A rural-urban divide in Europe? An analysis of political attitudes and behaviour

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Abstract

This Technical report offers insights on how the spatial dimension of attitudes and political behaviour across Europe relates to the underlying socio-demographic and economic features. In investigating the existence and nature of a rural-urban divide, it aims to support the Commission’s activities towards a Communication on a Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas.

This work builds upon the JRC Science for Policy report *Immigration and trust in the EU. A territorial analysis of voting behaviour and attitudes* (Scipioni, Tintori et al. 2019). It examines if and how a rural-urban divide may correlate and impact on Europeans’ opinions and political choices, with specific reference to a series of issues considered to be particularly divisive in European public discourses in recent times. The study splits the analysis in two parts: one related to data on attitudes, the other on political behaviour. In the part based on survey data, it first looks at the 2018 Flash Eurobarometer on Regions and then, to gain a time perspective, it considers the Standard Eurobarometer series from 2003 to 2019. This section focuses on whether and how attitudes have shifted in rural versus urban areas towards the EU and national governments, as well as over immigration.

The part on the political behaviour looks at the European Parliament elections of 2014 and 2019. The section first describes how the political offer of European parties has evolved between the two elections, in relation to the EU and immigration policies according to the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES). Then, it analyses how European voters, divided according to their residence in urban, rural or intermediate territories, cast their votes in both elections for parties coded according to their positions towards the EU and immigration.

Overall, the empirical analysis detects some signs of a rural-urban divide in the political attitudes and behaviour of Europeans, but unevenly across various Member States and, importantly, their occurrence is issue-dependent. In addition, the observed geographic differences are less territorial in nature than a second-order manifestation of socio-demographic structural characteristics. The study thus contributes to the framework of the JRC work to provide scientific analyses to identify and understand socio-demographic drivers and implications of territorial disparities across the EU, with a view to support knowledge-based policy design and inform tailored measures.
Key messages:

- In the 2018 Flash Eurobarometer on Regions, a rural-urban divide is evident for more Member States in relation to trust towards the EU as compared to trust in the national government. In the Standard Eurobarometer, no urban-rural difference emerges in the respondents’ selection of the two most important issues for their countries, except in relation to the education system, and only in few points in time in relation to housing and inflation.

- In the Standard Eurobarometer surveys between 2003 and 2019, no significant differences emerge in the levels of trust towards national institutions and the EU based on the self-reported level of urbanisation. The same result holds also when looking at satisfaction with democracy at national and EU level.

- When attitudes are grouped by country, region, or level of urbanisation, we observe evidence of rural-urban divides in some but not all cases analysed. However, when holding constant the respondents’ key socio-demographics – such as age, education, and occupation – differences based on self-reported level of urbanisation are no longer evident. Aggregate-level variations are thus likely to be by-products of the structural differences of the population’s socio-demographic features between rural and urban areas.

- When looking at electoral outcomes, data from the 2014 and 2019 European Parliament elections confirm that signs of rural-urban divides emerge when looking at votes for political parties with different stances on EU and immigration. Notably, in a few Member States, parties favouring EU integration and liberal immigration policies tended to receive a larger share of votes in urban rather than rural areas.
Introduction

Among the Commission’s priorities, two – *Promoting our European way of life* and *A New Push for European Democracy* – aim to make the most of the potential of EU regions in cooperation with Member States and local authorities and to tackle territorial inequalities triggered by demographic change, economic and digital transformations. Against this background, the JRC provides scientific analyses to identify and understand socio-demographic drivers and implications of territorial disparities across the EU, with a view to support knowledge-based policy design and inform tailored measures.

Surveys and elections are the main participatory and democratic processes in which Europeans express their positions on the societal and demographic transformations Europe is undergoing. In this context, this work offers insights on how the spatial dimension of attitudes and political behaviour across Europe relates to the underlying socio-demographic and economic features. It examines the existence and nature of a rural-urban divide in the EU towards the structure of political representation (e.g., governments, parties) and a series of issues considered to be particularly divisive in European public discourses in recent times. With its specific reference to rural areas, this report contributes to the range of activities that the JRC has been developing to support the publication of the Commission Communication on a Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas.

This technical note builds upon our previous work on *Immigration and trust in the EU. A territorial analysis of voting behaviour and attitudes* (Scipioni, Tintori et al. 2019), developed in the context of the work *Geography of Discontent* (Dijkstra, Poelman, and Rodriguez-Pose 2018), as well as our study of the political implications of ageing from a territorial perspective (Ch. 6 in Goujon, Jacobs-Crisioni, Natale 2021). We split our analysis in two parts. One related to data on attitudes, the other on political behaviour.

In the part based on survey data, we first look at the 2018 Flash Eurobarometer on Regions\(^1\). We concentrate on the respondents’ rural/urban self-identifier, by country, and look at their attitudes towards the EU and national governments. We then move to the Standard Eurobarometer series from 2003 to 2019 to gain a time perspective. We consider whether and how attitudes have shifted in rural versus urban areas towards the EU and national governments, as well as over immigration.

The part on the political behaviour looks at the European Parliaments elections of 2014 and 2019. We first describe how the political offer of European parties has evolved between the two elections, in relation to the EU and immigration according to the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES)\(^2\). Then, we look at how European voters, divided according to their residence in urban, rural or intermediate territories, cast their votes in both elections for parties coded according to their positions towards the EU and immigration.

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Flash Eurobarometer 2018

The 2018 Flash Eurobarometer on Regions includes several attitudinal questions concerning the level of trust towards various levels of government. In Figure 1, we focus on trust in the EU and the national governments, dividing the respondents according to their self-reported place of living.

Figure 1. Proportions of respondents who tend to trust the EU or the national government by self-reported place of living

When it comes to trust in the EU, an urban-rural divide – in several cases quite large – is notable, with the exceptions of LU, EE, PT and, less markedly, IT, NL and EL. In most MS (LV, MT and HR the only exceptions) trust in the EU is higher among self-reported urban respondents. In the case of trust in the national governments, the overall pattern is much more varied, with values for the self-reported place of living being rather close or overlapping (thus indicating no difference in the proportions).

The Standard Eurobarometer series allow to gain a time perspective and check whether purported differences in attitudes based on the rural or urban self-classification of the respondents have changed over time.

Rural-Urban respondents: different concerns?

In the Standard Eurobarometer, respondents are asked what are the two most important issues for their countries. At the descriptive level, Figure 2 shows that there seems to be little difference between respondents declaring to live in urban versus rural areas, when it comes to the salience of different issues, except quite consistently in relation to the education system, and only in few moments in time in relation to housing and inflation.

Figure 2. Proportions of respondents who consider the issue salient by self-reported place of living

![Figure 2. Proportions of respondents who consider the issue salient by self-reported place of living](image)


Rural-Urban respondents: differences in trust

The analysis carried out in previous section has been descriptive and based upon country- or EU-level aggregates. We now look at the individual level, and check the extent to which the aggregates trends witnessed above are robust to the introduction of controls for respondents’ socio-demographics.

The graph below results from linear probability models where different forms of institutional trust are regressed upon a series of covariates, most importantly self-reported place of living. More precisely, the two lines below portray the predicted probability stemming from an interaction of self-reported place of living with time. Our models did not retrieve any statistically significant differences between the predicted probabilities of different forms of institutional trusts based upon the respondents’ self-reported place of living. In fact, not only the shaded areas representing the confidence intervals, but also the lines for the point estimates overlap to a considerable extent. Thus, as far as the Standard Eurobarometer dataset can tell, we cannot detect signs of a significant urban/rural divide.

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We created this dataset by appending microdata from the GESIS repository.
Figure 3. Predicted probabilities of trusting the EU, the national government, the national parliament, and political parties modulated by place of living.

We ran similar analysis, considering the respondents’ degree of satisfaction with democracy (Figure 17). Again, no statistically significant differences emerge depending on self-reported place of living.

In conclusion, by comparing the aggregate-level, descriptive results in the previous sections and individual-level results in these last paragraphs, the observed differences over both institutional trust and issues salience may have more to do with the structural socio-demographic features of the populations self-reporting to live in rural versus urban areas, rather than with the places themselves. Once we control at the individual level for individual features such as age, gender, education, and occupation, in fact, the differences witnessed at the aggregate level tend to disappear. The suggested explanation builds on Eurostat data, which reveals that, on average, urban areas have attracted more and more young and educated people, whereas rural areas have grown older and host higher shares of low educated. Eurobarometer surveys, which aim at being representative of the national populations, mirror the same compositional characteristics. However, it could be argued that the results might be tainted by the somehow subjective definition of the respondents’ abode. To be thorough, we investigate this aspect in further detail in the next section, where we exploit to the full the different information present in the Eurobarometer surveys concerning the different geographical identifiers.
Locating the respondents: the different geographical identifiers of Eurobarometer surveys (2014-2019)

There are several geographical identifiers available in the Standard Eurobarometer. The first and most obvious is the Member State where respondents reside. Standard Eurobarometer surveys are designed to be representative at such level. Secondly, there is a NUTS (Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics) identifier. Since Eurobarometer series survey 1000 respondents per country, the sampling by NUTS level varies necessarily depending on the Member State’s population size, with some countries including respondents down to NUTS3 level (i.e. roughly at province level, as in the case of HR) and other only at NUTS1 (i.e., macro-regions, as in the case of DE). Third, the self-reported place of living, which is of a subjective nature, as it reports the respondents’ perception of their abode. This variable, as used in the previous section, allows for three values: ‘Rural area or village’, ‘Small or middle sized town’, ‘Large town’. Fourth, the community size, which reflects the classification of the respondents’ location as coded by design by Eurobarometer. Here too, it can take three values: “Rural area”, “Towns and suburbs/small urban area”, “Cities/large urban area”.

In this section, we break down a series of political attitudes – namely, trust in the EU; trust in the national government; trust in regional/local authorities; voice being heard at the EU level – by Member State and community size. This way, differently from the previous section, we locate the respondents according to the definition provided by Eurobarometer, which relies on the degree of urbanisation as classified by Eurostat. It should be noted that the information concerning the community size of the respondents is available only since 2014. The main objective is to test whether differences connected with these geographical identifiers (if any) persist after holding constant a number of respondents’ socio-demographics, namely age, gender, family status, education, occupation, difficult in paying bills, and left-right ideological self-placement.

Descriptively, Figure 4 to Figure 6 offer the breakdown of the respondents by education, age, and occupation according to the attributed community size. As far as education is concerned, there seems to be little variation over time in the EU28 aggregate. As expected (Figure 4), the share of those aged 20 and above when stopped full-time education is highest among those reported to live in cities. Conversely, cities had the lowest share of those having less than 15 years old when stopped full-time education. In addition, the differences in shares of those aged 20 when stopped full-time education in rural areas versus cities is between approximately 15 and 20 percentage points, whereas the differences in those aged less than 15 when stopped full-time education between cities and rural areas is between 5 to 10 percentage points.

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4 The non-parametric correlations between these (ordinal) variables – i.e. community size and place of living – is moderate to high: Kendall’s tau is 0.54, Spearman’s rho 0.59.
5 It should be noted that, in time, Eurobarometer surveys show a drastic drop of respondents living in intermediate places, while those living in rural and cities increased substantially.
7 These values represent the sampling strata of the Eurobarometer surveys. According to the Eurobarometer methodology, ‘The sampling is based on a random selection of sampling points after stratification by the distribution of the national, resident population in terms of metropolitan, urban and rural areas, i.e. proportional to the population size (for a total coverage of the country) and to the population density’ Available at https://www.gesis.org/en/eurobarometer-data-service/survey-series/standard-special-eb/sampling-and-fieldwork. In the Eurobarometer raw data, the community size variable has long been present, albeit it was not harmonised between all Member States until November 2015. Indeed, the Eurobarometer codebooks actually state that that variable was harmonised for all Member States except Germany already in early 2014. In this report, we manually recoded a new variable starting in 2014 for all Member States except Germany. In the case of Germany, we imputed the correspondence between the 10-values community size prior to November 2015 with the matching values of the 3-values community size after 2015. For further details, see Table A1 and Fig. AXXX in Annex.
8 As a technical aside, we also add country and time fixed effects.
9 Thus, for this short note, we can safely pool all observations together without having to resort to more advanced techniques to deal with time series. That being said, the time series here is rather short (about 6 years), so we cannot extrapolate too much from this.
Turning to age composition (Figure 5), we notice a larger portion of younger cohorts in cities as compared to other community sizes, and conversely a higher share of older cohorts in rural areas, with almost no exceptions among Member States.
Turning the attention to occupation (Figure 6), as expected, we observe that cities have the highest share among managers, white collar workers, and students, whereas rural areas display high shares of retired and manual workers.
Figure 6. Occupation by community size and Member State

Source: Standard Eurobarometer, 2014-2019. Notes: Due to uneven coding in the original data, "don't know" replies are discarded. Weighted observations.
Rural-Urban attitudes by community size

Below, we explore the differences between the three levels of community size on a series of attitudinal questions: trust in the EU; trust in the national government; trust in regional/local authorities; voice being heard at the EU level. We include the listed questions as dependent variables not only for the sake of comparison with the previous section, but also because the first analysis revealed that a rural-urban divide may vary depending on the issue at stake. We have purposefully only included essential demographics\textsuperscript{10} of the respondents, with the goal of making the different populations more comparable on what are likely to be relevant traits, no matter what attitudinal question is being asked. We therefore examine whether any difference emerges between any of these identifiers after we include a series of sociodemographic controls\textsuperscript{11}.

Furthermore, the descriptive statistics have shown large degrees of variations between Member States when it came to the interplay between several covariates and community size. It is thus reasonable to assume that the relationships between community size and the attitudinal variables will vary depending on the Member State. Consistently, in our model, we allow the relationships between community size and the attitudinal variables to vary depending on the Member State by ways of interactions. For a more immediate interpretation, we translate the results in predicted probabilities.

Overall, the results suggest in the majority of cases a lack of significant difference between different levels of community size across the considered attitudinal questions, once we control for the socio-demographic features of the respondents. Thus, this section confirms what previously observed in the case of self-reported place of living. In fact, Figure 7 to Figure 10 show that when we balance our data so that the three groups of respondents at each level of the community size are more similar, we factor in our models the uncertainty due to missingness, and we let our main variable of interest (community size) to vary depending upon the Member State, we fail to observe a statistically significant difference between the probabilities associated with each level of community size\textsuperscript{12}. In plain words, these findings confirm that geographic differences are less territorial in nature than a second-order manifestation of demographic and cultural divides – what in the political science and sociology literature is defined compositional effect rather than contextual (see, e.g. Maxwell 2019). The main exception to this story seems the case of trusting the local and regional public authorities – where in several Member States we do observe higher predicted probabilities in rural areas as compared to cities. Again, this is in line with what previously noticed in terms of rural-urban divides likely to be issue-dependent.

\textsuperscript{10} The other main limit of the analysis lies in the high numbers of missing values present in the dataset when we include more attitudinal variables, such as political trust or ideological self-positioning, ranging between a fourth and a third of the dataset. We dealt with this by multiple imputation, using the R package Amelia (see Annex for more details).

\textsuperscript{11} The baselines for these categorical variables are detailed in the Annex.

\textsuperscript{12} Most likely, the other covariates are mopping up all the differences left after we matched the different strata in the data.
Turning now to the specific political attitudes analysed here, Figure 7 reveals that only in LU and MT the predicted probabilities of trusting the EU differ between cities and rural areas.

*Figure 7. Predicted probabilities of trusting the EU associated with community size*

Notes: Country and period dummies. Bars represent 95% confidence intervals with robust standard errors, clustered at NUTS level. Covariates: age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, difficulty in paying bills, left-right ideology.
The predicted probabilities of trusting the national government (Figure 8) differ between cities and rural areas only in FR, LU, PT, and SK.

Figure 8. Predicted probabilities of trusting the national government associated with community size

Notes: Country and period dummies. Bars represent 95% confidence intervals with robust standard errors, clustered at NUTS level. Covariates: age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, difficulty in paying bills, left-right ideology.
In the case of trusting local and regional public authorities (Figure 9), we do notice differences between rural areas and cities, with rural areas showing higher predicted probabilities than cities in BG, CY, CZ, ES, LV, MT.

*Figure 9. Predicted probabilities of trusting local and regional public authorities associated with community size*

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| Notes: Country and period dummies. Bars represent 95% confidence intervals with robust standard errors, clustered at NUTS level. Covariates: age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, difficulty in paying bills, left-right ideology.
Finally, in the case of the predicted probabilities of agreeing that one’s own voice is heard in the EU (Figure 10), respondents residing in cities show higher predicted probabilities as compared to those living in rural areas in IE and LV.

*Figure 10. Predicted probabilities of agreeing that one’s own voice is heard in the EU associated with community size*

Notes: Country and period dummies. Bars represent 95% confidence intervals with robust standard errors, clustered at NUTS level. Covariates: age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, difficulty in paying bills, left-right ideology.
Rural-Urban differences in political behaviour during the European Parliament Elections – 2014 and 2019

Parties Positioning towards the EU and Immigration

Before looking at the votes for the European Parliament of 2014 and 2019, it might be useful to consider how the political offer has evolved between the two electoral rounds. We rely on the two rounds of the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) of 2014 and 2019 to describe the distribution of parties according to their position on two issues: the EU and immigration policies. For sake of clarity, we grouped the parties adopting arbitrary cut-off points from the original scoring exercise, coarsely isolating the two extremes from the moderate or more neutral positions.

Figure 11: Number of parties according to their position about the EU

Source: Chapel Hill Expert Survey of 2014 and 2019

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13 We selected the following two variables from the CHES questionnaire: EU_POSITION = overall orientation of the party leadership towards European integration; IMMIGRATE_POLICY = position on immigration policy. In the annex, it is possible to look at the same data with a finer grained distribution.
The distribution of parties according to their positioning on the selected issues show that the political offer has remained substantially similar between the two electoral rounds, when it comes to the parties’ platform towards the EU. On the contrary, in the case of immigration policy, there has been a shift towards an increased polarization and a substantial increase of parties running on platforms favouring more restrictive policies.

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14 The country-level picture is more uneven though. See Annex (Figure 20 and Figure 21) for a breakdown of the changes in parties’ stances over these dimensions between 2014 and 2019, by member state.
Rural-Urban differences in the distribution of votes by parties’ position on the EU and Immigration policies

We look at the distribution of actual votes that the parties coded by CHES received in the election for the European Parliament of 2014 and 2019, disaggregated by degree of urbanisation of the electoral location. We keep the same colour coding adopted in the previous section.

In the figure below, we pool all the vote at EU level obtained by parties grouped according to their position on the EU (in shades of blue) and immigration policies (shades of green). In the elections of 2019, the more pro-EU parties seem to have lost consent in rural and intermediate areas, compared to the previous round of 2014. In addition, a difference between the rural and urban areas has become notable in 2019, as the share of votes for parties supporting the EU increases as the level of urbanisation moves from rural to urban.

Figure 13. Share of votes by degree of urbanisation and party position on EU and immigration policy

Source: Die Zeit, CHES

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15 We have no data for EL in 2014; EE for 2014, MT for 2014, CY for 2014. For most Member States, we used electoral outcomes recorded at LAU level and assigned the corresponding degree of urbanisation as defined in Eurostat’s Methodological manual on territorial typologies (2019; available here https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-manuals-and-guidelines/-/KS-GQ-18-008). In the cases where electoral outcomes were not already available at LAU level, we adopted the following solutions: for EL, PL, and SI we merged the electoral units to match the LAU and assigned the corresponding degree of urbanisation; in the case of DE, since the electoral results were recorded at NUTS3 level, we used the corresponding Urban-rural typology provided by Eurostat (predominantly urban regions; intermediate regions; predominantly rural regions) but kept the LAU labelling in the figures for consistency and visualisation’s clarity. The UK is included as it was still a member state of the EU at the time of the elections.
Figure 14. Share of votes by degree of urbanisation and party position on immigration policy.

Through the lens of the parties positioning on immigration policies, an increase in polarisation of voters is detectable in the outcomes of 2019 compared to 2014. In addition, while in rural areas and towns and suburbs the preferences for parties favouring a restrictive turn in immigration policies have grown, in cities we can observe a marked shift in the share of votes for parties supporting a liberal policy on immigration, which went from about 6% of the vote to approximately 14%, matched by a drop in the share of votes for parties favouring restrictive immigration policy, which went from nearly 22% of votes to about 18%.

We repeated the same analysis for the selection of Member States we had sufficient coverage of electoral data at LAU level for the EP elections of 2019 to appreciate the in-country differences of the observed trends.
When it comes to parties’ position towards the EU, an urban/rural divide in the electors’ preferences is particularly evident in several Member States (AT, DE, FI, FR, HU, IT, PL, RO, SE), but not all. In fact, in some Member States (BE, BG, CZ, DK, EL, LT, NL, PT, SI, SK, UK) the share of votes for parties supporting the EU is higher in rural areas or at the same level of cities.

Figure 15. Proportion of votes by degrees of urbanisation (LAU) and party position on EU integration in 2019

In the case of votes for parties divided by their position towards immigration policies, voters in rural areas opted for parties in favour of restrictive policies in higher shares than their urban fellow citizens in most Member States. Exceptions to this trend are few (BE, BG, CZ). It is worth noting that votes for parties coded as strongly in favour of liberal immigration policies is reported only in a limited number of Member States and that the voters in cities are more inclined to support those parties than their rural counterparts (e.g. DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, NL, PT, SI, SE), with BE and UK being the only exceptions.
Figure 16. Proportion of votes by degrees of urbanisation (LAU) and party position on immigration policy in 2019*

Source: Die Zeit, CHES. Notes: In the case of DE, electoral results were recorded at NUTS3 level. We kept Eurostat’s definition of degree of urbanisation for LAU in the figure for consistency and visualisation’s clarity.
References


Maxwell, Rahsaan. 2019. ‘Cosmopolitan Immigration Attitudes in Large European Cities: Contextual or Compositional Effects?’ American Political Science Review, 113(2), 456-474. doi:10.1017/S0003055418000898


Annex

Multiple imputation of missing values in the Standard Eurobarometer

Considering the large number of missing values in the dataset (and particularly for variables which are not socio-demographic features of the respondents), we used the multiple imputation software Amelia (Blackwell, Honaker, and King 2017) in R\(^{16}\) to reflect this uncertainty in the estimates. The package has several assumptions that the reader should be aware of, most notably missing at random and that the complete data (meaning both the observed and unobserved) have multivariate normal distribution. While these assumptions may be regarded with suspicion, one has to compare with the baseline of listwise deletion of – in our case at hand – tens of thousands of observations.

To simplify, the software estimates the missing values based on the observables, and then create multiple datasets with such inferred values. The more missingness is pervasive in the dataset, the more imputed datasets should be created. The degree to which the models are uncertain regarding the missing values is reflected in more variation across datasets. Considering the large amount of missing values particular in the left-right ideological self-positioning variable\(^ {17}\), we imputed 10 different datasets\(^ {18}\) for each dependent variables in our analysis.

To then extract the quantities of interest, we simulated the coefficients in our regressions (King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2000). More precisely, we first extracted our estimates from each dataset from logit regression, and then propagate uncertainty in the systematic components by simulating\(^ {19}\) from the multivariate normal distribution. Second, the matrix of each resulting set of parameters was multiplied by the median values of our covariates and the interaction of time and immigration attitudes variable (i.e. the independent variable of interest). Finally, we compute the inverse logit to get the predicted probabilities, and extracted the 95% confidence intervals.

Baselines for the categorical variables.

- **community size**: reference is “Towns and suburbs/small urban area”
- **age**: reference is 35-44
- **gender**: baseline is man
- **marital status**: baseline is married
- How old were you when you stopped full-time education? Baseline is between 16 and 19 years old
- **occupation**: baseline is manual workers
- **difficulties to pay your bills** at the end of the month: reference is ‘From time to time’
- ‘In political matters people talk of “the left” and “the right”. How would you place your views in this scale?’: reference is 5 & 6 (on a 1–10 left-right scale)

\(^{16}\) For more information on the R packages and its assumptions, see [https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/Amelia/vignettes/amelia.pdf](https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/Amelia/vignettes/amelia.pdf).

\(^{17}\) As already mentioned, Amelia uses observed data to infer on missing values and assumes that data are missing at random. Out of concern that the large amount of missing data in the left-right ideological self-positioning variable may not be missing at random, we performed all our analyses also without that variable. In some cases, we observe much smaller confidence intervals in our predicted probabilities when we include the left-right ideological self-positioning variable (for instance, in the case of saying that things are going in the wrong direction in the country).

\(^{18}\) To provide a comparison, the package default is 5.

\(^{19}\) More precisely, we drawn 10000 simulations from the multivariate normal for each of the 10 sets of parameters derived for each dataset. All these steps were performed for each dependent variables. The R markdown is available upon requests. The authors would like to thank Gary King for suggesting this approach.
Additional figures

Figure 17.

Predicted probabilities of being satisfied with EU and national democracy, modulated by place of living

Self-reported place of living

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<th>Rural area or village</th>
<th>Large town</th>
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<td>Satisfaction with EU democracy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with national democracy</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Standard Eurobarometer, 2003-2019. Notes: Due to uneven coding in the original data, ‘don’t know’ replies are discarded. Weighted observations. Country and period dummies. Bars represent 95% confidence intervals with robust standard errors, clustered at NUTS level. Controls: age, gender, education, occupation.
Figure 18. Unweighted observations for community size, by Member State.
Figure 19. Conditional distribution of education given community size

Community size

- Rural area
- Towns and suburbs
- Cities

Age when stopped full-time education:
- <= 15
- 16-19
- >=20

Proportion

Time: 2016, 2018, 2020

27
Figure 20. Changes in parties’ support for the EU between 2014 and 2019

Higher values mean greater support for the EU. Dotted line represents the middle of 1-7 scale. Parties coloured in blue if they became more supportive between 2014 (on the x-axis) and 2019 (on the y-axis), red otherwise.

Figure 21. Changes in parties’ stances on immigration policy between 2014 and 2019.

Higher values mean greater support for liberal immigration policies. Dotted line represents the middle of 0-10 scale. Parties coloured in blue if they became more supportive between 2014 (on the x-axis) and 2019 (on the y-axis), red otherwise.

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