

Chapter 14

Scope of government preferences

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Introduction

The question as to what level of government, or decision-making level deals, or should deal with different policy areas, is multifaceted and has been posed by political philosophers for centuries. It is one of the aspects of the political system that is supposed to have a strong effect upon its legitimacy (Thomassen and Schmitt, 1999).

Therefore, in democratic polities the legitimacy of any given level of government is largely based upon its citizens' evaluation of whether a certain division of power is right or not. In the framework of the problems of governance in the EU, the question of which level of government should deal with different areas has been dormant for a long time, given the permissive pro-European consensus. The introduction of the subsidiarity debate has turned it into one of the hot issues in the debate on the legitimacy of and democratic deficit within the EU.

This paper will first examine the degree to which European citizens allocate decision-making responsibilities to the European Union, to the national state, or to their regional level of government. Secondly, we will test a set of hypotheses (distilled from the theoretical discussion in the following section) concerning the socio-demographic, attitudinal and structural characteristics

that affect differences in preferences for government levels. Thirdly, we will suggest paths for future research.

Theories on scope of government

The concept of the scope of governance deals mainly with two related items. Firstly, to what extent can government formulate binding decisions regarding the organization of human behaviour in certain sectors of life (economy, education, health care, etc.) and which sectors have to be reserved to non-public actors (the market, civil society, the nuclear family, the individual citizen, etc.). Secondly, there is the question of the territorial level of government at which this regulation should occur in the sectors where government regulation is considered legitimate: should it be local, regional, national, European or global?

There is a large body of theoretical and empirical research regarding the first question. The rapid expansion of the welfare state and the fiscal crises of the 1970s have turned the “scope of government” into a hot issue ever since (Borre & Goldsmith, 1995:1). Political philosophers, democratic theorists, political economists and political sociologists, from the left to the neo-liberal spectrum¹, have made substantial theoretical contributions. Comparative empirical survey research has also flourished², identifying determinants of attitudes about the scope of government with their consequences for the system and culminating in the huge “Scope of Government” volume of the Beliefs in Government project (1995).

However, in this paper we will only focus on the territorial part of the scope of governance problem, although the first aspect regarding the role of government in steering society may influence choices made regarding the second.

Contributions to the scope of government debate beyond the EU

Early political philosophers such as Aristotle first raised the question of the territorial scope of governance and it was prominent in classical works such as those of Thomas Aquinas, Althusius, Hegel, Mill, De Toqueville and Montesquieu.

The debate was expanded and deepened in the 19th and 20th centuries. In the first place it was, and still is, at the heart of theories of federalism (especially in the early decades of the US and later in Germany). The oldest problem is posed in federal states and concerns the question of which competencies should be dealt with at the national and which at the level of the federal entity. In the formerly unitary states currently undergoing a process of federalisation, regionalisation or devolution (Spain, Belgium, France, the UK, Italy) this question figures high on the political agenda, opposing the maximalist demands voiced by ethno-regionalist parties and the desire of the state-wide parties and institutional actors to keep this transfer of competencies to the sub-state level to a minimum (Keating, 1995; De Winter & Türsan, 1998). Furthermore, in consolidated federal countries like Germany and the US, the question is nourished by the increasing dependence of states on the federal government for financial aid, which has enabled the federal government to influence policies that are nominally within the control of the state government. Even in many stable, non-federal democracies, the question of degree of autonomy is desirable at the sub-national level recurs (Hesse & Sharpe, 1991)³.

Secondly, the disastrous effects of the industrial revolution on the living conditions of the working class raised the question of government intervention in the laissez-faire economy. The spectacular but uneven growth of industrial production also raised the question of government steered protectionism of the national economy vs. global market-guided free trade.

Thirdly, the emergence and expansion of the state (all levels confounded) threatened civil society bodies that had performed certain public functions in earlier regimes (Rokkan & Lipset, 1967) and the relevant intermediary organisations (trade unions, employers associations, mutual health organisations, cultural and youth organisation, non-public educational networks, and even the family) (Wilke and Wallace, 1990). Often these civil society organizations were linked with the (Catholic) church. It was in fact the Catholic Church that developed a comprehensive theory of subsidiarity first (cfr. the encyclicles *Rerum Novarum*, 1891 and especially *Quadragesimo Anno*, 1931), in order to delimit the role of state and non-state bodies (“natural groups” such as the family, church and guild) in organizing society (especially in pillarised or consociational societies). Here, the concept is used in order to prevent the state becoming too active in certain sectors of social life (industrial relations, public health, education, culture, socialisation, etc.). The Christian doctrine of personalism enshrined in four papal encyclical letters states that each person is invested with legitimate power, whose first constraint is the legitimate power of others. The second constraint is the delegation of his power to social groups, local collectivities, or the state. Hence, the power of the state and other social bodies is only legitimate when individuals agree to be subject to the political bodies that they have chosen to transfer their personal power to (Million-Delsol, 1992). The introduction of the principle of subsidiarity into the debate thus aims at fixing a set of rules with regard to governing bodies (independent from their territorial level) and civil society. By widening the issue of level of government to scope of governance, it introduces the element of consent of citizens and civil society in the debate.

Fourthly, the emergence and empowerment of organized labour raised the question of the role of social partners in organizing the welfare state (cfr. neo-corporatist arrangements promoted by Social- as well as Christian-Democrats) (Schmitter).

Fifthly, the participatory revolution that followed the events of May 1968 eventually led to the slogan “Small is Beautiful” (Schumacher). Decisions should be taken as close to the people as possible (towns, small communities), as this would guarantee more citizen participation (indirect or semi-direct), would make citizens aware of the impact of their actions and would enhance the accountability of decision-makers and thus legitimacy of decisions, leading to wider support for the political system.

The Club of Rome report underlined the global dimension to sustainable growth and the environment, stressing the need for global public intervention in order to save the earth’s natural resources and to ensure long-term survival. The latter two currents found voice in the slogan “Think Globally, Act Locally”.⁴

The replacement of Weberian concepts of public administration by the New Public Administration paradigm redefined the role of public administration in running the res publica, pleading for more public-private-partnership, multilevel involvement of public bodies and civil society, policy networks, comitology and alternative normative instruments (convenants, soft law, benchmarking, open method of coordination) etc. (Brans 1997).

Since economic and fiscal crisis of the 1970s, neo-conservatives and ultra-liberals have used subsidiarity in their critique of the welfare state and rolling back “big government”, stressing minimal state intervention (only tolerated when markets fail), favouring the privatization of most classical government functions (including minimal state functions like law and order and prisons) and thus maximising individual freedom.

The scope of government problématique in a multilevel Europe

Originally the scope of government question was only posed in terms of EC/EU governance vis-à-vis the sovereignty of the national states and was basically treated as being a problem of postwar expansion of forms of

international governance (UN, Nato, etc). International organisations historically emerged and expanded in number and scope precisely because of the fact that more and more issues inherently transcend national borders, and therefore can only be dealt with through some form of permanent international co-operation. In the European context, this question has focused on the policy issues and sectors in which European institutions can operate more effectively than can national member-states. Here several theories compete. Neo-functionalist integration theory states that initially internationalised governance of inherently supra-national issues is to be achieved through the internationalisation of less political sectors (like transport and communication, economy, finance and culture exchange), and that the benefits of the internationalisation of these sectors will entice national government to gradually expand international co-operation into sectors of ‘high politics’, such as foreign affairs, defence, the judiciary and the police, which are all at the heart of the sovereignty of the nation-state (Haas and Schmitter, 1964).⁵

Within the specific internationalization context of European integration, the scope of government question was already present in the Treaty of Rome, giving member states a choice of methods for achieving Community-fixed objectives. It became politically salient in the traditional two-level debate between intergovernmentalist (sovereignist) and supranational (federalist) concepts of international organizations, voiced on the one hand by sovereignists (British Conservatives) and on the other hand by regionalists (German Länder).

The growing critique of “creeping federalism” within the European integration process led pro-European leaders (Tindemans report 1975; Spinelli report 1984 and finally Delors) to revive the concept of subsidiarity in order to appease the growing tension between national governments and the European Commission. Hence, the focus was on the vertical (territorial)

dimension of subsidiarity, not on the horizontal dimension (relations between public authorities and non-public actors).

The federalist ambitions of the founding fathers of the European Community were to some extent tempered by the Maastricht treaty, which puts a strong, though strictly symbolic, constraint on this progressive and deterministic vision of creeping internationalisation. The inclusion of the principle of subsidiarity in the Maastricht treaty aimed at explicitly installing a set of rules covering the division of competencies between member-states and European institutions. Art. 3 states that:

“In areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence, the Community shall take action, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, only if and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States and can, therefore, by reason of scale or effects of the proposed action, be better achieved by the Community’

Hence, only those policy sectors that cannot be dealt with effectively at a lower level of government are eligible for Europeanisation. Still, this principle is so vague that it serves predominantly political objectives, i.e. putting the Eurosceptics at ease⁶, rather than serving as a practical guideline for stipulating which policy sectors should remain national and which not (Estella de Noriega, 1997: 249-270). Nor was it originally ‘justiciable’, (Schilling, 1995) although questions of violation of the subsidiarity principle are now occasionally brought before the ECJ.⁷

The subsidiarity principle was then successfully seized upon by the regions, who promoted a “Europe of the Regions” with a third, regional, layer within the EU system of “multilevel governance” (Hooghe and Marks, 1996). The principle of subsidiarity implicitly also recognises the potential role of regional and local levels of government. The creation of the Committee of the Regions in 1994 illuminated the fact that the regional level is also willing

to struggle against an irreversible evolution towards gradual increasing the decision-making prominence of European institutions, implicitly and explicitly referring in its opinions to the principles of subsidiarity or 'proximity' (du Granrut, 1994; Hooghe & Marks, 1996; Dony, 1997; De Bruycker, 1997, Vandersanden, 1997).

Finally, the growing disaffection of EU-citizens with the EU and with their national governments (Norris, 1999), as dramatically expressed by the referenda on the Maastricht Treaty and the EU Constitution, has pushed the European Commission to seek the greater involvement of different levels of government ("as closely as possible to the citizen"), and of the wider civil society at different levels (Prodi's White Paper on Governance), therefore also addressing the horizontal aspects of the subsidiarity principle as one of the ways to cope with the "democratic deficit".

The EU debate has raised many questions about the scope of EU-governance:

- 1) Which territorial levels of government should be recognized and endowed with authority?
- 2) Who should decide, and on the basis of what arguments, that centralisation of government would ensure higher comparative efficiency or effectiveness (in other words, who carries the burden of proof as to what the "proper" level is: the lower or the higher level)?
- 3) Should a "competence catalogue" or "no-go areas" be defined or does the current open-ended listing of community goals suffice? (Schmitter, 1997; Swenden, 2004)
- 4) Should the EU allocate more resources to lower level units in order to bolster their capability and potential for efficient public intervention?
- 5) Should EU decision-making only deal with setting objectives, letting the sub-units decide how to achieve these ends of their own accord (administrative vs. legislative federalism)?

6) Which institution(s) should deal with conflicts about the application of the subsidiarity principle, and who can introduce a case (ECJ, CoR, CoM, EP, policy experts)?

7) Should opt-outs be allowed, and if so, how can one prevent freeloading?

Note that in most of these debates, a third question is also raised sometimes: it asks not only what can and should government do and where is the most appropriate level of decision-making, but also how should government actions be prepared, decided and implemented?

Political theory contributions to the debate on the scope of EU governance

Apart from federalism studies, political science has until now not contributed much to the discussion of the scope of governance (Dahl and Tufte, 1973). Dahl even argues that it is difficult to deduce the legitimacy of the appropriate level of government from normative political theory, as he suggests that democratic theory cannot sufficiently provide grounds for the justification of the appropriateness of different levels of government (Dahl, 1989:204)⁸.

Within the Beliefs in Government project, Sinnott (1995) proposes three criteria for deciding on the question of which level is appropriate.

The first basis for deciding the appropriate level of governance lies in the very nature of issues. Some are intrinsically international, as they penetrate or transcend national borders, and therefore cannot effectively be dealt with at national levels. Others require a larger than national scale in order to mobilise the resources necessary to solve the problem. Likewise, some problems (such as improving traffic security at an accident-ridden crossing in a particular neighbourhood) are so narrow that local government can best tackle them. These arguments fall under what we will call the “endogenous” attribution of levels of governance.

Second, the level of governance can be attributed in an “exogenous” way, when a given level of governance simply claims that a particular issue or policy sector is (explicitly) lying within its legally defined sphere of competence (or implicitly derived from the main institutional principles or general function as enshrined in constitutions or treaties).

Last, but not least, issues can be attributed to a given level of government because the citizens, the media or political elites simply believe that this problem ought to be tackled at that level (“normative” attribution of level of governance). This level attribution obviously has a subjective basis, since it does not matter whether the preferred level of government has the legal competence to deal with these issues, nor does it matter whether the nature of the issue in fact makes this level the most appropriate. However, as subjective as this basis may be, it is central to the question of the legitimacy of government levels attributed in an exogenous or endogenous way.

Hence the principle of subsidiarity in its broad sense stipulates that the competencies of a given decision-making level follows not only from the proven but also from the accepted insufficiency of other decision-making levels as well as of civil society organisations. The intervention of a political body should provide for an added value in the search for the common good. Furthermore, the opinion of those represented about the level to which they want to delegate their sovereignty should be fully taken into account for any specific division of competencies to be legitimate.

Hence, under the principle of subsidiarity, the endogenous attribution of level of government should be complemented with evaluation by those represented, while exogenous attribution as such is considered illegitimate. However, the question of which issues or policy sectors are eligible for endogenous internationalisation is not easy to answer. There is no consensus on the range of problems that, due to the nature of the issue, belong to the remit of local, regional, national, European and international governance.⁹

The degree of endogenous internationalisation of a particular issue can vary between countries due to structural constraints. Firstly, certain countries can be considered to be the cause of the problem suffered by others, as would be the case where cleaner neighbours surrounded a country that polluted its air. In the latter case, the problem of air pollution is endogenously international, in the former it is a problem that can and should be solved by national government.¹⁰ Secondly, in some countries, a particular level of governance (national, regional and local) may be better equipped to deal effectively with an issue. This can be because of the effects of economy of scale, depending on the size of the territory covered and material resources and expertise different levels of governance have at their disposal. The Luxembourg national state is probably too small to issue its own currency and conduct an effective monetary policy. In strongly federal states like Germany, the state governments are much better equipped to deal with environmental problems than is the sub-state level in non-federal states (Massart, 1998). Thirdly, the degree of interdependency of economic and social systems may vary considerably: in a closed, autarchic economy the need for international collaboration and governance may be less than it is in open economies where prices, wage, interest rates, etc. are highly dependent on the policies and economic fortune of the main trading partners. To conclude, establishing the endogenous European character of a given policy problem is a hazardous exercise, as objectively this character may vary considerable from one member state to another.

Hypotheses

In this paper we arranged our hypotheses around four groups of variables: first the classical socio-demographic and socio-political variables, second general political attitudes, third political attitudes towards the EU, and finally structural characteristics of groups of countries.

Socio-demographic and socio-political variables

From the different chapters in the Niedermayer and Sinnott volume (1995) on Public Opinion and International Governance we can derive a number of individual socio-demographic and socio-political characteristics that can be expected to exert an impact on preference for different government levels:

- Education: respondents with higher levels of education may tend to grasp the international dimension and interdependency of problems more easily;
- Age: we expect young people to give greater preference to the European level than older generations given their more open attitude to the world (Reimer, 1992; Gabriel, 1994:112; Elchardus, 1997).
- Gender: if we consider the scope of government preference an indicator of a more general latent pro-European attitude variable, then we can expect women to opt for the national level, as is the case with European identity (Eurobarometers);
- Subjective social class: the Eurobarometers indicate that workers, the unemployed, homemakers and pensioners have a weaker European identity than employers and cadres (and the more highly educated). Hence we can expect that the higher the level of subjective class identification, the stronger the preferences for the European level;
- Union membership: similar reasoning to that above
- Religion: Catholicism is traditionally associated with internationalism, while Protestantism is associated with national democracy. Thus we expect Catholics to be more likely to opt for the European level than Protestants.

General political attitudes

From various chapters in the Niedermayer and Sinnott volume (1995) on Public Opinion and International Governance we can derive a number of individual attitudinal and socio-demographic characteristics that can be expected to exert an impact on preference for different government levels:

- The degree of political interest in national politics: those that display a relatively high degree of interest in national politics will be more likely to prefer national decision-making, as only political levels of which one has a minimal degree of understanding can be expected to be considered appropriate as a level of government.¹¹
- Political information seeking behaviour: in terms of watching news on TV and reading newspapers;
- Left-right attitudes: one can expect that left-oriented people, given the association between internationalism and socialism, will give more preference to the European level, while right wing respondents will be more likely to favour the national level, given the general association between national conscience and a conservative outlook (Gabriel, 1994:112; Huber and Inglehart, 1995:84).
- Support for national authorities: this is measured by degree of satisfaction with democracy in one's own country and trust in national political institutions.¹²
- Retrospective and prospective sociotropic economic evaluations: as national governments usually still claim credit when the economy fares well (but blame Europe if things go badly), we can presume that positive sociotropic economic evaluations (retrospective as well as prospective) would lead to a higher preference for the national level;
- Ethnocentrism (expressed in fear of scarcity of jobs and social welfare benefits): for many Europe is associated with economic globalization, leading to dislocation of enterprise and jobs, which puts the welfare state under pressure. We can expect that those with a stronger fear of loss of jobs and of social welfare benefits would be more likely to opt for the national level.

Political attitudes towards the EU

As the wider definition of the subsidiarity principle introduced the notion of support by citizens for the political system, one can expect legitimacy of EU governance to be determined not only by the endogenous nature of policy

problems but also by citizens' consent to the rules of the game in this regime, including the division of labour between different levels of governance. We can therefore expect this consent to be facilitated by a general positive evaluation of EU integration process on the one hand and on the other, by general and diffuse disaffection with the national or regional decision-making bodies (Easton, 1965). In fact, since the supposed ebbing away of the permissive consensus on European integration (Lindberg and Scheingold, 1970:41-42; Niedermayer, 1995), the legitimacy of the European Union as an increasingly important decision-making level has become a 'variable', fluctuating in time and space between, but also within member states.¹³ We can therefore expect that the preference of European citizens for using different decision making levels to solve their most important problems will be related to their general support for different regime levels and to the democratic legitimacy of those levels (Dahl: 1989: 109).

With our data we will operationalise generalised support for the European regime using the following variables (for a similar procedure, see Schmitt and Scheuer, 1996):

- feeling that one is a European citizen;¹⁴
- pride in EU citizenship;
- interest in EU politics;
- belief that EU membership is a good thing;
- support for further European unification
- satisfaction with democracy in the European Union.

As argued in the introductory chapter to this volume, there could be a spill-over between specific policies and the way in which different levels of decision-making are considered legitimate. Hence, we can expect that citizens' preferences for levels of government are affected by their evaluation of the usefulness of EU institutions for their individual well-being and that of their country and/or by the incapacity of national or regional governments to

produce satisfactory policy outputs. This 'specific' support for the outputs of the EU will be operationalised using the following variables:

- the perception that one's country has benefited from EU membership¹⁵;
- degree of trust in EU political institutions (Commission and Parliament).

Structural characteristics of groups of countries

Finally, the Niedermayer and Sinnott volume (1995) contains a number of structural features of each country that can be expected to affect preferences for government levels:

- The size of a country: the smaller the country, the less appropriate the level of the national state objectively is and will be perceived to be, as this level will be less adequate for conducting an effective policy with respect to major problems in society¹⁶;
- The duration of EU membership (Niedermayer, 1995): the transfer of competencies from the national level to the European Union is a unique but also a painful learning process. The transfer of competencies from the national to the European level has created a democratic deficit that the expansion of the role of the European and national parliaments has not managed to bridge. This deficit is more likely to be tolerated when the transfers are gradual in time and span (as has been the case for the six founding members of the European Community for Coal and Steel) since they have been socialised for nearly half a century into the process of dismantling national sovereignty 'slice by slice'. The democratic deficit costs are higher and denser in the case of newcomers, which are asked to change large parts of competence hitherto falling under national sovereignty within a short time span;
- The openness of a country's economy¹⁷: the more an economy is open, the more people will be aware of the necessity of international co-operation in order, for instance, to better face the challenge of the internationalization of economic decision-making in the private sector;

- GDP per capita in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS) (EU-25 = 100),
- The level of economic development: in 2004 per capita GNP in \$,
- Human development/ quality of life (UN, World bank, etc),
- Annual harmonized index of consumer prices (2004),
- General government deficit as % of GDP (2004),
- Eurozone membership,
- Schengenland membership,
- Degree of decentralization (unitary, federal, regionalized, decentralized),
- General government expenditure as % of GDP,
- Demographic structure (% under 18 and over 65),
- Sectors of employment (primary, secondary or tertiary sector of society in 2004,
- Types of welfare state.

First empirical results

Some remarks regarding the data used

Some countries were excluded from the empirical analyses in this paper: Luxembourg and Lithuania (for lack of the dependent variable “preferred scope”), Sweden (too many variables lacking) and Northern Ireland (not a country).

We also dropped the income variable, given the high number of cases in Italy with monthly net income between 12,000 euro en 820,000 euro! In order to include income in the equation Italy would have had to be dropped. Since income did not seem to be a significant predictor of preferred level of governance when a model was tested excluding Italy it was decided to omit income as predictor variable and gain more information by including Italy in the equation.

This leaves us with 21 countries (table 1). Deletion of missing values reduces the number of cases retained in 16 countries by more than half (overall 9,474 valid vs. 13,365 missing) in the analyses, and in 8 by more than two thirds!

Table 1: Valid and missing cases per country withheld for analyses

Country	N in analysis	N in survey	% retained
AUSTRIA	713	1010	70,59%
BELGIUM	278	889	31,27%
BRITAIN	601	1500	40,07%
CYPRUS	226	500	45,20%
CZECH REP	188	889	21,15%
DENMARK	500	1317	37,97%
ESTONIA	397	1606	24,72%
FINLAND	480	900	53,33%
FRANCE	1026	1406	72,97%
GERMANY	253	596	42,45%
GREECE	240	500	48,00%
HUNGARY	533	1200	44,42%
IRELAND	785	1154	68,02%
ITALY	410	1553	26,40%
LATVIA	289	1000	28,90%
THE NETHERLANDS	860	1586	54,22%
POLAND	210	960	21,88%
PORTUGAL	450	1000	45,00%
SLOVAKIA	303	1063	28,50%
SLOVENIA	290	1002	28,94%
SPAIN	442	1208	36,59%

Scope preferences over time and in space

Table 2: Perceived and preferred levels of decision-making for three most important issues in 1994 and most important issue in 2004¹⁸

Level/	1994		2004			
	Perc/12	Pref/12.	Perc/12	Pref/12.	Perc/21	Pref/21
Sample						
Regional	16%	14%	17%	23%	17%	22%
National	66%	47%	64%	54%	64%	56%
European	18%	39%	19%	23%	19%	22%

If we compare the results from the 12 countries that were included in 1994 as well as the 2004 survey over time, we notice little difference with regard to the perception of how decision making currently takes place for the most important problem(s). There are however major shifts in the preferred level of decision-making. The European level tumbles from 39% to 23%, while the

regional and national levels gain importance (+9% and +7 % respectively). Note also that it does not make much of a difference whether we consider the 12 countries included in our 1994 analysis or the 21 countries included in the 2004 analyses.

The overwhelming demand for more europeanisation of decision-making levels of 1994 has been reduced to a small yet positive difference (19% perceived to 23% preferred), while the national level still shows a deficit (64% perceived vs.54% preferred). Contrary to 1994, the regional level enjoys also a positive difference (17% perceived to 23% preferred).

Table 3: Perceived and preferred levels of decision-making for most important issue per country in 2004

	Perceived			Preferred		
	Regional	National	European	Regional	National	European
Austria	16,69%	61,44%	21,87%	13,03%	52,99%	33,98%
Belgium	24,2%	50,71%	25,09%	19,29%	43,78%	36,94%
Britain	26,5%	58,59%	14,91%	34,76%	53,14%	12,1%
Cyprus	4,37%	73,14%	22,49%	5,27%	56,26%	38,46%
Czech Republic	17,32%	59,45%	23,23%	15,09%	63,26%	21,65%
Denmark	20,1%	67,51%	12,39%	26,47%	60,2%	13,33%
Estonia	29,42%	61,83%	8,75%	15%	74,05%	10,95%
Finland	18,47%	63,82%	17,71%	26,75%	62,06%	11,2%
France	17,39%	58,74%	23,87%	30,24%	43,44%	26,33%
Germany	24,9%	51,46%	23,64%	25,4%	46,8%	27,8%
Greece	12,11%	51,76%	36,12%	14,87%	60,99%	24,14%
Hungary	13,3%	80%	6,7%	9,95%	78,12%	11,92%
Ireland	16,98%	65,59%	17,43%	25,11%	56,61%	18,28%
Italy	8,82%	79,55%	11,63%	10,42%	74,29%	15,29%
Latvia	22,37%	61,51%	16,12%	10,86%	57,13%	32,02%
Netherlands	5,34%	78,19%	16,47%	11,55%	57,8%	30,65%
Poland	22,31%	64,71%	12,98%	21,41%	67,82%	10,77%
Portugal	7,64%	58,71%	33,65%	17,39%	56,52%	26,09%
Slovakia	17,85%	64,3%	17,85%	20,37%	57,44%	22,2%
Slovenia	24,49%	65,15%	10,36%	12,53%	81,75%	5,72%
Spain	8,88%	76,25%	14,87%	19,17%	49,6%	31,23%

This dramatic loss of popularity of the European level can be due to several factors, that will have to be tested in a later stage of this project, drawing on comparisons over time of the other contributors. First, it is possible that the EU level effectively lost attractiveness, as the referenda on the Constitution and hesitation of ratification by other countries seem to suggest. This loss can be due to the current enlargement and prospects for further enlargement, the

pressure of globalisation and the failure of a “social Europe”, shifts in EU expenditures between policy sectors and countries, etc. Second, there may be a shift in the nature of the most important problems perceived, towards more endogenously national or regional issues, such as traffic security and fight against petty crime.

Amongst the member country populations that favour the European level most, we find in decreasing order Cyprus, Belgium, Austria, Latvia, Spain and the Netherlands, while amongst those that favour the European level least we find Slovenia, Estonia, Britain, Finland and Hungary. Amongst the member country populations that favour the national level most, we find in decreasing order, Slovenia, Estonia, Hungary and Italy. The most region-oriented countries are Britain, France, Denmark and Finland, not exactly those with a strong regional tradition.

Bivariate relations

In order to explore the potential explanatory power of our independent variables (perceived and preferred scope), we ran spearman correlations (see table 4). Amongst those significant at the 0.001 level, we find, amongst the socio-demographic variables, gender and subjective social class. Amongst the attitudinal variables, we find “feeling a European citizen”, “pride in EU citizenship”, trust in European political institutions, EU membership good or bad, support for further unification, “decisions of Europe are in country’s interest” and “decisions of Europe are in my own interest”. Note that the bivariate relationships are very weak (best is $r=0.079$ for “feeling European citizen”). We also find some expressions of pro-EU attitudes as well as expressions of anti-EU attitudes.

Table 4: spearman correlations between independent variables and preferred scope of government

Variabelen	Spearman corr met Gewenste niveau (Q04)	Sign.
Age	-0,013	
Gender	-0,038	***
Education	0,003	
Subjective social class	0,050	***
Union membership	-0,014	
Religion	0,007	
Retrospective sociotropic economic evaluation	0,006	
Prospective sociotropic economic evaluation	-0,013	
Ethnocentrism : scarcity of jobs	0,020	*
Ethnocentrism : social welfare benefits	0,031	**
Feeling European citizen	-0,079	***
Proud of EU citizenship	-0,043	***
Days a week watch TV	-0,012	
Days a week, read newspaper	-0,012	
Left-right self placement	-0,002	
Satisfaction with democracy in own country	-0,028	**
Approval of government's record	-0,021	*
Interest in politics	-0,007	
Trust in national political institutions	0,028	**
Interest in European politics	0,022	*
Trust in European political institutions	0,086	***
EU membership good or bad	-0,061	***
Unification	0,077	***
Satisfaction with democracy in Europe	0,004	
Decisions of Europe are in country's interest	-0,049	***
Decisions of Europe are in my own interest	-0,048	***

*p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Multivariate analyses

General multinomial logistic model

Table 5 offers an overview of the strength of the effect of each of the potential determinants on the choice of government level. The strength can be deduced from the ratio L^2/df , i.e. the larger the ratio, the stronger the effect.

The results tell us first that the model does not fit the data well, as the likelihood ratio is significant (0.000). Note however, if the model is run on un-weighted data (not taking country size into account), we do obtain a perfect fit (sign. = 1, table not reported). This suggests that the dataset is quite unstable. This is caused mainly by the German data. If we include Germany and run the model for the remaining 20 countries weighted by

population, the model fits as well as with the unweighted data. As the German sample we use is quite small (253 cases remaining from the survey of only 596), and is then effectively expanded in our weighted data set by the huge size of the German population, the potential deviance of Germany from European trends strongly affects the overall European results.

Table 5: Multinomial logistic model for choosing government model (European, national, regional) for solving most important problem.

Variablen	DF	X ²	Sign.	X ² /df
Age	8	44,21	0,000	5,53
Gender	2	10,85	0,004	5,42
Education	2	2,10	0,350	1,05
Subjective social class	8	20,71	0,008	2,59
Union membership	2	8,97	0,011	4,48
Religion	8	22,11	0,005	2,76
Retrospective sociotropic economic evaluation	2	62,74	0,000	31,37
Prospective sociotropic economic evaluation	2	17,04	0,000	8,52
Ethnocentrism : scarcity of jobs	2	9,55	0,008	4,77
Ethnocentrism : social welfare benefits	2	10,78	0,005	5,39
Feeling European citizen	4	32,83	0,000	8,21
Proud of EU citizenship	2	6,57	0,037	3,29
Days a week watch TV	2	1,91	0,384	0,96
Days a week, read newspaper	2	2,90	0,234	1,45
Left-right self placement	2	4,01	0,135	2,00
Satisfaction with democracy in own country	2	6,09	0,048	3,05
Approval of government's record	2	2,24	0,326	1,12
Interest in politics	2	47,80	0,000	23,90
Trust in national political institutions	2	27,81	0,000	13,91
Interest in European politics	2	4,33	0,115	2,16
Trust in European political institutions	2	60,20	0,000	30,10
EU membership good or bad	4	6,88	0,142	1,72
Unification	2	33,94	0,000	16,97
Satisfaction with democracy in Europe	2	35,64	0,000	17,82
Decisions of Europe are in country's interest	2	32,12	0,000	16,06
Decisions of Europe are in my own interest	2	7,86	0,020	3,93
COUNTRY	40	672,17	0,000	16,80
Likelihood ratio	18832	21971,04	0,000	

The main explanatory variables (controlling for the effect of all the other variables in the model) are (in decreasing order of importance) retrospective sociotropic economic evaluation and trust in European institutions (Commission and Parliament scores added). Then we find, interest in politics, satisfaction with democracy in the EU, support for unification, trust in national political institutions, the feeling that EU decisions are in one's countries interest, prospective sociotropic economic evaluation, feeling an EU citizen, and, country. The following do not seem to have any effect (controlling for the effect of all the other variables in the model): education,

watching TV and reading newspapers, left-right self placement, approval of government's record, interest in EU politics, and approval EU membership.

Net effects of significant categorical variables

On the basis of the parameter estimates of the model above (table 5), we can now estimate the net effect of each of the significant categorical variables, i.e. age, gender, subjective social class, membership union, religion, feeling European, and last but not least, country (see table 6).

In this table, the "effects" are expressed as the difference in percentage vis-à-vis the average percentage of respondents that opted for a specific government level (i.e. 23.26% regional; 53.92% national; 22.82% European). Once again, the effects are "net effects", the chance of choosing a specific level while taking into account the effect of all other categorical determinants retained in the model.

Note also that when interpreting the strength of the effect, i.e. the difference vis-à-vis the average, one should be taking the size of the average choice for a government level into account. For instance, a difference of 8% in favour of the national level (chosen on average by 54% of respondents) is less important for an equally large difference of 8% for the European level (chosen on the average by 23% respondents). For instance, in table 6 we can notice that Danish choose the European level 8.15% less than the general European average (22.82%). Speaking in relative terms, this is about 35% "less than average" ($-8.15 / 22.82$), or in other words, Danes chose about 1.5 times less for the European level than the average European. If we look at the Germans, we notice that they choose the national level 8.44% less for than the European average (53.92%). While in absolute terms, the difference from the overall average of choice for a level is about the same as for the Danish vis-à-vis the EU (-8.15 and -8.44), speaking in relative terms Germans choose only about 15% "less than average" ($-8.44 / 53.92$).

Table 6: Net effects of determinants on the choice of government level

Preferred level of government		Regional	National	European
European Mean		23.26%	53.92%	22.82%
Age				
	<25 year	1,12	-0,72	-0,40
	25-34 year	3,54	0,30	-3,84
	35-49 year	-1,70	0,47	1,24
	50-65 year	-2,04	-0,61	2,65
	65 +	1,85	0,15	-2,00
Gender				
	Male	-1,16	0,37	0,78
	Female	1,42	-0,46	-0,96
Subjective social class				
	Working class	-0,62	1,32	-0,70
	Low middle class	3,53	-1,98	-1,55
	Middle class	-0,59	0,08	0,52
	Upper middle class	-2,00	0,53	1,48
	Upper class	4,89	-3,38	-1,51
Membership Union				
	No member	-0,54	0,88	-0,33
	Member	1,67	-2,70	1,02
Religion				
	Catholic	-0,01	0,53	-0,52
	Protestant	4,54	-2,70	-1,84
	Orthodox	-9,39	6,65	2,74
	Other	-2,28	1,65	0,63
	None	-0,09	-1,43	1,52
Feeling European citizen				
	Often	-2,52	-0,37	2,90
	Sometimes	-1,22	0,87	0,35
	Never	3,40	-0,80	-2,60
Country				
	Austria	-12,20	-2,16	14,36
	Belgium	-3,55	-8,98	12,52
	Britain	4,01	3,23	-7,24
	Cyprus	-14,03	4,10	9,94
	Czech Republic	-9,30	4,48	4,82
	Denmark	-5,73	13,89	-8,15
	Estonia	-4,09	13,40	-9,31
	Finland	-4,37	14,26	-9,89
	France	8,93	-11,90	2,97
	Germany	4,89	-8,44	3,54
	Greece	1,14	0,75	-1,89
	Hungary	-13,67	24,47	-10,80
	Ireland	0,54	5,59	-6,14
	Italy	-12,98	23,96	-10,98
	Latvia	-12,02	-1,46	13,47
	The Netherlands	-13,46	0,47	13,00
	Poland	-0,70	13,97	-13,27
	Portugal	-5,20	3,92	1,29
	Slovakia	-1,77	3,56	-1,78
	Slovenia	-13,16	31,86	-18,70
	Spain	-2,22	-4,42	6,64

In regards to the socio-demographic variables included, we find that age seems to make a noticeable difference only for the 25-34 category: they choose the regional level more (+ 3.5) and the European level less (-3.8) level. Men choose the regional level marginally less and the European level more, while women display the opposite pattern. With respect subjective social class, the lower middle classes as well as the upper classes opt more

often for the regional level (respectively +3.5 and +4.9). The latter also opt significantly less often for the national level.¹⁹ Trade union members choose the national level less (-2.7). Finally, protestants choose the national and the European levels less often (-2.7 and -1.8) and prefer the regional level (+4.5). Orthodox respondents opt in the first place for the national level (+6.5), but also favour more the European (+2.74) while they shun the regional level (-9.4).

In terms of attitudes, those that often feel a citizen of Europe opt more for the European level (+2.9) and less for the region (-2.5). Those that never feel a European citizen display the opposite pattern: they opt more for the regional level (+3.4) and less for the European (-2.6) than the average respondent.

While in all the previous cases the differences vis-à-vis the overall averages are generally weak (less than 10%), the impact of the country variable is very often above the 10% level, even controlling for all the previous socio-demographic and attitudinal variables. The Austrians (+14.3), Latvians (+13.5), Dutch (+13.0) and Belgians (+12.5) opt most for the European level (by more than 10%), followed by Cypriots (+9.9), Spaniards (+6.4), Czechs (+4.8), Germans (+3.5) and the French (+3.0). Amongst those that are significantly less likely than average to opt for the European level, we find in decreasing order, the Slovenes (-18.7), the Polish (-13.3), the Italians (-11.0), the Hungarians (-10.8), the Finns, (-9.9), the Estonians (-9.3), the Danes (-8.2), British (-7.2) and the Irish (-6.1).

Opting significantly more (than 10%) for the national level than the overall average, we find in decreasing order the Slovenes (+31.9%), Hungarians (+24.5), the Italians (+24.0), the Finnish (+14.3), the Polish (+14.0), the Danes (+13.9) and the Estonians (+13.4). Amongst those opting much less for the national level than the overall average, we find in decreasing order the French (-11.9), the Belgians (-9.0) and the Germans (-8.4).

Those opt significantly more (than 10%) for the regional level than the overall average, we find in decreasing order the French (+8.9), the Germans (+4.9) and the British (+4.0). Most countries however opt significantly less (than 10%) for the regional level: we find in decreasing order the Cypriotes (-14.0), the Hungarians (-13.7), the Dutch (-13.5), the Slovenes (-13.2), the Italians (-13.0), Austrians (-12.2), the Latvians (-12.0), followed by lesser “anti-regionals” as the Czechs (-9.3), the Danes (-5.7), the Portuguese (-5.2), the Finnish (-4.4), the Estonians (-4.1) and the Belgians (-3.6).

Finally, the country that fits best the pan-European pattern of scope of government preferences is Greece!

The interpretation of these country effects is not always straightforward. Not only are they often much stronger than the socio-demographic and attitudinal effects, but in the groups that opt clearly for one or the other level we find strange bedfellows. The aversion of Italians to the European level and preference of the national level is quite surprising (Caciagli), as is the aversion of the French to the national level. The preference for or aversion to the regional level is not clearly linked with the existence of regional or federal institutions, as shown by the anti-regional position of the Italians and Austrians, and the pro-regional position of the French.

Net effects of significant metric variables

On the basis of the parameter estimates of the model presented in 5, we can now estimate the net effect of each of the significant metric variables. In table 7, the “effects” are expressed in the additive logistic regression parameters on the binary variables “regional vs. European” and “national vs. European”, with European as reference category. Hence, in both dichotomies, negative signs indicate a clearer preference for the European level. Once again, the effects are net effects, the chance of choosing a specific level while taking into account the effect of all other metric

determinants retained in this model. We also checked whether these effects hold when controlling for interaction effects with the country variable.

Table 7: Direct significant net effects of attitudes on the preference for the regional or national vis-à-vis the European government level (additive logistic regression parameters), controlling for all other variables included in the model.

	Regional vs. European	National vs. European
Retrospective sociotropic economic evaluation	0,11**	-0,12***
Prospective sociotropic economic evaluation		0,12***
Ethnocentrism : scarcity of jobs		0,08**
Ethnocentrism : social welfare benefits	-0,06*	
Proud of EU citizenship		-0,08**
Satisfaction with democracy in own country	-0,11**	-0,07*
Interest in politics		0,21***
Trust in national political institutions	0,05**	0,08***
Trust in European political institutions	-0,13***	-0,12***
Unification	-0,06***	-0,06***
Satisfaction with democracy in Europe	0,27***	0,20***
Decisions of Europe are in country's interest	-0,29***	-0,27***
Decisions of Europe are in my own interest	0,14**	0,12**

* p < .1; ** p < .05; *** p < .001

Regarding the opposition between the national and European level, we find significant effects (***) p < .001) for the retrospective as well as prospective sociotropic economic evaluations, but with opposite signs. The better one evaluates the retrospective sociotropic economic situation, the more one prefers the European level, while the worse one evaluates the prospective sociotropic economic situation, the less one prefers the European level. But both main effects disappear when country interaction effects are controlled. The stronger one's interest in politics, the less one prefers the European level (effect remains when controlling for country interaction effects). The more one trusts national political institutions, the less one prefers the European level, while the opposite is true for trust in European political institutions (both effects remain when controlling for country interaction effects). The more one agrees with the principle of further European unification, the more one prefers the European level (but, the main effect disappears if country interaction effects are included). The more one agrees that EU decisions are in the interests of one's country, the more one prefers the European level

(interaction effects could not be tested). However, the more one is satisfied with democracy in the Europe, the less one prefers the European level! (interaction effects could not be tested).

Regarding the opposition between the regional and European level, we find the following significant effects (***) ($p < .001$): the more one trusts European political institutions, the more one prefers the European vis-à-vis the regional level (the effect remains for controlling for country interactions). The more one agrees with the principle of further European unification, the more one prefers the European level (but, the main effect disappears when controlling for country interaction effects). The more one agrees that EU decisions are in the interests of one's country, the more one prefers the European level (interaction effects could not be tested). But again, the more one is satisfied with democracy in the Europe, the less one prefers the European level! (interaction effects could not be tested).²⁰

Macro-analysis of impact of types of countries

Finally, we searched for the effects of types of countries, using a multinomial logistic multilevel model that also takes micro-level effects into consideration. As multinomial logistic multilevel analysis often suffers from estimation problems if one includes too many macro-variables, it was decided to test the effect of macro-variables by including only a limited number of macro variables in the equation per run.²¹ Significant effects were withheld. To test whether these effects remained significant after controlling for the micro-variables, the most important micro-effects (retrospective sociotropic economic situation and trust in national institutions) were included the models (these tests are not reported here). Again, due to estimation problems, it was not possible to test a model with all the significant macro and micro variables. Controlling for the micro variables the effect of the macro variables remained.

Table 8: Multinomial logistic multilevel analysis of macro-variables on the preference for the regional or the national vis-à-vis the European government level, controlling for retrospective sociotropic economic situation & trust in national institutions

		Regional vs. European	National vs. European
Welfare state	Liberal / Corporatist	.930***	.963***
	Mixed / Corporatist	.918***	1.406***
	Socio-Democratic / Corporatist	1.945***	1.822***
	South-European / Corporatist	-.243***	.564
Type of state	Regionalize unitary / Federal	,148	-,004
	Centralize unitary / Federal	-,291	-,127
	Decentralized unitary / Federal	-1.121***	-,566
Member Eurozone	Member / No member	,270***	,154***

*** p < .001

Three typologies of states seem to affect preference for a particular level of government (table 8). The first typology is based on type of welfare state.²² Compared to the reference category of the corporatist states, we find that the liberal, mixed, and socio-democratic welfare states prefer governance at the regional as well as the national level. Welfare state types in Southern European prefer governance at the European level to the regional level but prefer the national level even more (although our results were not significant).

Regarding degree of centralization, we find that, compared to the reference category of federal states, the decentralized unitary states prefer the regional level less and the European level more, with the highest preference being given to the national level (although this was not significant), while the regionalized and centralized types do not display significant links to either side of the dichotomy.²³ Finally, member countries of the Euro-zone prefer the regional level more and the national level less.

Future directions of analysis

The impact of the nature of the most important problem

From our previous study (De Winter & Swyngedouw, 1999) we know that the preferences for (and perceptions of current) government levels vary strongly across policy sectors (see table 9). Furthermore, in our multivariate analysis of the 1994 data we find that the endogenous nature of the most important problem emerged as being the second most important factor. Hence, now that the recoding of the most important problems is finally available, we intend to classify this as we did before on the basis of their endogenous attribution:

1. Genuine national matters;
2. Problems that are basically situated at national level but whose causes or solutions are partially related to similar problems and solutions in other countries (and therefore may produce distortions of competition, weaken social and economic cohesion, or restrict trade). Amongst the problems mentioned in the survey, this category predominantly includes labour market and social security transfer issues and fiscal and public expenditures (as all these influence a country's competitive position);
3. Problems with main cross-border aspects as well as problems that have international but basically bilateral dimensions. Some of these issues may have larger genuine international dimensions but these are not predominant.²⁴
4. Problems with predominantly genuine international dimensions. Sometimes these dimensions are not due to the cross-border nature of the problem, but to long-lasting international co-operation in the policy sector like the Common Agricultural Policy.

Table 9: Most important policy sectors and preferred decision-making levels 1994 (percentages based on responses)

Level / Policy	Regional		National		European	
	Perc/12	Pref/12	Perc/12	Pref/12	Perc/12	Pref/12
Employment/Economy	16	14	67	48	17	39
Public finance	15	15	71	52	15	33
Europe	14	12	57	35	30	54
immigration	16	13	65	46	19	40
environment	18	12	59	37	22	51
criminality	16	13	65	48	19	38
welfare	15	16	71	52	15	32
centre-periphery	22	15	63	52	16	33
international	14	7	59	35	27	58
democracy	12	8	70	53	18	39
education	15	20	70	38	15	42

Identification with European party families and parties

Many authors have pointed to the differences in pro-European attitudes between European party families (Hix & Lord, 1998, Hooghe & Marks, Marks & Wilson). We could recode all the national parties into European party families, according to the typologies of von Beyme and others, and test whether (potential) voters for or identifiers with different party families display different preferences for the scope of government.

However, the within family variation is often very large. Therefore it would be better to use a more exact classification instrument that is now available, such as the new Chapel Hill dataset on national party positioning on European integration, based on expert surveys (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/europe/chapelhillsurvey>). This would allow us to identify the pro-europeanness of every national party.

Preferred scope of government as indicator of latent pro-EU variable

One may wonder whether the preferred scope of governance is more an indicator of a latent general “attitude towards the EU” and less an expression of a reasoned calculation as to the level at which important problems can best be dealt with.

Conclusion

The question as to which decision-making level can most appropriately deal with different policy problems is a central aspect of the legitimacy of a political system. With regard to governance in the EU, the discussion is structured around the meaning and application of the principle of subsidiarity, permitting EU action when member-states or regions cannot take sufficient action to solve a problem, or when, for reasons of scale or effects, actions could be better taken by the EU. This question of which issues or policy sectors are subject to endogenous internationalisation is difficult to answer in the real world. In addition, international governance, like national or regional governance, can only gain legitimacy when the public agrees with the rules of the game, including the division of labour between different governmental levels. Therefore, the opinion of European citizens regarding the appropriate level of government in the EU (European, national, regional) is crucial if present or future divisions of power between these levels are to retain or gain legitimacy.

Our analyses show that the European publics of the 12 countries included in the 1994 survey have clearly lost their enthusiasm for the EU as the most appropriate level at which to solve the most important problem they perceived in 2004. Notice that the inclusion of the 13 new countries does not make much of a difference, as they comprise eurosceptics and euro-enthusiasts equally.

The bivariate and multivariate analyses also produced much weaker findings than in 1994. Multinomial logistic analysis of all potential determinants produced significant effects (controlling for the effect of all the other variables in the model) for, in decreasing order of importance, retrospective sociotropic economic evaluations and trust in European institutions, interest in politics, satisfaction with democracy in the EU, support for unification, trust in national political institutions, the feeling that EU decisions are in the

interest of one's country, prospective sociotropic economic evaluation, feeling an EU citizen and country. If we only analyse categorical determinants, we find some effects of age, gender, subjective social class, religion, and feeling oneself to be an EU citizen. While all these differences vis-à-vis the overall averages are generally weak (less than 10%), the impact of the country variable is very often above the 10% level. In the country groups that opt clearly for one or the other level we find strange bedfellows.

When looking for the net effects of the metric determinants of the opposition between the national and the European level, controlling for the interaction effect with country, we find as significant effects that the more strongly one is interested in politics, the less one prefers the European level; and the more one trusts national political institutions, the less one prefers the European level, while the opposite is true for trust in European political institutions. Regarding the opposition between the regional and the European level, we find that the more one trusts European political institutions, the more one prefers the European rather than the regional level.

Finally, we searched for effects of types of countries, using a multinomial logistic multilevel model, which also takes micro-level effects into consideration. Three typologies of states seem to affect the preference for a level of government. Compared to our reference category of corporatist states, we find that liberal, mixed, and socio-democratic welfare states prefer the regional, as well as the national, level. Regarding the degree of centralization, we find that, compared to the reference category of the federal states, the decentralized unitary states prefer the regional level less and the European level more. Finally, member countries of the Euro-zone prefer the regional level more and the national level to a lesser extent.

Further research is required, especially into including the endogenous nature of the most important problem that emerged, using data that has just become available. Secondly, we should add the EU positions of the parties that voters

identify with or vote for, by using the new Chapel Hill dataset on national party positioning on European integration.

Notes

¹ O'Connor 1973, Niskanen 1973, Bell 1976, Brittan 1975, Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki, 1975, Wilensky 1975, 1981, Douglas 1976, King, 1975 & 1987, Rose & Peters 1978, Baker, Dalton & Hildebrandt, 1981, Clark & Ferguson, 1983, Birch 1984, Flora 1986, O'Conner & Brym 1987, Inglehart, 1977 & 1997, Luhmann 1990, Castles, 1998, etc.

² Mainly based on ISSP, EB, Political Action and EES surveys.

³ See for instance the European Charter of Local Self-Government, drafted by the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, on October 15, 1985 (Duff, 1993).

⁴ Think Globally, Act Locally refers to the argument that global environmental problems can turn into action only by considering ecological, economic, and cultural differences of our local surroundings. This phrase was originated by Rene Dubos as an advisor to the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972. In 1979, Dubos suggested that ecological consciousness should begin at home. He believed that there needed to be a creation of a World Order in which "natural and social units maintain or recapture their identity, yet interplay with each other through a rich system of communications". In the 1980's, Dubos held to his thoughts on acting locally, and felt that issues involving the environment must be dealt with in their "unique physical, climatic, and cultural contexts." (Eblen and Eblen, 1994, p. 702)

⁵ For an overview of the other factors that may explain the expansion of the EU, see Schmitter (1996).

⁶ The president of the Commission, Jacques Delors, launched the possibility of introducing the principle of subsidiarity in the discussion on the division of competencies.

⁷ For an overview of the meaning of subsidiarity in the context of European integration, see EIPA (1991), CEPR (1993), Maillet (1993), Hrbek (1995); Centre for Economic Policy Research (1993), Lourau (1997), Wilke and Wallace (1990), Estella De Noriega (1997).

⁸ "In other words, whether the scope and domain of majority rule are appropriate in a particular unit depends on assumptions that the majority principle itself can do nothing to justify. The justification for the unit lies beyond the reach of the majority principle and, for that matter, mostly beyond the reach of democratic theory itself" (Dahl, 1989: 204).

⁹ For an interesting attempt at a definition, see the Giscard d'Estaing report (1990) prepared for the Institutional Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, which applies criteria of effectiveness of task accomplishment of the Community vis-à-vis the member states, and transnational nature of the task, whose dimensions or effects extend beyond national frontiers. The Council has drafted a similar set of criteria (cited elsewhere).

¹⁰ Fight against drugs has stronger international or cross-border dimension in Belgium, France and Germany than in Portugal or Austria, given the permissive Dutch policy on soft drugs. Pollution matters in case of rivers is more an international issue in Holland, as all their rivers pass other countries, whereas in the insular GB and Ireland this would be much more a national issue. Immigration is maybe more of European issue in Schengen countries than in others.

¹¹ The questionnaire included the common question on the degree of interest for politics in general.

¹² For a discussion on the substantive meaning of this variable and its impact on European integration attitudes, see Martinotti & Stefanizzi (1995).

¹³ In some countries like Spain, Belgium and Italy sub-national actors and authorities also challenge the legitimacy of the nation-state as decision-making level.

¹⁴ Operationalised through the variable of the degree of feeling European (in addition to one's belonging to a nation).

¹⁵ For a discussion on the substantive meaning of this variable, see Bosch and Newton (1995).

¹⁶ See the introductory chapter on the trade-off between size and the scope of democracy.

¹⁷ Measured by the share of exports in the Gross National Product in 1994 (OCDE, 1996: 192-195). The import shares correlate strongly with export shares, so either one could be used. We do not use the difference between imports and exports (as used by Wessels and Kielhorn in the second book) because the absolute degree of openness can be expected to have the major impact on citizen attitudes, not the balance of payments (mostly unknown to most citizens). When a country's imports and exports range around a fifth of the GNP, which is the case in Greece, France and Germany, the necessity for being internationally competitive (and all its consequences in terms of wage and price setting) is less a constant ordeal and worry than in countries where imports and exports constitute three fourth or more of the GNP (like in Belgium and Luxembourg).

¹⁸ The answers to the first, second and third problem and the decision-making levels in 1994 are aggregated using the multiple response technique. Percentages are based on responses, not on respondents. This method makes the percentages add up to 100%, rather than to 300%. In 2004, we have scope perceptions and preferences only for THE most important problem.

¹⁹ Note however that the upper classes only represent 1.4% of the entire population, so it may be wise to merge them with the upper middle classes.

²⁰ Note that we also get puzzling, but less significant, results for the belief that EU decisions are in one's own interests, for the national vs. European as well as the regional vs. European dichotomy. It also seems that the more one is satisfied with democracy in one's own country, the less one opts for the regional and national vs. the European level.

²¹ The macro-variables that were included in our test were population size of country in thousands, duration of membership EU of country (in 1958-2004 period), GDP per capita in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS) (EU-25 = 100), the level of economic development: in 2004 per capita GNP in \$, human development/ quality of life (UN, World bank, etc), the openness of a country's economy (OECD data), Annual harmonized index of consumer prices (2004), General government deficit as % of GDP (2004), Eurozone membership, Schengenland membership, degree of decentralization (unitary, federal, regionalized decentralized), General government expenditure as % of GDP, demographic structure (% under 18 and over 65), sectors of employment (primary, secondary or tertiary sector of economy in 2004, types of welfare states, and Operating budgetary balance : % GNI Financial net-payer or net-receiver country.

²² Sources: Esping Andersen (1990), Scharpf (2002), MISSOC (2004) : "Social Protection in the Member States of the European Union, of the European Economic Area, and Switzerland. Situation on 1 January 2004, Brussels, European Commission", MISSCEEC (2002): "Study on the Social Protection Systems in the 13 Applicant Countries - Synthesis Report, European Commission").

²³ Source: Loughlin (2001), Loughlin and Delcamp (2003), Levrat (2005), Committee of the Regions Studies (2003)

²⁴ For instance, with regard to environment, Golub (1996) rather convincingly argues that most issues of environmental protection can be solved at the level of the national state, as many do not have a significant cross-border character. Also, in terms of market distortion, competitive strategies based on ecological dumping have negative effects for those member states that employ them, and therefore market distortion only occurs in the short run.