This supports use of the models in case studies which are different
from those which the model were developed for, provided the researcher is sufficiently familiar with country-specific contexts to interpret the results.

Finally, as was mentioned in the previous section, the results which were found in the applications of the model to the Visegrád countries still brought about knowledge about the opinion formation process even if the model was not unconditionally confirmed, but little information was to be extracted from the control cases except Estonia. The fact that there was not sufficient evidence for neither fully rejecting nor confirming the model in the remaining three cases may be a reflection of the fact that the country-specific contexts created different dynamics in the opinion formation process than the model supposes, and that these contexts caused people to rely on other factors than those which are proposed by Zaller. However, requiring that a model should be able to hold explanatory effect over a large number of cases is setting the bar very high for judging model quality. The fact that the model proved to be able to provide useful information in several case studies supports a conclusion that it is transferable to the new member states in principle, as long as the specific natures of the case studies are taken into account.

9.2.2. Alternative approaches for testing Zaller’s model

In order to produce additional knowledge on whether the model successfully explains public opinion formation, several approaches can be suggested. First of all, given the nature of the model, which requires access to mainstream and polarised case studies, the necessity of comparable cases is obvious. The model should be tested on as many cases as possible to justify generalisations based on comparative results. One alternative which will allow for designing a good comparative study is to add a further distinction to the one of message environment; one between two- or multiparty political systems, if two-party systems are included, since the political discourse may be expected to differ between these, which was briefly mentioned in the preceding section. Moreover, a ‘polarisation scale’ which measures the degree of polarisation within a country, measured on an index based upon a measurement of elite consensus, would be useful to determine the level of elite divergence if such a scale was available.
Furthermore, longitudinal studies and use of time-series or panel data which monitor elite messaging on the selected issue over time would be useful for illustrating the effects of political messaging between times of high and low issue salience. The opportunities for useful information to be extracted through using qualitative as well as quantitative methods must not be excluded; a careful selection of study panels which are monitored over time would be able to provide more in-depth information and allow for causality effects to be more thoroughly established. However, the drawback with using study panels is that they provide limited possibilities for making generalisations unless the sample is very large. The choice of methodology will depend on what kind of information one wishes to produce from the model; still, the model allows for a variety of methodologies to be applied which provides several alternatives for future research into the model.

9.3. Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis: summary and discussion

The empirical results in the tests of Gabel and Palmer’s hypothesis generally provided support for the assumption that people will apply utilitarian considerations when they form attitudes towards European Union membership. Before a discussion on the explanatory capabilities of the model can commence, a summary of the results will be presented.

To begin with the Czech Republic, all variables which measured respondents’ evaluations of personal life situation: current life situation, current situation compared to five years ago and expectations about life situation in five years were significant in several models, but the effects were inconsistent. Satisfaction with democracy, expectations for advantages for the country and economic prosperity if the country joined the EU were consistently significant, and particularly expecting advantages for the country produced very high odds ratios on the dependent variable. The only demographic variables which were significant in the final models were age in one model and education in two, age producing negative odds ratios and education positive. Moreover, it must be noted that unemployment was significant and negative when demographics were tested separately, as well as urban-rural and income with positive odds. In Slovakia, the effects of variables which measured life situation were poor if the variables are treated as a group: only life situation in five years was
significant in 2003-4 and life compared to five years ago in 2004. The predictors which measured the effects of expecting advantages for the country and economic prosperity if the country joined the EU, but satisfaction with democracy had less consistent effects, as it was not significant in 2004. As for demographic characteristics, education was significant in 2002 and 2004, but since the control model which fitted the estimation with generalised ordered logistic regression did not return a significant effect of this variable in 2002, this result must be treated with caution. The same is the case for income, which was significant in the final model in 2003, but was questioned by the results in the control model. The most remarkable result was to find that being unemployed returned positive odds ratios in 2003, even in the final model, which revealed that the unemployed actually has higher odds for believing that EU membership that the employed. The Polish case gave a slightly weaker impression of the explanatory strength of utilitarian measures, since fewer predictors were significant. Life situation and life compared to five years ago were not significant in any model while life situation in five years was consistently significant, and satisfaction with democracy and expectations economic prosperity were not significant in 2003  in 2003. Expecting advantages for the country if Poland joined the EU was consistent and produced very high odds for believing that EU membership would be a good thing. Demographic variables were never significant in the final models, however, when tested separately, age and income were significant in 2003-4, and education in all samples. However, the effects of variables were still sufficiently present before the final model to agree that the theoretical underpinnings of the model provided a fruitful framework for analysis of public opinion and were able to generate some information on public opinion formation towards the EU. In Hungary, satisfaction with life was never significant, life compared to five years ago was only significant in 2004, while life situation in five years, satisfaction with democracy and country advantages were consistent across all models. However, expecting economic prosperity if the country joined the EU was not significant in 2003. Demographic measures produced little information also in Hungary: only age was significant in the final model in 2003 with positive odds and a negative squared term, which revealed that the odds for believing that EU membership would be a good thing increased as respondents got older, but again decreased for the oldest respondents. In the separate tests of demographics, some information could be taken from education in 2002-3 and
age and income in 2004. Note that age produced negative odds in this model, which revealed that the odds for a positive view on accession would decrease with age.

The differences in case-specific findings and the conclusions which were reached in the case studies were relatively small. The overall impression was that there was a pattern present which suggested a hierarchy of predictors, given the results which showed that believing that EU membership would bring advantages for the country and general economic prosperity were the most reliable predictors of attitudes towards the EU. Especially the former produced extremely high odds for believing that EU membership would be a good thing. Satisfaction with democracy was also significant in most models, but there were a few exceptions. For the variables which concerned respondents’ personal life satisfaction, expectations about the situation in five years was the most consistently significant variable, which revealed that having optimistic outlooks about life situation would generate positive attitudes towards EU accession as well. For socio-economic divisions, age and education were the most frequently significant variables, but while higher education produced positive odds, age would predict highest odds for young respondents in some models and the middle aged in some. However, since they often were significant in the first and second models, the effects of these predictors cannot be excluded completely even though they were less influential on attitudes towards EU membership than collective-level evaluations and expectations. When significant, if income increased, so would the odds for positive attitudes towards accession, and in some models, it was revealed that urban respondents would be more positive than rural dwellers. The most remarkable finding was that unemployed Czechs were negative towards accession (in 2003 only, but not in the final model), while their Slovak counterparts were more likely to believe that EU membership would be a good thing. This variable was even significant when all predictors were included.

The control cases returned relatively similar effects. The Estonian model reported that demographic characteristics were not significant, but more information was produced by satisfaction with democracy, expectations of advantages for the country and economic prosperity if the country joined the EU. In Latvia, the latter predictors were also consistent determinants of positive EU attitudes while age was significant and negative in 2004 and urban-rural in 2002/4. The Lithuanian case only produced
consistent estimates from expectations of economic prosperity, but satisfaction with democracy and country advantages were consistent in two models, as well as expectations from life in five years. Unemployment was significant in the negative direction in 2003/4, and life compared to five years ago in 2002 with positive odds. In Slovenia, country advantages and economic prosperity were consistent predictors of positive views towards accession, as well as expectations of life situation in five years and satisfaction with democracy except from in 2004. Age produced a positive effect in 2002 which may be surprising, given the common knowledge that younger cohorts tend to be more positive towards integration than the older, and education created a positive effect in 2002. The control cases hence complement the results in the main case studies which suggest that the most consistent predictors were those which were related to collective factors, and that demographic characteristics and individually rooted evaluations and expectations produced less consistent results.

Even if the patterns in the empirical results deviated slightly from the theoretical predictions, it was concluded that Gabel and Palmer’s hypothesis provided a useful theoretical framework for analyses of public opinion. The assumption that individuals will make cost-benefit calculations when forming opinions on EU membership was also not fundamentally challenged. Even if the variables which were related to evaluations of whether the EU would benefit the country as a whole were more reliable predictors than individual-level expectations and evaluations and demographic variables, it must be emphasised that this did not completely exclude the effects of the latter two types of variables, but suggested a contextual hierarchy of predictors. The model sequencing which gradually added predictors informed that individual-level predictors and demographic variables were often significant before all predictors were controlled for. Therefore, even the lack of consistent effects of these types of variables made it difficult to fully confirm Gabel and Palmer’s assumption that individuals will regard EU membership in terms of their competitiveness and personal situation, they still had a certain effect. However, respondents in the Visegrád countries appeared to set personal considerations aside to a certain extent and put stronger emphasis on evaluations of the common good when they formed opinions on European integration. With a slight exception of the Czech 2003 model, where more individual-level predictors were significant, respondents
regarded EU membership less in terms of expectations of personal gains or losses, and based their choices more on what they believed would be the best for the collective.

The actual reasons for these results may be difficult to explain. Whether an idealistic outlook made Visegrád citizens be more interested in benefits for the general public than for themselves individually is difficult to say. Alternatively, the widely held view in the region that being negative towards membership was regarded as being unenthusiastic about reform, could have contributed towards the respondents’ emphasis on collective utilitarianism. It is therefore not unthinkable that the prevailing consensus, even if it was contested in Poland and the Czech Republic to a larger extent than in Slovakia and Hungary, contributed towards the strong effects of collective considerations.

However, even if the overall model could not be unconditionally confirmed, the empirical results still suggested that the hypothesis displays generality and parsimony, as useful information could be extracted from the results. The fact that the patterns were relatively consistent across the case studies also provided a sufficient basis for making generalisations for CEE states, as well as allowing for inductive reasoning in a process of forming new hypotheses. Even if the results did not fully confirm Gabel and Palmer’s hypothesis, the very core of the theoretical assumptions was not questioned; rather a slight redefinition was suggested. This further confirms that Gabel and Palmer’s model provides a useful theoretical framework for analysis, and that the model is widely transferable, even if the hypothesis was developed for research on public opinion among citizens in member states which at that time did not include CEE countries. Also, since the model was developed as a series of tests which applied different predictors, Gabel and Palmer add few constraints on choice of variables. The core of the model is the theoretical underpinning which expects individuals to make cost-benefit calculations. This leaves the researcher with the opportunities of experimenting with various predictors which measure the theoretically defined effects. Hence, the scope for experimental research is large, which allows for a flexible research process based on trial and error. Such a flexible model is parsimonious given the scope for selecting and testing variables, and this flexibility also increases the validity of the model, since more approaches are allowed to be taken when testing the model. In addition to this, the fact that the model tests
utilitarianism as a function of different factors on several levels also increases the odds for verifying at least parts of the model, as proved to be the case in this study.

However, the reasons that individual-level predictors were subordinate to collective-level variables must still be examined. A first possible reason can be related to the fact that the authors’ and collaborators’ own tests of the models were conducted on respondents in old member states who were citizens of the Common Market when the data was collected. Needless to say, the respondents in the samples which were used in this study were making choices on EU membership in a completely different context than the respondents in the original tests. First of all, respondents in the Visegrád countries found themselves in a context of low information in which EU membership was regarded as a very pressing issue, and this made the scope for critical voices smaller. As previously mentioned, rejecting EU membership was regarded as equivalent with political extremism, in some countries more than other. Pressure for such a high consensus on the issue makes it more difficult to trace factors which have the capabilities of creating negative attitudes, since these will be rarer and possibly caused by different factors than in the old member states. Secondly, respondents would have no actual experience from EU membership to draw upon when they attempted to judge the costs and benefits of EU membership, since membership was only a future prospect and not a current reality. Hence, respondents had to form opinions based upon their judgment of a hypothetical scenario, which also can be argued to create a different opinion formation process than when respondents are judging a current situation. Thirdly, the political reality surrounding the question of EU membership will logically differ from a current member state with a consolidated market economy and democracy to a post-communist state which is still undergoing a transition process, and these differences will also cause EU membership to be regarded in a different way by respondents. Such differences in political and economic realities may be contributing to different results in the tests carried out on Visegrád respondents than on the respondents in the EU15.5

5 However, tests of the model have not returned the same results in the EU15; Jenssen and Moses found that economic conditions had little effect on voting behaviour in the Nordic accession referendums, which reveals that the effects of economic situation are not consistent across the bloc. See Jenssen and Moses (1998), ‘The Economic Environment,” in Jenssen et al. (eds), To join or not to Join, p. 152.
To examine the individual-level variables; the variable which measured how people regarded their situation to be in five years was a more reliable predictor of attitudes than evaluations of one’s current situation, which reflected a certain importance in future outlooks for one’s personal situation. However, the theoretical proximity between this variable and EU membership also appears somehow smaller than the link between EU attitudes and evaluations of current life situation and how one’s situation is compared to five years ago. The cognitive process of judging something hypothetical in the future (EU membership) may be more related to people’s expected future situation than their current situations. This might constitute an explanation for the varying effects of predictors which measured experiences with the status quo. However, this interpretation is tentative and remains a suggestion only, since the actual reasons for respondents’ underlying choices unfortunately cannot be disclosed through a general survey.

The inconsistent effect of demographic characteristics may also have been related to the high consensus on the issue, and it is possible that support for EU membership cut across demographic cleavages which caused the inconsistent results from socio-economic variables. Another possible theoretical explanation for the lack of effects of demographics could be that the pressing nature of the EU question led people, including those who possessed low competitive skills, to regard membership as so important that they were in favour of it even if they personally would not be the best placed to reap benefits from accession. On the other hand, the idea that people with low competitive skills will not regard EU membership favourably since they will feel threatened by it or not expect to benefit personally from accession can be questioned. It could also be hypothesised that people who seek improvement in their economic or professional situation would be positive to EU membership, since they saw it as providing opportunities. Such an evaluation could occur, at least theoretically, among unskilled workers and people with lower income, and even the unemployed, which was the case for Slovaks without jobs in 2003. Unemployed Slovaks were highly positive towards membership, most likely due to the opportunities membership would provide for finding work abroad, or hopes that EU membership would improve the local economy and employment situation. The migration of unskilled workers from CEE to more developed member states can be taken as evidence that such a view exists; EU membership appears to have brought about opportunities for ‘losers’ of the
transition process, and these prospects may have been anticipated prior to accession and caused ‘losers’ to regard membership with favour. It can also be argued that the same reasoning may apply to people with low income, and that this was the reason for the varying effects on this variable too; people with lower income may also have hoped that EU membership would bring about possibilities for them to improve their situation. Also rural citizens could have anticipated to benefit from accession, even if the general understanding is that this group will not be able to avail of economic opportunities, since these will mainly be available in central areas. However, it is possible that rurally located people had hoped to benefit from structural and agricultural funding if the country joined the EU. It can therefore be anticipated that ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ will both be in favour of EU membership, just for different reasons. Still, the more consistent effects of age and education suggest the opposite, as several of the models revealed that young, or middle-aged respondents in some cases, would have higher odds for believing that EU membership would be a good thing, as well as those with higher education. Young and middle-aged people may perceive themselves to be in the ‘prime’ of their career and that they have opportunities to excel professionally, which older respondents, who will be closer to retirement age or retired, will not have the same outlooks. A similar reasoning may explain why education had a relatively consistent effect; the higher education people have, the more they may expect to be able to avail of new opportunities. However, given the overall poor results from the tests of socio-demographics, Gabel and Palmer’s justification for the claim that personal competitiveness will function as a determinant of attitudes towards membership required further examination: these tests relatively that they were less important than other considerations when people formed opinions on EU accession, alternatively, the effects of competitiveness on EU attitudes may have been different in the Visegrád countries than the theoretical model expected.

Based on this discussion, a suggestion for modification of the model can be put forward. It is essential to keep the initial theoretical underpinning which poses that citizens make cost-benefit calculations when forming opinions on European integration, but the model could also specify a hierarchy of predictors. The theoretical framework should argue that people first and foremost will make utilitarian consideration on the basis on what will benefit the country as a whole, and that they secondly will make calculations based on evaluations of personal benefits from
integration. Even if this assumption can be criticised theoretically, as explained in the previous paragraph, it still is useful to include since a certain effect was evident from the tests in this study, in addition the fact that previous studies on the matter have concluded that such evaluations matter. Secondly, the effects of personal-level evaluations may change when citizens have become used to the idea of being citizens of the Common Market and when the issue has become less salient. However, the justification for using these variables should avoid, if possible, claiming that personal situation is a proxy for the national economy, and rather argue that people may use their personal situation as a framework for judging how EU membership will influence them personally.

9.3.1. Theoretical foundations and applicability to Central and Eastern Europe

While Gabel and Palmer’s model was found to have produced useful information about the opinion formation processes in the main as well as the control cases, and to be general, parsimonious and flexible, it is necessary to conduct a more thorough discussion of the theoretical assumptions of the model, and explore more thoroughly whether it contains assumptions which are theoretically unfit to apply to case studies in post-communist democracies. Some of these issues were addressed in the previous section, but still require further examination in order to assess whether the model is well suited to study how citizens in post-communist states form opinions on European integration.

To begin with, the aspect of the model which concerns personal competitiveness as measured by socio-demographic characteristics was discussed in the previous section, and it was suggested that the theoretical assumptions were possibly less applicable to the post-communist/pre-membership context than to consolidated democracies/old member states. However, a few more factors remain to be discussed.

First of all, it needs to be explored whether Gabel and Palmer’s two-step assumption that citizens’ evaluations of their own economic situation will function as proxies for how they view the national economy is sufficiently justified, and it can also be questioned whether these evaluations will function as proxies when people form attitudes on European integration. As was noted in Chapter 2, Gabel and Palmer
criticise Eichenberg and Dalton’s model of economic voting by contesting the latter’s assumption that the national economy will directly influence attitudes towards European integration. They argue that citizens will not necessarily correlate economic conditions with EC membership and hold the Community responsible for the economic situation of the country. The same argument can be put forward for the effect of evaluations of personal situation towards EU attitudes. The assumption that personal situation is a proxy for objective national economy requires that citizens are capable of judging the effects of the national economy on their personal situation. Therefore, if citizens experience a link between objective and subjective conditions, we cannot be sure that it reflects the reality of the economic conditions. It is clear by now that the transition process has not brought about equal opportunities for citizens, and people may or may not be aware of the fact that the economic situation does not necessarily reflect their personal experiences. It is possible that ‘winners’ of the transition process, who generally are higher educated and therefore should be capable of judging the state of the national situation better than lower educated ‘losers,’ are well aware that the country faces economic problems, but that they have been lucky to find opportunities despite the difficult state of the national economy. Likewise, it can be assumed that ‘losers’ know that there also are ‘winners’ within the system, and believe that the national situation is better than their own since they are aware that transition has brought about opportunities which they have not been able to avail of. If it is taken into account that this group may not possess the resources to make qualified judgements about the state of the national economy, it becomes even more likely that subjective perceptions may not necessarily reflect objective conditions. It should also be noted, as was explained in Chapter 3 and briefly mentioned in the previous section, that when applying the hypothesis to case studies in CEE before accession, the respondents who were asked would not yet have become citizens of the common market. Therefore, an eventual correlation between personal situation and conditions and attitudes towards EU membership, if established, would be better interpreted as reflecting expectations on how EU membership would influence their personal situation than how they experience the effect of EU membership, which the model supposes. This is not to suggest that the model cannot be applied to countries which are not yet EU members, but that results must be interpreted as a result of projections than direct evaluations of the effects of EU membership.
The second step of Gabel and Palmer’s argument, that such proxies will be used as a framework for making cost-benefit calculations of EU membership, can also be questioned. Citizens may or may not connect such personal circumstances with how they regard EU membership; the EU may be viewed as something which more will have an effect on the country as a whole, and not be regarded as being so over-reaching that it will influence one’s own situation. Therefore, respondents may not necessarily expect that EU membership will influence one’s personal living standard. Alternatively, people with low satisfaction of life may also deem the situation as hopeless, and that EU membership cannot change the situation. This may explain why the variables which measured life satisfaction and comparing one’s situation to five years ago only occasionally showed that there was correlation between the variables and attitudes towards the EU. When respondents were asked how they expected their life to be in five years, a more consistent connection between a positive outlook on personal situation and EU membership was found. This tells us that current situation was not as important as how they hoped it would be in the future, and the significant effects of this predictor could be interpreted as a belief that EU membership could improve their personal situation. However, previous studies that show that experiences of transition are transferred into attitudes towards EU membership exist, and that people who are unsatisfied with status quo also are more critical towards EU membership, which suggests that Gabel and Palmer’s argument cannot be rejected based on the results in this study only, even if it can be theoretically criticised.

Hence, the question remains whether the case-specific circumstances may have caused respondents to make different connotations when asked about their opinions on EU membership than Gabel and Palmer’s model intended. It may be more ideal to slightly modify some assumptions before the hypothesis is applied to post-communist case studies. It can be argued that this restricts the applicability and generality of the model, but it must also be emphasised that the applications on the Visegrád cases did lead to useful results even if they were slightly different than theoretically expected. This suggests that the model is a useful framework for analysis even if the results did not meet all assumptions of the model. If one takes country/region-specific factors into account when interpreting the results, the model can still be applied as a theoretical framework, alternatively, with the modifications which were suggested in the previous section.
9.3.3. Alternative approaches for testing Gabel and Palmer’s hypothesis

Since Gabel and Palmer’s own tests of the model thoroughly explore the hypotheses and have experimented with a number of predictors for tests in the old member states, additional testing of the models should first and foremost be expanded to additional case studies. Then it should include more variables which measure opinions on the national economy and state of democracy, and as well on personal economic circumstances. Ideally, the demographic variables should also include tests for effects of belonging to different professions, to further highlight differences between professional groups. Comparative tests should be carried out between post-communist states and consolidated economies to control for differences, and moreover, tests on the EU27 as a group would have revealed information which would more fully demonstrate the parsimony and generality of the model. While Gabel and Palmer use multinominal probit for their tests and this study has presented results from ordered logit and generalised ordered logit, experiments with additional measurement methods would have provided additional information on which methods bring about the most stable results. One useful approach would have been to conduct time-series analysis to shed light on differences over time. This would have been particularly interesting given the current climate of financial crisis, since economic hardship can be expected to bring about changes in economic evaluations and possibly also opinions towards EU membership.

9.4. Comparing the models

Even if the results confirmed that both models were able to produce empirical information on public opinion formation, it still remains to be discussed whether the results and the properties of the models suggests that one model should be preferred over the other. The preceding sections highlighted that the models display strengths and weaknesses on different levels. However, while both models contain parsimonious and general properties, there are differences in terms of ease in testing the models and interpreting the results, and how the theoretical assumptions were met by the tests in this study.
To begin with the level of difficulty in testing the models, there is a clear difference between the models. Zaller’s model takes its point of departure in the message environment of the case studies and therefore requires more thorough primary research than Gabel and Palmer’s model. Unless party positions on European integration have been examined, it is not possible to judge whether the country which has been selected for research constitute a one-or two-way message environment, which is the core of the theoretical argument. Such an understanding is also necessary to interpret the results in order to determine whether respondents and elites were or were not in consensus about the EU issue, which is essential for the model for polarised message environments. Such preliminary research is time-consuming and requires thorough reviews of literature. The advantage of Gabel and Palmer’s model is that it requires less understanding of country-specific factors, even if a certain understanding is necessary to discuss the underlying reasons for the results which were produced. Zaller’s model is also more complex to apply in practical tests since it requires post-estimation analyses in order to fully utilise the information from the initial findings, and interpreting the results require higher attention to detail than Gabel and Palmer’s model. The latter model is therefore easier to apply and interpret in practical tests.

The results did meet the assumptions of neither model unconditionally. However, the results from Gabel and Palmer’s models suggested that possible criticisms of the theoretical underpinnings were on a less fundamental level than Zaller’s model. While the former model contained assumptions where the suggested criticisms also were feasible to defend, the apparent problem with Zaller’s model was related to the basic distinction between message environments. The assumption that mainstream and polarised environments create different contexts for public opinion formation was not excluded on a theoretical level, but Zaller’s approach was found not to be able to explain such differences. The lack of significance of demographic predictors in Gabel and Palmer’s model suggested that not all variables in the model were able to explain variance, but this did not constitute reasons to question the core of the model. Neither did the findings which suggested that a hierarchy of predictors was present constitute reasons to doubt that citizens make cost-benefit evaluations, it just suggested that some forms of evaluations were more important than others. The assumptions of Gabel and Palmer’s model were therefore met to a higher extent by the results, hence,
in terms of success in model-testing, the experiments with Gabel and Palmer’s hypothesis provided stronger support for the fundamental theoretical framework than the tests of Zaller’s model.

However, it is still difficult to argue that one model produced more useful empirical results than the other. Even if the theoretical foundations of Zaller’s model were questioned on a fundamental level, the very fact that the theory could not be confirmed brought about interesting knowledge. The fact that opinion formation processes took on similar forms irrespective of message environment is an interesting result which teaches us something, which suggests that Zaller’s model does not need to be verified in order to produce useful output. Unless the model is rejected due to insufficient information, as was the case in the three control cases, empirical results which question the model are also valuable results. If Gabel and Palmer’s model was rejected, little information would have been brought about from this rejection: we would only have known that people do not make cost-benefit analyses and would have no possibilities to search for alternative explanations. This is a reason to recommend further tests of Zaller’s model, since it operates with two scenarios, depending on message environment. If a case is found not to meet the assumptions of the scenario it is expected to, it can still meet the assumptions of the other or be a combination of both, which was the case in this study.

To return to one of the reasons for choosing the models: that they represent different schools of thought in public opinion research, it remains to be discussed whether these tests suggest that one school of thought is to be preferred over another and whether the results in this study contribute to this debate. This becomes a difficult task, since none of the applied models received unconditional support from the tests. There is therefore no empirical evidence to support a claim that external cueing is more able to explain public opinion formation than internally processed evaluations/personal characteristics or vice versa. Making such a choice based on only two models would also be a biased conclusion, since more evidence would be required to answer the question. The results rather suggest that one should not exclude the effects of neither internal nor external cues and that opinions are formed as a function of both, which agrees with several previous studies on public opinion which include the effects of internal and external factors. However, research on public opinion formation is still
left to fully examine whether there are situations or cases where citizens will rely more on elite influence than internal evaluations or values or vice versa, and is an interesting path for research. This applies especially to countries in Central and Eastern Europe where the political systems are still not consolidated and where the available political options often appear unclear. It was emphasised in Chapter 2 that researchers have not reached consensus about the actual effects of elite influence on citizens in the new member states, however, Zaller’s model may not be the most useful theoretical foundation for fully exploring the matter. It is still useful to continue to experiment with models which represent the ‘schools of thought’ and compare the results from these to explore if one theoretical framework is more explanatory than the other.

To conclude this section, these results suggested that the assumptions of Zaller's model were met to a lesser extent than those of Gabel and Palmer’s model; that the latter model requires less preparation before it is applied, but that both models produced useful information on public opinion formation. This suggests that Gabel and Palmer’s model is theoretically more robust than Zaller’s, but it must be emphasised that the latter model should be more fully explored before its theoretical properties can be fully rejected. However, based on the results in this study, Gabel and Palmer's model proved to be a more reliable framework for studying public opinion formation in the Central and Eastern European case studies than Zaller’s, even if the latter model also contributed to producing valid results.

9.5. Summary and conclusion

The tests which were carried out in this study highlighted a number of factors which have been discussed and analysed in this chapter. This section will provide a summary of the conclusions which were reached, while the following chapter will discuss how this study forms a contribution to the field of public opinion research, as well as the problems and limitations of the study.

To begin with, it was concluded that both models were useful frameworks for studying public opinion formation in the Visegrád countries. The applications brought about useful information on opinion formation even if some of the results did not
meet the theoretical assumptions of the models. The results prompted a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the theoretical foundations and the methodologies of the respective models. In the case of Zaller’s model, awareness was found to be a reliable predictor of opinions towards EU membership, but the results also suggested that the effect was modified by political predispositions. This led to a critical discussion on whether the distinction between message environments is a useful theoretical foundation for studying public opinion, and suggestions on how to redefine the model to either exclude or treat the distinction differently were presented. Gabel and Palmer’s model was also confirmed with some reservations, but it was still found that the theoretical framework in itself contained valid hypotheses for deductively studying public opinion formation. The results suggested that there were differences between the types of predictors, in the sense that collective considerations were more important proxies in the opinion formation process than individual-level cost-benefit calculations. The model was therefore suggested to be redefined to include a specification of such a hierarchy. Furthermore, the two-step assumption that personal experiences will function as proxies for the national economy and also will influence attitudes towards European integration was critically examined. However, the core of the theoretical foundation of the model which argues that citizens will make cost-benefit evaluations when they form opinions about EU membership was accepted, since the hierarchical nature of the predictors did not directly question this assumption.

Despite these critical remarks, both models were found to be able to produce interesting information on the subject, even if the theoretical assumptions of Zaller’s model were not met by the results. Based on the conclusion that the theoretical properties of Gabel and Palmer’s model were confirmed to a greater extent than Zaller’s, and since an application of Gabel and Palmer’s model requires less preparation, the latter model was concluded to be the most effective framework for analysis. This was not to recommend that Zaller’s model should not be subject to further tests; even if the model was not fully confirmed, the results were still interesting.

The analyses of the models also included a discussion of whether they were applicable to case studies in Central and Eastern Europe, and even if certain aspects of
the models were regarded as creating different connotations for citizens in the new member states than in the EU15, the models were still regarded as generally applicable to the post-communist member states. The chapter also provided suggestions of alternative methodologies for testing the models, which included uses of more predictors and experiments with different measurement tools, such as time-series analyses.

Finally, this chapter has demonstrated that the study has brought about information which concerns several aspects of the process of studying public opinion, both on the empirical and methodological level. The following chapter will examine whether this study succeeded in answering the research questions, and how it has produced a contribution to research to this academic discipline.
Chapter 10

Conclusions

10.1. A brief summary

This study was designed to explore public opinion processes in Central and Eastern European countries towards EU membership through using Zaller’s model of opinion formation and Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis. The secondary aim was to critically examine the theoretical foundations of the models and discuss whether they are applicable and parsimonious. The study also wished to explore whether and how the models can be applied in future research into the realm, and whether one model could be given stronger recommendations for further research than the other. A third objective of the study was to contribute to the academic debate on whether ‘old’ models of opinion formation, which originally were designed to test case studies in the old member states, are applicable to case studies in Central and Eastern Europe. The selected case studies were the Visegrád countries; the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary with the remaining 2004 post-communist EU entrants, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia as control studies. The models were tested over the time period between 2002-2004 in order to investigate whether the effects of the predictors differed over time, and to include surveys which were conducted around the time of the accession referendums.

The results showed that the models were able to produce information on public opinion formation, but that certain theoretical assumptions of the models could be questioned. For Zaller’s model, the hypothesis that higher awareness would predict support for EU membership in mainstream message environments, and that political predispositions would determine whether people were positive to integration in polarised cases, could not be fully confirmed. The results pointed more in the direction that the higher awareness respondents possessed, the more positive they would be towards EU membership in all cases irrespective of message environment, and this effect was modified by predispositions. The results created a foundation for a critique of the hypothesis, and therefore, it was suggested that a defined version of the model would either avoid the reliance on a distinction between message
environments, alternatively, search for different variables to describe the difference between one-and two-way message scenarios. A third alternative was suggested to create a model based on the same theoretical foundations, but take region-specific factors into account when defining the model. For Gabel and Palmer’s model, the results showed that there was a hierarchy of predictors to be defined, where cost-benefit calculations on whether EU membership would be good for society as a whole were more consistent predictors of attitudes than personal-level evaluations. The same was the case for the authors’ argument that level of personal competitiveness, measured by demographic characteristics, would bring about differences in support between respondents with low or high competitive skills respectively. This assumption was not consistently met by the results, which showed that socio-demographics were rarely significant variables when the other predictors were controlled for. Therefore, the model was suggested to be modified to specify such a hierarchy of predictors. The suggested modifications for the respective models were complemented with suggestions on appropriate methodology in future applications of the models.

The analyses of the models also included a discussion of whether they were applicable to case studies in Central and Eastern Europe, and even if certain aspects of the models were regarded as creating different connotations for citizens in the new member states than intended from the models, the models were still regarded as generally applicable to post-communist countries. However, it was emphasised that country/region-specific contexts needed to be born in mind when interpreting the results.

The theoretical properties of Gabel and Palmer’s model were confirmed to a greater extent than Zaller’s, and while the theoretical foundations of the latter model was criticised, the core of Gabel and Palmer’s argument was not questioned. In addition to this, applications of Gabel and Palmer’s model require less preparation. Therefore, the latter model was concluded to be the most effective framework for analysis. This did not exclude the possibility that Zaller’s model should be subject to further research. Even if the model was not fully confirmed, the results which were produced were interesting. This is an argument in itself for additional tests of the model, and
moreover, the case studies in this test were too few to provide sufficient evidence for rejecting the theoretical foundations of the model.

10.2. Answering the research question

The objectives of the task have overall been met by the study on many levels, even if the empirical knowledge which was produced differed from what was expected from the models in Zaller’s model to a greater extent than Gabel and Palmer’s. Both models produced useful information, even if the results led to calls for modifications of the models and criticisms towards their intellectual underpinnings. The models were concluded to be overall valid and parsimonious, particularly Gabel and Palmer’s model, and also to the extent that they could be recommended for further research into public opinion in Central and Eastern Europe. The conclusion that these ‘old’ models were applicable to these case studies was somehow contradictory to the criticisms of the theoretical frameworks of the models. While it was argued that there were reasons to question certain aspects of the theoretical assumptions on an intellectual level, they were still found to be overall valid from the results, with the exception of Zaller’s distinction between message environment. It was emphasised that results need to be interpreted with region/country-specific contexts into account to take into account that certain variables may bear different meanings in the new member states than intended from the models. This leads to the conclusion that the objectives of the study were met, even if the models were not unconditionally confirmed.

10.3. Problems, self-criticism and defence

Finally, even though this study has aimed to complement existing studies on approaches and methodologies which uncover what makes citizens tick when they form opinions towards EU membership, some of the classical problems which characterise public opinion research in Central and Eastern Europe contributed to limiting the available options when the study design was defined. As was described in chapter 3, intellectual problems in terms of case study selection and theoretical specifications, as well as data selection, limited the freedom for manoeuvre in terms of choice of design, and to a certain extent narrowed down the available options for which cases, theories and variables which could be selected. These problems were
frequently rooted in the existence of relatively few country-wide surveys, such as the European Social Survey, the World Values Survey and the Eurobarometers. Given the dependence of available variables in the data sets and that these were present in more than one survey, the selection of models was therefore limited. A further difficulty was exactly that Zaller’s and Gabel and Palmer’s models were not designed to explain opinion formation in new member states. This raises questions on how to interpret results within the post-communist context, which was mentioned in the previous chapter. Moreover, working with figures to describe the psychological process through which respondents form opinions relies on certain clarity of connotations which the variables represent, and therefore, interpretations of coefficients can be subject to criticism from a critical reader. Since such limitations as those which were experienced when this study was designed, some of the greatest challenges for future research into public opinion in Central and Eastern Europe remain to find ways of overcoming such obstacles in order to facilitate a simpler research process with more options for manoeuvre.

The approach taken in this thesis can naturally be criticised, and the methodology which was selected can be argued to contain weaknesses. First of all, the selection of predictors can always be open to criticism. Even if the selection of variables was justified in Chapter 3, there are always ways of arguing that different predictors should have been selected, since it is a question of judgement which variables best measure a phenomenon unless these are given from the model. For example, Zaller’s model emphasises knowledge and interest in the subject as measures of awareness. The predictors which were used in these tests were justified to be representative of these factors, but critics may argue that other factors should have been emphasised, such as whether one is likely to vote in general elections. However, based on the available variables in the data set, a selection had to be made since the number of variables has to be restricted according what is the scope of the study. Naturally, this study does not argue that the tests which have been conducted here give final answers to whether the models can explain public opinion formation. The study rather provides a suggestion to how to apply the models, which is a part of the contribution this study makes. Needless to say, there is a need to further studies which apply the models in order to test different approaches and provide more extensive knowledge about the models.
The same argument can be raised for the quantitative applications. As was discussed in Chapter 3, there are weaknesses with ordinal logistic regression which can raise criticism against a choice of using this tool. This study chose to run control models using generalised logistic regression to control the results to cross-check the figures from the ordered models. Since the results contained only minor deviations, the original results received support from the control models, and when discrepancies between the models occurred, it was taken into account and discussed. The uses of predicted probabilities to further analyse the figures can also be criticised since it may be argued to represent ‘fictional’ people who score the same on all variables. This was the reason for not choosing all predictors for the graphing of probabilities, but selecting a few which were deemed theoretically interesting. The fact that the results were relatively consistent across case-studies and largely brought about the same conclusions suggests that there was useful information to be extracted from the probabilities.

Finally, the choice of models may also be questioned by a critical reader. Particularly Zaller’s model can be criticised to measure narrow aspects of the opinion formation process, since it only takes message environment, awareness and political predispositions into account. Gabel and Palmer’s model can be criticised to omit other important factors, such as political values as proxies for making utilitarian evaluations, for example attitudes towards competition and free market economy. However, this study did not choose these models because they were regarded to be the ‘only’ models which have not been applied to case studies in Central and Eastern Europe, or which are theoretically interesting. They were selected since they contain interesting theoretical frameworks which are based on different foundations; the effects of external environment or different measures of cost-benefit calculations. The justification for the choice of models therefore lies in their theoretical properties; that they have not been applied to Central and Eastern European case studies in Zaller’s case; and still has not been conclusively applied in comparative tests which also compared is to a very different model. Most importantly, the theories were selected because the theoretical frameworks were expected to bring about interesting information about public opinion formation in the case studies. These are the reasons that these models were selected, without arguing that this is a superior approach to
testing theories in a comparative perspective; the models do not explain all aspects of
the opinion formation process, but the aspects they do explore are interesting.

10.4. Contributions to research

While pathways to design a study which can contribute to the existing literature on
public opinion towards European integration were discussed in Chapter 3, it remains
to be summarised which contribution this study has made. While the actual results and
output was summarised above and was discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 9, this
section will summarise the aspects of this study which have added to the existing
information within the field.

First of all, the study has produced empirical information on public opinion formation
towards EU membership in the Visegrád countries in the time period of 2002-4.
While the information is limited within the framework of the selected models, the
empirical evidence which was presented provided knowledge about certain aspects of
the opinion formation process, which, as was explained in section 3.3. of the theory
and methodology chapter, were found theoretically interesting to examine.

Secondly, as was one of the main aims of the study, the study has examined whether
Zaller’s and Gabel and Palmer’s models are capable of explaining the aspects of the
opinion formation process as they are designed to, and therefore, this study has
contributed to illuminate strengths and weaknesses of the models. The results were
complemented with critical examinations of the models and their assumptions, as well
as suggestions on how to re-define the model and apply them in future research. What
is more, the comparisons of models provided a contribution to existing knowledge
about the strengths and weaknesses of the models.

Thirdly, the methodology which was used in this study has suggested a different
methodological framework for testing the models, and the output this methodology
produced has produced suggestions for future analyses which apply the models. This
forms a contribution towards public opinion modelling in general. Moreover, the
choice of testing the models over a short period of time not only provided a stronger
empirical base for making conclusions about the models, but also on whether the effects of proxies change as issues become more or less salient.

A final point is that these tests have added contributions to the academic debate whether ‘old’ models designed to research public opinion in the old member states are applicable to case studies in the new member states. By attempting to answer this question, the study has brought a contribution towards the debate through the tests of two familiar models and the assessment of their applicability towards such case studies. Concluding that the models can be transferred suggested that the option of using ‘old’ models should not be excluded, and provides a suggestion that similar experiments with traditional models can be justified. The study has also added to the knowledge of the problems which arise when studying public opinion formation in Central and Eastern Europe.

10.5. Concluding remarks and food for thought

At the time of writing, the future of European integration looks uncertain with the recent rejection of the Lisbon Treaty by the Irish electorate. At the time of writing, the Treaty is yet to be endorsed in a second referendum, which will be crucial to determine the future of European integration.

Previous treaties which have aimed to enhance integration have in several cases been met by critical civic responses. Possibly the most dramatic change in public opinion structures occurred after the Treaty of Maastricht, which only narrowly was endorsed by the French electorate and was rejected in the first vote by the Danes. These events were followed by increased Euroscepticism among the citizens of the Community.

The perception that the integration project is an elite-led project which does not reflect the interests of the citizens has become more widespread, and as political disenchantment and discontent with political elites is growing, European as well as national politicians struggle to find support for enhanced integration as well as rallying interest for it. Citizens of post-communist countries face an even more difficult dilemma; not only is public discontent with political elites comparatively very high, but increasingly more citizens of Central and Eastern Europe question
whether democratic reforms and European integration as the symbol of a final
departure from the past have brought about the results they had hoped for. Public
disillusionment is directed towards more fundamental political questions than in the
old member states, since citizens in consolidated democracies rarely question the type
of regime they live in, but focus their critique on selected aspects of it. This
characteristic is important to take into account when conducting further research on
public opinion in the region, and it also necessitates that variables which cover more
aspects than direct attitudes towards integration are included in analyses.

The recent debacle about the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, which was only ratified
after two Irish referendums and heated debates in other member states such as the
Czech Republic and Poland, taps into questions on whether a deepening of integration
can continue with the support of the member states and their citizens. Increasing EU-
critical sentiments call for the continued development of models and hypotheses to
describe and explain the structure of attitudes towards integration. Theoretical
foundations of such models may have to be reconsidered as the political environment
of integration changes, especially when the current financial crisis is taken into
account. These are some of the reasons that public opinion researchers will continue
to meet challenges, and that the field will always continue to develop.
Appendix A
Control tests for Zaller’s model, generalised ordered logistic regression

The outcome categories on the dependent variable which are reported are outcome 1 and 2, with outcome 3 as the reference category. The question which was asked was phrased *Generally speaking, do you think that (our country’s) membership of the European Union would be/will be: 1) A good thing? 2) A bad thing? 3) Neither good nor bad.*

Table A1. Generalised ordered logit estimates for the Czech Republic, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Often discuss politics</em></td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Persuading others of opinion</em></td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Watching EU news</em></td>
<td>1.45**</td>
<td>1.45**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Watching TV news</em></td>
<td>.58**</td>
<td>.58**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Knowledge (self-reported)</em></td>
<td>1.35**</td>
<td>1.35**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Actual knowledge</em></td>
<td>1.29**</td>
<td>1.29**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Education</em></td>
<td>1.37**</td>
<td>1.37**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Left-right position</em></td>
<td>1.05**</td>
<td>1.05**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Left-right position</em>^2</td>
<td>.99**</td>
<td>.99**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were no differences between the generalised ordered model and the ordered model which was presented in the case study chapter.
Table A2. Generalised ordered logit estimates for Slovakia, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
<td>2.76**</td>
<td>1.62**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV news</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>1.54**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td>1.05**</td>
<td>1.05**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position^2</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The only difference between the ordered model and the control model was that self-reported knowledge was not significant on outcome 1. The other discrepancies were very marginal adjustment of a few of the odds ratios. The $R^2$ was also slightly higher in the generalised ordered model.
Table A3. Generalised ordered logit estimates for Poland, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>1.34**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
<td>1.53*</td>
<td>1.53*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV news</td>
<td>1.35*</td>
<td>1.35*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td>.96**</td>
<td>.96**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position$^2$</td>
<td>.99**</td>
<td>.99*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The only difference from the original model was that persuading others during discussions was significant for outcome 2, which it was not in the ordered model. The odds from left-right position and the squared term remained unchanged, while the remaining odds were marginally adjusted. The $R^2$ was also higher in the generalised model.
Table A4. Generalised ordered logit estimates for Hungary, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Often discuss politics</em></td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Persuading others of opinion</em></td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Watching EU news</em></td>
<td>1.87**</td>
<td>2.06**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Watching TV news</em></td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Knowledge (self-reported)</em></td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>1.34**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Actual knowledge</em></td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Education</em></td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Left-right position</em></td>
<td>.85**</td>
<td>.78**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Left-right position</em>(^2)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two differences from the original model were to be noted: self-reported knowledge was not significant on outcome 1, and education was not significant at all, which questions the effects of education in the ordered model. The odds ratios for the other variables remained close to the values in the original model, but note the difference in odds produced by left-right position, which were lower than the .87 in the original model.
Table A5. Generalised ordered logit estimates for Estonia, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-506.47319</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;chi²</td>
<td>0.0987</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>1.87**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV news</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>1.79**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td>1.20*</td>
<td>1.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position²</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Watching EU news and self-reported knowledge were not significant for outcome 2, while the remaining values were very close or equivalent to the estimates in the ordered model.
Table A6. Generalised ordered logit estimates for Latvia, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Often discuss politics</em></td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Persuading others of opinion</em></td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Watching EU news</em></td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>1.42**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Watching TV news</em></td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Knowledge</em> (self-reported)</td>
<td>1.41**</td>
<td>1.41**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Actual knowledge</em></td>
<td>1.17*</td>
<td>1.17*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Education</em></td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Left-right position</em></td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Left-right position</em></td>
<td>1.01**</td>
<td>1.01**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The only change from the original model was that EU news was significant on outcome 2. The other changes were only marginal adjustments of odds ratios from the ordered model.
Table A7. Generalised ordered logit estimates for Lithuania, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
<td>2.15**</td>
<td>2.15**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV news</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td>1.84**</td>
<td>1.84**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.90**</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Except education, which became significant on outcome 1, the changes from the original model were only marginal adjustments of odds ratios on a few variables and did not change the interpretations from the ordered model.
Table A8. Generalised ordered logit estimates for Slovenia, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Often discuss politics</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading others of opinion</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching EU news</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV news</td>
<td>1.65**</td>
<td>1.65**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (self-reported)</td>
<td>1.48**</td>
<td>1.48**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right position^2</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The changes from the original model are only marginal adjustments of odds ratios; the odds for watching EU news increased with .03, and the remaining values were unchanged.
Summary and discussion

While the overall results produced only marginal different odds ratios or results which were equivalent to the ordered model, the few changes which occurred were relatively evenly distributed between response categories and variables and produced no specific patterns. Only seven discrepancies could detected, which reflect that the odds in the ordered model were largely proportional and that no specific problematic variables could be identified. The only case where a variable was not significant on any outcome was education in the Hungarian model. The marginal differences between the odds which were produced in the ordered logit models support the estimates in the initial analyses, and suggest that the results which were produced by the ordered logit model were largely reliable.

To be sure, the 2002 and 2004 control models, which also were conducted for the control studies, produced similarly few discrepancies and did not endanger the interpretations of the ordered models. However, one exception should be noted, as there were five cases when self-reported knowledge was not significant on outcome 1; the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 2002 and 2004 and Slovenia in 2004. The fact that the discrepancies occurred on the same response category and twice in the same countries suggest that the effect on this variable was slightly inconsistent in these case studies. In other words; before and after the referendum, Czechs and Slovaks who believed that EU membership would be a ‘bad thing’ held that opinions for other reasons than their own impression of their knowledge. However, while the effects of this variable was consistent across case-studies, except in Slovenia, it can be accepted that the variable is suited for comparative tests, but should be interpreted with a certain degree of caution in the Czech and Slovak cases.
Appendix B. Control tests for Gabel and Palmer’s utilitarian hypothesis, generalised ordered logistic regression

Table B1. Generalised ordered logit estimates for the Czech Republic, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>1.76*</td>
<td>1.48*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>2.58**</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>1.76*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>5.42**</td>
<td>7.19**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>2.23**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age²</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>1.57**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The control tests identify three problematic variables in the ordered logistic model. Satisfaction with democracy, and satisfaction with life were not significant on outcome 2, and life situation in five years and education on outcome 1. The remainder of the results were only marginally changed and did not change the interpretation of the original results.
Table B2. Generalised ordered logit estimates for Slovakia, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfaction with life</strong></td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Life compared to 5 years ago</strong></td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfaction with democracy</strong></td>
<td>2.05**</td>
<td>2.05**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situation in 5 years</strong></td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Country advantages</strong></td>
<td>5.12**</td>
<td>5.12**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic prosperity</strong></td>
<td>4.48**</td>
<td>4.48**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age^2</strong></td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban-rural</strong></td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>1.32*</td>
<td>1.32*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unemployed</strong></td>
<td>2.82**</td>
<td>2.82**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The only change from the original ordered model was that income was not significant, and the remaining odds were either not changed at all from the original model or changed marginally adjustments of the odds ratios.
Table B3. Generalised ordered logit estimates for Poland, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td>1.74**</td>
<td>1.76**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>6.24**</td>
<td>9.92**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age$^2$</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The differences from the original ordered model were very small, odds ratios were only marginally adjusted, and the interpretation of the odds remained unchanged.
Table B4. Generalised ordered logit estimates for Hungary, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>.59*</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>1.42*</td>
<td>1.42*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td>2.03**</td>
<td>2.03**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>7.20**</td>
<td>7.20**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age²</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two differences between the original and the generalised model were evident: satisfaction with life was significant on outcome 1, and age was not significant at all in the generalised ordered model. The remaining odds ratios were only marginally changed.
Table B5. Generalised ordered logit estimates for Estonia, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-417.6238</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob&gt;chi²</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFadden’s R²</td>
<td>0.3324</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>1.342196</td>
<td>1.342196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.365013*</td>
<td>1.365013*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>1.84**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>3.01**</td>
<td>6.71**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>8.53**</td>
<td>8.53**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age²</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The only change from the original model was that satisfaction with democracy was not significant in for outcome 1, and the odds for this variable was higher for outcome 2 than was produced from ordered logit. The same was the case for country advantages, which produced higher odds in these models, especially for outcome 2. Except these changes, the results remained only marginally changed.
Table B6. Generalised ordered logit estimates for Latvia, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>2.49**</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>5.50**</td>
<td>11.05**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>2.35**</td>
<td>2.35**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age$^2$</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While satisfaction with democracy was significant in the ordered model, it was not in this case for outcome 2; and the odds for outcome 1 which this variable produced was also notably higher. Situation in five years was also not significant, which was a change from the first model. Country advantages also produced higher odds in outcome 2 and lower in outcome 1 than the original model, while the remaining results remained only marginally changed.
Table B7. Generalised ordered logit estimates for Lithuania, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Log likelihood</strong></td>
<td>-183.10033</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prob&gt;chi^2</strong></td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>McFadden’s R^2</strong></td>
<td>0.5673</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>1.61*</td>
<td>1.61*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td>1.84**</td>
<td>1.84**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>33.64**</td>
<td>33.64**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>3.51**</td>
<td>3.51**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age^2</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>.20**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The changes from the ordered model were very small; the only difference was that unemployment was not significant for outcome 1, and that the odds produced on outcome 2 were smaller than in the original model; and also significant at the .01 level as opposed to the .5 level in the original model.
Table B8. Generalised ordered logit estimates for Slovenia, 2003

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{Log likelihood} & -375.53381 \\
\text{Prob>chi}^2 & 0.0000 \\
\text{McFadden’s } R^2 & .2378 \\
\end{array}
\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life compared to 5 years ago</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>1.58**</td>
<td>1.58**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation in 5 years</td>
<td>1.49**</td>
<td>1.49**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country advantages</td>
<td>4.35**</td>
<td>4.35**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>3.02**</td>
<td>3.02**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age(^2)</td>
<td>1.16*</td>
<td>1.16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban-rural</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The only change from the ordered model was that the squared term of age became significant. Except this discrepancy, the same variables remained significant with only minor changes in the odds ratios.
Summary and discussion

The estimates from the generalised ordered model produced overall similar odds ratios to the ordered model, and the main differences were only marginal adjustments of the odds. The most notable differences were that age was not at all significant in Hungary and income in Slovakia, and the squared term of age was significant in the control model but not in the original model in Slovenia, which changed the interpretation of the negative effect of age. The 2002 GOL models reported similarly few discrepancies: in Latvia, and life situation compared to five years ago was not significant, which was a change from the ordered model, and the same was the case with education, which was not significant in Slovakia. The 2004 models contained no drastic differences, but satisfaction with life became significant in Slovakia, which it was not in the ordered model.

Even if these few discrepancies do not constitute a strong reason to reject that the variables are overall reliable; since these were distributed over different case studies, the deviations are random and it should be sufficient to accept that its non-parallel properties created a few deviations in the GOL models. However, it may still be advised to bear these discrepancies in mind when reading the ordered tables where discrepancies did occur.
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