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Citizen Support for Policy Integration

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ONE of the most remarkable features of modern European politics has been the process of European integration. Beginning with the Coal and Steel Community, the nation-states of Europe have gradually and relatively steadily moved toward ever-closer union. Moreover, in the last decade the rate of progress has accelerated, as the European Union expanded its policy responsibilities and membership, and institutionalized its presence in European politics.

The initial process of European integration was dominated by the strategies and actions of political elites in line with the intergovernmental model described by Stone Sweet and Sandholtz (Chapter 1). Over time, however, this process has gradually moved toward a model of supranational governance that includes a range of other societal actors. Party leaders, parliamentary committees, transnational interest groups, and other political groups are now more involved in the process of building Europe.

Our research specifically focuses on the rôle of public opinion as a societal actor in the integration process. Only ten years ago, unification research often ignored public opinion for understandable reasons. The integration process began as intergovernmental bargaining, and factors such as international power, elite preferences, or the actions of organized interests dominated the frameworks of neofunctionalists and realists alike. When researchers did consider the role of public opinion, at most they concluded that the public offered a "permissive consensus" that provided political leaders with considerable latitude in carrying out the European project (Lindberg and Scheingold 1970). Others bluntly dismissed the significance of public opinion (Haas 1958: 17).

Several factors have contributed to an increased awareness of the significance of public opinion in the integration process. In retrospect, it appears that scholars underestimated the role of public opinion in defining the national preferences that guided elite bargaining during the early decades of the integration process. Adenauer's efforts to build a European identity among the Germans, the public debate that accompanied the failed attempt to develop a

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European defense force, or the popular endorsement of the Common Market concept were affected by public preferences, or at least elite perceptions of these preferences. Even under an intergovernmental model, public opinion is important in defining national preferences.[1]

In addition, as the integration process has evolved from intergovernmental bargaining toward "normal" politics, this expanded the role of public opinion in the process. EU policy is no longer a policy domain that is distant from the everyday life of Europeans. Just as in the formation and implementation of domestic policy, EU policy involves public debates about the political choices facing each member nation. For example, public opinion on integration policy contributed to Margaret Thatcher's political vulnerability toward the end of her administration. Similarly, public debates over currency union and public reactions to proposed cuts in government spending to meet EU targets are highly visible parts of French and German domestic politics. Public preferences inevitably condition the actions of interest groups, political parties, and elites toward EU policies. Furthermore, a changing framework for EU policymaking increases the potential ways in which public opinion can influence the integration process.[2] Today, public opinion (and the positions of other national and transnational actors) is politically relevant in determining the activities of the EU politics of the member-states to a degree that violates a simple intergovernmental model of the integration process.

Public opinion also plays a role in moving the integration process along the continuum from intergovernmentalism to supranationalism. The public's policy preferences can influence which areas are most susceptible to further integration efforts. When there is permissive consensus or positive support, national governments are more able to endorse European action. When the publics of the member-states disagree, this is likely to retard further integration. Moreover, discussion of the "democracy deficit" within the EU necessarily creates pressures to move away from intergovernmental modes of decision-making and toward institutional arrangements that increase the input from the public and other societal actors.

The recent history of the European Union illustrates that public opinion wields real influence. Public reactions to the reforms of the 1980s and 1990s—principally the Single European Act and the Maastricht accords—demonstrated that European citizens were neither "permissive" nor "consensual" in their appraisal of the dramatic relaunching of European integration. The Danish referendum of 1992 temporarily detracked the integration process, while the Irish, French, and Danish referendums of 1993 moved the process ahead. In

[1] Indeed, neofunctionalist writings in the second wave of integration research readily accepted the role of public opinion in the integration process (Haas 1971; Schmitter 1971). On the interrelationship of domestic preferences and intergovernmental bargaining see Moravcsik (1989).

[2] The introduction of a directly elected parliament gives the public a direct representation within the EU. In addition, the institutionalization of the integration process has increased the public's potential points of access into the process, such as contacting EU officials, to contacting national parliament officials, petitioning the ECJ, and other methods.

fact, one could argue that public opinion and the votes of citizens in the ratification of the SEA and Maastricht have been *a profound influence* on the recent process of integration. In the wake of the Danish and French referendums on Maastricht, sensitivity to public opinion became a hallmark of European integration.[3]

In summary, public opinion has grown from a relatively minor role in the integration process to a principal focus of political and scholarly attention. We acknowledge that public opinion has a broad and diffuse influence, and that the policy positions of specific societal actors—such as political parties and interest groups—may be more important in explaining the immediate course of the integration process (see Chapter 3). But public opinion provides the broad context for these policy debates, much as it does for the domestic politics of the member-states. Public support for the European Union can facilitate the process of further union, just as public skepticism toward the EU can slow the integration process. As the Union moves toward further reform, it seems no exaggeration to speak of a *Citizens' Europe*.

This research examines the patterns of citizen support for the process of European integration. We focus our attention on support for policy integration in specific issue areas. That is, to what extent do Europeans believe that policy responsibility in specific areas such as health, environment, defense, and other fields should be transferred from national governments to the European Union. Like others in this research project, we are interested in explaining how the integration process moves along the continuum from state-centered action to supranational action—this time measured in public preferences (see Chapter 1). We believe that public opinion is one factor that can influence movement along this continuum. In addition, the variations in public support for policy integration provide a medium for testing theories of the integration process as measured in public sentiments.

1. Public Opinion and Policy Integration

Even if European integration is described as a general political process, it involves separate decisions to take common action on discrete policies. Progress comes not from a broad movement on all fronts, but by specific initiatives in specific areas. Integration is a process by which the EU gradually accumulates policy responsibilities.

However, most prior opinion research has focused on generalized public

[3] Further evidence of the relevance of public opinion comes from the European Union itself. The European Commission has displayed its concern for public opinion by its efforts to monitor opinions in the member-states. In addition to the long series of biannual Eurobarometer surveys of European public opinion, the Commission recently instituted a new series of periodic "flash" surveys to gauge opinion in the wake of important EU reform initiatives and a new monthly monitoring poll to keep the Commission abreast of public reactions.

support for the process of European integration (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993; Anderson and Kaltenthaler 1995; Gabel and Palmer 1995; Gabel 1998). Scholars have devoted less attention to the specific policy preferences of Europeans and their support for European action in specific policy domains.[4] Yet many theories of European integration stress the policy-specific nature of this process. The recent debates over the terms of the Single European Act or the Maastricht agreement reinforce the point that specific policy choices are being debated, and the relative speed of the integration process is a function of the specific policies being discussed.

Therefore, our analyses focus on public opinions toward specific policy domains. In what areas do Europeans feel that policymaking should be the responsibility of national governments, and in what areas should this be the responsibility of the European Union? More important, what factors determine these policy preferences? Although opinion research has not studied policy integration in detail, existing integration theory provides a fertile starting point for generating our hypotheses. The following sections review this literature.

1.1. Cross-policy variation

The question of how policy integration develops is directly linked to some of the central theoretical questions in integration research. The work of early functional theorists focused on the sequence of broadening policy responsibility for a supranational body that results from initial integration efforts (Haas 1958; Mitrany 1966). Partially because certain problems require it (Mitrany 1966), and partially because of the problem of overcoming national loyalties (Haas 1958), the neofunctionalist strategy begins integration in sectors of scientific, technical, or economic interdependence. Once in place, these initial steps lead to increased interdependence, which may create pressure for further integrative steps, a process labeled "ramification" by Mitrany and "spillover" by Haas.

Of course, there has been much debate about the theoretical and political merit of the functional strategy (e.g. Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff 1990: 433–42). What interests us here, however, are the theoretical implications for public support for policy integration in various domains. If public sentiments follow the neofunctionalist logic, then a direct implication of functionalism is that: *public acceptance of policy integration should be greater in narrow areas of scientific or technical integration*.[5]

For example, European publics may see mutual agreements on occupational safety standards as a technical matter and easily accept EU competency on

[4] Sinnott (1995) is one of the few exceptions; he presents European trends in support for policy integration.

[5] More precisely, we might expect that potential public resistance to integration will be lower in these areas, enabling elites to use them as an initial basis of integration. Then success in these areas will generate public awareness and support for the integration process.

this issue. However, issues that directly touch on employment practices or employment security may evoke different popular responses. In short, policy integration starts with "narrow" policy concerns and then broadens to more fundamental policy domains.

Functionalist theory generates additional hypotheses about the process of policy integration. The impact of *interdependence* is crucial for both Mitrany and Haas because it creates two types of effect.[6] First, it increases the mutual sensitivity of societies, and thus increases the need for policy coordination. Second, and perhaps more important, it increases the interest of the parties in a relationship of *mutual gain*. Haas's later work emphasized the successful provision of "welfare" as a factor contributing to integration (1984). This notion is nicely summarized by Nye: "Neofunctionalists prefer a strategy of increasing policy interactions and assume that identities and loyalties will gradually follow *interests* and expectations in clustering around (and supporting) institutions associated with policy integration" (1971: 44, emphasis ours). Interests, of course, must be seen as the successful provision of gains.

This version of neofunctionalist theory thus presumes that existing and potential international cooperation drive the integration process, a theme similar to Stone Sweet and Caporaso's research in this volume (Chapter 4). European action develops in areas where the potential benefits from international cooperation are greatest. If the public perceives Europe in these terms, then we might expect that: *public support for policy integration should be greater for those issues that are difficult to solve at the national level or which have clear potential benefits from international coordination.*

In contrast to the neofunctionalist approach, Stanley Hoffmann (1966; also see Moravcsik 1991) argued that the integration process is shaped by national interests. Integration proceeds most swiftly when it does not involve matters of essential national interests. In Hoffmann's terms, integration begins with "low-politics" issues such as the technical or scientific examples of neofunctionalist theory. In these cases, national elites (and the general public) are more willing to grant decision-making authority to a supranational body over which they will have less control. When significant accomplishments have been achieved in these areas, the integration process may move to other policy domains. Hoffmann argued that "high-politics" issues of national security or national identity would be the most resistant to policy integration. Thus, efforts to establish a customs union or a common foreign-aid program might gain broad support, but attempts to develop a single European Army would meet with popular (and elite) resistance. Hoffmann's definition of high and low politics issues was somewhat fuzzy; the former included such issues as national security,

[6] This approach is also compatible with Karl Deutsch's work on intersocietal transaction patterns and the development of "community" (Deutsch *et al.* 1957: 58). Deutsch saw public values and the integration process as interrelated: as societal transactions and interdependence increased, presumably values would change or perhaps converge. For Deutsch, then, the development of support for "community" was rooted in structural factors, especially the cross-border flow of goods and other international interactions.

control of the domestic economy, and general rights of national sovereignty. Low politics issues encompass such matters as welfare policies, tariff policies, and other lower priority policies. If we accept this broad distinction, then: *public support for policy integration should be greater for "low-politics" issues than for "high-politics" issues.*

An even more utilitarian argument assumes that the integration process is based on national calculations of specific policy gains from unification. The expansion of the EU's policy authority results from relationships of interdependence and calculations of gain derived from the integration process. Elites may start the ball rolling, but eventually they have to deliver the goods. Prior research generally supports this utilitarian assumption of public opinion. Richard Eichenberg and Russell Dalton (1993) show that Europeans evaluate the policy performance of the EU in two senses. First, gains from intra-European trade are strongly related to overall public support for the European Community. Second, there is now ample evidence that Europeans evaluate the EU on the basis of economic performance, that is, based on such factors as unemployment, economic growth, and inflation (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993; Gabel 1995; Gabel and Palmer 1995). Further, Matthew Gabel's recent work (1998) demonstrates that Europeans are quite sophisticated in their evaluation of the costs and benefits of integration. Drawing skillfully on the theory of gains from trade in the customs union context, Gabel shows that Europeans seem well aware of the implications of trade liberalization given their particular combination of education and compensation, that is to say, their skills and (relative) wages. Although Europe as a whole has experienced huge gains in prosperity from trade, Gabel shows that individual Europeans are aware that there will be winners and losers in the process, and they adjust their support for integration accordingly. This leads to another prediction about public opinion: *public support for policy integration will reflect a utilitarian calculation of the costs and benefits of European action.*

1.2. Cross-national patterns

The preceding discussion has focused on possible differences in policy integration across specific policy domains; but, of course, another source of variation involves differences across nations. The debates on the Single European Act clearly demonstrated that nations varied in the priority they attached to various policy domains and their willingness to support European action in specific domains. For instance, Southern Europeans advocated a social charter and greater EU efforts on social policy, while the Danes and the Dutch wanted the EU to assume greater responsibility for environmental policy. Even the specifics of trade and economic policy varied across nations; while some nations strongly endorse monetary union, others are openly skeptical about the idea.

In addition to indicating the general evaluation of a policy area, utilitarian theories may explain why nations differ in their support for policy integration. For instance, Matt Gabel's research on the class bases of support for the EU

suggests that utility calculations may vary across nations (Gabel 1997). However, it is not entirely clear how to translate the general utilitarian logic into hypotheses linking costs and benefits in specific policy areas. We will develop the utilitarian hypotheses in more detail below when we examine the levels of policy integration in specific domains, but the general logic is clear: *national differences in support for policy integration may be a function of specific national costs and benefits.*

Rather than a narrow utilitarian logic, cross-national comparisons of attitudes toward European integration may emphasize the importance of national traditions, culture, and values as an explanation. An early work in this genre was Karl Deutsch's *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area* (1957). Although Deutsch placed heavy emphasis on the impact of intersocietal communication theory, he also emphasized the "mutual compatibility of major values" as a variable crucial to the integration process. The strength of national identity, or nationalistic sentiments, has been a major factor in explaining national support for European Union (Shepard 1975; Inglehart 1977). Even if phrased in more modest terms, national traditions and experiences with the European Union can create a national response to European integration that is apparent across specific policy domains. For example, Gabel and Palmer (1995) show that World War II experiences still condition overall levels of national support for the EU; Eichenberg and Dalton (1993) find that "national traditions" exert a significant impact on support for the EU even when a multitude of other factors are included in a multivariate model.

Still, it is unclear whether such broad national characteristics hold promise for explaining national levels of policy integration across domains. While this literature suggests which factors should be associated with the decline of national identity and support for the general process of European integration, support for integration of specific policy areas actually varies greatly across societies (as we will see below), highlighting the question of what factors differentiate policy areas from one another. Nonetheless, this research does provide a possible cross-national hypothesis: *public support for policy integration should be greater among those societies with the highest level of support for the general project of European integration.*

By examining the levels of public support for policy integration in several policy domains and across the member-states of the EU, we can both assess the prospects for further expansion of the EU's policy authority, and use this evidence to test prior theorizing about the nature of the integration process.

2. Patterns of Support for Policy Integration

We are primarily interested in explaining public support for policy integration in areas that were involved in the SEA/Maastricht agreements or that may represent the next steps of the integration process. On the one hand, public

acceptance of EU action in specific policy domains marks areas that are most susceptible to further integration, or at least domains where the "permissive consensus" is most developed. On the other hand, by understanding what influences the public to shift their preferences along the national–supranational dimension, we can better understand the theoretical basis for policy integration.

Our empirical base is the rich series of Eurobarometer surveys that the Commission of the European Community has conducted (Reif and Inglehart 1991). Since the 1970s the EU has asked Europeans about their willingness to see various policy areas handled at the national level or at the European level (Dalton 1978). Then, beginning in the mid-1980s the EU began a new series using a different survey question:

> Some people believe that certain areas of policy should be decided by the (National) government, while other areas of policy should be decided jointly within the European Community. Which of the following areas of policy do you think should be decided by the (National) government, and which should be decided jointly within the European Community?

Our analyses focus on the percentage of the public who respond that particular policy areas should be "decided jointly" within the EU.

2.1. Variation across policy issues

Table 9.1 shows the percentage support for policy integration for the fullest set of items over the 1989–97 period. We present the overall responses for the Europe of the twelve (EU12), that is, for those twelve states who were members of the Community during the full period of these surveys.[7] (Statistics for 1985–9 are shown in italics because question wording diverged from subsequent surveys and thus are not fully comparable.)

Focusing first on the overall *level* of support for policy integration, the Community finds itself in a "half empty/ half full" situation. Across all policy areas, support for policy integration is about 50 percent. In more recent surveys, which include additional policy areas, support has occasionally dropped to below that level, standing at 49 percent in 1993 and 1994. However, these data also show that support varies widely across issue areas. Taking the extremes, only 35 percent of Europeans favored integrating "personal data" policy (in 1993), but almost 80 percent have at times favored integration in "cooperation with developing countries."

Fig. 9.1 ranks policy domains according to the overall level of support for EU decision-making. An "above average group" contains six policy areas: developing countries, scientific research, foreign policy, environmental protection,

[7] Percentages are based on the Community-wide sample, weighted to reflect national populations 15 years of age and over.

Table 9.1. Percentage of respondents favoring policy integration at the EU level

	1985	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Cooperation with developing countries	77	42	51	76	74	79	79	74	76	78	74	70
Scientific and technological research	70	60	63	77	75	76	76	70	72	74	72	68
Foreign policy toward non-EC countries		44	50	66	64	70	71	68	69	71	68	64
Protection of the environment	69	61	68	67	66	70	71	67	63	69	63	61
Security and defense	58	60	57	48	47	50	55	48	49	56	49	50
Currency		43	48	57	51	57	55	51	51	61	56	53
Rates of value added tax				51	48	51	53	48	48	52	48	47
Basic rules for broadcasting (radio/tv)				47	45	46	45	38	41	43	41	41
Codetermination/worker participation				36	37	39	38	32	33	42	42	41
Health and social security				38	39	39	39	34	31	40	35	33
Education				34	38	38	39	33	30	35	35	34
Average of above 11 issues				54	53	56	56	51	51	56	53	51
Political asylum regulations							58	54	55	58	53	53
Immigration policy							59	54	54	59	54	54
Industrial policy							57	48	48	56		
Fight unemployment	59						51	46	50	60	51	51
Worker health and safety							48	40	40	48		
Cultural policy							47	38	36	39	34	34
Protection of personal data				39	39	39	41	35				
Average of full response set							55	49	49	55	53	51

Note: Some Eurobarometers contain additional (policy) responses not shown here; when two surveys are available in one year, the mean of the two is displayed.

Sources: Eurobarometer number: (1985) 24; (1987) 28; (1988) 29; (1989) 32; (1990) 33; (1991) 35/36; (1992) 37/38; (1993) 39/40; (1994) 41/42; (1995) 43/44; (1996) 46; (1997) 47.1.

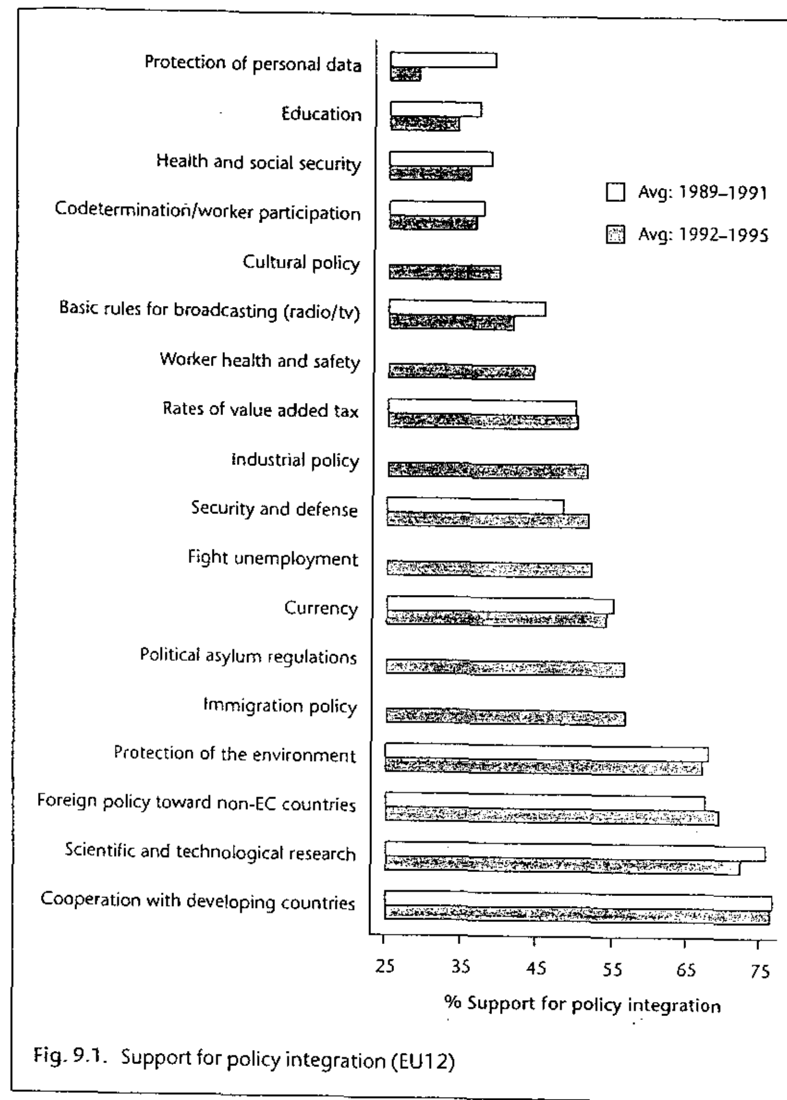

Fig. 9.1. Support for policy integration (EU12)

asylum regulations, and immigration policy. Where comparisons to earlier periods are possible (Dalton 1978), there was broad support for European action on foreign policy and environmental policy long before the initiatives of the SEA and Maastricht. This is a fairly diverse set of policy areas, but they are characterized by at least one of the following traits: they deal with the external environment (foreign policy, developing countries, immigration issues); with classic interdependence issues (environment, immigration); and

they do not have substantial *immediate* implications for individual standards of living.[8]

The "average" group basically contains two sorts of policies: defense and economic management. The ranking of defense is understandable in terms of the "high–low" politics distinction discussed earlier—defense is, after all, the basic function of protecting *national* territory—but it is significant that this aspect of external relations is apparently considered separate from the broader task of foreign policy, which is listed in the first group. The remaining items in this "average" group essentially deal with economic management and market management: support for a common currency, industrial policy, VAT rates, and unemployment policy.[9] Similarly, Dalton (1978) found that in the 1970s there was broad public acceptance of EU competence on economic issues of fighting employment and inflation. Thus, the broad economic role of the EU is generally accepted by its citizens, even if monetary and employment policies still primarily remain the responsibility of national governments.

Finally, the public appears least willing to grant the European Union policymaking responsibility on two types of policy issues: individual rights and standards of living (worker health; codetermination; social security; education), and policies dealing with national culture—what we earlier referred to as "identity issues" (education, privacy, cultural policy). Similar patterns have been observed for the 1970s (Dalton 1978).

Do these statistics speak to the theoretical issues raised above? In both a positive and negative sense, they clearly do. First, there does not appear to be a "high–low" politics distinction in judging policy integration. To the extent that "high" politics meant pursuing the *national interest* in relation to the external environment, these surveys suggest that Europeans have long adopted the view that national interests are best pursued in the European context. National defense remains somewhat problematic in this regard,[10] but there is broad support for a joint EU position on issues of Europe's foreign relations with the world. In addition, Dalton's (1978) early study of policy integration found that Europeans had generally accepted EU competence on a variety of foreign policy issues (relations with the superpowers, control of multinationals, and defense). European elites may once have emphasized the difficulties of coordinating foreign and defense policies among the European states (Rabier and Inglehart 1981), but these views have apparently changed (European Commission 1996). European publics see this as a natural area of joint action.

[8] Immigration perhaps deserves further discussion. We treat it as an interdependence issue, because the experience of the 1990s suggested to Europeans that it was to some extent a collective problem that no state could solve alone. Of course, immigration may have budgetary and welfare (employment) implications, although its ranking here suggests that Europeans see it as a problem concerning the external environment.

[9] VAT taxation might be considered an exception, but in the EU context it has long been discussed as an aspect of market liberalization rather than fiscal policy.

[10] e.g. *Eurobarometer* 44 (spring 1996) found that 44% of the citizens in the twelve favored national action on defense issues, and 52% favored EU action; thus a majority do support a European alternative. Furthermore, a 1996 survey of European elites found very high levels of support for European action on defense and foreign policy in general (CEC 1996).

"High-politics" issues no longer retain a special status among Europeans, if they ever did. In the early stages of the Community, overcoming traditional national sovereignty was clearly near the top of the psychological and political agenda for elites. As time has passed, however, it became clear that separate national positions on many international issues were less likely to succeed than a joint position. Beginning in the mid-1970s, moreover, a number of issues convinced European leaders—and apparently their constituents—that European interests were being neglected (principally by the senior alliance partner). Serious European efforts to construct joint positions began. Beginning most earnestly with the "Nixon shocks" of 1971, there ensued disharmony on the Middle East, energy policy, defense spending, nuclear weapons in Europe, the Soviets in Afghanistan, and the Iranian hostage crisis. Throughout this period, Europe attempted to increase its room for maneuver by laying the groundwork for a common foreign policy (Ginsberg 1989). Interestingly, when the Community first began surveying citizens on policy integration, it phrased the "foreign policy" item in the following terms: "make [our] presence felt in discussions with the superpowers." In short, as early as the 1970s, for Europeans, "high politics" meant aggregating their influence to balance the superpowers, and that could only be done on an EU level (Eichenberg 1997).

If the "high–low" politics distinction seems to have outworn whatever usefulness it once had, other aspects of integration theory find more support in these data. Clearly, there is something to the neofunctionalist logic and strategy. Problems of interdependence and technical complexity attract high support, either because the logic of interdependence seems to demand it (environment, immigration) or because the issue is distant from the citizen's concerns (scientific research). Similarly, past research has shown that market liberalization conditioned overall support for the Community, presumably because of the prosperity to be gained from trade. We see moderately high support for the management of that market (currency regulations, VAT).[11]

Finally, support for policy integration decreases when the issue turns from the management of the market to two sets of issues: the *definition of the national culture* (education, cultural policy, privacy) and the *distribution of national welfare*, including questions of income distribution (social security) and workplace rights (codetermination, health and safety). Education spans both categories; and European elites also see education as primarily a national policy domain (CEC 1996). These latter patterns confirm the enduring utility of the early emphasis on national values, culture, and identity, as well as Dalton's (1978) emphasis on the personal salience of public policy as a factor conditioning support for policy integration.

In summary, public support for policy integration suggests that the EU faces three distinct sets of political problems as it moves beyond the market emphasis of the SEA to the policy emphases of Maastricht. There is a broad basis of

[11] In 1996 European elites rated currency as the top policy domain for European action (CEC 1996). This is an apparent change from earlier elite opinions (Rabier and Inglehart 1981).

support for European action on issues of interdependence and relations with the outside world. There is moderate support, although not overwhelming, for the policy mechanisms that "regulate" the internal market. However, there is little support—indeed there is outright resistance—to any interference in the national state's traditional role as the final arbiter on questions of *the national culture* and *the distribution of national welfare.*

2.2. Variations across nations

Citizen support for policy integration varies among the EU member-states as well as across policy domains. For example, generalized sentiments toward European integration may extend across policies; nations that favor policy integration in one sector may also favor integration in others. Conversely, there are strong reasons to expect substantial national differences in the patterns of policy integration. Some nations may see benefits from integration in some areas, but neutral or negative consequences from integration in other sectors. Indeed, the process of integration has often involved balancing these contrasting national priorities to strike a European-wide bargain.

Table 9.2 presents the national patterns in the percentage preferring Community action in each of the eleven core policy areas (also see Dalton and Eichenberg 1993). Comparing across nations, the greatest net support for European-level action is found among the six founding nations, with most policy areas showing a plurality of support for EU action. It is noteworthy that the Germans fall noticeably below the other founding states. Germans are less enthusiastic than their neighbors about the seemingly consensual issues for European action—science and technology, foreign aid, and environmental protection—and are hesitant to yield national autonomy on matters such as currency reform and VAT rates. While Germans and their government voice strong support for the European ideal, they are now more cautious in actually transferring authority to Brussels.

A hesitancy toward policy integration is displayed among all six "new" states. The Danes and British express less support than average for policy integration in nineteen of the twenty-two areas presented in the table. Support for European action is equally restrained in Greece, Spain, and Portugal.

Taken in aggregate, support for policy integration across a range of policy areas appears to be an extension of overall support for the European project. Indeed, it would be surprising if this did not occur, since those publics which endorse the EU overall should generally endorse greater policy responsibility for the Union. However, these aggregate patterns often coexist with substantial and different patterns at the national level. Such variations may be a function of national values or utilitarian calculations.

Table 9.2. Support for Community decision-making by nation across eleven policy areas

	France	Belgium	Holland	Germany	Italy	Luxem.	Denmark	UK	Ireland	Greece	Spain	Port.	EU avg.
Cooperation with developing countries	83	75	81	77	83	78	67	65	77	63	73	66	77
Scientific and technological research	84	76	79	65	76	81	73	66	75	62	70	66	72
Foreign policy toward countries outside the EC	74	75	75	72	78	74	61	62	68	51	62	59	70
Protection of the environment	67	61	83	67	60	62	52	59	46	45	59	51	59
Security and defense	53	61	70	58	57	69	34	41	27	22	42	41	51
Currency	61	60	58	47	67	60	48	29	58	40	48	39	50
Rates of VAT	65	63	71	48	47	44	40	33	47	27	39	32	47
Basic rules for broadcasting and the press	47	41	45	48	46	55	24	30	39	28	36	31	41
Codetermination	34	32	33	39	32	43	12	33	39	27	23	31	33
Health and social welfare	21	27	39	33	35	37	10	31	26	35	26	37	30
Education	26	22	33	32	41	45	21	21	22	27	27	26	29
Country Average	55	54	61	53	57	59	40	42	48	39	46	44	51

Note: Table entries are the percentage replying that each policy area should be decided jointly within the Community *minus* those who believe the area should be decided by the respective national governments.

Sources: Eurobarometer 42 (Fall 1994).

3. Case Studies of Policy Integration

In our understanding the construction of the European project comes from developing public support where it is lacking, and building compromises between the differing policy priorities of societal actors and their national governments. In some areas the public may accept European action, facilitating policy integration in these areas. For instance, the public in the six EC founder states lean toward EC decision-making on foreign policy and security issues, and this support has increased in the post-Cold War period. The publics in the remaining nations prefer national policymaking on security and defense issues.[12] In other areas, the opinions of the public lag behind policymakers; in several member-states a plurality of the public still favors national action on monetary and currency union.

This section explores support for policy integration in three specific sectors: environmental policy, security and defense policy, and monetary union. These focused analyses will enable us to examine how national preferences differ and how these differences vary across time. Our goal is to determine how domestic policy preferences are formed and how they interact with policy change at the EU level.

3.1. Environmental policy

Our first case study deals with public support for EU or national decision-making on environmental policy. We selected this area for several reasons. Environmental policy is one of the most visible new issues of European politics, and thus enables us to examine the formation of preferences in a new area that has not previously been integrated into the policymaking process of either the EU or national governments. Environmental policy also represents an area where the international dimension of the problem is obvious, but where industry and consumers may bear real economic costs through stricter environmental policy. Thus it is an area that contains a diverse mix of factors that might encourage or discourage a shift toward supranational policymaking. We also know that environmental policy is an area where EU responsibility has changed as a result of the SEA and Maastricht accords—thus we can track the interaction of public opinion and policy change.

Environmental policy has a long, albeit sometimes surreptitious, policy history within the European Union (Sbragia 1993*a*; Vogel 1993). The European Community formed before environmental protection was a salient political issue. Thus, the Treaty of Rome makes no mention of environmental policy,

[12] However, when given the choice between NATO or the EU as a forum for international security, the public in Mediterranean Europe favors the EU.

and the early Community possessed no formal authority on environmental matters. Environmental issues began to gain the attention of policymakers in the early 1970s, as public pressure and international meetings brought this issue onto the political agenda. At the 1972 Paris Summit the heads of government called for the EC to develop an environmental program. The first EC environmental action plan followed in 1973; it assessed the state of the European environment and suggested a series of potential policy reforms. A second action plan was published in 1977 and a third in 1983. In 1981 the Community formed DG XI, which was responsible for environmental issues. During this period the issue received some attention from the EC institutions. However, economic recessions in the 1970s and 1980s focused EC attention on economic issues. In addition, the EC lacked formal legal authority to act on environmental matters, except through consensual regulations and directives. The Community issued a number of directives on environmental issues over this time, but these were fairly modest proposals because of the unanimity requirement. As late as the 1980s, therefore, environmental policy remained primarily a policy domain of national governments.

Although the environment remained off the EU's formal list of responsibilities, there was mounting public and interest group pressure during the 1980s for the EU to become more active on environmental matters. European-wide environmental problems, such as acid rain or periodic environmental crises, reminded Europeans that environmental problems spread across national borders. This was also a period of heightened public interest and activism on environmental issues (Dalton 1994). The public and environmental groups pressed Brussels to become involved in environmental policymaking, a role that was encouraged by DG XI.

The Single European Act transformed the EU's role on environmental issues. A revision of Art. 100 gave the Commission the legal right to set environmental policy. Additional changes to Art. 130 set the standards for environmental protection and mandated that environmental protection requirements be considered in other Community policy areas. Beyond the legal standing the EU gained by these provisions, these reforms also changed how environmental policy would be decided in the future. Instead of unanimous consent, as was the rule prior to 1987, Community action could be taken by a qualified majority when market-related issues were involved. The Maastricht Accords then extended the EU's environmental areas subject to a qualified majority and increased the European Parliament's role on environmental matters. Thus a single polluter nation no longer can block environmental protection policies at the EU level. A series of decisions by the European Court of Justice also expanded the EU's ability to promote strict environmental regulations (Vogel 1993).

By the 1990s, the EU had become a significant arena for the making of environmental policy in Europe. Much if not most of the policy responsibility still lies with the national governments. However, the EU is increasingly

involved in setting environmental standards, arbitrating between conflicts involving economic interests and environmental protection, and establishing European-wide environmental policies.

This is an area where there has been a considerable shift from intergovernmental decision-making in the 1970s to supranational decision-making in the 1990s. Thus, it is interesting to examine the relationship between public preferences and the activities of the Community. Did the public follow elite cues, as the intergovernmentalists would suggest, or is there evidence that public opinion existed separately from the EU's own actions?

Because the Eurobarometers have changed their question wordings over time, we cannot exactly track the trends in public opinion over the past three decades. Yet the evidence from different questions presents a single picture. When questions on environmental policy were first asked in the 1970s, there was already surprisingly high public interest in these issues. In the 1973 European Community Survey, a large majority in each member-state (except Ireland) already felt that environmental protection was an important or very important issue. Subsequent surveys showed that public interest in environmental matters remained widespread over the next decade, despite the economic recessions Europe experienced at the same time (Dalton 1994: ch. 3). In the late 1980s and early 1990s, public interest increased even further.

The first EU public opinion surveys on this issue also found that a clear majority of Europeans favored EU action on environmental issues in the early 1970s. As early as 1974 and 1975, two-thirds of the European public favored Community-level decision-making on policies to fight pollution and protect the environment. Even after the economic recessions of the next several years, surveys in 1983 and 1984 found even higher levels of support for European action.[13]

Table 9.3 summarizes public support for EU decision-making on environmental matters over the last decade. Two findings are apparent from these data and earlier research. First, public support for European action *preceded* EU responsibility for this policy area. Since the early 1970s Europeans have generally favored EU policymaking, recognizing the international dimension of this issue and the need for common action on setting environmental standards. The European public created a "permissive consensus" for action on this issue —a consensus that took the EU more than a decade to translate into formal authority. Furthermore, the development of formal EU authority on this issue has apparently little impact on public sentiments.

Second, national differences in support for European action are fairly consistent and fairly stable over time. Southern Europeans, such as the Greeks, Spaniards, and Portuguese, are least supportive of EU action on environmental

[13] Sinnott (1995) notes that the wording changes in Eurobarometer 6 and 10 appeared to lessen support for European action on all issues, and attributes this to a methodological artifact of the question wording. For this reason we will not discuss these two surveys.

Table 9.3. Percentage of respondents favoring integration of environmental policy

	1985	*1987 (Fall)*	*1989 (Fall)*	1990 (Spring)	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Netherlands	81	79	82	81	83	83	84	82	84	86	75
Germany	79	82	77	68	73	73	75	69	72	72	69
France	81	49	73	62	69	70	65	68	69	67	70
Italy	84	56	64	68	71	74	62	61	68	67	65
Greece	48	58	50	55	61	60	57	52	67	60	57
Luxembourg	83	78	63	63	63	65	67	59	65		63
UK	70	62	63	71	70	70	65	60	65	57	48
Spain	69	57	63	64	73	69	62	59	63	64	66
Belgium	72	53	69	66	69	67	66	62	63	69	64
Denmark	60	85	44	55	57	61	60	49	60	48	55
Portugal	59	51	42	43	61	67	58	52	59	49	45
Ireland	50	47	44	51	55	56	49	48	57	55	48
EU12	69	61	67	66	70	71	67	63	69	65	62
Eurobarometer	24	28	32	33	35/36	37/38	39/40	41/42	43/44	46	47.1

Note: Where two Eurobarometers are displayed, the mean for the two biannual surveys is shown.

matters. The Irish also display significant reservations. In contrast, support is greatest in the Netherlands, which has a very active environmental movement and some of the strongest national environmental regulations in Europe.

This cross-national pattern tends to undercut a narrow self-interest explanation of national opinions. If we assume that EU standards would reflect an "average" of present national environmental policies, then EU policymaking would raise environmental standards for most Southern European nations and might produce lower environmental standards in nations with strict legislation. However, support for EU action is greatest in nations with already strong environmental legislation, and weak in nations with less developed environmental protections (Spain, Greece, Portugal, and Ireland).

Rather than national self-interest, it appears that support for EU action on environmental matters mirrors general public support for action on this policy. Where publics favor strong environmental regulation, as in the Netherlands, the expansion of EU policy responsibilities can increase environmental standards across the continent. Where public support for environmental reform is weak, as in Southern Europe, then an expansion of government activism (even by a European government) is not supported. In other words, in this area policy integration at the EU level appears to be an extension of national policy activism by other means.

3.2. A common foreign and security policy

There is something of a paradox in the fact that Europe has found it most difficult to achieve progress on the integration of foreign and defense policy. To be sure, it is precisely in these areas that "high-politics" questions of national interest, national tradition, sovereignty, and territorial security are raised. Nonetheless, it is also the case that European unity and European institutions were conceived to serve the pursuit of a broad range of external political and security interests. Most obviously, since 1957 Europe has been a customs union, and the institutions of the Community have become thoroughly engaged in the diplomatic representation of foreign trade and other economic interests abroad. Second, the very creation of the European Community was strongly motivated by foreign and security policy considerations. With the failure of the European Defense Community in 1954, the creation of integrated European institutions offered the only option that would bridge the American-supported desire to rearm West Germany and the European (especially French) fears that this step understandably provoked. Like American participation in NATO, the new institutions of European unity served the dual purpose of deterring the Soviets through unity, while simultaneously integrating and containing the newly rehabilitated West Germany.

A united Europe was seen as a balance—or lever—in an external environment characterized by bipolar dominance. As DePorte has put it (1986: 222–3):

> Finally, on the international level, [the Schuman plan] promised not only to strengthen Western Europe in face of the Russian threat but also—though this was less talked about—to strengthen it vis-à-vis its indispensable but overpowering American ally. These Frenchmen, like many West Europeans, did not doubt that they had to rely on American strength for their security. But they did not want to rely entirely on the Americans to manage relations with the East which involved no less than war and peace, that is, the lives of the European nations. At the least a more united Europe could better influence American decisions affecting its vital interests; at the best it could break through the rigidity and risks of bipolar Europe by becoming strong enough to cease to be a stake of the superpowers in cold or hot war.

However, this latter purpose of European foreign policy soon fell victim to the Cold War context of a Europe allied to the USA. Increasingly, foreign and security policy were defined as a stark choice between the Atlantic and European options, and the latter could not be pursued without risking the former. Although European integration was originally a child of the Cold War, in the ensuing years integration of foreign policy could not be seen as competing with the Atlantic connection. The very real threats and tensions of the Cold War (not to mention pressure from Americans) helps to explain why the choice was framed this way, but perhaps it also resulted from the fact that the most energetic proponent of a European voice was General de Gaulle, who complicated matters even further by making it clear that Europe should be led by France, and who in any case was a strong critic of supranational solutions (Grosser 1982; DePorte 1986).

Yet the French position always contained a contradiction. Given the Soviet Union's geographic advantage, its (perceived) conventional dominance, and its large nuclear arsenal, European security required a nuclear deterrent. However, the first and most emphatic principle of French security policy under DeGaulle was the insistence on independence, most particularly in the nuclear realm. In the absence of French willingness to share its deterrent, let alone integrate its defense forces, the remaining European states chose to privilege the Atlantic connection, a result that certainly slowed the evolution of common European positions in foreign and security policy.

There matters rested until the end of the 1960s, when the European challenge to US foreign policy began to grow. Beginning with the Vietnam War and the negative economic consequences for Europeans, there ensued a number of transatlantic quarrels, especially on policy in the Middle East, energy, nuclear weapons, and the coordination of economic policy. Not surprisingly, therefore, the "launching" of formal efforts to institutionalize European cooperation in the foreign policy field began in earnest in the early 1970s in the form of European Political Cooperation (EPC), a form of intergovernmental coordination of foreign policy that nonetheless produced some important European positions on foreign policy, most notably the 1980 Venice declaration on the rights of the Palestinians. Perhaps equally important, the institutionalization of EPC led to biannual meetings of Foreign Ministers to discuss foreign policy specifically, and it also created a dense web of administrative links among Foreign Ministries

and between Brussels and the ministries (Ginsberg 1989; Wood and Yesilada 1996; Smith, Chapter 11).

Foreign policy received little attention in the Single European Act because it was largely a market reform; but the Maastricht Treaty made official what Europeans had long aspired to: that the European Union "shall define and implement a common foreign and security policy" (see Chapter 11). The provisions of the Treaty on Common Foreign and Security policy are quite complex, but substantively they include the aspiration to an integrated defense and security policy in addition to the actual adoption of a common foreign policy, as for example in Art. J.4: "the common foreign and security policy shall include all questions related to the security of the Union, including the eventual framing of a common defense policy, which might in time lead to a common defense." The Treaty also commits the member-states to close consultation, collaborative actions in international bodies and conferences, and it specifies the West European Union as the "defense arm" of the Union.

However, the most important aspect of the Treaty's foreign policy provisions is that intergovernmental rather than supranational decision-making is specified. In both areas, the Council must first decide by unanimous vote that "joint action" should be undertaken; subsequent decisions in the pursuit of these actions are to be taken by qualified majority vote. In summary, the language and indeed the symbolism of the Treaty pushes the Union quite a bit forward in the integration of foreign policy, but supranational integration of authority remains rather limited.

Does this situation reflect the views of European citizens? To the extent that the Treaty continues the European tradition of ambivalence in the integration of foreign policy, it closely parallels citizen views. In the 1970s and 1980s, for example, responses to Eurobarometer surveys as well as US government polls showed that Europeans supported common European foreign policies. For example, in 1974 and 1975, almost 70 percent agreed that the Community should decide jointly to "make [our] presence felt in discussions with the US and the USSR," and in 1976, 55 percent of Europeans agreed that the EC should decide jointly to "defend [our] interests against the superpowers" (Dalton 1978). In addition, there was an increase from the 1970s to the 1980s in the percentage of Europeans who wanted Europe to conduct security policy "together" rather than "separately" (Eichenberg 1989: 14). However, throughout this same period, a substantial plurality of Europeans continued to believe that European security was best pursued within the NATO Alliance when survey questions provided that alternative (Eichenberg 1989: 118–58). Thus, although Europeans responded favorably to the idea of a common foreign or security policy, when phrased as an alternative to NATO, they turned distinctly less favorable.

The same is true of more recent polls. Table 9.4 summarizes the Eurobarometer policy integration questions on foreign and defense policy. It includes three separate questions on EU-level decision-making: cooperation with developing countries; foreign policy toward non-EC countries; and security and

Table 9.4. Percentage of respondents favoring integration of foreign and defense policy

Cooperation with developing countries

	1985	1987	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Italy	88	34	83	82	84	84	79	83	83	84	85
Netherlands	75	48	75	73	76	77	80	80	82	86	84
France	84	37	81	74	79	82	77	83	82	80	77
Spain	80	52	70	77	80	75	71	72	78	74	78
UK	79	50	76	80	81	80	72	73	76	67	66
Belgium	79	40	76	73	77	74	73	72	75	73	65
Ireland	83	43	73	72	73	77	72	75	75	75	74
Germany	79	51	77	68	76	78	76	76	75	72	76
Luxembourg	85	45	72	78	79	79	75	77	75		75
Denmark	57	48	64	63	68	70	69	68	74	64	68
Greece	72	37	56	58	64	64	58	61	71	64	57
Portugal	62	39	54	55	70	74	61	65	70	67	59

Foreign policy toward non-EC countries

	1985	1987	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Netherlands		48	68	66	79	74	78	76	79	82	82
Italy		37	78	74	75	80	75	78	79	79	83
France		42	73	63	72	73	70	74	76	74	72
Belgium		49	78	70	76	73	72	74	74	69	66
Germany		58	67	60	68	72	70	70	73	73	71
Luxembourg		51	63	65	65	72	72	71	73		76
Spain		39	58	69	71	65	64	61	70	70	69
Ireland		36	64	62	60	67	64	66	66	68	70

Table 9.4. (*cont.*)

	1985	1987	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Foreign policy toward non-EC countries											
Portugal		24	41	47	59	67	55	60	63	58	56
UK		53	61	64	68	65	61	61	62	56	55
Denmark		50	47	47	56	57	58	60	62	57	58
Greece		33	36	42	54	55	50	49	61	59	53
Security and defense											
Netherlands	64	54	63	67	66	70	75	71	77	76	75
Luxembourg	74	60	63	68	57	63	64	63	69		66
Belgium	64	60	58	53	63	57	57	56	65	61	54
Italy	71	53	56	60	59	69	54	60	64	60	64
Germany	61	57	58	50	53	57	58	59	60	61	62
France	61	72	51	42	46	53	42	51	56	52	54
Spain	60	58	37	40	48	48	43	41	52	50	54
Portugal	46	40	24	26	41	52	41	38	52	36	33
UK	51	64	39	42	42	41	39	39	42	37	35
Denmark	55	69	33	42	41	45	35	37	40	33	36
Greece	51	49	23	31	38	43	33	25	34	33	33
Ireland	53	50	25	24	29	29	23	26	30	26	28
Eurobarometer	24	28	32	33	35/36	37/38	39/40	41/42	43/44	46	47.1

Note: Where two Eurobarometers are displayed, the mean for the two biannual surveys is shown.

defense. There are several notable features in Table 9.4. First, comparing the levels of support across the three questions, there is much stronger support for the notion of integrating foreign policy generally than for integrating defense and security specifically. Why might this be the case?

First, as noted above, the Union already has a long tradition of coordinating its relations with the external environment. The most obvious example, of course, is the Union's role representing Europe on trade matters, but there is also the long experience of EPC as well as the Union's active program of trade and development assistance with the poorer nations (Lomé conventions). Second, the questions on foreign policy integration speak to general issues, while the integration of defense and security policies has quite specific operational (and perhaps budgetary) implications. Especially in the context of Cold War Europe, or even in specific situations with obvious implications for the Union, such as the conflict in Yugoslavia, the potentially unpleasant implications of defense policies surely affect the responses.

The cross-national differences in responses to these items also merit discussion. Unlike the responses to many of the policy integration items, the first two foreign policy items in Table 9.4 reveal substantial cross-national consensus; in no country is there consistently less than 60 percent support for integration of foreign policy and relations with the Third World, and the gap between the states showing the strongest and weakest support is much less than was the case in responses to the item on environmental policy integration. In summary, as concerns the general integration of foreign policy, there is both national and cross-national consensus.

The same is not true of defense and security policy, where there is substantial polarization between the oldest members of the Union and the newer members. In addition, the United Kingdom, now the inheritor of the Gaullist mantle in Europe, is substantially more negative than its continental partners. Most important, the three most important players on the issue of security policy integration—France, Germany, and the UK—are clearly divided in their level of support.

Finally, it is worth noting that the EU remains bedeviled by the debate concerning the compatibility of an EU defense policy and a defense based on NATO. Whether the debate is necessary is a subject beyond the terms of this chapter, but it is worth noting that, when faced with the choice in recent US government surveys, European support for the NATO Alliance remains surprisingly strong, given the decline in the Soviet/Russian threat, but it is also the case that, on a number of questions concerning an integrated European defense, citizens remain strongly supportive. Indeed, there is evidence that support for NATO and support for an integrated approach to European security are not perceived by citizens to be incompatible (USIA 1995). It therefore comes as little surprise that NATO and the EU in 1996 institutionalized a situation of "dual competence" for security policy in which NATO endorsed the concept of a specific "European Defense Identity" within NATO but also reaffirmed the primacy of the NATO Alliance (Art. 1996; NATO 1996; Eichenberg 1997).

3.3. Economic and monetary union and the politics of convergence

The final policy area we examine is citizen support for EU sovereignty on economic and monetary issues—one of the main issues of contention in current EU politics (see Chapter 7). The politics of European monetary cooperation can be usefully divided into three historical periods. A first phase might be called the *fixed exchange-rate phase*, encompassing the series of attempts beginning in the early 1970s to coordinate monetary policy by binding members to a more or less narrow band of exchange-rate fluctuations vis-à-vis other member currencies. Several characteristics of this phase (the European Monetary System and its variants) are noteworthy. First, in its inspiration and justification, the EMS was fairly narrow, technical, and indirect in its implications for fiscal and macroeconomic policy. It was essentially designed to manage and protect European markets from the uncertainties of exchange-rate fluctuations. By reducing uncertainty and exchange-rate cost of transactions, the system aimed to promote investment, trade, and growth. Equally important, the EMS had a *direct* impact only on the monetary instrument of government economic policy. Although it had indirect implications for fiscal and macroeconomic policy, these were not explicitly covered by the system. Thus, the politics of taxing, spending, and employment were left outside the direct purview of EU policy harmonization. Second, a substantial motivation for the system was the combination of annoyance and uncertainty that resulted from the perceived inconsistency and unpredictability of American monetary and fiscal policy after the breakdown of the Bretton Woods system. In summary, although the system was certainly embodied with some of the symbolism of European unity, one could argue that, in its public presentation and justification, it was designed largely as a management tool to facilitate the operation of the common market.

The EMS was not without its difficulties, of course, but a second phase began with the signature of the Maastricht Treaty and the commitment of the Union to economic and monetary union (EMU). From this point forward, the Union was committed to something far beyond the coordination of monetary policy through exchange-rate management, for Maastricht requires EU members to merge their sovereignty in monetary affairs by creating a single European currency, a single set of (politically independent) institutions for managing and regulating that currency, and perhaps most important, a single set of fiscal and economic policy objectives (termed convergence criteria) that are deemed necessary for a single currency to function effectively.

The immediate post-Maastricht phase certainly contained some continuity with the past. Especially when viewed in the context of the single-market program, the need to remove the uncertainties and costs associated with fluctuating exchange rates continued to hold a prominent place in the official rationale for the policy. What is more, European annoyance and concern for the vicissitudes of American economic policy continued to inform the policy dialogue that animated both the SEA in the 1980s and the monetary provisions of the Maastricht Treaty.

However, with Maastricht two new elements entered—and came to dominate—the public discussion. The most prominent was the central innovation of EMU itself: the establishment of a supranational authority and institutions to supplant national sovereign authority over monetary policy. Equally important, the politics of national symbols came to dominate the political reaction to EMU, as the theme of debate focused on the issues of national pride and identity that were combined in the visible symbols of history and culture that are imprinted on each nation's currency. Whereas monetary debates once turned on the width of the band in the "snake," after Maastricht the question was whether the loss of the nation's currency did not also mean the loss of its history and identity.

Not surprisingly, the politics of national identity proved troublesome enough as the Union and member-states worked through the ratification of the Treaty, but no sooner had they surpassed the ratification hurdle than members found themselves embroiled in a third, continuing phase of the public debate. This is the phase of the *convergence criteria*, and it has become increasingly clear that the potential negative impact of the criteria concerning interest rates, inflation, and budget deficits have been brought home to the European public by recent debate and experience. Unlike the relatively narrow and technical features of the former exchange-rate regime, which at least in public perceptions probably concerned exchange-rate coordination and little else, the convergence requirements of EMU now require coordination of budgetary and macroeconomic policy, and perhaps a significant dose of austerity. In short, the prior system had concerned exchange rates only, but after Maastricht the core of national governments' functions are at issue; political leaders must struggle to square domestic priorities on taxes, spending, growth, and employment with the politics of convergence. These developments come as an additional blow to domestic audiences already troubled by slow growth, stubbornly high unemployment, and pressure on public spending programs that arise from demographic developments and international competition. Finally, divergent economic and budgetary policies among the member-states further complicate a political problem that is already delicate. In summary, as the Union moves toward final implementation of EMU, the constraints and choices required by convergence exacerbate a consensus problem within and among EU members that was already complicated by the symbolic politics of identity and nationalism that initially greeted the Treaty.

However, whether these political complications will prove fatal to successful transition to EMU remains as yet an open question. In the first place, as Cameron describes so clearly in Chapter 7, the Union has moved decisively to remove doubts that it was committed to a clear timetable for implementation of EMU. In the initial post-Maastricht phase, there remained a hypothetical quality to the commitment to full EMU. However, with the declarations of the Turin and Dublin summits and the subsequent deliberations of Finance Ministers, the Union is now squarely on record as committed to implementation. Second, the key players in EMU, especially France and Germany, have reaffirmed their commitment to implementation and have worked closely to

surmount both public doubts and squabbles among member governments. Finally, even absent these developments, it is not at all clear that public opinion totally rejects either the general aspirations or the technical details of EMU. As we have noted elsewhere (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993), European public opinion is sensitive to inflation and seems to ascribe some responsibility to Brussels for its successful management. To the extent that EMU is sold as a policy tool to bring non-inflationary growth, there is therefore some basis for believing that the public would greet it positively. Similarly, as described in an earlier section of this chapter, there is ample evidence that European public opinion supports "market-management" mechanisms at the EU level, precisely because they perceive an important goal of the EU to be the promotion of prosperity through intra-European trade. Thus, to the extent that EMU can be sold as a mechanism for reducing the cost and uncertainties of the market, it appeals to a basis of support that already exists in public opinion. Finally, the role of EMU and the Euro as "buffers" against American economic policies remains explicit, and thus has an appeal on economic grounds as well as appealing to a sense that the Union and its policies are designed to promote European influence more generally.

Whether the final "convergence" phase of transition to full EMU will founder on public rejection remains an open question. Table 9.5 displays national patterns of public support for joint EU decision-making in three policy areas that are relevant to EMU: "currency," "fighting unemployment," and "health and social security." Although these survey questions do not inquire in detail what the EU's precise responsibility in these three areas would be, clearly the first of the three items does sensitize respondents to the central issue of a common currency. In addition, the "unemployment" and "social security" questions highlight the new salience of the "post convergence" Union in areas such as economic growth and unemployment. These policies are also related to the budgetary convergence criteria; health and social policy represent the largest categories of public spending in Western Europe.

Table 9.5 reveals that support for policy integration in these areas has followed a generally similar cross-national pattern over time: there was a period of declining support in the initial post-Maastricht period (perhaps affected by a deteriorating economy as well), followed by a period of recovery in support that continued into 1995. Of the three policy areas, support for integration of currency policy is the highest in all countries but two (the UK and Portugal). By 1995, support for joint decision-making on currency matters enjoyed majority support in ten of the twelve member-states shown here, and in many members the support is quite strong. In fact, in every member-state but the UK and Germany, the negotiation, debate, and ratification of the Maastricht Treaty *increased* support for currency integration from its level prior to the signing of the Treaty.

Similarly, joint EU efforts to fight unemployment enjoy majority support in most member-states, a pattern that has been in evidence since the 1970s (Dalton 1978: 20). Moreover, this support also grew in the aftermath of the

Table 9.5. Percentage of respondents favoring integration of currency and related policy issues

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Currency											
Netherlands	40		53	50	58	58	57	57	77	70	58
Italy	32		68	66	71	77	69	67	75	74	76
France	60		72	63	69	65	58	64	70	64	60
Luxembourg	59		56	54	57	63	61	58	70		64
Belgium	46		67	62	65	66	62	57	70	62	57
Spain	35		46	41	57	54	53	50	62	59	56
Ireland	41		57	56	55	57	52	56	66	61	56
Greece	52		44	47	53	59	51	44	57	51	52
Germany	51		59	44	53	46	46	45	55	50	44
Portugal	27		28	33	47	57	44	39	52	51	41
Denmark	49		54	50	52	53	46	49	51	35	41
UK	32		42	42	36	32	27	30	43	29	25
"Fight unemployment"											
Greece						57	53	51	67		55
Italy						70	57	56	69		67
Ireland						57	47	53	65		54
Portugal						61	52	53	61		47
France						58	50	60	61		57
Netherlands						49	48	48	61		53
Belgium						50	47	56	61		58

Table 9.5. (*cont.*)

"Fight unemployment"

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Spain						44	37	37	56		51
Germany						46	46	50	59		52
UK						36	32	40	53		28
Luxembourg						42	43	51	56		54
Denmark						26	43	35	49		36

Health and social security policy

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Greece			45	52	54	53	44	41	52	45	41
Portugal			36	39	45	55	42	34	51	37	31
Italy			48	56	54	52	39	38	48	46	48
Spain			40	40	47	42	33	27	41	34	36
Netherlands			41	44	39	38	45	38	45	44	39
Germany			37	35	37	40	41	33	42	34	34
Belgium			35	39	32	33	29	28	37	36	36
Ireland			35	31	29	37	28	29	39	32	29
UK			35	36	33	31	30	31	38	30	25
France			34	30	28	30	23	23	31	29	28
Luxembourg			31	40	34	33	33	36	40		37
Denmark			11	15	14	15	14	10	17	12	15
Eurobarometer	28	29	32	33	35/36	37/38	38/39	41/42	43/44	46	47.1

Treaty, in some countries by substantial margins. To be sure, this question on "fighting unemployment" might be seen as rather anodyne, since it is hard to imagine respondents rejecting *any* measure that might relieve Europe's most significant economic and social problem, and the increase in support on this question came over a period of economic difficulty. Nonetheless, it is worth recalling (from Table 9.1), that there *are* issues concerning the integration of social and employment policy about which respondents are far more negative (worker codetermination and health and safety regulations, for example). Thus, it seems at least plausible that respondents view the currency question and the unemployment question as issues of *market management*, a function that has long formed part of the EU's rhetoric and responsibilities (in the customs union, SEA, and EMS), and a function for which citizens seem to hold the EU responsible. In summary, the responses to these questions suggest that citizens are receptive—and certainly not resistant—to the EU's argument that the functioning of the single market requires economic mechanisms that reduce the uncertainties and costs of doing business in that market.

The same is not true of support for joint decision-making in the area of "health and social security." As we discussed earlier, rejection of EU action in this policy domain does not require the EMU to explain: the fact that the welfare state represents the unique combination of *national* values and compromises that form the basis of the postwar reconciliation of class and partisan interests in Europe. Perhaps it is not surprising that Europeans would be wary of introducing a supranational policy mechanism to supplant national *welfare traditions* and policies that represent such a historic and potentially fragile set of national compromises. In fact, the opposition to involving the EU in policies dealing with "income inequality" is actually longstanding (Dalton 1978: 20).

Equally important, the welfare state programs represent the largest categories of public spending, and to that extent they are obvious targets of budget austerity as the EMU convergence criteria force governments to reduce deficits. Interestingly, whereas the citizens of the more wealthy, older members of the EU had supported the market-management policies described earlier, here several of them fall at or below the average level of support for integration (France, Luxembourg, and Belgium are prominent examples). Since the modern welfare state is both older and larger in these states, there is some suggestion that citizens are reacting to the potential retrenchment that EMU might bring to social policy. These suspicions are reinforced by the fact that support for integration in this area *has actually declined* since 1989 in the older, wealthier member-states.

Other comparisons across the member-states are also noteworthy. There is a fairly clear pattern of strong support for currency policy among the group of wealthy, founding members who conduct a substantial amount of trade within the EU (that is, those for whom the market-management argument holds strongest sway). The exception, of course, is Germany, where support has stagnated over the period of the Maastricht debate and where questions about the costs of reunification and the fate of the deutschemark (and the economic

policies that support it) are reflected in the ambivalence of the German public. Secondly, Greece, Spain, and Portugal were initially skeptical, but support for joint currency decision-making has grown substantially in these countries, leaving only Denmark and the UK in the familiar roles of rejectionists. Perhaps most interesting, on the health and social security question, the now-familiar pattern of strongest support among the older, founding members of the community is reversed: on this issue, only the newer members—especially Greece, Portugal, and Spain—show near-majority support for integration, a result of the fact that support has actually grown in these countries since the late 1980s.

Two perspectives compete to explain this pattern. First, to the extent that the measure taps vulnerability to EMU-caused budgetary austerity, the newer, less wealthy EU members may simply have less to lose than the older members with larger, well-established health and pensions systems (to name just two). Second, to the extent that the measure taps aspirations to social *policy harmonization*—perhaps on market-management and convergence grounds—the cross-national patterns suggest that the newer, poorer societies see some self-interest in harmonization (presumably because it would raise welfare standards), while the older members do not (presumably because it would mean a lowering of their own standards).

In any case, the combination of these patterns suggests clear lessons and perhaps predictions concerning the politics of EMU. First, there is moderate support within and among member-states for the harmonization of currency policy. This support has actually edged upward after the initial negative reaction to Maastricht. This support may depend on the logic of *market management*, a logic that Europeans are sensitive to because of its importance to the functioning of the single market and its prior history in the EMS. To be sure, the problems of German ambivalence and Danish and British recalcitrance are evident here as well, but this is hardly new, and in any case it occurs in the context of a generally warming public reception to monetary coordination.

However, as suggested earlier, the Achilles' heel of EMU may turn out to be the low levels of support that most citizens feel toward harmonizing health and social security. This is already evident in the domestic debates of France and Germany, both of which have made difficult budgetary cuts and reforms in their efforts to meet the convergence criteria.

4. Policy Integration and the Implications for the European Union

As the European Union moves beyond the market liberalization provisions of the Treaty of Rome and the Single European Act, our results can make a significant contribution to our understanding of how the integration process moves from state-centered action to collaborative policymaking within the European

Union. At a theoretical level, we would argue that our findings have much to say about the nature of the integration process. The first lesson is the importance of disaggregating the integration process. Although European integration may be a general process, it is comprised of specific steps on specific policy matters. Thus, it is more realistic to speak of a process of *policy integration* in which EU responsibility can be judged for specific policy areas. The building of a European Union progresses by the cumulation of policy integration, and the factors affecting policy integration may vary from issue domain to issue domain.

Generalizing patterns across multiple policy areas, it appears that some theoretical perspectives seem outworn, such as the "high–low" politics distinction that framed discussions of European integration in the 1960s and 1970s. While it is true that support for a truly unified European defense policy is moderate at best, one might argue that even this moderate support is higher than the "high-politics" framework would have predicted. Moreover, support for a joint European approach to the broader array of international relations is high and it is arguably more resistant than other policy areas to short-term perturbations. As we have argued, the staleness of the "high–low" distinction probably occurs because the analysts of earlier periods failed to notice that the Community's hesitant ventures into foreign policy collaboration masked a fundamental transformation in East–West relations (as well as Atlantic economic relations) that was propelling Europe into a posture of increased independence. With the end of the Cold War and the gradual reduction of the US presence in Europe, that trend is likely to continue.

Other theoretical perspectives are more useful in predicting where there is public support for policy integration. Clearly, theories that stressed the importance of values, culture, and identity are helpful in understanding public opinion toward specific policy domains. Perhaps this is not surprising; Karl Deutsch, for example, was an astute student of state- and nation-building. Our results show that scholars lost sight of the fact that Europe represents an experiment in the fundamental transformation of an international system. To the extent that this experiment impinges on the substratum of cultural and national identification built over hundreds of years, it is likely to meet resistance. If our results suggest anything, it is that support for policy integration is lowest in areas that touch on issues of national identity and culture.

Ironically, however, the *neofunctionalist strategy*—so much criticized for its imprecision and indeterminacy—stands up well in our analysis. First, as Mitrany suggested so long ago, citizens seem capable of identifying issue-areas characterized by interdependence, that is, those that are difficult to address on a national basis alone. Opinion series show, for example, that Europeans favored international action on environmental policy before national elites were willing to grant the EU policy responsibility. Second, the interdependence aspect of neofunctionalist theory is confirmed by the general public support for the liberalization of the market and for the instruments for managing that market. Perhaps the history of the community does not provide evidence of a

mechanical process of integration–spillover–integration, but it is not entirely clear that neofunctionalist theory would have predicted such a simple process in the first place.[14]

Of course, the most interesting test of the neofunctionalist argument is yet to come, and this in two senses. First, the maturation of the internal market should yield a substantially different pattern of economic and political cleavages, based on the new division of labor of a fully functioning customs union. In this respect the work of Gabel (1998) is crucial; he demonstrates that support for integration varies along the lines suggested by a model of trade integration.[15] Thus, the predictions of the neofunctionalists might finally come to pass in the form of shifting patterns of interest aggregation to the European level.

This is a crucial subject for further research that would include the study of public opinion as well as analyses into the actual patterns of politics and policy-making. The best example is the so-called Social Charter of the Maastricht Treaty. As might be predicted from the data in this chapter, the Social Charter provoked some of the stormiest conflict in the final phase of negotiation (and ratification, as Danish voters showed). The provisions of the Social Charter are actually quite modest, confined to issues of workers' rights and working conditions. The core of the welfare state—the income transfers that constitute the largest share of public budgets—remain untouched (Lange 1992).

Nonetheless, once in place, the Social Charter might create pressure for further policy integration—spillover—for it is difficult to conceive of a truly liberalized labor market that has large discrepancies in compensation levels. Comparative advantage, after all, encompasses not just wages, but also the overall compensation package.[16] How this political process will play out is, of course, an open question, but it does suggest that there was more to the neo-functionalist logic than critics have given due.

[14] Actually, it is also not entirely clear that such spillover did not take place, but this is not the place to debate the issue.

[15] It is also apparent in work that goes beyond public opinion. Jeff Frieden, for example, has shown that trade has shifted coalitions on EU issues in ways that might promote further integration. See Frieden (1994).

[16] If our analysis is correct, two divergent results are likely to occur. First, an "opportunistic" approach may very well be taken by workers in societies with relatively limited social benefits—essentially the poorer members, but perhaps others whose relative social compensation is low (UK). Second, this approach is likely to be resisted by workers (and perhaps their elected representatives) in societies seeking to preserve relatively more generous social benefits—essentially the central and northern Europeans.

10

Institution-Building from below and above: The European Community in Global Environmental Politics

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THE European Community was created in a postwar world of proliferating regional and global institutions. Its unique characteristics did not insulate it from the international environment. How the Community was to relate to that environment was contested both within the Community and within its counterpart international institutions. What role should the Community play on the international stage?

The member-states which formed the Community retained their sovereign right to negotiate unilaterally in the myriad international organizations created after World War II. Their participation in the Community did not automatically preempt their right to negotiate and represent themselves at international bargaining tables. The one exception was clearly the GATT as the Treaty of Rome gave the Community exclusive competence for commercial policy (although the Community itself did not become a signatory to the GATT). (See for example Woolcock and Hodges 1996.) Given the retention of national sovereign rights in the international field outside of the GATT, the Community's role in external relations was problematic. Many of the member-states assumed that the international powers of the Community would be "enumerated" powers and that they, the member-states, would control that process of institutionalization.

In 1997, as we examine the international role of the Community, we find it playing a major role in many international fora concerned with "civilian" issues. While its negotiating cohesiveness is not as stellar as the proponents of a federal Europe would wish, its international presence is far more significant than the Treaty of Rome would predict. This is particularly true in the global environmental arena. How did the Community gain the power to be represented when the Treaty of Rome did not even mention the notion of