

APPENDIX

Variables: Measurement

Economic perceptions: Retrospective sociotropic economic evaluations. 5 – a lot better, 4 – a little better, 3 – stayed the same, 2 a little worse, 1 – a lot worse.

L-R ideology: Left–right self–placement, 1 to 10 scale, from left to right.

Party ID: Identification with political party, 1 yes, 0 no, “Don’t Know” coded as -1.

GDP growth: World Bank indicators measure of the year when EP surveys were collected. Note: for 2024 GDP growth from 2023 is included as 2024 was not available at the time of the research.

Age: Age of respondent.

Female: Gender 1 – male, 2 – female, 3 – other (excluded due to low number of observations).

Education: Based on years when finished education, 1 low (15 years or less), 2 middle (16 to 19 years), 3 high (more than 19), 4 – still in school.

Religiosity: Attendance of religious services 5 – never, 4 – once a year or less, 3 – a few times a year, 2 – once a week, 1 – several times a week.

Year: 2004, 2009, 2014, 2019, 2024. 2004 is the baseline in the models.

Country: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherlands. Belgium is baseline in the models.

Incumbent: Binary 1 when vote for incumbent party and 0 when vote for an opposition party or blank vote. To decide which party is incumbent we used ‘Who Governs’ data. At least one year prior to the EP elections the incumbents should be in governing position on national level.

Parties considered Incumbents in 2004 EP elections:

- Belgium incumbent: VLD, MR, PS, SP.A-SPIRIT; Prime Minister: VLD.
- France incumbent: UMP, UDF, PRV (NA); President: UMP.
- Germany incumbent: SPD, DG; Prime Minister: SPD.
- Italy incumbent: FI, AN, LN, CDU (NA), CCD (NA); Prime Minister: FI.
- Luxemburg: CSV, DP; Prime Minister: CSV.
- Netherlands: CDA, VVD, D66; Prime Minister: CDA.

Parties considered Incumbents in 2009 EP elections:

- Belgium incumbent: CD&V, VLD, MR, CDH, PS; Prime Minister: CD&V.
- France incumbent: UMP, PRV (NA), NC (NA), LP (NA), FRS (NA); President: UMP.
- Germany incumbent: CDU, SPD; Prime Minister: CDU.
- Italy incumbent: FI, LN, AN, DCA (NA) (Berlusconi IV 14/05/2008) elections in EP June 2009; Prime Minister: FI.
- Luxemburg incumbent: CSV, LSAP; Prime Minister: CSV.
- Netherlands incumbent: CDA, PVDA, CU; Prime Minister: CDA.

Parties considered Incumbents in 2014 EP elections:

- Belgium incumbent: PS, MR, CDH, SP.A, CD&V, VLD; Prime Minister: PS.
- France incumbent: PS, W (NA) PRG (NA), EELV; President: PS.
- Germany incumbent: CDU, SPD, CSU, FDP; Prime Minister: CDU.
- Italy incumbent: PD, NCD, RDI (NA), PPL, SC (NA), UDC; Prime Minister: PD.
- Luxemburg incumbent: DP, LSAP, DG; Prime Minister: DP.
- Netherlands incumbent: VVD, PVDA; Prime Minister: VVD.

Parties considered Incumbents in 2019 EP elections:

- Belgium incumbent: MR, CD&V, VLD; Prime Minister: MR.
- France incumbent: PE, REM, AGIR (NA), MODEM (NA), MRSL (NA); President: REM.
- Germany incumbent: CDU/CSU, SPD; Prime Minister: CDU.
- Italy incumbent: LN, M5S; Prime Minister: (Independent - NA).
- Luxemburg incumbent: DP, LSAP, DG; Prime Minister: DP.
- Netherlands incumbent: VVD, D66, CU, CDA; Prime Minister: VVD.

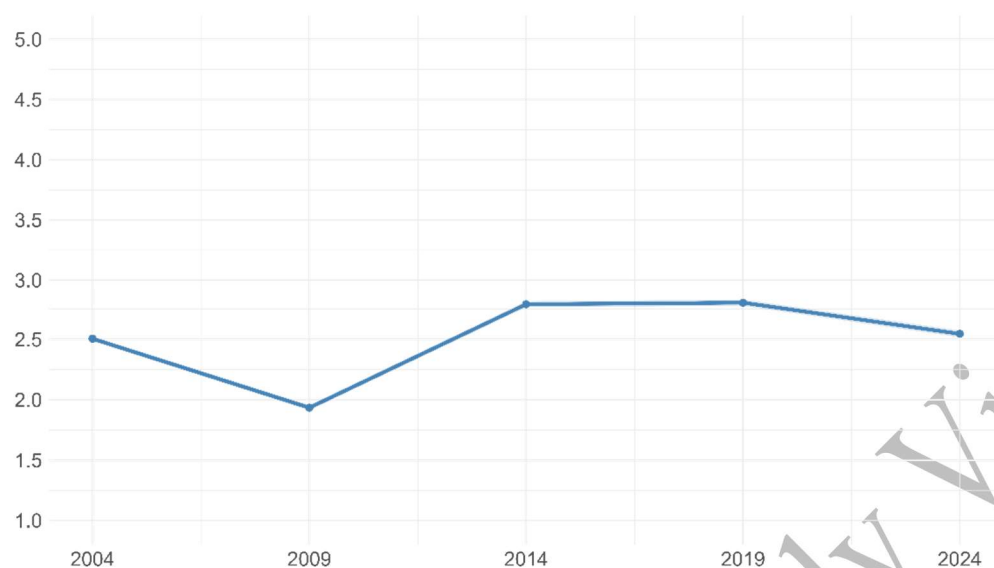
Parties considered Incumbents in 2024 EP elections:

- Belgium incumbent: VLD, MR, PS, CD&V, SP.A, ECOLO, GROEN; Prime Minister: VLD.
- France incumbent: TDP (Dissolved in 2022), REM, MODEM, H, AGIR, PRV (all are part of EP coalition); President: REM.
- Germany incumbent: SPD, DG, FDP; Prime Minister: SPD.
- Italy incumbent: FDI, FI, LN; Prime Minister: FDI.
- Luxemburg incumbent: DP, LSAP, DG; Prime Minister: DP.
- Netherlands incumbent: VVD, D66, CU, CDA; Prime Minister: VVD.

Summary statistics of variables used

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	Median	NA
Incumbent	0	1	0.375	0	8594
Economic Perceptions	1	5	2.513	2	806
L-R ideology	1	10	5.205	5	3184
GDP growth	-5.55	4.23	0.58	1.25	0
Party ID	-1	1	0.5923	1	1882
Age	16	97	49.69	50	1472
Female	1	2	1.513	2	39
Education	1	4	2.356	2	562

Figure1. Mean value of economic perceptions for each EP election among six founding members.



Note: Economic perceptions are measure on a 5-point scale with 5 – measuring much improved and 1 – gotten much worse.

Table 1. Logistic Regression Results controlling for EU economy

	Dependent variable	
	Incumbent (1)	Incumbent (2)
Economic perceptions	0.405*** (0.017)	0.398*** (0.017)
GDP EU	-0.002 (0.007)	-0.081*** (0.023)
GDP growth		0.090*** (0.024)
L-R ideology	0.124*** (0.007)	0.126*** (0.007)
Party ID	0.195*** (0.032)	0.190*** (0.032)
Age	0.012*** (0.001)	0.012*** (0.001)
Female	0.073* (0.034)	0.071* (0.034)
Education (middle)	-0.010 (0.052)	-0.007 (0.052)
Education (high)	0.015 (0.051)	0.016 (0.051)
Education (still in school)	0.121 (0.105)	0.112 (0.105)
Religiosity	-0.106*** (0.015)	-0.106*** (0.015)
Country (France)	-0.743*** (0.061)	-0.706*** (0.062)
Country (Germany)	-0.090 (0.056)	0.044 (0.067)
Country (Italy)	-0.042 (0.057)	0.115 (0.071)
Country (Luxembourg)	0.077 (0.065)	0.140* (0.067)
Country (Netherlands)	-0.953*** (0.058)	-0.868*** (0.062)
Constant	-2.304*** (0.132)	-2.368*** (0.133)
Observations	16,836	16,836
AIC	20,625	20,613

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001