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SUPRANATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND LEGITIMACY: HOW THE 2008 GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS HAS AFFECTED PUBLIC OPINION ON MEMBERSHIP IN THE EU

by

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B.A. University of Central Florida, 2011

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines public opinion towards membership in the EU, before and after the 2008 global economic crisis, in the newest member states to join the institution in 2004 (the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia) and 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania). Prior to the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1989, socialist economies and communism maintained a citizenry that never experienced unemployment and that did not have a political voice. Because free-market economic policies and democratic values are new to these countries, public opinion regarding membership in a supranational organization that promotes and fosters these ideals is important to study. Data from the Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey spring waves 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the World Bank, and Eurostat are used to measure multiple indicators of support for membership in the EU. Ordered logistic regression and means comparison analyses are employed to measure the effect of national-level economic prospects, economic winner/loser status, political party power, age, national identity, gender, and individual-level political ideology on public opinion toward membership. The results demonstrate that multiple indicators affect attitudes toward membership and that a negative shift in public opinion is apparent following the 2008 global economic crisis. At the individual-level of analysis, economic winner/loser status and national identity are significant in the predicted direction in all five models. Age is a significant indicator of support only in 2008, 2009, and 2010. At the aggregate-level, means comparison analyses and t-test statistics indicate that GDP annual growth rates have a positive effect on attitudes toward membership in the EU. As GDP annual growth increases, approval of membership in the EU increases. Eurozone membership and unemployment rates indicate varied support for membership in the EU, and the results of means comparison analyses of political party power at the national-level are inconclusive and exploratory in nature. With all findings considered, future studies can further examine the implications and long-term effects of global financial crises on public opinion towards membership in various international economic organizations.

For my family and friends who supported me through the grueling, yet rewarding, process that is writing a master’s thesis. I would not be where I am today without your love and encouragement.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the first enlargement of the European Union (EU) in 1973 when Denmark, Ireland, and the United Kingdom gained membership, the causes of euroscepticism have remained highly studied. Many factors contribute to citizen approval or disapproval of membership in the EU in both member states and candidate countries. In 1950, when Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands first formed the European Economic Community (EEC)—later to become known as the EU—there were already plans to expand the Community to other western European countries (European Commission 2014a). The last two enlargements taking place in 2004 and 2007 introduced twelve new countries to the EU, including Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania (European Commission 2014a). The newest member states (excluding Cyprus and Malta) share a history of communist rule and a transition to democracy after the collapse of the Soviet Union during the late 1980s. Cyprus and Malta, on the other hand, share a history of British colonial rule up until the 1960s. This thesis seeks to answer two main research questions: how have attitudes towards membership in the EU among new member states changed since the 2008 global economic crisis? And, what do these changes in attitude mean for the future and legitimacy of the EU?

In 2009, the Lisbon Treaty was signed which established new powers for the European publics. The treaty states that the next official to replace José Manuel Barroso in the fall of 2014 as the president of the European Commission (EC) must be endorsed by the European Parliament (EP). Because the EP is elected by European voters, the voters have a direct influence on who will become the next president of the EC (European Parliament 2014). The 2014 EP elections, taking place on May 22nd through the 25th, were the first to be held since the signing of the Lisbon Treaty. Participation in EP elections following the global economic crisis has given citizens the power to evaluate the EU leaders' efforts to address the economic crisis that continues to plague the Eurozone and other member states. According to Adam Nathan, the Deputy Director of European Influence (an organization to maintain a cohesive Europe), the presence of eurosceptic parties in the EP is considered a good thing for democracy. However, if the percentage of eurosceptic MEPs exceeds 20 percent and begins to approach 30 percent, then "Europe is doing something wrong" (Nathan 2014). The results of the 2014 EP election are indicative of rising euroscepticism in the region which could ultimately mean disaster for the institution.

The effect of national economic health on citizen approval of governments and political leaders is not new to the field of political science. From an individual's economic well-being to the health of the state economy, citizens use fiscal cues to determine whether or not they support the leaders of their country or their current government (Anderson 2000; Dorussen and Taylor 2002; Powell and Whitten 1993; Whitten and Palmer 1999). The literature on economic voting frequently references the responsibility hypothesis. It claims that voters place blame or reward for economic performance on the government and hold politicians or incumbents responsible for the rising and falling economy (Lewis-Beck and Paldam 2000). The EU is an example of a supranational organization that experiences the same forces that national governments do during election cycles. This research is important for many reasons. Myriad public opinion surveys measure approval ratings of membership in the EU while countries are in the candidacy period and after they gain membership. Using the Eurobarometer public opinion surveys, statistical analyses will be conducted in order to examine the effect of the 2008 global economic crisis on attitudes towards the supranational entity.

Because the stability of the EU rests in the support that it receives from its member states, this research remains relevant and very important. The legitimacy of an institution is threatened when members begin to foster negative evaluations of that institution (Cichowski 2000). David Easton (1965; 1975) described three levels of political support—support for “political authorities, the regime, and the political community” (Dalton 2008, 239). If citizens demonstrate decreased levels of support for political authorities, then they will vote those authorities out of office. However, if support decreases for the regime or political community, the political implications become more urgent—this is when a loss of legitimacy can occur.

The newest members of the EU with a history of communist or colonial rule are critical to examine because although over two decades have passed since the dissolution of the Soviet Union and gaining independence, its legacy continues to affect public opinion and political behavior. While these countries have transitioned to independent democracies and free-market economies, the democratic values that are apparent in the older member states are not firmly established yet in the sample countries. The communist legacy has left “an us (the people) versus them” (the government, institutions, and members of parliament) mentality in the citizens of these countries leaving them skeptical of integration (Guerra 2013).

The literature (Anderson and Reichert 1995; Cram 2009; 2012; Deutsch et al. 1957; Dobratz 1993; Esparza 2010; Hooghe and Marks 2009; Inglehart and Rabier 1978; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2007) has identified a number of variables that have an effect on attitudes towards membership in post-communist member states. Institutional, economic, and cultural factors all influence public opinion on membership in the EU. The research, however, has overlooked how the 2008 global economic crisis has changed attitudes toward the Union and what this means for the future of the institution. This thesis seeks to fill this gap. The first chapter investigates the previous literature on multiple variables that affect public opinion toward membership in the EU. The health of the national economy and the economic vote, national and cultural identity, national level political party power, and value change are considered. Chapter two discusses the various economic and political transitions that the sample countries underwent following the dissolution of Soviet Union. GDP annual growth rates and unemployment are two economic indicators that are examined in depth. Chapter three introduces the data and methods for the study and chapters four and five examine the results of the quantitative analysis and conclusions of the thesis.

CHAPTER ONE: LITERATURE REVIEW

The EU, was established in 1957 to foster economic cooperation between its member states. The 2008 global economic crisis brought the sample countries—the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Cyprus, Malta, Bulgaria, and Romania—of the Union into a recession deeper than any of the countries have experienced since the 1930s. The gross domestic product (GDP) of the EU27 dropped 4.5 percent in 2009 and has not yet risen to the level it was prior to the crisis (Eurostat 2013). Previous studies (Anderson 2000; Campbell et al 1960; 2010; Dorussen and Taylor 2002; Duch and Stevenson 2008; Lewis-Beck and Paldam 2000; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2008; Powell and Whitten 1993) have shown that economic factors influence the voting behavior of citizens in democracies throughout the world. Therefore, the cooperation of member states with the EU is contingent on public support of the various neoliberal economic and social policies backed by the institution.

The Economy and the Economic Vote

A plethora of studies on economic voting exists in the literature. Beginning with Campbell et al.'s seminal work *The American Voter*, scholars continue to study how the economy affects vote choice in national elections. The classic economic voting hypothesis posits that individuals reward or punish incumbent politicians based on their retrospective evaluations of the status of the economy (Butler and Stokes 1969; Campbell et al 1960; Fiorina 1978; Key 1966; Kinder and Kiewiet 1981; Lewis-Beck and Nadeau 2011; Stokes 1963). If economic conditions are bad, the incumbent party in the succeeding election suffers (Weatherford 1978).

The retrospective economic voting model suggests that citizens are concerned with the results of current economic policies and punish the incumbent party responsible; on the other hand, the prospective voting model evaluates proposed policies by the incumbent party to fix the economic situation (Fiorina 1978). The latter model suggests that voters act on the promises made by candidates, whether an incumbent or not, regarding how they will address the state of the economy (Clarke and Stewart 1994; Lewis-Beck 1990). While this model has been explored, the retrospective voting hypothesis remains the dominant theory in the literature.

Most of the early research on voting behavior (Campbell et al 1960; Key 1966) focuses on the United States and other developed western societies. However, recently scholars have paid more attention to how economic situations affect elections in transitional and less developed democracies (Coffey 2013; Duch 2001; Fidrmuc 2000; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2008; Stegmaier and Lewis-Beck 2009; 2011). The recent availability of public opinion surveys and data regarding citizen evaluations of governments in these transitional democracies have made these studies possible. With recent democratization in the sample countries, it is important to consider factors such as poverty, a “fragile” middle class, poor governing abilities, and the distribution of wealth, and how these variables affect voting behavior—specifically the economic vote—and elections (Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2008, 304). Because democracy and free-market economic policies were recently instituted in these countries, communication between the citizenry and the government may not be as well-established as in western democracies. For this reason, exploring the economic vote in such societies is vital and will provide insight to the saliency of economic issues in CEE countries and how citizens attribute reward or blame to national and supranational entities.

To begin, it is important to examine how class factors affect the economic vote. Fluctuations in the economy (annual GDP growth, unemployment rates, and per capita income) affect the various groups in society differently. An individual's position in the class structure influences his or her outlook on economic events and the policy alternatives proposed by political elites (Hamilton 1972; Parkin 1971; Rainwater 1974; Weatherford 1978). For instance, blue collar workers usually hurt more by economic recessions than white collar workers for many reasons. Evidence for this can be observed in unemployment rates, for instance; the former group of individuals typically experiences unemployment rates which double those of the latter group (Weatherford 1978). Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier (2007) find that the economy compared to other social issues and partisan identification repeatedly has a greater impact on vote choice. Unemployment as a measure of the health of the economy is found to affect voting consistently in the research (Bell 1997; Fidrmuc 2000; Gibson and Cielecka 1995; Pacek 1994). Rising unemployment rates in CEE countries lead to higher levels of support for the opposition party and lower levels of support for the main incumbent candidate (Gibson and Cielecka 1995). This finding supports the responsibility hypothesis and indicates that an economic vote is apparent in transitional democracies.

In questioning whether transitional countries follow the economic voting model as in advanced democracies, research has found that less developed democratic systems function as older systems do in that citizens do reward or place blame on political officials for the failure or prosperity of the national economy (Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2008). Specific economic variables that sway vote choice have been discussed in the literature. Lewis-Beck and Nadeau (2011) identify and find evidence for three effects of the economy on vote choice. First, the economy as a valence issue maintains an overall consensus. Voters want the economy to function at optimal levels; no voter desires bad economic conditions especially when those conditions have a direct effect on his/her household, giving height to the saliency of the issue. Second, the economy as an issue position interacts with ideological views. Citizens on the left of the ideological spectrum favor more government intervention in the economy while those on the right prefer less. Lastly, in discussing how one's patrimony affects his/her propensity to use the economic vote, the authors find evidence that one's assets rather than income affect vote choice.

Position and patrimony are particularly intriguing in the examination of CEE countries. For instance, the wealth of an individual affects whether he/she is more or less likely to support the "jurisdiction encompassing out-groups" (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 12). Members of the "out-group" (individuals who have lower incomes and require assistance—such as welfare programs from their national governments) will tend to support membership in the EU. At the aggregate level, individuals living in countries that receive more direct and indirect economic benefits from membership in the EU will demonstrate higher levels of support for their country's membership in the EU (Anderson and Reichert 1995). The EU's enforcement of redistributive policies generates these sentiments; this will be discussed later in this chapter. The in-group/out-group analysis can be paralleled with economic winner/loser status.

Fidrmuc (2000) provides classifying characteristics for which individuals fall into which category. Economic winners are typically white-collar workers who are educated at the college level, whereas economic losers have lower levels of education, are unemployed, or are blue-collar workers who find most of their employment in the agricultural sector. In a comparison between skilled and unskilled laborers, Gabel (1998) finds evidence that individuals who are competitive in the liberalized market (skilled laborers) will garner more positive evaluations of the institution compared to those who are less competitive (unskilled). The EU as an economic entity provides prospects of economic security for lower income families. At the same time, it provides opportunities for white collar workers and entrepreneurs for trade liberalization and expanded markets. The literature does not suggest that any group of individuals in the societies and countries disapprove of membership in the EU solely based on fluctuations of the economy. However, it does suggest that membership in the Union influences skilled and unskilled laborers differently depending on their competitiveness in the open market which in turn affects public opinion (Gabel 1998). I expect that the effect of economic winner status on decreased support for membership in the EU will be weaker after the 2008 global economic crisis compared to economic losers.

Economic expectations also significantly affect how individuals evaluate institutions and governments; this directly shapes public opinion on EU membership. Because integrative reforms and redistributive policies vary across the region, these policies transform various groups in the population inconsistently. The equality of opportunity (EOp) theory, originally posited by Roemer (1998), suggests that circumstances and individual efforts are factors independent of each other and that affect a citizen's economic success (Dunnzlaff et al. 2010). If every citizen in every country is given the same circumstances (opportunity), then their financial well-being becomes completely contingent on the effort that they are willing to put forth to achieve economic gains. In 2000, the EU launched the Lisbon strategy that aimed to address issues of globalization and to improve the workings of the EU as a monetary union (European Commission 2014b). In order to achieve these goals, the Union implements common policies among all member states while allowing each country to implement their own structural reforms. In a sense, the opportunity presented by the EU for each country is the same; however, structural differences in tax and distribution schemes among nations creates discrepancies in economic situations among the citizens of member states. The EU through Structural and Cohesion Funds aids less developed regions by redistributing money from economically well-off member states to economic losers (Ehin 2001). In 2012, 45.9 percent of EU total spending went towards sustainable growth that includes job creation, competitiveness, economic growth, and improved quality of life (European Commission 2014b). Citizens of member states with a higher GDP annual growth rate will be less supportive of EU membership before and after 2008 compared to citizens in member states with lower GDP annual growth rates; this will be the case because countries with stronger independent economies have a lesser need to rely on the EU for economic support than countries with weaker economies. Regarding unemployment rates as an economic indicator, countries with higher unemployment will be more supportive of EU membership before and after 2008 compared to citizens in countries with lower unemployment rates. The logic behind this argument remains the same as GDP annual growth as an economic indicator of support—employment opportunities made available by membership in the EU are more attractive to citizens in countries that suffer from a lack of jobs within their own country of residence.

Democratic accountability is another issue that affects how citizens in member states of the EU evaluate their national and supranational governing institutions. The question is whether or not citizens are able to place blame on the proper government officials for the health of the economy and impact of policies. Hellwig and Samuels (2007) suggest that the economic openness the EU directly affects the citizens' of member states propensity to place blame on national government officials for the health of the economy. As globalization continues to expand and open world economies, the connection between the economic vote and the evaluation of the national economy begins to dissolve. An inclination for voting cues is apparent when citizens become unable to distinguish between their national economy as an independent actor and its relationship in the global economy. Political parties use this lack of knowledge to their advantage with issue framing to influence public opinion in a particular direction. This will be discussed further in this chapter.

The EU provides a clear example of how the political economy of globalization affects domestic politics. For members of the EU, if the economy is doing poorly, politicians can shift blame to the supranational institution or other factors that are beyond their control (Hellwig and Samuels 2007). Because the role of each institution (national governments and the EU) is not salient, this could lead to citizens' inability to assign blame to the proper party and therefore unable to reward or punish the politicians of their country. Kayser and Peress (2012) find that in instances when a global economic crisis is occurring, citizens are much less likely to turn against their government than when only their country's economy is suffering. That being said, after 2008, I expect that public opinion towards the EU as a whole will decline in all member states. A country's economic position in the international context also influences citizens' perceptions of their government. Therefore, at the aggregate level, countries with higher GDP annual growth rates after 2008 will demonstrate greater levels of support for membership in the EU compared to countries with lower GDP annual growth rates.

Identity

An individual's identity (national and cultural) is another variable that changes public opinion on membership in the EU (Cram 2009; 2012; Esparza 2010; Hooghe and Marks 2009; Risse 2003). How one identifies in society can change rapidly especially during times of political and economic transformation. Citizens of CEE countries have experienced control by the Soviet Union, gaining independence, and integration with the EU within less than fifty years. Therefore, it is important to examine sub-national, national, and supranational identities, because of their prevalence and influence on public opinion towards integration in the EU in the newest member states (Cram 2009).

The seminal work by Deutsch et al. (1957) suggests that integration reinforces national identities. Political integration, they claim, becomes an issue when citizens or governments begin demanding "greater capabilities, greater performance, greater responsiveness, and more adequate services" (Deutsch et al. 1957, 87). After the fall of communism and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, successor states were left with underdeveloped economies and dysfunctional governing systems. With less than twenty years to develop their economies and governments, candidate states of the EU in 2004 and 2007 were offered an opportunity for substantial growth towards democracy and a free-market. When a government provides a foundation for a more attractive lifestyle, political loyalty can be transferred from a national to a supranational government (Deutsch et al. 1957). Determining what an individual considers a more attractive way of life poses issues of measurement. However, European public opinion surveys, specifically the

Eurobarometer, ask multiple questions about if and how much individuals identify with being European.

Membership in the EU is new for the most recent countries to join the institution in 2004 and 2007. Conflicting arguments on how easily and quickly a European identity can be established are discussed in the literature. Some argue that citizens in the newer member states garner more nationalist sentiments over loyalty to the EU because a deep-rooted European identity has not yet dissolved their cultural values (Smith 1995). Deutsch et al. (1957) claim that identity is developed when individuals come to a consensus that social problems need to be addressed and that peaceful cooperation is the only way to accomplish such change. The latter argument suggests that current global events and issues are more influential of identity and that national borders will not hinder the development of an international identity if a common social problem needs to be addressed. Hooghe and Marks (2009, 2) argue that “the functional need for human co-operation rarely coincides with the territorial scope of community.” In theory, then, supranational organizations, such as the European Union, that practice governance over national bodies, conflict with community and national identities. Cram (2009) argues further that European integration does not necessarily mean that the loss of a national identity is inevitable. Rather, membership in the institution reinforces national identities while maintaining European pride; these identities blend together while remaining separate in what Risse (2005) calls a “marble cake model.” Responses to public opinion surveys may suggest that citizens in one country may not feel as blended in national and European identities as citizens in other countries.

National factors that influence feelings of identity and public opinion on membership in post-communist member states are argued to be accountable for these discrepancies. Risse

(2003) argues that the adoption of the euro as national currency has an effect on citizens' identification. By eliminating the monetary unit that is solely used within a country and implementing the use of an international currency, a sense of European community is established; citizens of a country are not isolated because of this economic difference but rather become a part of an international community upon its implementation. Of the sample countries, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Malta, Slovenia, and Slovakia are all euro sharing; the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, and Romania have all maintained their national currencies. Building from Risse's argument, I expect that the former group of countries express a more enthusiastic view towards membership in the EU, and the latter group a more eurosceptical stance on the issue after 2008.

Political Parties

Political parties are another significant determining factor of public opinion towards membership in the EU. Because European issues have low salience, citizens in member states rely on party cues to develop opinions on various policies set forth by the institution. In this sense, national level political parties can frame issues to sway opinions in either a eurosceptical or a pro-European direction, which suggests that political figures and parties in charge of a nation will exert substantial influence on public opinion during their time in office.

In examining the Czech Republic, Esparza (2010) discusses how political parties influence opinions in four issue dimensions: democratic growth, national identity, the economy, and national security. Regarding these four elements, he found that parties are not typically placed on the left or right of the ideological spectrum on all issues—they represent varying positions, both liberal and conservative, depending on the topic. Throughout the duration of this section, I will use the terminology ‘gal’ and ‘tan’ to refer to green/alternative/libertarian and traditional/authoritarian/nationalist philosophies, respectively (Vachudova 2008).

In the case of the Czech Republic, Esparza (2010) analyzes four parties: the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), the Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), the Christian Democratic Party (KDU-ČSL), and the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM). The ideological positions of these parties follow: ODS falls right of center, ČSSD is left of center, KDU-ČSL is positioned in the center, and KSČM is also positioned left. Of these parties, ODS and KSČM are Eurosceptic and ČSSD and KDU-ČSL are pro-European. From this, it is clear that political parties that are close in ideology on the left-right spectrum can have varying opinions towards membership in the EU for multiple reasons. Regarding national identities and democratic growth, political parties demonstrate less concern on membership in the EU than with issues such as the economy and national security. In economic terms, parties that are placed on the right of the ideological spectrum are pro-EU in that they support the promotion of the free-market and free-trade; those on the left are more inclined to support market control and regulation by the government. With respect to national security, parties on the right support membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and a militarily interconnected Europe while parties on the left demonstrate less support (rather a lack of need) for membership in the organization.

While national identity is not an issue of paramount importance in the approval or disapproval of membership with the EU at the party level, these groups still use identities to influence public opinion. CEE countries that have a strong presence of radical right ideologies pose a threat to the growth of democratic philosophies. The Greater Romania Party (PRM) and the New Generation Party-Christian Democratic (PNG-CD) express nationalist, authoritarian, and xenophobic stances on various social and cultural issues (Sum 2010). By creating an "us" versus "them" mentality in the electorate, parties are able to instill these nationalist identities within the citizens of a country; this is the case in Romania, for example. These parties also view the EU as an "overly bureaucratic" (Hainsworth 2008, 82) institution that threatens national communities. In countries with a prevalence of right of center parties in parliament there should be more euro-enthusiastic sentiments held throughout the public.

Hooghe and Marks (2009) also examine how parties use identity and economic interests to influence public opinion on EU membership in post-communist member states. They argue that political conflict provides the opportunity for parties to use communal identity to mobilize the public. In CEE countries multiple issue positions are apparent. In countries that successfully and immediately transitioned to liberal democracies after the demise of communism in 1989 such as Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic), Latvia, Lithuania, and Slovenia, right and 'gal' positions are typically seen. Countries that did not experience a successful transition from authoritarianism to liberal democracy, as in Romania, Bulgaria, and Slovakia, left and 'tan' positions are promoted by political parties (Vachudova 2008). The latter group of countries following the dissolution of the Soviet Union

A fear of the loss of national sovereignty and identity is widespread across many political parties that are right of the center in CEE countries. In the Czech Republic, where many view membership in the EU as a "necessary evil" (Perron 2000, 22), resentment towards the Union is a product of citizens feeling as though accession will result in a loss of national identity

(Kopecky and Mudde 2000). Eurosceptical parties in the Czech Republic—the ODS and the Republican Party of Czechoslovakia (SPR-RSČ)—reinforce these fears by promoting a pro-nationalist agenda through issue framing (Vermeersch 2010). If an electorate maintains strong nationalist sentiments, then it is beneficial for a party to adopt a congruent platform in order to secure votes. Politicians use historical events and national identities to reinforce anti-EU and pro-EU attitudes in order to establish a solid platform.

Not only do political parties frame issues in order to gain support from the electorate, there is evidence that they are also very responsive to public preferences (Downs 1957; Hill and Hurley 1999; Laver and Schofield 1990; Ray 2003: Schumpeter 1942). Therefore, it is difficult to determine in which direction the causal arrow points. Whether political parties influence public opinion through issue framing and voting cues or create a platform based on public preferences, there is an undeniable governing factor that shapes public opinion for citizens who have lower levels of knowledge about the EU and the international economy.

Value Change

The last indicator of support to be discussed is value change. Value change in CEE countries has been explored consistently in the literature. From communism, to its collapse, and the development of democracy and a free-market economy, the transitional regimes and citizens who were subject to these changes have undeniably been affected. How these value changes have influenced public opinion is a question to be considered especially when contemplating membership in the EU. Conflicting arguments have been established on whether there is a generational effect on public opinion. Inglehart and Rabier (1978) (Anderson and Reichert 1995) suggest that the younger and more educated publics will be more supportive of membership in the EU and that older generations will demonstrate less support for the supranational institution. Other scholars have found that there is no consistent age or generational effect on public opinion over time (Çarkoğlu 2004; Dobratz 1993).

Inglehart (1981) proposes two hypotheses in his theory of value change—a scarcity hypothesis, and a socialization hypothesis. The scarcity hypothesis posits that individuals attribute value to items that are in short, or scarce, supply. The difficulty of obtaining the scarce item is what magnifies the item's worth. Once, the supply meets the demand, the item loses its value. The socialization hypothesis, on the other hand, posits that the conditions that surround an individual's pre-adult life will shape the values that the individual holds during his/her adult life. Political and socioeconomic conditions during the formative years of pre-adulthood are therefore the most important aspects affecting political values held later on in life (Dalton 2008). The socialization hypothesis will be focused on during the ensuing discussion of value change in the post-communist member states of the EU.

Since WWII, Inglehart and Rabier (1978) claim that European mass publics have developed more post-materialist values (Anderson and Reichert 1995) such as self-expression and quality of life over economic and physical security. In order to establish the difference between materialist and post-materialist values, Inglehart (1977) applies the logic behind Maslow's value hierarchy. Post-material values focus on aesthetic, intellectual, and concepts of social belonging—philosophy, free speech, visually appealing cities, and political involvement are items that post-materialists value. Materialist values are more concerned with safety and sustenance needs—strong defense, stable economies and economic growth are indicative of materialist values (Dalton 2008). Looking at the EU solely as an economic entity would lead one to conclude that younger generations who hold post-materialist values would be less likely to support membership with the institution compared to older generations. Considering the EU as an entity that promotes cosmopolitan values such as "social progress, social inclusion, social protection, solidarity and social cohesion" would lend to another explanation that younger generations would be more supportive of membership compared to older generations (Andor 2013, 3). From Inglehart's argument it is difficult to substantiate a claim on a generational divergence regarding public opinion on membership in the EU. Other researchers have sought to address this issue.

Dobratz (1993) evaluates the relationship between post-materialism and support for EU membership. He argues that older generations in older more industrialized member states—specifically the original six members: Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands—are more likely to support membership. The author posited that the older generation of politicians who were present in the establishment of the EEC and who sought to avoid further military conflict in Europe were going to be more supportive of an institution that would ensure the prevention of a war outbreak later on in the region. The historical events that these individuals lived through conditioned their response to their involvement with an international economic community (Dobratz 1993). Three generations should be considered in this analysis: those who lived under communist rule, those who lived through the transition and the collapse of communism, and those who have grown up in an independent state with growing democratic values and market liberalization. By examining these three generations, whether or not history affects public opinion on membership in the EU can be determined. History as a determining factor of public opinion in older and younger generations deserves further examination.

The communist legacy is expected to have a significant effect on older generations regarding public opinion on membership in the EU. The repressive rule which older generations experienced prior to the collapse and transition from communism conditioned their opinions and involvement in the democratic process. The totalitarian effect instilled terror in the population and atomized individuals to the extent that civil society did not exist (Bahry and Silver 1987; Friedrich and Brzezinski 1956). Trust in institutions in general declined significantly during this period which included trust in government and later trust in newly formed political parties. With widespread distrust in institutions, I expect these citizens will be distrusting too of membership in the EU.

Younger individuals who experienced the transitional period will be more optimistic about membership in the institution. Because access to information for this generation was greater than that of the generation before them, belonging to the international community became more apparent to these individuals, and democratic values and a free-market became desirable. In some post-communist states such as Bulgaria, Romania, and Slovakia, individuals protested for a new government during the transitional period clearly indicating that they did not support the previous communist rule (Bunce 2011). This generation and the generation to follow, which did not experience communism or the transitional period, will be overall more likely to support membership in the EU.

The claim that younger, more educated publics will be more likely to support membership in the EU is seemingly logical. The cognitive mobilization argument posits that rising levels of education in recent decades provide younger generations with the information necessary to evaluate the costs and benefits of membership in the EU. Information in post-communist countries about global events has become easily obtainable due to technological advancement (Inglehart and Rabier 1978, 86). Younger, educated citizens who belong to high socio-economic status are not necessarily more supportive of membership in the EU because they hold post-materialist values as Inglehart argues, rather they have the education and information that is imperative to successfully assess the value of membership.

With the evidence at hand, it is difficult to make solid claims about a generational difference regarding public opinion and membership in the EU. From Inglehart and Rabier (1978) and Dobratz's (1993) contradicting arguments on value change and public opinion, a hypothesis can be developed in an either positive or negative direction. Perhaps, younger generations will be less supportive of membership as Inglehart claims because they will view the EU solely as an institution with economic interests or they will be more supportive because of the other non-economic values that the institution promotes. The same assumption can be made against Dobratz's argument taking historical factors into consideration. Including this variable will act as an exploratory addition to the research question in discussion.

From the literature it is clear that multiple factors should be considered when examining public opinion toward membership in the EU. The 2008 global economic crisis is expected to have a negative effect on how citizens evaluate membership. Prior to the economic crisis support should be higher overall across the sample countries. Individual and aggregate level variables discussed throughout this literature review will have varying effects on opinions toward the institution.

CHAPTER TWO: FROM SOCIALISM TO CAPITALISM

During the 1990s, the CEE countries under observation experienced many challenges including democratization, marketization, and state-building. Of particular interest are the economic transitions and obstacles that each state had to overcome after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. New states emerging from the federations of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)—including the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, and Slovenia—not only had to democratize and rebuild their economies, they also had the undertaking of state building that lagged their development (Haughton 2007). Already established states were able to focus on economic reform and democratic growth immediately following the dissolution of the Soviet Union while the countries listed above had to first build their governments from the ground up. The purpose of this chapter is to examine by economic indicator how the new member states' economies have been affected by EU membership and the 2008 economic crisis.

To begin, it is important to discuss the economic transition that each country in the sample underwent during the late 1980s and early 1990s. The economic policies under communist rule are starkly different from those implemented during the democratization and marketization process in the CEE region after the end of the Cold War. Some countries in the sample experienced more successful transitions, while others struggled with neoliberal policies and the maintenance of social welfare systems and levels of employment. The varying transition experiences will be further discussed in this chapter.

Bohle and Greskovits (2007) identify three transition types that are apparent in the region: the neoliberal, the embedded neoliberal, and the neo-corporatist types. The countries falling into the first category (the Baltic States—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) experienced the most radical implementation of neo-liberal policies while Slovenia experienced the least radical implementation of such policies. Countries classified as the embedded neo-liberal type (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia) experienced the smoothest transitions from communist regimes and socialist economic policies to democracy and a free-market. The policy-makers in these states attempted to establish a medium between neoliberal economic policies and socialist welfare programs (including industry subsidies) during the transition period. Lastly, neo-corporatist countries continued to experience state control of various social programs after the transition and the beginning stages of economic reform. Slovenia, for instance, during the transition period, became an inclusionary democracy which is characterized by a strong activist state and aggressive state actors (Acuna and Smith 1994). The transitions of each country are important to consider because the initial stages of economic reform have determined the growth of each country through the 1990s, gaining membership in the EU, and the economic crisis of 2008.

After gaining membership in the EU and NATO in 2004, the Baltic States passed directly into what American economist Hyman Minsky calls the Ponzi stage. This stage in financial cycles is characterized by domestic debt relationships (Sommers and Bērziņš 2011). The financial cycle develops in the following way:

> Economies start in balance, with industry paying for its expansion out of retained earnings. Next, industry borrows money, but these debts can be paid out of earnings—the 'hedge' stage. Over time both real estate and industrial investment become increasingly

> debt leveraged, with banks taking a greater share of real wealth from the economy. After this increased debt leveraging, only interest can be paid and not any amortization of the principal. The Ponzi stage is reached when interest is simply added to the debt, so that debt levels become detached from the underlying real economy of production to pay. (Sommers and Bērziņš 2011, 124)

Prior to the implementation of neoliberal policies in these countries, post-Soviet economies were debt-free with high levels of employment. The levels of debt incurred by Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, after 2004 negatively affected their economies compared to the initial success that they experienced after the transition period. Unemployment rates increased and GDP growth plummeted during the economic crisis in these countries (see Figure 1). The radical implementation of neoliberal policies and the extreme levels of confidence inspired by membership in the EU and NATO could possibly have led to risk-taking behavior of political elites in the Baltic States during the transition period and after 2004.

The countries classified as embedded neoliberals—the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia—experienced a different transition during the early 1990s and a different response to membership in the EU and NATO. Unlike the Baltic States, political elites in this group of countries did not have a clear image or idea of how to implement neoliberal economic policies after the dissolution of the Soviet Union (Shields 2011). Foreign direct investment (FDI) became the controlling factor of their economies and corruption in institutions led to citizens having low levels of trust in the government and political elites (Shields 2011). After gaining membership in the EU, populists in Poland became suspicious of foreign influence and feared that their culture would be destroyed. The 2008 economic crisis reinforced this group of individuals' fear and lack of confidence in the EU.

The European Monetary System (EMS), developed during the 1990s, initially posed the opportunity for greater market liberalization, free trade, and stable exchange rates for the member states of the EU. The prospects of economic growth were endless and the implementation of a single currency in 1999 provided numerous benefits for the euro-sharing countries (Papaioannou and Portes 2008). Of the twelve countries in the analysis, six—Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Malta, Slovenia, and Slovakia—have adopted the euro as national currency. The remaining countries continue to use their original currencies. While the latter group in the sample is more vulnerable to international monetary fluctuations, the former benefits from larger markets and low transaction costs.

Prior to the 2008 economic crisis, the euro "accounted for 20 percent of daily foreign exchange rate transactions worldwide" (Hodson and Puetter 2013, 376). Second to the U.S. dollar, the euro is the most widely used currency in the world, and is beginning to act increasingly as an asset currency (Cohen 2008; Papaioannou and Portes 2008). Countries that maintain their national currencies have developed banking systems in which transactions are indexed in euros. The balance of payments keeps national economies linked through flows of money, investment, and international trade (Cohen 2008). By adopting the euro as national currency, member states benefit economically in national, corporate, and individual interests.

While the euro is a stable international currency, like all other economies in the world, the 2008 global economic crisis threatened the strength and standing of the monetary unit. In 2010, the European Central Bank (ECB) launched the European Systemic Risk Board, which was designed to safeguard the financial stability of the EU (Hodson 2011). The economic and sovereign debt crises, Hodson and Puetter (2013) argue, have negatively affected confidence in a single monetary unit and predict that the euro is likely to be abated if member states are unable to find a solution to the debt crisis that currently plagues the Eurozone. While the countries that have adopted the euro remain safer economically in the international context, doubts about a single currency are now surfacing in the region, which could spell disaster for the EMS and the economic relationship among the euro-sharing countries (Hodson and Puetter 2013).

Analyzing citizens' responses to the neoliberal policies that political elites drafted and enforced during the initial transition period is another main focus of this chapter. The economic conditions after the implementation of lustration laws—which aimed to remove all communist policies from economic systems of post-Soviet member states—did not initially elicit a positive response from the citizenry of CEE. Political discontent grew as unemployment rates increased, along with the rising prices of basic goods such as of bread, fuel, and rent (Haughton 2007). CEE electorates initially believed that privatization was intended to benefit politicians while the public was left to struggle with the loss of jobs and the discontinuation of generous welfare arrangements that existed under communist rule (Haughton 2007; Sommers and Bērziņš 2011). With struggling economies, the initial prospect of membership in the EU evoked a positive response at the citizen and elite levels. During the pre-accession period, the Program of Community Aid to the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe (PHARE) offered financial support to CEE countries and various incentives for cooperation with the Union such as liberal and open trading arrangements (Haughton 2007). After accession, structural and cohesion funds continued to influence positive evaluations of membership in the region.

Accounting for 11.3% to 25% of CEE annual GDP between 2007 and 2012, the structural and cohesion funds distributed by the EU are a vital component of the economic equation in the region (KPMG Central and Eastern Europe 2013). The three main operational programs under structural and cohesion funds of the European Union are the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Cohesion Fund (CF), and the European Social Fund (ESF). ERDF promotes economic and social cohesion, CF focuses on major environmental projects and renewable energy, and ESF was established to reduce disparities in prosperity and living standards among EU member states (KPMG Central and Eastern Europe 2013). The distribution of these funds among CEE member states varies mostly by the population of each country; countries with larger populations receive larger allocations of each fund. Member states are able to receive fund distribution if they comply with the economic regulations set forth by the EMS. However, enforcement from the supranational body is difficult because not all regulations are binding and the various economic bodies of the EU do not have the authority to enforce such laws.

In an attempt to accomplish compliance of economic policies drafted under the Lisbon Treaty in 2007, the European Commission (EC) has developed two programs—the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines and the Stability and Growth Pact. The former, endorsed by the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN), is non-binding in nature and only acts as a recommendation body for member states' economic policy to fall in line with the policies drafted by the Commission (Hodson and Puetter 2013). The latter is binding and requires that member states "run budgets that are in balance or surplus over the medium term and deficits below 3 percent of GDP" (Hodson and Puetter 2013, 374). While the Stability and Growth Pact is binding, ECOFIN is reluctant to enforce sanctions on member states that do not comply with the budgetary rules and regulations—this is mostly because member states have not empowered the institution to act as a sanctioning body. The ECB is another actor in the enforcement of economic regulations in member states. However, like ECOFIN, the ECB faces issues of constrained authority in the region (Hodson 2011).

By evaluating the economic transitions of each country and their experiences through the 2008 global financial crisis, I will determine how economic indicators affect public opinion and each countries relationship with the EU.

GDP Annual Growth Rate

To begin, GDP growth rates are the most important indicator of economic health in the EU member states. When GDP grows, economic prospects for businesses, jobs, and employment are positive; as GDP declines, economies begin to weaken and rely on economic stimulus through borrowing and reliance on foreign investors in the case of CEE. Using data from the World Bank, GDP growth rates from 2006 to 2010 can be examined for the twelve countries in the sample. Figure 1 illustrates that from 2006 to 2008, all of the countries in the sample maintained positive growth rates. While some declined and others increased throughout those three years, they all remained over zero percent growth. In 2009, however, in all sample countries besides Poland, negative growth rates are seen. While growth did not drop below zero percent in Poland in 2009, the country still experienced a decrease in growth of 3.5 percent from 2008 to 2009. The economies in all countries grew in 2010 placing them in a positive rate territory, except in Latvia and Romania where the economies continued to shrink.

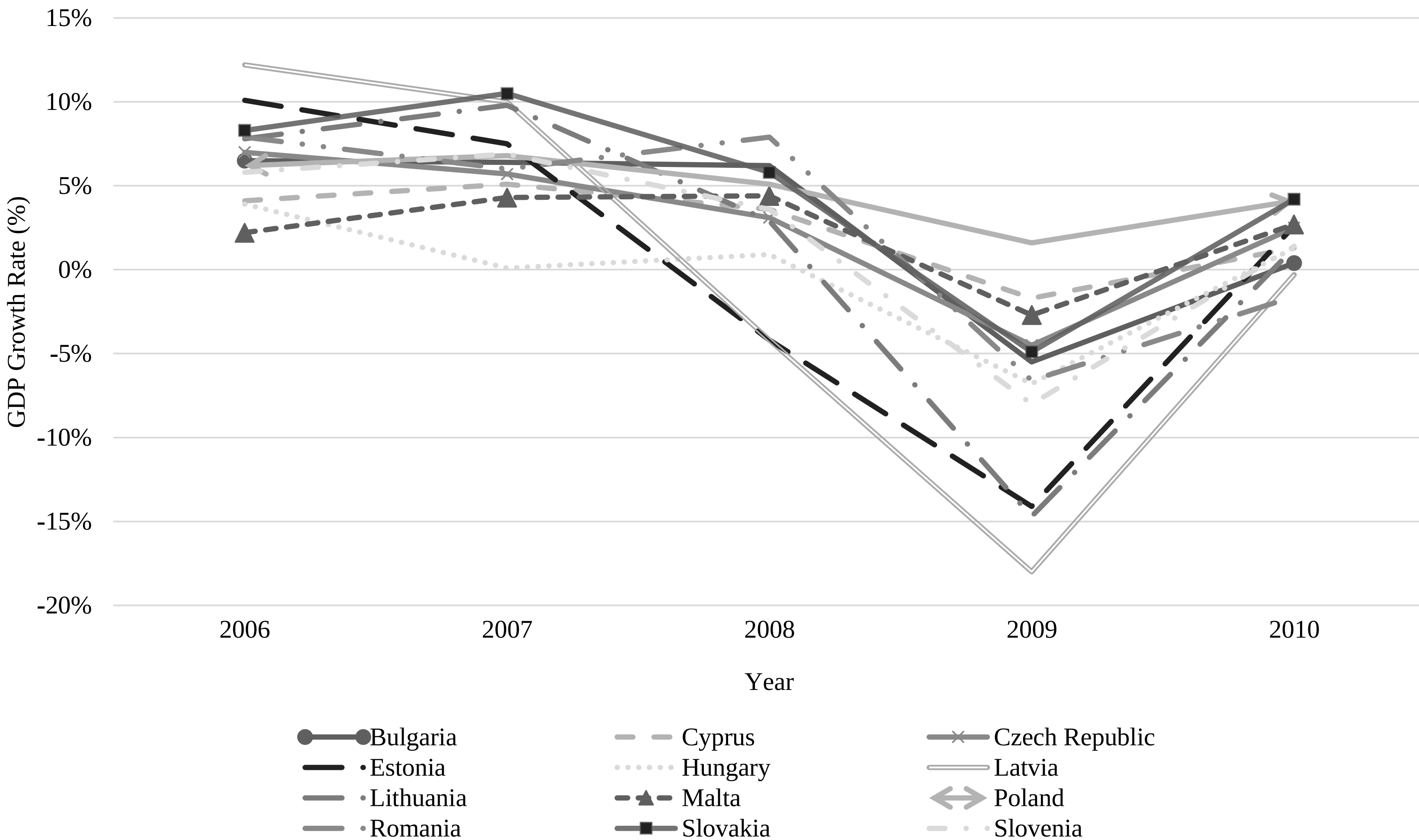

Figure 1. GDP Annual Growth Rate (%) from 2006 to 2010
Source: World Bank Data 2013

Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were the most drastically and negatively affected in 2009 in terms of GDP annual growth. The radical implementation of neoliberal policies during the transition period and the debt crisis that these countries underwent in 2004 can explain the economic instability following the onset of the economic crisis. The Baltic countries' economies grew substantially from the beginning to mid-2000s but declined most deeply in 2009. Economists claim that the negative turn in the economy was the product of no gains in production and high consumption that depended on foreign direct investment (Sommers and Bērziņš 2011). The structure of these economies was bound to collapse as soon as the inflow of foreign capital ceased.

Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic all remained between negative 6.6 and negative 4.5 in growth in all five model years (-6.8, -6.6, -5.5, -4.9, and -4.5, respectively). While Poland, Malta, and Cyprus never fell below -3.0 percent growth during or after the crisis (+1.6, -2.7, -1.7 percent, respectively). The continual transformation of these economies since the development of a market following 1989, created a buffer for the effects of the economic crisis (Švihlikоvá 2011). These countries, rather than radically reforming the economy from socialist to a free-market after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, experimented with various economic policies until they reached stability. The strength of their economies compared to the Baltic States rested in supply-side economics rather than the reliance on foreign capital inflows (Švihlikоvá 2011).

Table 1. GDP Annual Growth Rates, 2006-2010

	2006	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Bulgaria	6.50%	6.40	6.20	-5.50	0.40
Cyprus	4.10	5.10	3.60	-1.70	1.30
Czech Republic	7	5.70	3.10	-4.50	2.50
Estonia	10.10	7.50	-4.20	-14.10	2.60
Hungary	3.90	0.10	0.90	-6.80	1.30
Latvia	12.20	10	-4.20	-18	-0.30
Lithuania	7.80	9.80	2.90	-14.70	1.30
Malta	2.20	4.30	4.40	-2.70	2.70
Poland	6.20	6.80	5.10	1.60	4.10
Romania	7.90	6	7.90	-6.60	-1.60
Slovakia	8.30	10.50	5.80	-4.90	4.20
Slovenia	5.80	6.90	3.60	-8.00	1.40

Source: World Bank Data 2013

Unemployment

Another important economic indicator to discuss is unemployment. In the socialist states of the Soviet Union, full employment was maintained by the state; jobs and full-time wages and salaries were secured for all citizens. However, after the transition to a capitalist society, unemployment rates increased to a level never experienced before and citizens began to suffer because of it. In focusing specifically on the time between 2006 and 2010, a few trends can be observed. In every country, male and female unemployment rates decreased between 2006 and 2008. Following the crisis in 2009 and 2010, unemployment rates increased in every case.

Initially after the economic transition the Baltic States faced a slower decline in employment compared to the other countries in the CEE region (Nesporova 2002). However, after 2008, these countries experienced drastic increases in unemployment compared to the other countries in the sample. Figure 2 clearly demonstrates this trend. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, in 2009 and 2010, experienced the greatest increases in unemployment (an increase of 11.4 percent from 2008 to 2010 in Estonia, 11.3 percent in Latvia, and 12 percent in Lithuania) with levels higher than any of the other countries in the sample. Neoliberal economic policy in the Baltic States was not democratically agreed on nor discussed with the citizenry, rather political and economic elites entirely enforced these policies after the transition.

Up until the economic crisis, the Baltic States in comparison to the other countries in the sample enjoyed significant growth in terms of GDP and low rates of unemployment. Sommers and Bērziņš (2011) suggest that the economic bind in these countries—in terms of national debt—began in 2004, after the Baltic States gained membership with the EU and NATO and developed a new confidence in the market. Slovakia and Poland also had considerably higher unemployment rates from 2006 to 2010 compared to the other countries in the sample (almost double those of the other sample countries at the lowest rates—typically experienced in 2008—and the highest rates—in 2009 and 2010).

Gender and age are two variables that determine how individuals are affected by unemployment rates (Cho and Newhouse 2011). The following sections will identify how these various groups in the CEE region are afflicted by unemployment.

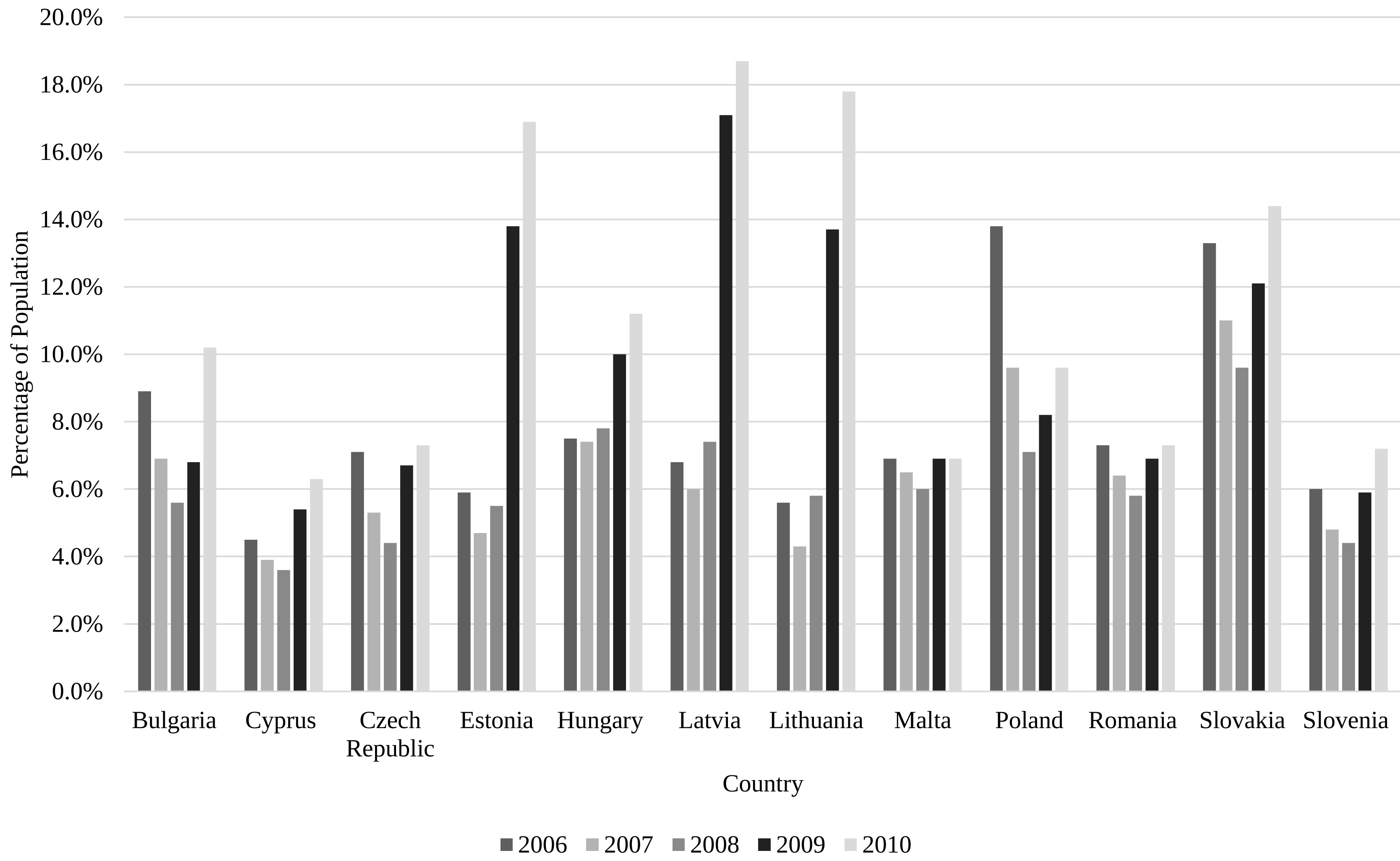

Figure 2. Percentage of Total Population Unemployed
Source: World Bank Data 2013

Unemployment by Gender

Men and women in the labor force of CEE countries experience varying unemployment rates. Rutkowski (2006) argues that the restructuring of the labor force in industry following the political transition during the late 1980s, led to these disparities. In countries where heavy industry is declining and the service sector is expanding, higher unemployment among men and lower unemployment among women are apparent. Prior to the transition, a gender gap in the labor force was not apparent, neither in pay rates, nor in the number of males and females employed (Paci 2002). However, it is clear that in CEE societies today this does not remain the case. Cho and Newhouse (2011) conclude similar findings—men suffer greater unemployment rates in middle income countries following economic crises. Again, Cho and Newhouse (2011) attribute this trend to the hard hit industrial sector and higher unemployment rates among men during the pre-crisis years.

During economic recessions, in countries where women are mostly the secondary earners of income in the household, lower rates of women participate in the workforce. Due to the hardship of finding affordable childcare, women tend to choose not working (Nesporova 2002). The World Bank measures unemployment by the percentage of the labor force that is without work but that is available and actively seeking employment (The World Bank 2013). It is important to keep this in mind when considering unemployment as a determining factor of public opinion towards membership in the EU in this analysis. Women in these situations, while technically unemployed, are not actively seeking employment and therefore do not experience the same pressures as those who are actively seeking work.

Figure 3 illustrates unemployment trends for females in the sample countries from 2006 until 2010. Clearly, unemployment rates vary by country and fluctuate over the five year span. In all cases, however, (excluding Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) unemployment rates among women decreased steadily from 2006 to 2008. One possible implication for this trend is that these four countries began to feel the impact of the global economic crisis sooner than the other eight in the sample. In 2009, all of the twelve countries experienced increases in female unemployment from 2008. The Baltic States were the hardest hit with doubling rates from 2008 to 2009 and increasing significantly thereafter in 2010.

In Malta, Hungary, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic, similar trends can be seen throughout the cases. Female unemployment in these cases remained between 6.4 and 10.7 percent throughout the five model years. Compared to the Baltic States, unemployment rates for women remained high but steady between 2006 and 2010 in these sample countries. Romania, Slovenia, and Cyprus experienced similar trends; however, in these cases unemployment rates were lower between 2006 until 2010 (never falling below 4.3 or exceeding 7.2 percent in all cases). Lastly, in Poland and Slovakia rates remained high over the five year span. In 2006, these two countries experienced female unemployment rates similar to the Baltic States in 2010—they decreased in 2007 and 2008, dropping even as low as 7.9 percent in Poland but increased again in 2009 and 2010 higher than the other countries in the sample besides Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Figure 4 demonstrates unemployment rates for the male labor market from 2006 through 2010. Similar to trends in the female workforce in the Baltic States, men experienced significant increases in unemployment in 2009 and 2010 compared to 2006 through 2008. From 2008 to 2009 in these countries, male unemployment rates almost tripled in all three cases, and in 2010 they continued to rise. Regarding male unemployment, different country group trends can be seen in the data. Slovenia, Malta, the Czech Republic, and Cyprus overall experienced the lowest rates of male unemployment from 2006 to 2010; unemployment in these cases never fell below 3.2 percent and never rose above 6.8 percent. Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania experienced slightly increased rates compared to the former group of countries; in these cases unemployment never fell below 5.5 percent and never exceeded 11.6 percent. Poland and Slovakia, similar to trends seen in female unemployment remain high in comparison to the other cases in the sample (besides the Baltic States in 2009 and 2010).

Finally, in a comparison between male and female unemployment by country case, three major trends are apparent. In Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovenia from 2006 to 2008, women experienced higher unemployment rates compared to men. From 2009 to 2010 in these cases, higher unemployment rates can be observed for men compared to women. Female unemployment rates remained higher than male rates from 2006 through 2010 in Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Malta, Poland, and Slovakia. The opposite trend is apparent in the Baltic States, and Romania. The cases that experienced increased male unemployment rates in 2009 and 2010 compared to female unemployment can be explained by the decrease in the industry sector following the economic crisis. The cases where male unemployment rates continually exceed female unemployment incite questions regarding the structural factors responsible for such trends. The probabilistic likelihood that occupational differences in the labor force are responsible for these unique trends is high.

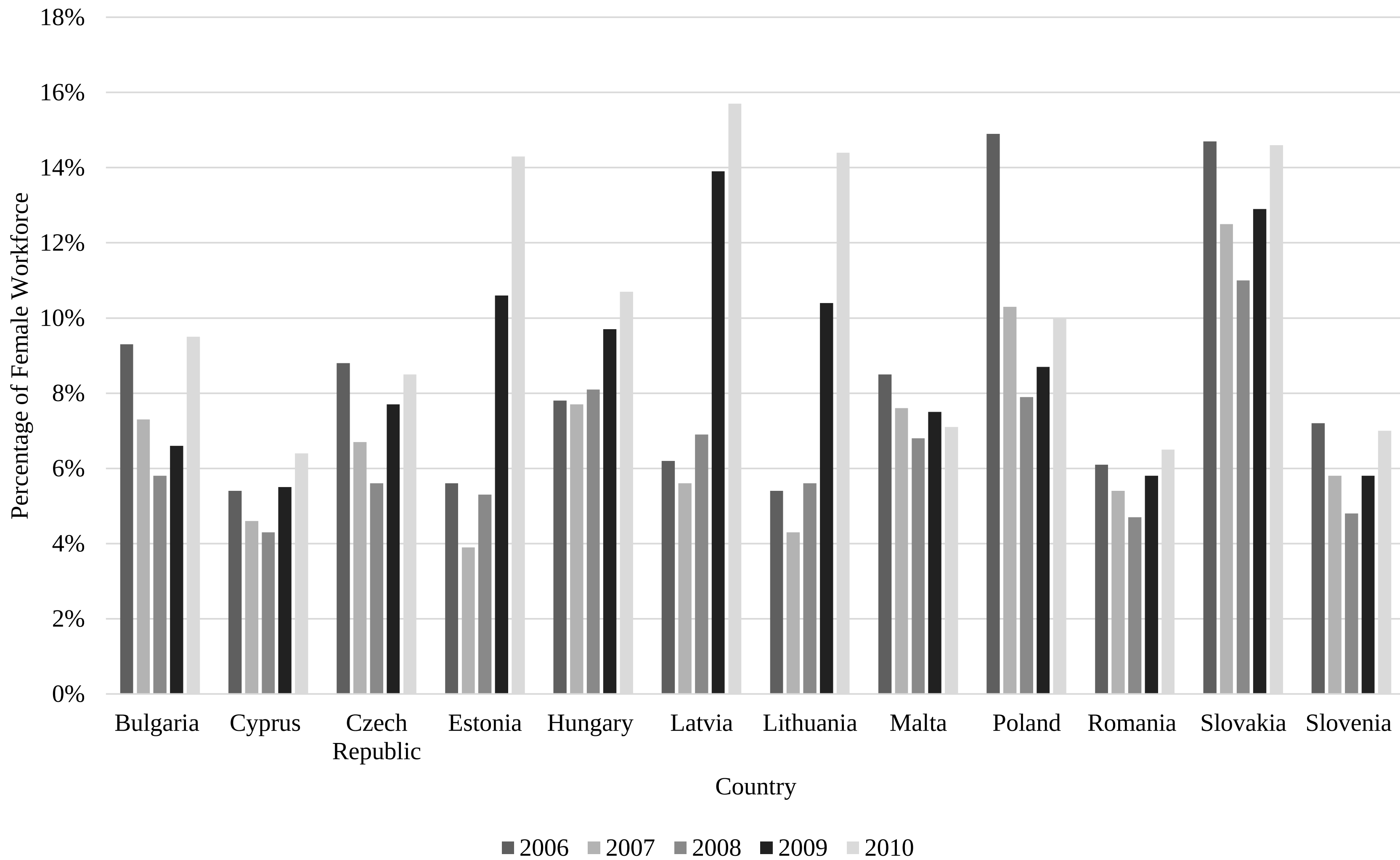

Figure 3. Unemployment by Gender, Percentage of Female Labor Force
Source: World Bank Data 2013

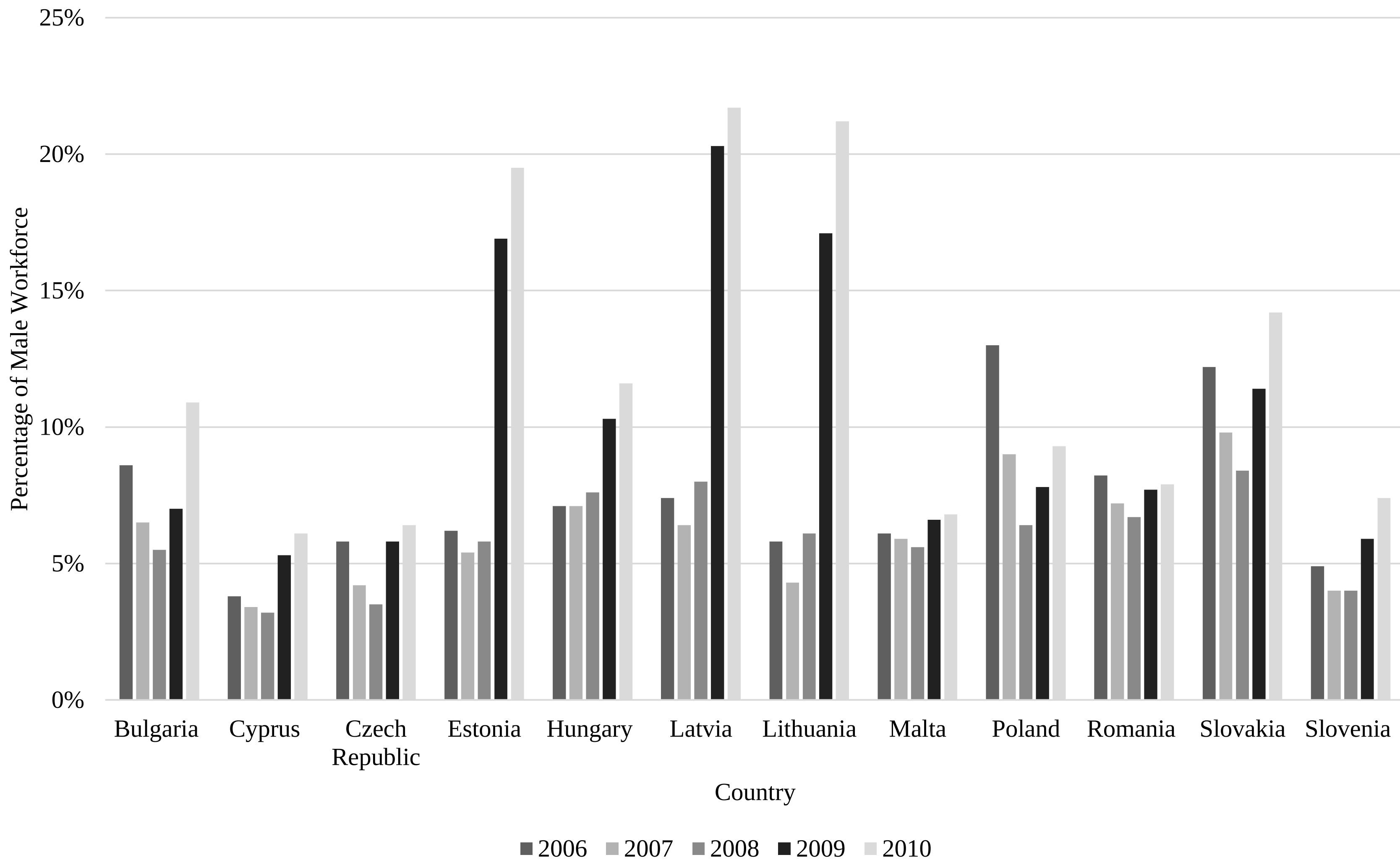

Figure 4. Unemployment by Gender, Percentage of Male Labor Force
Source: World Bank Data 2013

Figure 5 illustrates the division of the labor force for each country by occupation. Agriculture, industry, and services are the three sectors that are observed. In Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the services sector (which is employed mostly by females) employs the majority of the labor force. In Romania, the majority is shared by the agricultural and services sectors. However, these labor force compositions do not provide enough evidence to explain why women maintain lower unemployment rates in every year compared to men in these countries. In every country (besides the Czech Republic where the majority of individuals are employed in industry) the service sector employs the most individuals. The CEE economies that were previously established on the industry sector through the Soviet period and the early 1990s, transitioned into knowledge economies primarily built on the services sector as the leading force in economic growth and labor. Females employ over one-third of the services workforce and only 15 to 16 percent of males work in this division. However, in only a few cases (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Romania) are male unemployment rates higher than female rates in all five model years (Pollert 2005). Returning to the issue of the active role of women in the labor market, and the cost effectiveness of women being employed in a household where men are the primary income earners, lower levels of female involvement in the labor market explains the trend across most of the cases of higher unemployment rates for females in CEE countries.

Unemployment by Age

Trends in unemployment rates for different age groups can also be observed in the sample countries. Across the globe, youth unemployment rates are high. In the EU-27 alone youth unemployment remained almost twice as high as the rest of the population until the end of

2008 (European Commission 2014c). Since the economic crisis, in a market of uncertainty, employers have been reluctant to make investments in employees if they expect the cost to be greater than the benefit. Young people, ages fifteen to twenty-four, in EU member states, therefore, have suffered the most from the economic crisis for the following reasons. These groups of citizens generally lack the skills that many employers seek and their lack of participation in the labor force inhibits their ability to gain the experience necessary to make them desirable candidates. The second most affected age group are those ages twenty-five to thirty-four (Hutengs and Stadtmann 2013). Hutengs and Stadtmann (2013) conclude that these two cohorts are the most vulnerable to business cycle fluctuations in CEE economies. Cho and Newhouse (2011) also find that in CEE countries, youth suffered greater unemployment rates compared to adult workers following the 2008 economic recession. “Youth unemployment is often double and triple that of the national unemployment rate, partly because young people leave school without the skills needed to participate in today's knowledge economy” (UNICEF 2014).

The EC has identified the issue of youth unemployment and has taken action to counter the effects of the economic recession. The European Employment Strategy and the Open Method of Coordination have launched initiatives to enhance the employability of youth groups throughout Europe (Martín 2012). The main objectives in tackling the issue are to employ 75 percent of the population ages twenty to sixty-four and maintain the dropout rate of schools under 10 percent in secondary education (Martín 2012). The EC is less concerned with employability at the individual level and more concerned with the regulation of social and economic conditions of the labor market as a governmental responsibility.

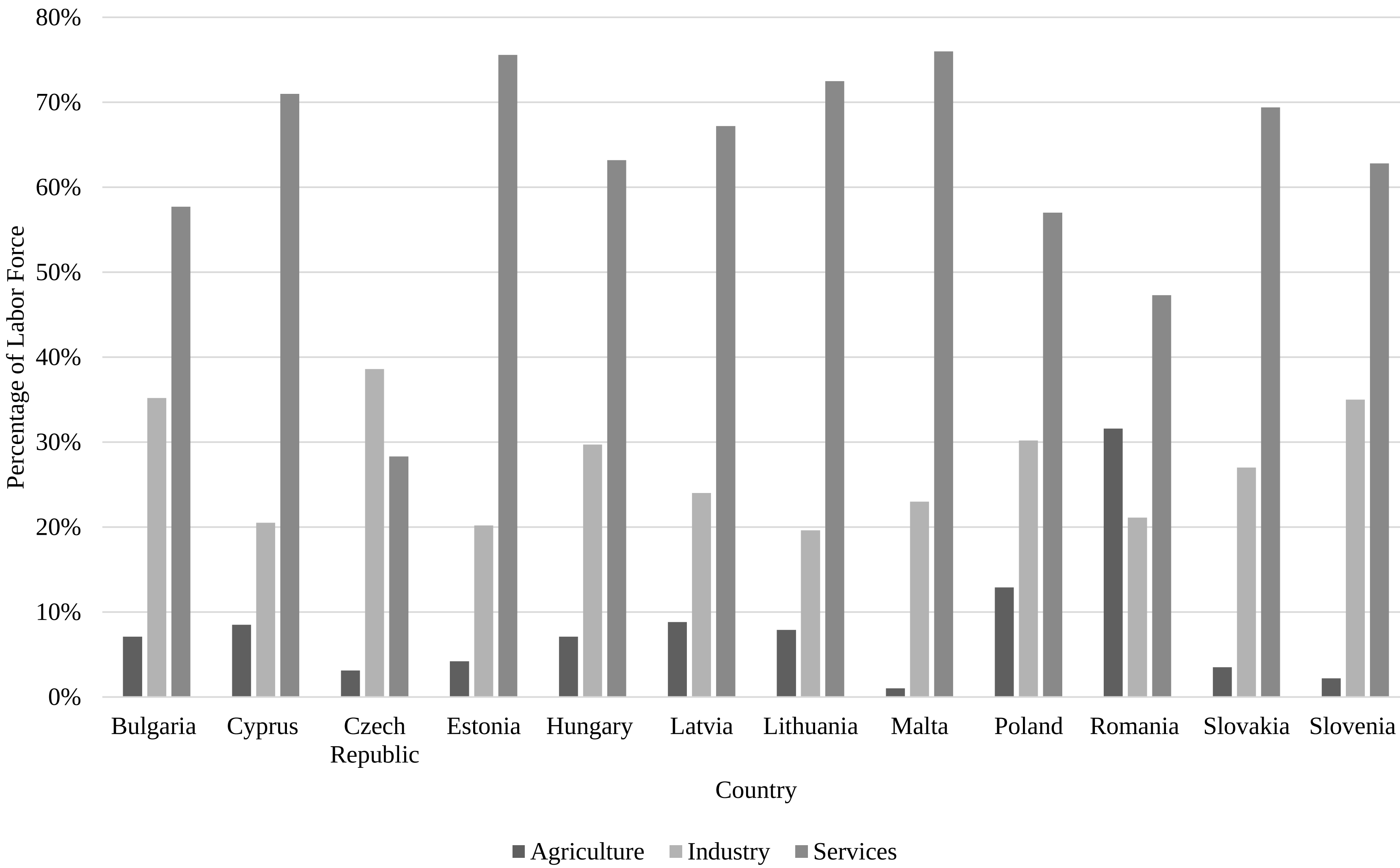

Figure 5. Labor Force by Occupation in CEE
Source: CIA World Factbook 2013

Figures 6 and 7 illustrate that both male and female youths (ages fifteen to twenty-four) experience very high unemployment rates in all cases. The Baltic States, again, experience the highest male youth unemployment rates. For female youths, however, in the cases Poland, Romania, and Slovakia, the highest unemployment rates are observed. While the youth populations of the sample countries experience higher unemployment compared to the rest of the population for the reasons listed above, they are also affected by the same economic factors as the general population.

Another variable to consider, which has not received much attention in the literature on the 2008 global economic crisis, are unemployment rates in rural versus urban communities. Cho and Newhouse (2011) identify that this variable and the current economic crisis have not been analyzed; however, they rely on previous crises to draw empirical conclusions regarding how sectorial conditions affect unemployment rates. It seems that individuals working in rural communities, mostly in agriculture or for family businesses, feel the shock of economic crises less so than those employed in urban cities. Employees in the latter group, overall, experience decreases in salaries at the onset of economic crises, and women especially experience significant wage declines (Cho and Newhouse 2011). This is an important factor to consider when analyzing unemployment and the components that are most affected by. In the cases of CEE, however, employment in agriculture is low. Therefore, an effect regarding this variable might not be as clearly seen in the analysis.

The transition periods and economic reforms of each country are telling of their economic standings today and during the five years under analysis. From the early 1990s onward, it is important to analyze the stability of each country’s economy independently of other nations and actors, and to determine how resilient they are to economic shocks. By examining these factors, one is able to resolve how public opinion in the different samples might be determined by each nation's economic well-being.

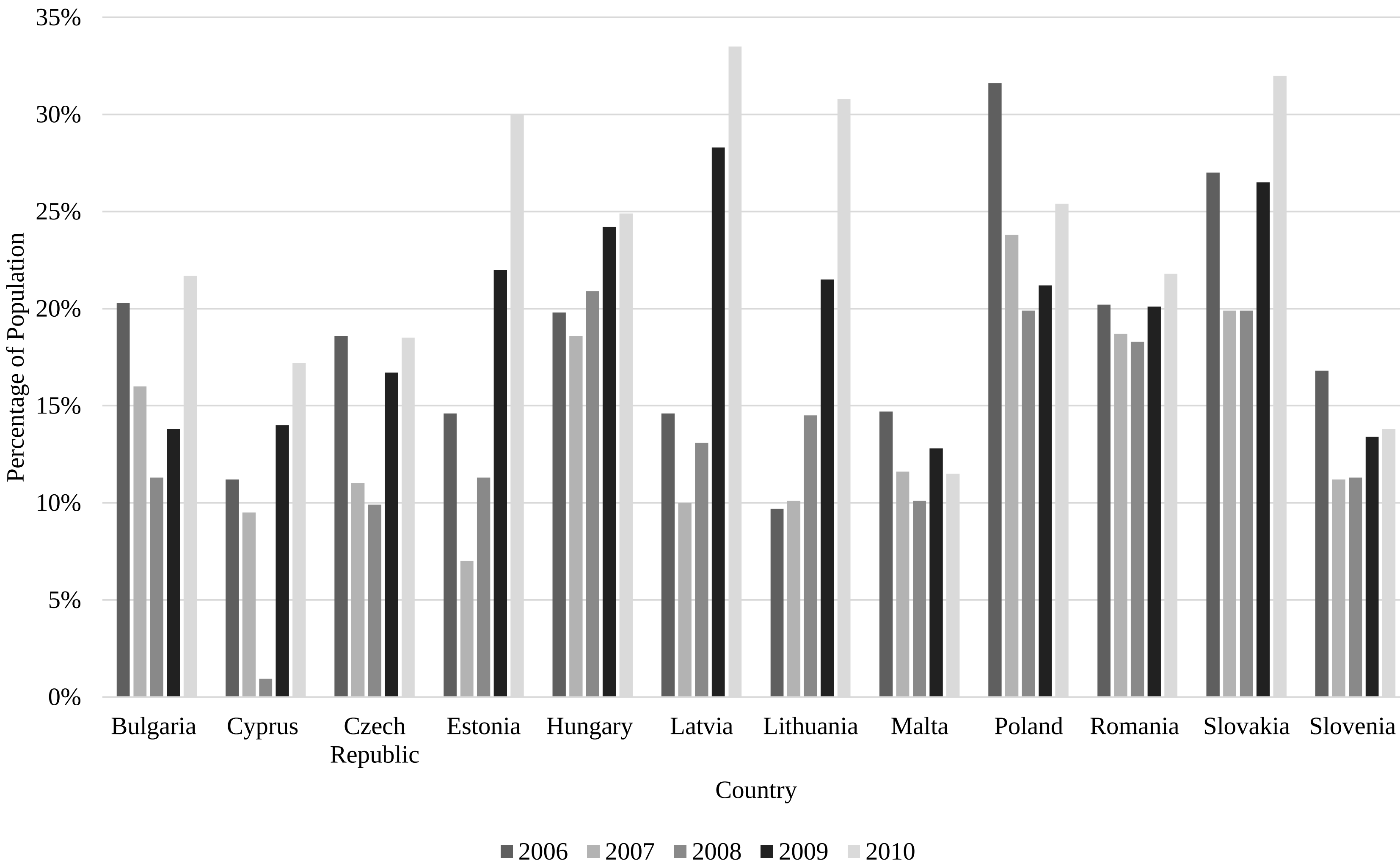

Figure 6. Youth Unemployment, Females Ages 15-24
Source: World Bank Data 2013

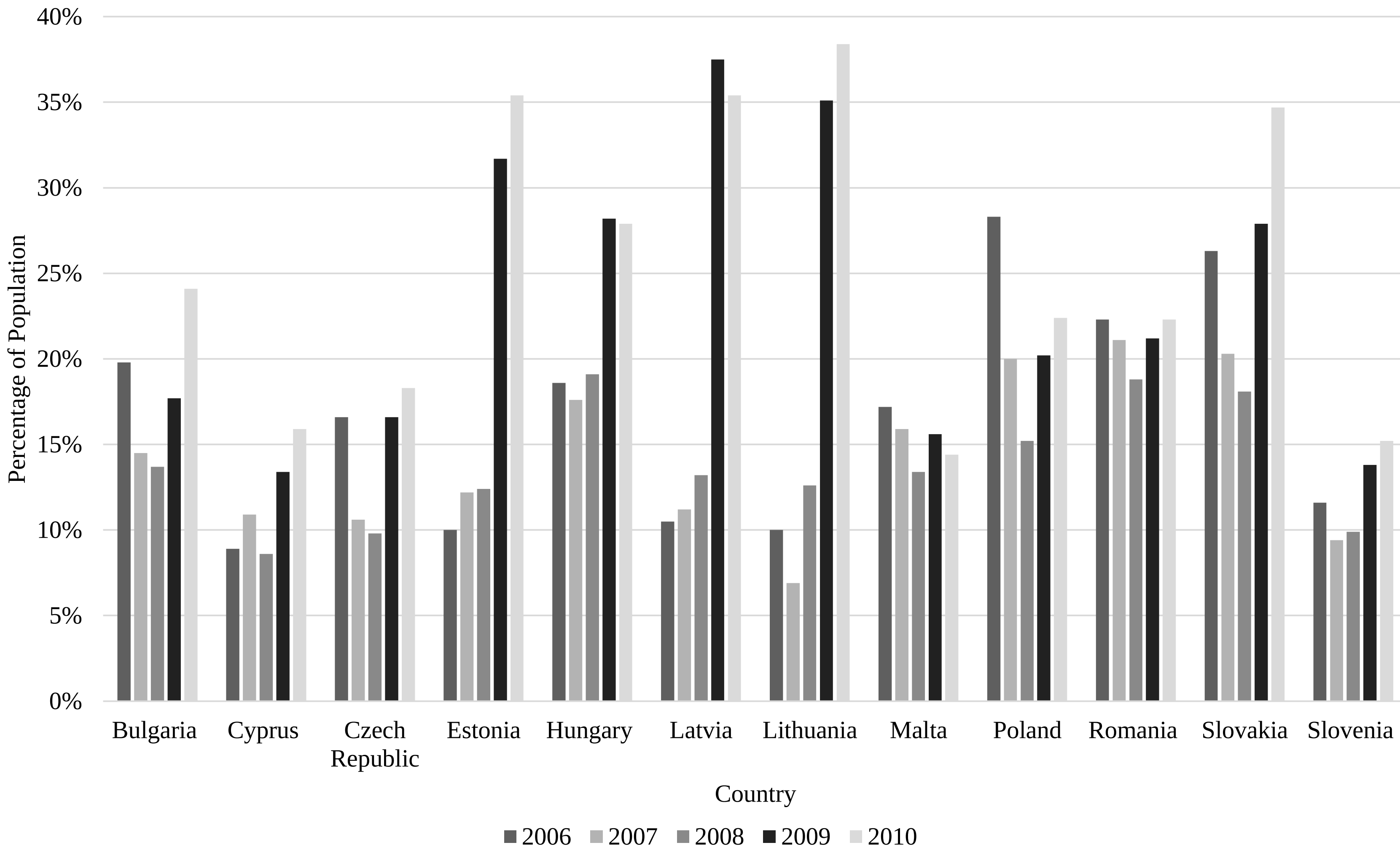

Figure 7. Youth Unemployment, Males Ages 15-24
Source: World Bank Data 2013

CHAPTER THREE: DATA AND METHODS

Sample Countries

Twelve sample countries are included in this analysis: Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia (see Appendix B for summary statistics). Of these twelve countries, six (Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Malta, Slovenia, and Slovakia) have adopted the euro as national currency, while the other six continue to use their own national currency; these five countries are considered euro-sharing. Five models will be estimated for the years 2006 through 2010. Each model will include all of the independent and control variables in an ordered logit regression analysis.

Dependent Variable

Public opinion on membership in the European Union is measured using data from the Eurobarometer public opinion surveys in the years from 2006 to 2010. Five spring waves—data are collected between March and May of each year—are included in this analysis. The first three models for 2006, 2007, and 2008, will measure public opinion prior to the onset of the economic crisis during the fall of 2008. The last two models for 2009 and 2010, will analyze opinions after the market crash. For each survey, the same question is employed: “Generally speaking, do you think that (OUR COUNTRY)’s membership in the European Union is…?” Respondents claiming that membership in the EU is a “bad thing” are coded as 1, those in the neutral category (neither good nor bad thing) are coded as 2, and the responses a “good thing” are coded as 3. This will ensure reliability across all five models (see Appendix A for all question wording).

Macro-Level Economic Indicators

Macro-level economic indicators will include GDP growth rates from 2006 to 2010, and unemployment rates of the total population, males and females, and youth unemployment for the same years. These data are collected from the World Bank.

Micro-Level Economic Indicator

At the micro-level, opinions on the health of the national economy will be measured using data collected in the Eurobarometer public opinion survey. This variable will be operationalized using the following question: "What are your expectations for the next twelve months: will the next twelve months be better, worse or the same, when it comes to the economic situation in (OUR COUNTRY)?" The "worse" category is coded as 1, the neutral category is coded as 2, and the "better" category is coded as 3. A question regarding the current economic situation in the country would be desirable to include in the ordered logit analysis. However, the Eurobarometer public opinion survey does not ask such a question. Prospective economic evaluations will be employed for the following reason: the importance of this study is to determine what changing opinions could mean for the future policy-making process of the EU. By examining how citizens expect economic conditions to be in the future, we can determine if they believe future membership with the EU is a beneficial prospect.

Control Variables

Four control variables will be included in the analysis. National level party power, age, national identity, gender, and economic winner/loser status will be operationalized in the following ways. To begin, national level party power will be measured by the ruling party (or coalition) in parliament for each country in each model year. Information for this variable will be gathered from the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). Age, identity, gender, and economic winner/loser status will be measured using data from the Eurobarometer survey. One aspect that will be used to measure identity is whether or not the country is euro-sharing. Individuals residing in Eurozone countries, I hypothesize, will feel more European and identify less with their individual country compared to citizens in non-Eurozone member states. The survey also includes multiple questions regarding one's identity. The following question will be included in the ordered logistic regression analysis: "What does the European Union mean to you personally?" One response to this question is "loss of our national identity." A dummy variable will be created from this question to be included in the ordered logistic regression. Lastly, in order to measure economic winner/loser status, the five models will include an individual level prospective economic question following Herzog and Tucker's (2009) model. The following question will be included: "What are your expectations for the next twelve months: will the next twelve months be better, worse or the same, when it comes to the financial situation in (YOUR HOUSEHOLD)?" Again, the "worse" responses is coded 1, the "same" responses is coded 2, and the "better" response is coded 3. All of the control variables will be included in an ordered logistic regression analysis.

National Level Party Power in Post-Soviet Member States

By examining political party power in parliament in a given model year, I will be able to determine the ideological influence of political elites on the citizenry. The literature review identifies that citizens rely on political party cues in order to understand complex and less-salient political issues (Esparza 2010; Hellwig and Samuels 2007; Hooghe and Marks 2000; Vermeersch 2010). At the individual level, citizen's responsiveness to policy is contingent on the relative importance of political and economic issues (Franklin and Wlezien 1997). For instance, individual-level economic well-being (economic winner/loser status) is typically more salient to citizens than the health of the national (or also, in this case, the international) economy. Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2009) argue that in post-Communist Europe political parties clearly establish issue positions but that the salience of the issues depends on national conditions. By examining the ever changing coalition governments of the CEE countries, case by case, I will be able to determine how political parties came to power in parliament between 2006 and 2010 and how they remained in power.

Prior to the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, only one political party reigned supreme in the Soviet Republics, the Communist Party. After gaining independence, however, democratic parties that were right-of-center in political ideology on economic issues began to emerge across the member states. Parties on the left still competed in national elections, but the prevalence of right parties far outnumbered those on the left. The following section will examine the political party structure and coalition building in the twelve countries of the sample from 1989 until 2010. These data are collected from the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Political Handbook of the World.

Table 2. Political Party Stance on EU Integration by Country

	Eurosceptical	Neutral	Euro-enthusiastic
Bulgaria	Union of Communists in Bulgaria, CA		NMSS, CB
Cyprus	AKEL, New Internationalist Left, DIKO		DISY
Czech Republic	Free Citizens Party		ČSSD, KSČM , ODS, KDU-ČSL, SZ
Estonia	Independence Party, Center Party		Res Publica
Hungary		Fidesz, LMP	MSzP-SzDSz
Latvia	National Alliance, LNNK, ZZS		JL, LPP, TP, LC
Lithuania	Order and Justice		
Malta	Labour Party (MLP)—eurosceptic prior to accession	MLP (after Malta's accession MLP developed a neutral position on foreign policy)	PN
Poland	Congress of the New Right, Real Politics Union, National Movement	Law and Justice, PO	
Romania	PRM, New Republic		PSD-PUR
Slovakia	SNS, Freedom and Solidarity, Conservative Democrats of Slovakia	HZDS	
Slovenia	Slovenian National Party		SDS, NSi, DeSUS, SLS-SKD

Source: PARLINE Database, Political Handbook of the World 2005-2006

Bulgaria

Prior to the political and economic transition of Bulgaria in 1989, only two political parties were existent in government, the Bulgarian Communist Party (KPB) and the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BZS-AS). These two parties comprised the political entity known as the Fatherland Front which included trade unions, individual citizens and the communist youth movement (Bulgaria 2005). Complete control of government was maintained by these two groups which left no room for other political parties to compete for representation. Electoral rules, however, shifted after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the reformation of government following thereafter. The newly enforced proportional representation system allowed numerous political parties to compete in national elections and gain seats in parliament by securing over four percent of the total vote.

In 1989, multiple opposition parties to the KPB began to emerge and coalitions in parliament started to form. The main communist party of the country (KPB) changed its name to the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) after the transition and continued to gain representation in parliament in ensuing elections. By 2001, sixty-five parties were registered by the Central Election Commission and thirty-six took part in the election (Bulgaria 2005). Within the past decade the number of registered political parties has continued to grow in the country.

The 2005 National Assembly election resulted in seven political coalitions gaining seats in parliament. The Coalition for Bulgaria (CB), the National Movement Simeon II (NMSS), the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS), the Attack Coalition (CA), the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF), the Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria (DSB), and the Bulgarian People’s Union (BPU) all met the necessary threshold (four percent) of votes to gain representation. The CB (30.95 percent of the vote and eighty-two seats), NMSS (19.88 percent of the vote and fifty-three seats), and DPS (12.81 percent of the vote and thirty-four seats) maintained majority representation in government while CA, UDF, DSB, and BPU held twenty-one, twenty, seventeen, and thirteen of the remaining seats, respectively (PARLINE Database 2014).

The coalition government preceding 2005 represented pro-European platforms and the desire to improve the country's economy. Led by former King Simeon II, NMSS, which held the majority of seats in parliament (one hundred and twenty seats), pledged to bring the country's economy up to par with the standards of the EU and made it a goal to work towards membership in the organization. As in 2005, the CB in 2001 shared majority power with NMSS, however, was the second largest coalition in Bulgaria's parliament with forty-eight seats. Bulgaria's 2005 National Assembly demonstrated a slight shift in power with CB gaining twenty-nine more seats than NMSS while the two remained in power. Both coalitions, however, in 2001 and 2005 demonstrated support for both EU and NATO accession (PARLINE Database 2014).

In 2005, the political parties of the Bulgarian government became very fragmented. With conflicting ideologies between the major parties, the process of creating a coalition government after the election was long and complicated. The BSP and the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF) attempted to form a coalition but fell short five seats of the minimum requirement of one hundred and twenty-one seats needed to appoint a coalition and maintain a stable governing parliament (Ganev 2006). In order to make progress in forming a coalition government, the BSP and the MRF were forced to include NMSS (a party that was staunchly in opposition to the platforms of the BSP and MRF) in the coalition. The cause of conflict between NMSS and the other two parties stemmed from the NMSS believing that the BSP and MRF were fiscally irresponsible and politically incompetent, and a threat to the future integration of Bulgaria in the EU (Ganev 2006). Carothers (2002) argues that in weak democracies political elites are perceived as corrupt and self-interested. The public for this reason believed that the sudden cooperation of the three political parties was the result of corruption in government and political figures working to secure what was in their interest (Ganev 2006). The reasons why these parties ultimately cooperated have not been concluded.

The 2009 parliamentary election resulted in NMSS—renamed the National Movement for Stability and Progress (NMSP) in 2008—losing representation in parliament and the center-right party, the Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria Party (GERB), gaining the most seats in parliament. The newly formed political party GERB maintained popularity mostly through its charismatic leader, Boiko Borisov (Ghodsee 2008). Between the 2005 and 2009 National Assembly elections many changes in Bulgaria's government took place; new electoral laws were drafted and implemented and in 2007, and Bulgaria gained membership in the EU. The economic crisis along with the newly developed relationship between the country and the supranational organization led to new coalitions and political parties taking the fore in the 2009 political race. GERB, the ATAKA party, the Blue Coalition (BC), and the Order Lawfulness Justice Party (RZS), along with the CB and DPS took the seats of parliament (one hundred and sixteen, twenty-one, fifteen, ten, forty, and thirty-eight seats, respectively), throwing out NMSP, CA, UDF, DSB, and BPU.

With the newly formed parliament, came current political and economic issues to address. Although the goal of membership in the EU had been met, fiscal growth as a matter of contention remained. Corruption in government became an issue after the ECB froze over five hundred million euros in 2008, an aid allotment that was intended for growth in agriculture and infrastructure (PARLINE Database 2014). The ECB believed that the Bulgarian government was not addressing issues of corruption and organized crime sufficiently and therefore used monetary sanctions to punish the country. GERB and the BC, both center-right in political platforms, campaigned on economic growth and accountability with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and pledged to fight corruption in the government and economy. The CB on the other hand, which still maintained forty seats in parliament after the 2009 election, argued that GERB and the BC would threaten Bulgarian citizens' social protection in their efforts to legitimize the economy through energy and healthcare privatization (PARLINE Database 2014). Overall, the main coalition forces in the 2009 National Assembly continued with pro-European platforms and goals. However, their methods of attaining these goals conflicted.

Czech Republic

As in all of the post-Soviet countries in the sample, the Czech Republic experienced single party rule prior to the transition following 1989. The Communist Party (KSČ) controlled the National Front (NF) and it was not until a group of anti-communist human rights activists launched the Civic Forum (OF) in late 1989, that the Communist Party experienced contestation (Czech Republic 2005). During the early 1990s two movements developed out of the OF, the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) and the Civic Movement (ČSNS). In ensuing years, ODS maintained high levels (if not majority) representation in both chambers. The bicameral structure of the Czech Republic's parliament developed out of the need for a division of powers among legislative bodies and regional representation (Kysela 2014).

The Chamber of Deputies is comprised of fourteen multi-member constituencies that maintain two hundred seats in the house. Members of parliament are directly elected by Czech citizens in a proportional representation system where single parties must gain five percent of the vote for representation, coalitions of two parties must win ten percent of the vote, three parties, fifteen percent of the vote, and four or more parties must receive twenty percent of the vote to maintain representation in the Lower House (PARLINE Database 2014). During the 2006 parliamentary elections, five political parties gained representation in the Chamber of Deputies; ODS won eighty-one seats (35.38 percent of the vote), the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD) won seventy-four seats (32.32 percent), the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM) won twenty-six seats (12.81 percent), the Christian Democratic Union-Czech People's Party (KDU-ČSL) won thirteen seats (7.23 percent), and lastly, the Green Party (SZ) won six seats (3 percent) (PARLINE Database 2014). Overall, the sentiments of the majority parties in power were pro-EU. However, there were hesitations from the coalition developed by the ODS, the KDU-ČSL, and the SZ, to adopt the euro as national currency following the country's accession to the EU. The coalition formed by the ČSSD and the KSČM was also pro-EU but in response to adopting the euro as national currency, the coalition not only supported its implementation but also aimed at accomplishing that goal by 2010.

While the two coalitions had similar feelings towards membership in the EU, issues regarding the euro caused significant problems when the Lower House experienced political deadlock after the 2006 elections (Haughton, Novotná, and Deegan-Krause 2011). Both coalitions held one hundred of the two hundred seats in the Chamber of Deputies, therefore making it very difficult for the governmental body to gain any headway in economic issues such as the adoption of the euro or the implementation of a value added tax (VAT) (PARLINE Database 2014). In order to resolve this issue, the Prime Minister Mirek Topolanek attempted to create a government led by the ODS as a single player (not a part of a coalition) but failed to win the parliamentary vote of confidence which led to months of negotiations and ultimately the formation of a new coalition government (PARLINE database 2014). In 2007, the ODS, KDU-

ČSL, and SZ formed a center-right coalition and gained majority representation in the Chamber of Deputies (Haughton, Novotná, and Deegan-Krause 2011).

The Senate, on the other hand, is developed from eighty-one single member constituencies that are directly elected by Czech citizens with voting eligibility. The ODS (forty-one seats), the ČSSD (twelve seats), and the KDU-ČSL (ten seats) had the most members with representation in the 2006 upper house of parliament. Thirteen other political parties held seats in the Senate but were only represented by, in most cases one to three people. The make-up of the 2008 upper house was similar to 2006 with the ODS holding the most seats (thirty-five), the ČSSD coming in second with twenty-nine seats, and the KDU-ČSL with seven seats. Party power in both houses and for both years in observation for Senate were similar in ideologies and goals regarding a relationship with the EU.

Estonia

Two parliamentary elections taking place in 2003 and 2007 will be discussed for Estonia. The structure of parliament in Estonia is unicameral in nature. The chamber is elected every four years by direct election from which one hundred and one seats are filled. Coalition governments formed following both elections and developed unique platforms focused on EU and NATO membership as well as crime, corruption, and unemployment during the 2003 election, and economic growth, and tax and welfare reform in 2007 (PARLINE Database 2014).

The 2003 Riigikogu (Estonian parliamentary chamber) election resulted in two center-right parties obtaining sixty seats in parliament; the remaining forty-one seats were occupied by parties of center-left ideologies. The Center Party and Res Publica (RP) both won twenty-eight seats which resulted in political deadlock in the chamber. The former party led by Edgar Savisaar remained suspicious of free-market economic policies and Estonia's accession to the EU, while the latter supported capitalist economic policies and promoted membership in the Union (Taagepera 2006). With political deadlock and conflicting platforms on the two most important issues of the 2003 parliamentary elections, progress in the policy-making process came to a staunch halt in the Riigikogu. In order to alleviate the issue, the leader of RP, Mr. Juhan Parts established a coalition between his party, the Reform Party, and the Estonian People's Union (Pettai 2004). However, after his resignation in 2005, a new coalition developed between the Reform Party, the Center Party, and the Estonian People's Union leading to a shift in political power and dominant ideologies in Estonia.

Two coalitions maintained power during the years falling within this analysis. The first, which led the government from 2003 until 2007 was comprised of RP, the Estonian Reform Party (RE), and the People's Union of Estonia (ERL). RP began in 1989 when a group of young anti-Soviet activists banded together to enact political change. It did not officially become a party until 2001 and was rightist in nature, appealing to the portion of the citizenry that was unable to identify, or was dissatisfied, with center and center-left political power (Estonia 2005). The coalition was led by Juhan Parts—Estonia's prime minister from April of 2003 until April of 2005—a member of Res Publica. The three parties shared economic ideologies regarding international issues of EU and NATO membership, and domestic issues as regards unemployment rates, economic growth, and a flat tax.

In 2006, RP dropped out of government giving way to a new coalition government led by Edgar Savisaar of the Estonian People's Center Party (EK), which included the Estonian Rural People's Party (EME). A shift from the center-right position of the 2003 coalition government to the center-left in 2006 of the opposition party was a drastic change for the Estonian public. The new center-left government's tenure did not last long, however, and in 2007 the RE gained power in parliament. The Estonian parliament returned to a rightist position in 2007 and remained there until the ensuing election of 2011.

Hungary

During the late 1980s prior to the transition from communism, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSzMP) was the only political party authorized to participate in government. Following the transition in 1989, the Hungarian National Assembly (Orszaggyules) authorized other independent parties to engage in the campaigning and election process for parliament (Hungary 2005). Since the mid-1990s, hundreds of political parties have registered and participated in Orszaggyules elections. However, the Hungarian political system today is resistant to the entry of new parties—it is highly polarized and competitive (Enyedi 2006).

The 2006 Orszaggyules elections resulted in a socialist coalition gaining power and Katalin Szili—the leader of the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSzP)—becoming speaker of the Orszaggyules. The MSzP and the Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz) in 2006 established a coalition that ultimately faced the conservative coalition comprised of the Hungarian Civic Union-Christian Democratic People's Party (FIDESz) and the Christian Democratic Party (KDNP) in the election; these two "hegemonic camps" dominated the Hungarian parliament in 2006 (Palonen 2009). Regarding the distribution of seats, the former coalition secured two hundred and ten of three hundred and eighty-six seats winning majority status in parliament, and the opposition party, FIDESz led by Viktor Orbán in 2006, secured one hundred and sixty-four of the three hundred and eighty-six seats available in the National Assembly. The two coalitions, conflicting in ideology—but, never in a stalemate due to MSzP-SzDSz's significant seat gain on FIDESz in the 2006 election—secured seats of almost the entire assembly.

Multiple economic issues arose during the election. The main issue however, was the adoption of the euro as national currency. While Hungary has yet to become a member of the Eurozone (due to high deficits), the country has continued to make headway towards approval from the EU regarding the adoption of the euro (PARLINE Database 2014). The 2008 economic crisis, however, caused a setback in Hungary's ability to meet the standards of the EU by causing a 7.7 percent decrease in GDP growth (from 0.9 to -6.8 percent growth). Also, the national deficit as a percent of GDP lessened from -8.6 in 2006 (the year of the assembly election) to -3.8 in 2008 (World Bank 2014). Hungary's economy during these three years experienced declining deficits, however, in 2009 deficits increased again to -4.1 percent of GDP indicating a weakening economy (World Bank 2014). While four years have passed since Hungary has experienced deficits, the forint (Hungary's national currency) has not yet met the standard of the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM II)—a mechanism designed to ensure that exchange rates between the euro and the national currency of a member state do not disrupt economic stability in the single market that is the Eurozone—established by the EU (European Commission 2013).

Regarding economic policies, the two coalitions agreed with growth, but disagreed with the means to accomplish it. The MSzP-SzDSz coalition supported foreign investment, the promotion of a free-market economy, and enhancing relations between private and public business sectors in order to bolster economic growth (Korkut 2007). The FIDESz, on the other hand, believed that foreign investment would threaten national industry and that it should be kept to a minimum instead of relying on it for development (PARLINE Database 2014). Despite these disagreements, both parties agreed that the state should play a central role in economic reforms and advancement. The role of outside actors such as other member states of the EU and the EMU was not clearly agreed upon. Ultimately, the pro-EU (MSzP-SzDSz) coalition remained in power after the election.

Latvia

In August of 1991, Latvia gained independence from the former Soviet Bloc. The country's first parliamentary elections took place on June fifth and sixth of 1993, wherein eight hundred and seventy-nine candidates participated representing twenty-three political parties (Latvia 1993). Since the first election, five more have taken place. For the purpose of this study, the 2010 parliamentary election will not be discussed—having taken place in October of 2010, the results will not have affected the Eurobarometer public opinion survey conducted during the spring of that year. However, the 2006 election will determine the party power of parliament for the five years of this study.

The Latvian parliament consists of one hundred members who are elected directly every four years by popular vote using a party list system for five multi-member constituencies (PARLINE Database 2014). Between the 2002 and 2006 elections, three coalition governments formed in parliament headed by center-right parties. The first conservative government that took power was led by the New Era Party (JL) and included the Union of Greens and Farmers (ZZS), the Latvia's First Party (LPP), and the Conservative Union for Fatherland and Freedom (TB/LNNK) (PARLINE Database 2014). The JL, a liberal-right party, upon its establishment in 2002, developed a platform on economic growth and stability, anti-corruption measures, and accession to the EU and NATO. The other members of the coalition were concerned with the same issues, namely EU and NATO membership and economic growth (Latvia 2005).

In 2004, when the JL withdrew from the coalition due to a vote-buying scandal including the LPP, a new center-right coalition government formed including the LPP, the ZZS and the People's Party (TP) (PARLINE DATABASE 2014). The TP, new to the coalition, and also center-right in ideology, established a platform on the development of privately owned businesses, and pro-membership in the EU, NATO, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) (Latvia 2005). The coalition did not last long, and in 2005 the Prime Minister, Indulis Emsis of the ZZS, resigned when his budget proposals were rejected by parliament (PARLINE Database 2014). The final coalition to precede the 2006 election was comprised of the same three parties but was led by the new Prime Minister, Aigars Kalvitis. Political parties that were pro-Russian and leftist in ideology were represented in parliament but did not participate in any of the coalition governments and only maintained a quarter of the seats in parliament.

Nineteen political parties and a total of 1,024 candidates participated in the 2006 parliamentary election. Two electoral coalitions formed representing conflicting ideologies. The first built on a platform pledging to promote economic stability and an enhanced relationship with the EU was developed by the LPP and the Latvian Way Party (LC). The second represented the Russian minority in Latvia and maintained a leftist ideology; the parties active in this coalition were the For Civil Rights Party (PCTVL) and the Concord Center (SC). Another rival to the center-right coalition was the JL. The 2006 election was the first to take place since the country's accession to the EU in 2004 which can account for the rise in Russian minority representation in 2006. Following the election, former Prime Minister Emsis as newly elected Speaker, formed a government where the TP, the ZZS, the LPP-LC, and the TB/LNNK formed a coalition and controlled fifty-nine seats in parliament. This newly formed coalition was representative of the outgoing government and introduced the LC and the TB/LNNK, both of which are established on conservative, center-right ideologies. The two new parties to join the coalition held pro-EU and pro-NATO positions despite the fact that the latter party (TB/LNNK) was nationalistic in nature and wanted to establish purity (in language, strict citizenry laws, and culture) in the Latvian citizenry (Latvia 2005).

Between the 2006 and 2010 elections, Prime Minister Kalvitis resigned and Ivars Godmanis took the position of Prime Minister in 2007. He only held the position for two years when in 2009, following the global economic crisis, he resigned and Valdis Dombrovskis took the position. The collapsing Latvian economy is what ultimately led to riots consuming the capital and Godmanis' resignation (Marksoo, Białasiewicz, and Best 2010). Latvia was one of the three countries (the other two being Estonia and Lithuania) that was the most negatively affected by the economic crisis—unemployment rates soared and GDP growth plummeted significantly in general, and in comparison to the other countries in the sample. Prime Minister Dombrovskis in 2009 led a minority government comprised of the JL, the ZZS, and the TB/LNNK. The overall atmosphere of government remained center-right in ideology and continued to support membership in the EU after receiving a significant amount of aid from the institution following the economic crisis (PARLINE Database 2014).

Lithuania

The final Baltic state to be examined is Lithuania. Compared to Estonia and Latvia, Lithuania in both the 2004 and 2008 parliamentary elections maintained a government controlled by center-left political parties. The 2004 government led by Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas, was represented by a coalition comprised of the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (LSDP), the Social Liberal Party (SLP), the Labor Party (DP), the Union of Farmers' Party, and the New

Democracy Party (PARLINE Database 2014). Both the LSDP and the SLP developed on a platform to increase average salaries and ensure retirement pensions for the public. While the LSDP falls traditionally on the left of the ideological spectrum, the party supports liberal democracy, free-market economic policies, and social activism (Jurkynas 2005). On the other hand, the leader of the DP (which gained the most seats in parliament during the 2004 election), Viktor Uspaskich, had strong ties to Russia which concerned parties on the conservative side of the spectrum. The center-right Homeland Union argued that in order to protect Lithuania against threats from Russia, the country needed to establish a strong independent state. Other conservative parties, such as the Liberal and Center Union (LCS)—which consisted of the Lithuanian Liberal Union (LLS), the Lithuanian Center Union (LCS), and the Modern Christian Democratic Union (MKDS)—shared the same fears (Jurkynas 2005).

In 2008, Andrius Kubilius, leader of the Homeland Union-Lithuanian Christian Democrats (TS-LKD), formed a coalition government consisting of his party, the Rising Nation Party (RNP), the Liberals Movement of the Republic of Lithuania, and the Liberal and Center Union (PARLINE Database 2014). Two of the member parties of the coalition were newly formed in 2008, the TS-LKD and the RNP. The TS-LKD, a merger party of the former Homeland Union and the Lithuanian Christian Democrats classified itself as a right-of-center political party yet was open to candidates with communist ideologies (Lithuania 2005). The election resulted in the TS-LKD winning the most seats with forty-five of the one hundred and forty-one seats in parliament secured; the RNP won sixteen seats; the Liberals Movement of the Republic of Lithuania won eleven seats; and the Liberal and Center Union won eight seats. All in all, the governing coalition held eighty of the one hundred and forty-one seats in parliament (PARLINE Database 2014).

Poland

The Polish parliament is bicameral and consists of the Sejm, the lower house, and the Senate, the upper house. The former consists of four hundred and sixty directly elected members and the latter of one hundred directly elected representatives. Term limits for each house are four years. However, if a government is to dissolve, elections can take place in the midterm; this was experienced in 2007 when the coalition government led by Jaroslaw Kaczynski of the conservative Law and Justice Party (PiS) collapsed on allegations of corruption and the leaking of classified information (PARLINE Database 2014). Two Polish parliamentary elections will be examined in this analysis, one taking place in 2005, and the other in 2007.

In 2005, an election took place after the normal term expiration for both the Sejm and the Senate. The election resulted in a one party minority government formed by the prime minister and leader of the PiS, Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz. The PiS and the Civic Platform (PO) maintained a majority in the Sejm with one hundred and fifty-five and one hundred and thirty-three seats, respectively, and in the Senate with forty-nine and thirty-four seats, respectively (PARLINE Database 2014). Both of these parties, center-right and conservative in ideology, built platforms on deregulation, privatization, the adoption of the euro, and tax breaks. Also, with plans to form a coalition, the parties focused on fighting corruption in government and establishing transparency of government actions for the public (Markowski 2006).

Since the first election following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, center-left parties maintained control in the Polish parliament. The 2005 election was the first to take place where the left experienced significant losses. As a result of the 2001 election, a left-wing coalition government led by the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and the Labor Union (UP) maintained a majority in parliament. The coalition held two hundred and sixteen seats in the Sejm, and seventy-five in the Senate; it was later joined by the Polish Peasant Party which held forty-two seats in the Sejm, and four in the Senate. All of these parties were leftist in nature and leaned towards prior communist ideologies.

After Poland's accession to the EU in 2004, the unemployment rate was higher in the country compared to any other member state (PARLINE Database 2014). Despite increases in foreign investment following accession, the country's baby boom of the early 1980s caused unemployment rates to continue to soar (PARLINE Database 2014). The PiS and the PO both pledged to address economic issues and high rates of unemployment in the 2005 and 2007 elections.

The premature parliamentary election of 2007 resulted in the PO and the PiS maintaining the majority in both houses. However, the PO rose above the PiS in the number of seats held in both the Sejm and the Senate. The former won two hundred and nine seats in the lower house and sixty seats in the upper while the latter won one hundred and sixty-six and thirty-nine seats, respectively. The two parties faced opposition during the election from the SLD which formed an electoral coalition with the Social Democracy of Poland (SDPL), the Democratic Party (PD), and the UP. The coalition criticized the 2005 PiS-led government claiming that a radical reduction in taxation would ultimately lead to the country's economy collapsing (PARLINE Database 2014). The Left and Democrats coalition (LiD), comprised of the four parties listed above, won fifty-three seats in the Sejm and no seats in the Senate. The only parties represented in the Senate resulting from the 2007 election were the PO and the PiS (Szczerbiak 2008).

Through the 2008 economic crisis, the Polish government was run by center-right political parties with strong conservative ideologies. They promoted the free-market economy and business privatization for economic growth. Reduced taxation was another element of their economic policies and privatization of state-owned companies was a goal of the coalition. The desire to adopt the euro as soon as possible following the 2007 election has yet to be accomplished. The Polish zloty is still used as national currency as the country attempts to develop its economy and meet the standards of the EU.

Romania

Romania, one of the two newest member states to the EU (the other being Bulgaria), held parliamentary elections in 2004 and 2008, both of which are relevant to this study. The bicameral parliament consisting of the upper house, the Senate, and the lower house, the Chamber of Deputies, holds elections every four years at the expiry of each member's term. The two elections in observation took place three years prior to the country's accession to the EU, and a year after gaining membership and the onset of the global financial crisis. Elections held in 2008 occurred after the country had begun to feel the effects of the declining economy. Therefore, political party power resulting from this election should indicate the national government's response to the economic downturn and relationships with the EU.

In 2004, three political alliances led the Romanian parliamentary elections. The Social Democratic Party (PSD) in alliance with the Humanist Party (PUR) ran in first place; the Justice and Truth alliance (ADA) consisting of the center-left Democrat Party and the center-right National Liberal Party followed; and the Greater Romania Party (PRM) came in third to the other alliances (PARLINE Database 2014). Many of the political parties running in the election agreed on key economic issues such as EU membership, the introduction of a flat sixteen percent tax, and the adoption of the euro by 2014. Namely, the PSD and the ADA promoted Romania joining the EU and fostering economic growth (Stan 2005). When accession occurred in 2007, the country's economy boomed and the inflation rate dropped seven percentage points, the GDP growth rate rose above 8 percent upon the implementation of the flat tax, and remittances of about two million Romanians working abroad accounted for about 8.95 billion U.S. dollars (USD) in 2007 (PARLINE Database 2014). Romania did not experience economic success for long when the 2008 economic crisis initiated a downturn in economic growth.

The election of 2004 resulted in the PSD-PUR alliance gaining the most seats in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate (one hundred and thirty-two and fifty-seven seats, respectively). The ADA followed with one hundred and twelve seats in the Chamber of Deputies and forty-nine in the Senate; the Greater Romania Party (PRM) won forty-eight seats in the lower house and twenty-one in the upper house; and the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania (UDMR) won twenty-two and ten seats, respectively. Center-left and center-right parties were both apparent in the governing parties of parliament. Foreign issues were mostly agreed upon (such as pro-EU membership), while domestic issues (the implementation of a flat tax, pension grants, and increased teachers' pay) caused conflict between the left and right.

A shift in party power took place in 2008, once the country began to feel the immediate effects of the global economic crisis. Free-market economic policies were still supported by the president, Traian Basescu, and the prime minister, Calin Popescu-Tariceanu upon accession to the EU and the onset of the economic crisis. However, new party power in parliament began to emerge. The Democratic Liberal Party (PD-L), the PSD-Conservative Party (PC) alliance, and the PNL were the main challengers in the election, with the PRM, and the UDMR losing power in parliament. The reformed electoral rules—which changed voting for a list to voting for a specific candidate—caused the PRM and the UDMR to lose representation in parliament, an issue that both parties anticipated upon the implementation of the new laws (Marian and King

2010). The results were as follows: the PD-L won one hundred and fifteen seats in the Chamber of Deputies and fifty-one seats in the Senate; the PSD-PC alliance won one hundred and fourteen and forty-nine seats, respectively; the PNL won sixty-five and twenty-eight seats, respectively; and the UDMR won twenty-two and nine seats, respectively (PARLINE Database 2014). A coalition government formed between the PD-L and the PSD under the leadership of Emil Boc, the leader of the PD-L. The parties gaining power after the 2008 election were all center-right in political orientation. All continued to support free-market reform and the adoption of the euro to strengthen the national economy. The leu (Romania's national currency) continues to be used today, however, the country still has plans and is working towards the adoption of the euro.

Slovakia

The Slovak Republic—of former Czechoslovakia—gained independence from the union with the Czech Republic in January of 1993. Prior to 1989, the Communist Party controlled the government in Czechoslovakia. The National Front of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (ČSR) (controlled by the Communist Party) limited the ability of other political parties to gain representation in government. Immediately following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Velvet Revolution (which restored democracy in Czechoslovakia in 1989), opposition parties in government began to surface. The Civic Forum (OF), the Public against Violence (VPN), and the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) all began to form coalitions and minority factions in government during the early 1990s (Slovakia 2005).

The HZDS, after the two republics gained independence from each other, became the largest and most popular party in the Slovak Republic—it stood for returning to a democratic Slovakia that once existed prior to communist rule. Rather than take a strong stance on political issues upon its formation in the early 1990s, the HZDS built a platform on being inclusive and constructive (Haughton 2001). The position of the HZDS on the ideological spectrum has never been clear which is perhaps why the party experienced such success during the 1990s and early 2000s. By enforcing the rule and ideologies of its leader, the party was able to mold to the times and address various issues with the main goal in mind which was always democratic growth and accountability in the country (Haughton 2001). In 2006, the party formed an alliance with the People's Party and gained fifteen seats in parliament, however, remained the minority party of the National Council.

Prior to the 2006 elections for the National Council—the single body of the unicameral parliament in Slovakia—the overall political atmosphere was center-right and conservative in nature. The four party coalition government resulting from the 2002 election was controlled by the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKU), the Hungarian Coalition Party (SMK), the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH), and the Alliance of New Citizens (ANO). Despite the economy prospering in terms of GDP growth and increased FDI in 2005, public opinion began to shift away from the center-right government due to the unemployment rate remaining high at 15 percent (PARLINE Database 2014). Salient economic issues such as high unemployment gave way to a new leftist political party taking the fore in the 2006 election. The Smer Party, pledged to increase social spending and discontinue the VAT introduced in 2004, and the 19 percent flat rate income tax. This garnered a positive response from the public and Smer ended up securing fifty of the one hundred and fifty seats in parliament that are directly elected by the citizenry (Haughton, Novotná, and Deegan-Krause 2011).

Five other parties gained representation in parliament, including those that are center-right on the ideological spectrum. The SDKU maintained thirty-one seats, the SMK, twenty seats, the People's Party-Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (LS-HZDS), fifteen seats, and the KDH, fourteen seats. The Slovak National Party (SNS), which had not gained representation in the 2002 parliament won twenty seats during the 2006 election. The party, far right in nature, pledged to keep the SMK out of government. However, both parties gained the same amount of representation and remained at odds in the legislative processes to ensue (PARLINE Database 2014).

The primary issues of the 2006 election were mainly domestic, focusing on government spending, taxation laws, and unemployment. Nevertheless, international issues remained important—in 2004 the government of Slovakia enforced austerity measures in order to reduce deficits and meet the standards of the EU (Slovakia 2005). The main parties of the 2006 election were also concerned with the implementation of economic reforms necessary to adopt the euro as national currency and to expand the economy. Having already gained membership in the EU in 2004, the crucial interests of the government rested in domestic economic growth.

Slovenia

Since 1989, Slovenia has experienced the structuring and restructuring of numerous political parties and coalitions in government. Prior to 1989, like many of the other countries in the sample, the only political party that exercised any influence in government was the Communist Party—in Slovenia, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (SKJ). In 1990, however, the SKJ approved a multi-party system and many began to arise. The Democratic Opposition of Slovenia (Demos), an alliance comprised of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDS), the Slovenian Christian Democrats (SKD), the Slovenian Peasant League (SKZ), the Slovenian Democratic League (SDZ), the Social Democratic League of Slovenia (SDZS), and the Greens of Slovenia (ZS) established the first opposition to the SKJ. A plethora of democratic parties, both right and left of center, have developed platforms in the Slovenian government.

During the 1990s center-right coalitions, that supported a transition to a free-market economy and accession to the EU and NATO, maintained power in government. From the early 1990s until the election of 2004, the LDS dominated the political arena with the promotion of center-right political ideologies. The 2004 election changed party power in government with the Democratic Party (SDS) gaining leadership and forming a coalition with the New Slovenia (NSi), the Democratic Pensioners Party (DeSUS), and the Slovenian People's Party-Slovenian Christian Democrats (SLS-SKD). Of the four parties that were members of the new coalition government, two (DeSUS and SLS-SKD), identified as left-of-center. With the shifting nature of party membership and coalitions in Slovenia, political ideologies have not always been well-grounded in government and on issues. Overall, the parties in the coalition agreed on many of the most important areas such as EU membership, economic growth, and a liberalized market (Slovenia 2005).

The 2004 National Assembly election resulted in the SDS gaining the most seats (twenty-nine out of ninety that are directly elected), the LDS coming in second with twenty-three seats, the ZLSD with ten seats, the NSi won nine, the SLS won seven, the SNS won six, DeSUS won four, and there were two representatives of ethnic minorities elected. The SDS, NSi, DeSUS, and the SLS-SKD formed a center-right coalition taking a majority of seats in parliament (forty-nine of ninety seats). The economic issues focused on by the coalition were deregulation, privatization, and a market-economy (Slovenia 2005). The 2008 election yielded different results. The Social Democrats (SD) won the most seats in parliament coming ahead of the SDS with one seat (the former won twenty-nine seats, and the latter, twenty-eight). For the Real-New

Politics (ZARES) party, established by members of the LDS in 2007, won nine seats in the National Assembly. With the growth in popularity of the center-right political parties in 2004, LDS a leftist party experienced a slow disintegration with many members leaving to join other parties and alliances (Adam, Kristan, and Tomšič 2009).

The main issues of the 2008 election were taxes, housing, and border control with Croatia. In 2007, Slovenia adopted the euro causing economic growth of 5.5 percent. While many other countries in the sample continued to deal with struggling economies, those in the Eurozone benefited from stability in currencies and exchange rates. Despite this economic success, in 2008, at the onset of the economic crisis, the inflation rate began to climb reaching the highest it had been in six years (PARLINE Database 2014). Notwithstanding, the main focus during the election was less on international economic issues and more so on domestic issues to promote further growth and combat increasing inflation rates. The SD during the 2008 election criticized the SDS for failing to address inflation—the party promised to introduce tax relief for lower income individuals in order to alleviate economic pressures at the individual level. The resulting coalition government of the 2008 election ensured that SD maintained control, despite SDS coming in second with 29.26 percent of the vote (PARLINE Database 2014).

National Level Party Power in Cyprus and Malta

The two cases of Cyprus and Malta, which are included in the ordered logistic analysis, differ in many ways from the ten other post-Soviet sample countries. As former British colonies, Cyprus and Malta did not transition politically nor economically as the other countries in the sample did during the late 1980s after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. However, neither country gained independence from the British Empire until the 1960s (Cyprus in 1960, and

Malta in 1964) and have a relatively short history of an independent government. Comparatively speaking, in this sample, these two countries were more Western and democratic upon gaining accession to the EU in 2004. As two of the newest member states to the institution, it is important to consider them in this analysis for one important reason—they provide a comparative perspective to the communist legacy from the Great Russian super-power.

Cyprus

One parliamentary election was held in Cyprus during the five model years. In 2006, eighty seats were open for direct election by the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities for a five year term. Having already gained membership in the EU, the main issue of the election was the reunification of the country. The Greek community (75.8 percent), which held fifty-six of the eighty seats in parliament rejected the reunification plan, while the Turkish community (64.9 percent) supported it in 2004 (PARLINE Database 2014). Prior to the 2006 election, the Turkish minority was absent in the institutions of central government; however, during this election one Turkish candidate ran but did not secure a seat in parliament. Therefore, it is important to note that about eighteen percent of the population were unrepresented in government during the years in analysis.

In 2001, prior to gaining membership in the EU, the Communist Progressive Party of the Working People (AKEL) won twenty of the fifty-six seats allotted to Greek representatives and formed a coalition government with the centrist Democratic Party (DIKO), which won nine seats. The democratic opposition party on the right, the Democratic Rally (DISY), won nineteen seats but was far outnumbered by the leftist parties in government. AKEL and DIKO during the early 1990s were opposed to EU membership but did not build a strong platform on the issue. In

1995, AKEL changed positions on European integration and began to see it as a positive factor that could help to combat the security issue between the Greek and Turkish communities. However, strong sentiments and political platforms were still not developed on the issue. Compared to the post-Soviet member states, membership in the institution lacked the political drive and importance in Cyprus during the 2004 accession and the 2006 parliamentary elections.

In 2004, Cyprus was the strongest country economically to gain membership in the EU (Katsourides 2003). Four years after accession, in 2008, the country adopted the euro as national currency and became a member of the Eurozone. Unemployment rates in the five model years remained low (in comparison to the other sample countries), and the GDP annual growth rate was steady and only dipped slightly (-1.7 percent in 2009) after the onset of the economic crisis. Membership in the EU as an issue did not hold the same weight in economic gains (or losses) in Cyprus as it did in the other member states. This is not to say that various groups in the Cypriot community did not hold opinions on membership, they were just not as clearly established in the political realm and party platforms (Katsourides 2003).

The 2006 parliamentary election resulted in AKEL and DISY gaining the most seats (both parties won eighteen seats in parliament). DIKO, a coalition member of AKEL won eleven seats and the two parties together remained in power. Other members of the AKEL/ DIKO coalition were the Movement of Social Democrats (EDEK), the European Party (EK), and the Ecologists-Environmentalists Movement. The only right opposition party to the coalition government was DISY. Reunification plans remained important and the country worked with the United Nations to enforce political cohesion between the two ethnic communities.

Malta

Malta, like Cyprus, was a former British colony that gained independence in 1964. With a history of democratic rule and free-market economic policies, Malta had an advantage economically, compared to the other countries in the sample (save Cyprus) prior to and after accession to the EU. The difference between Malta and Cyprus, is that an ethnic divide is not apparent in the country. In Cyprus, one portion of the community desired unification, while the other desired independence and opposed membership in a unified country and supranational organization. Because such ethnic tensions did not occupy the political landscape in Malta during the two parliamentary elections taking place in 2003 and 2008, the focus could remain on membership in the EU. Political party power in the country from 2006 until 2010 will be determined through the examination of the two elections previously referenced.

The political structure in Malta is unicameral in nature. The House of Representatives is comprised of sixty-five seats, all of which are directly elected by the citizenry (PARLINE Database 2014). While a multi-party system is in place, two political parties maintain power of parliament. The Nationalist Party (PN), and the Labor Party (MLP), in 2003 and 2008, won all of the seats in parliament with the PN in both elections maintaining power by an acute margin. In 2003, the PN developed a platform that was congruent with the EU's social and economic policies and ultimately won 51.8 percent of the vote and thirty-five seats in the House of Representatives. On the other hand, the MLP campaigned on economic issues that were more focused domestic policies such as taxation laws (PARLINE Database 2014). With the PN maintaining power in both elections, a pro-EU platform was seemingly more popular across the citizenry. The MLP held a neutral position on foreign policy in both elections, however, prior to accession the party was opposed to membership in the EU (Malta 2005).

In 2008, Malta adopted the euro as national currency and became a member in the Eurozone (PARLINE Database 2014). The two political parties campaigned on economic policies during the 2008 election but remained at odds on foreign policies. Both parties advocated for job creation, and a boost in GDP annual growth rates. However, the means to accomplish these goals differed between the two parties. The PN campaigned on its past achievements with power in parliament—the party had created 20,000 new jobs and reduced the public deficit from 10 percent in 2004 to 1.6 percent in 2007. The leverage that the party used during the 2008 election was the promise to lower the flat income tax from 35 to 30 percent (PARLINE Database 2014). On the other side, the MLP promised to create 2,000 jobs in industry and 4,000 in new technologies while boosting GDP growth to over four percent (PARLINE Database 2014). Like Cyprus, the economy in Malta was not as heavily impacted by the economic crisis as the other ten countries in the sample. The main focus of political parties during the elections held in the model years remained on domestic growth through means independent of the EU.

Table 3. Political Party Power in Parliament by Year and Position

	Left	Center	Right
Bulgaria	2006-2008 (BSP)		2009-2010 (GERB)
Cyprus		2006-2010 (DIKO)	
Czech Republic			2006-2010 (ODS)
Estonia	2006 (EK)		2007-2010 (RE)
Hungary	2008-2010 (MSzP)	2006-2007 (MSzP-SzDSz)	
Latvia			2006-2008 (TP) 2009-2010 (JL)
Lithuania		2006-2007 (DP)	2008-2010 (TS-LKD)
Malta			2006-2010 (PN)
Poland			2006 (PiS) 2007-2010 (PO)
Romania	2006-2007 (PSD-PUR)		2008-2010 (PD-L)
Slovakia	2006-2010 (Smer)		
Slovenia	2008-2010 (SD)		2006-2007 (SDS)

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2013

Hypotheses

Multiple variables affect public attitudes towards membership in the EU. The relationships between opinion on membership in the EU and the economic voting hypothesis, political party influence, age, identity, individual-level political ideology, and economic winner/loser status will be hypothesized in this section.

Aggregate-Level Hypotheses

Three economic indicators—unemployment rates, Eurozone member status, and GDP annual growth rates—and political party influence will be discussed at the aggregate level. Chapters 1 and 2 have outlined the theory behind the inclusion of these variables; they will be further analyzed in the following chapters.

H1: Overall, following the economic crisis, approval ratings of membership in the EU will decline in all of the sample countries.

H2: Countries that are euro-sharing will garner more positive evaluations of membership in the EU after the economic crisis compared to the countries in the sample that are not Eurozone members.

H3: Countries with significant increases in unemployment rates (those rising about 10 percent unemployment) following the economic crisis will have more positive evaluations of membership in the EU compared to countries that maintained an unemployment rate under 10 percent.

H4: Countries with significant decreases in GDP growth during the economic crisis will have more positive evaluations of membership in the EU.

H5: In any given model, countries with political party power that is right-of-center on economic issues will maintain a citizenry that garners overall more positive evaluations of membership in the EU compared to those that have political party power left-of-center on economic issues.

Individual-Level Hypotheses

At the individual level, three variables will be examined, age, economic winner/loser status, and political ideology. Although the backlash of the 2008 economic crisis had national-level economic repercussions, citizens at the individual-level were affected economically as well. An examination of public opinion at the individual-level is necessary in order to demonstrate citizen response to the economic decline.

H6: Younger citizens will have more positive evaluations of membership in the EU before and after the economic crisis.

H7: Individuals who are economic losers will demonstrate lower levels of support for membership in the EU compared to economic winners.

H8: Citizens who believe that membership in the EU means a loss of national identity will maintain lower levels of support for membership in the EU compared to those who do not across all models.

CHAPTER FOUR: QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Individual-Level Analysis

This analysis examines seven individual-level independent variables: national level economic prospects, age, gender, trust in the EU, national identity, economic winner/loser status, and individual political ideology. Several studies have been conducted examining individual level indicators of support for membership in the EU (Anderson and Reichert 1995; Cram 2009; 2012; Deutsch et al. 1957; Dobratz 1993; Esparza 2010; Hooghe and Marks 2009; Inglehart and Rabier 1978; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2007). However, since the 2008 global economic crisis the literature has not addressed how public attitudes have been affected and which citizens in EU member states remain pro-European and which do not. The objective of this analysis is to determine the effect of the global economic decline on individual-level indicators of support for the institution. Will the crisis negatively affect support? If so, which groups in society will experience a greater change in attitudes? The following quantitative analysis will help to fill this gap in the prior research.

Table 4 presents the results from the five multivariate ordered logistic regression models. Each model, including all seven independent variables, is significant at the 0.000 level. The coefficients for each model on the main independent variable, national level economic prospects, remained positive in all five years with consistent levels of significance at the 0.000 level, indicating that for every one unit increase in national level economic prospects (controlling for all other variables) an increase in the logged odds of supporting membership in the EU can be observed—by 0.408 in 2006, 0.554 in 2007, 0.472 in 2008, 0.308 in 2009, and 0.285 in 2010.

Clearly, in 2009 and 2010 a significant decrease in the effect of national level economic prospects on attitudes toward membership in the EU can be identified.

Table 4. Indicators of Support for Membership in the EU, Five Logit Models

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable Public Opinion on Membership in the EU				
	2006	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
National Level Economic Prospects	0.408*** (0.048)	0.554*** (0.044)	0.472*** (0.044)	0.308*** (0.047)	0.285*** (0.043)
Age	-0.002 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)	-0.004** (0.002)	-0.005*** (0.002)	-0.005*** (0.002)
National Identity	0.900*** (0.065)	0.601*** (0.087)	0.645*** (0.088)	0.797*** (0.092)	0.598*** (0.081)
Economic Winner/Loser Status	0.222*** (0.056)	0.297*** (0.050)	0.281*** (0.049)	0.253*** (0.053)	0.140** (0.052)
Individual Political Ideology	0.049*** (0.014)	0.059*** (0.012)	0.023* (0.011)	0.064*** (0.011)	0.064*** (0.012)
Gender	-0.142* (0.064)	-0.113* (0.057)	-0.036 (0.056)	-0.161** (0.055)	-0.102* (0.051)
Trust in EU	2.150*** (0.075)	1.984*** (0.066)	2.205*** (0.067)	2.075*** (0.061)	2.043*** (0.060)
Intercept 0	-3.332*** (0.226)	-2.367*** (0.197)	-2.265*** (0.193)	-1.759*** (0.187)	-1.667*** (0.175)
Intercept 1	-6.084*** (0.242)	-4.707*** (0.207)	-4.730*** (0.203)	-4.040*** (0.194)	-4.179*** (0.184)
Observations	5,383	6,713	6,865	6,856	6,906
Wald $\chi 2$	1,405.40	1,553.21	1,679.14	1,683.61	1,749.11
Pseudo R2	0.206	0.176	0.184	0.169	0.162
− 2 Pseudo Likelihood	-3,897.68	-4,947.06	-5,098.82	-5,305.46	-5,658.38

Notes. Ordered logit coefficients are reported. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ in two-tailed tests. Greene's (2003) formula is used to calculate intercepts from ordered logit output.

The coefficients and levels of significance for national-level economic prospects in each model indicate support for hypothesis one—following the economic crisis beginning in the fall of 2008, an overall decline across all cases in the approval of membership in the EU is apparent. In a means comparison analysis, in all five models, this hypothesis is also supported. Individuals who believed that the national economic prospects for the next twelve months would be better than they were at the time of the survey demonstrated increasing levels of support for membership in the EU in 2006, 2007, and 2008 but in 2009, and 2010 the mean dropped in both cases. Individuals who believed that the national economic situation would remain the same in the next twelve months began to demonstrate a decline in support for membership in the EU in 2008 and continued to demonstrate this trend in 2009 and 2010. An interesting finding is that individuals who believed the national economic situation would get worse in the next twelve months showed increasing support for membership in 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 but then indicated a significant decline in average support in 2010 (see figure 7). The trend demonstrated from 2006 until 2009, of individuals who believed that the national economic situation would get worse in the next twelve months, indicates preliminary support for hypothesis four. A further case by case analysis of these findings will be conducted later in this analysis.

In a comparison of individuals who believed that the economic prospects for the next twelve months would be better than they currently were, to those who believed that they would be worse, maintained on average greater support for the institution. The results of the means comparison are in congruence with the prospective voting model proposed by MacKuen, Erikson, and Stimson (1992). They argue, in an analysis of presidential popularity, that "economic conditions affect…popularity only to the extent that economic conditions alter expectations of the economic future" (MacKuen, Erikson, and Stimson 1992, 603).

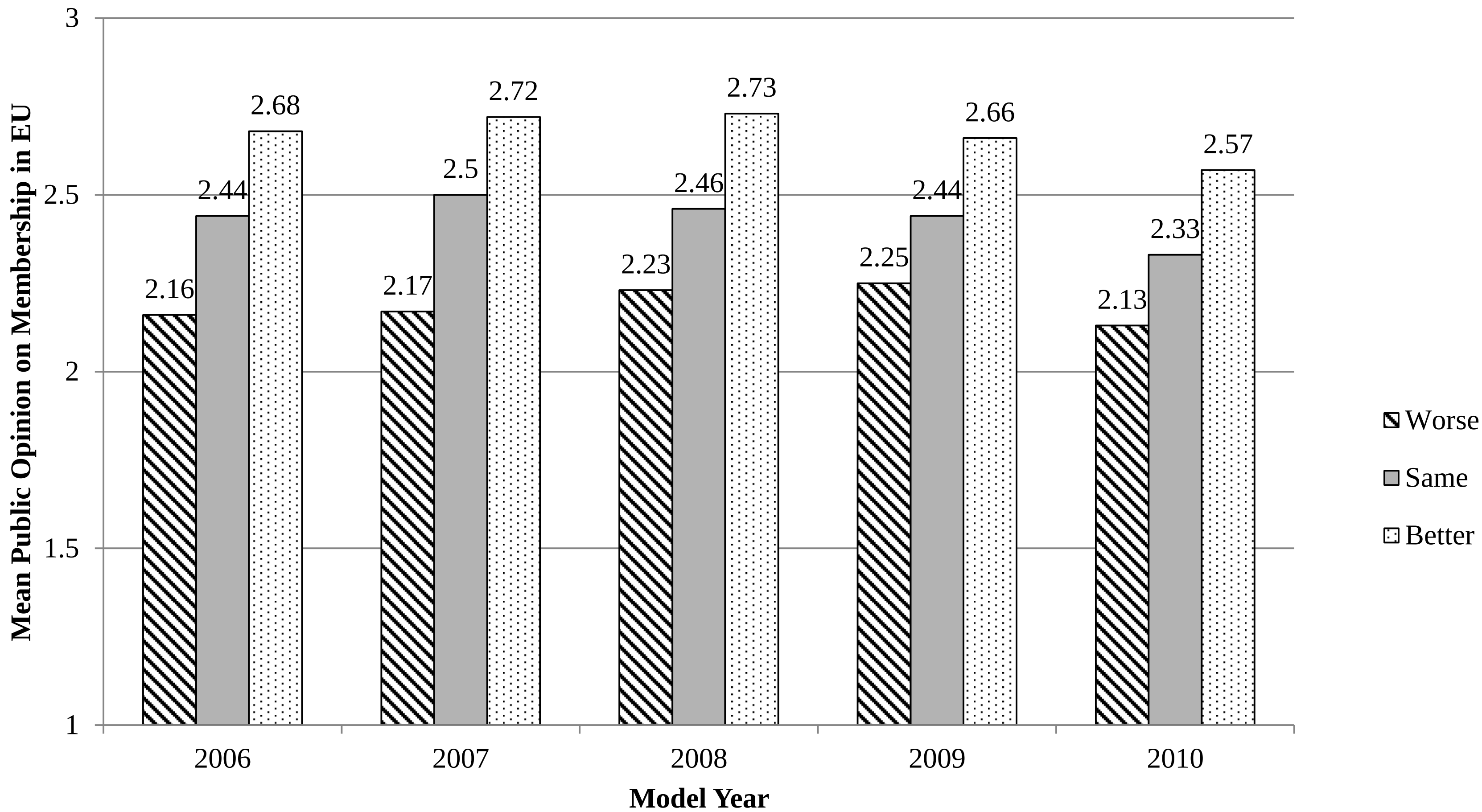

Figure 8. Means Comparison Analysis of National Level Economic Prospects on Public Opinion towards Membership in the EU, Five Models
Notes. Values for the dependent variable are coded as follows: membership in the European Union is a “1=bad thing, 2=neither good nor bad thing, 3=good thing.”
Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey, Spring Waves 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010

While the focus has typically been on the retrospective economic voting hypothesis, as indicated in chapter one, unfortunately a variable measuring retrospective economic evaluations does not exist in the Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey. Therefore, the economic voting hypothesis proposed by Fiorina (1978), and tested by multiple political scientists thereafter (Anderson 1995; 2000; Lewis-Beck 1988; Pacek and Radcliff 1995; Powell and Whitten 1993), cannot be tested in this analysis due to insufficient public opinion data.

The findings in figure 1 also indicate that economic winner/loser status and feelings of national identity are significant in all five models; age is significant in 2008, 2009, and 2010, but is not a significant variable in the 2006 and 2007 models. Hypothesis 7 claims that individuals who are economic losers will demonstrate lower levels of support for membership in the EU compared to economic winners across all models—this hypothesis is supported by the ordered logistic regression analysis and means comparison analysis of national level economic prospects on public opinion towards membership in the EU controlling for economic winner/loser status. Citizens who believe that their personal economic situation will be neither better nor worse in the next twelve months demonstrate a 0.222 increase in the logged odds of supporting membership in the EU in 2006, 0.297 in 2007, 0.281 in 2008, 0.253 in 2009, and 0.140 in 2010 compared to citizens who believe that their economic situation will become worse in the next twelve months; the same effect is apparent for citizens who believe that there economic situation will be better during the next twelve months. Clearly, as citizens view themselves as economic winners, their likelihood of supporting membership in the EU increases; this finding is congruent with Gabel’s (1998) analysis of skilled and unskilled laborers—individuals who are more competitive in the liberalized market (skilled laborers) are more likely to support EU membership than unskilled laborers, whom are less competitive. The effect of economic winner/loser status decreases after the economic crisis in 2009 and again in 2010.

Hypothesis 8 is also supported by both analyses; the latter analysis measures the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable controlling for loss of national identity. Citizens who do not fear that their country's membership in the EU will result in the loss of national identity are significantly more likely to support membership in the institution compared to citizens who fear a loss of national identity. Following the 2008 economic crisis, the effect of national identity on attitudes towards membership in the EU increased by 0.152 in the logged odds. In 2010, that number decreased to 0.598, lower than any of the four other model years.

Lastly, age is significant in 2008, 2009, and 2010 with coefficients that are in the proper hypothesized direction to support hypothesis 6 in all models. As the age of a citizen increases, his or her likelihood to support membership in the EU decreases. For every one unit increase in age (one year), a decrease in the logged odds of supporting membership in the EU can be observed. In the three models that are significant, the effect of age on support for membership in the EU increased by 0.001 in logged odds from 2008 to 2009 and remained the same from 2009 to 2010. Inglehart and Rabier (1978) suggest that due to value changes from a materialist to a post-materialist society, younger, more educated citizens will demonstrate greater support for membership in the EU compared to older generations. The literature review indicates that there is a possible flaw in this argument. Shouldn't citizens with materialist values (older citizens) be more likely to support membership in the EU? Dobratz's (1993) analysis is more telling of the results from this analysis—history, not value change, affects public opinion towards membership in the EU. Therefore, younger citizens who grew up in democratizing societies will be more likely to support the institution than older generations who were more accustomed to communism and socialist economic policies.

Aggregate-Level Analysis

This analysis examines four aggregate-level economic and political variables. Eurozone status, unemployment rates, annual GDP growth rate, and political party power will be evaluated. By looking at means comparisons for each model year on each of these four variables, I will be able to draw conclusions on hypotheses two, three, four, and five.

Evidence supporting hypothesis two was found. In a means comparison of public opinion towards membership in the EU between euro-sharing countries and non-euro sharing countries, the results demonstrate that prior to and after the onset of the 2008 economic crisis, euro-sharing countries (Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Malta, Slovakia, and Slovenia) on average maintained more positive evaluations of membership in the EU compared to non-euro sharing countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, and Romania) (see table 5).

Prior to the economic crisis in 2006 and 2007, non-Eurozone members maintained more positive evaluations of membership in the EU by a slight margin. However, beginning in 2008 this trend shifted, demonstrating the relationship that I hypothesized. Not only did Eurozone members garner more positive evaluations towards membership in 2009 and 2010 but in a combined average of opinions prior to the economic crisis (in 2006, 2007, and 2008) euro-sharing countries maintained more positive evaluations before and after the crisis. The effect of the shift in attitudes after 2008 was much greater for non-Eurozone members experiencing a decline of 12.86 percent in the population that believed that membership in the EU was a good thing. While Eurozone members also experienced a decline, their average only dropped by 9.06

percent of the population. The economic strength of the Eurozone countries and the benefits of sharing a common currency are factors that can explain these differences in attitudes toward the institution.

Table 5. Percentage of the Population Believing that Membership in the EU is a “Good Thing,” a Comparison of Eurozone and non-Eurozone Countries Before and After the Economic Crisis

	Year	**Eurozone Members**	**Non-Eurozone Members**
Before the Economic Crisis	2006	51.20%	52.09
	2007	43.50	45.09
	2008	53.21	45.95
	(Totals)	**49.30**	**47.71**
After the Economic Crisis	2009	46.88	39.38
	2010	33.60	30.32
	(Totals)	**40.24**	**34.85**
Difference		-9.06	-12.86

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey, Spring Waves 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010

Papaioannou and Portes (2008) argue that Eurozone members benefit economically from greater market liberalization, free trade, and stable exchange rates. Because the economy plays such a significant role in the approval ratings of government institutions and political figures, conventional wisdom would indicate that euro-sharing countries maintain greater approval of the institution than those who do not benefit from a common currency. In order for a member state to be eligible to implement the euro as national currency, it must meet certain criteria. The EC has developed five standards called the convergence criteria and all member states of the EU (besides Denmark and the United Kingdom) are required to meet these standards and adopt the euro within a certain time frame after gaining membership. The five standards of the convergence criteria are price stability, sound public finances, sustainable public finances, durability of convergence, and exchange rate stability (European Union 2014). These five macroeconomic indicators are measured to ensure that inflation is controlled, national debts and excessive deficits are not apparent, and that the country is able to maintain exchange rate stability for at least two years prior to adopting the currency (European Union 2014). The six countries in this sample that have not adopted the euro maintain weaker economies in the five regards mentioned above and were more negatively affected by the financial crisis of 2008 which explains their lower levels of support for the institution following the crisis. The following two analyses will further measure these economic differences in terms of GDP annual growth and unemployment rates over the five years for each country.

Regarding unemployment rates, in 2008, every country in the sample had below 10 percent unemployment. In 2009, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, and Hungary all rose above double-digit unemployment; the Baltic States experienced the greatest increase in unemployment rates following the economic crisis. Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Malta, Poland, Romania, and Slovenia all maintained rates below 10 percent in 2009. In 2010 these trends remained the same but Bulgaria rose above 10 percent. For the purpose of this analysis, I will group countries falling above and below 10 percent unemployment in 2009 and 2010 in order to measure public opinion towards membership in the EU in countries with high and low unemployment rates.

Table 6 demonstrates a comparison of countries with high and low unemployment rates and public opinion towards membership in the EU by model year. The findings suggest that, on average, 59.54 percent of the surveyed population in countries with high unemployment rates prior to the economic crisis, believed that membership in the EU was a good thing; 47.35 percent of the population of countries with low unemployment rates, on average, believed that membership in the EU was a good thing. From these findings it is clear that prior to the economic crisis, countries with higher unemployment rates, overall, garnered more approval by the citizenry for membership in the EU. Following 2008, the same trend is apparent with the difference between high unemployment countries and low unemployment countries remaining the same. The average population supporting membership following the economic crisis declined in both cases. These findings support hypothesis three.

In 2008, every country in the sample fell below the 10 percent unemployment rate threshold established in this analysis. Therefore, data for 2008 was omitted from table 6 because there is no variance among the sample. Countries that fall within the “low” category are not considered to have experienced significant increases in unemployment rates between any of the years in this analysis. A *significant increase* in unemployment rates is operationalized by examining whether a country went from below 10 percent unemployment to above that rate in the following year. The findings from this analysis cannot determine whether unemployment rates are the cause of declining approval of membership in the EU.

Rather, they suggest that a trend is apparent in countries that suffer economically in terms of unemployment rates. While it cannot be said that higher unemployment rates cause more positive evaluations of membership in the institution, it also cannot be said that lower unemployment rates cause opinions towards membership to become negative—this argument is neither claimed nor substantiated by the evidence. In fact, Eichenberg and Dalton (1993) found that citizens in member states of the EU (then the EC) do not tend to hold the institution accountable for employment conditions within their country.

Table 6. Percentage of the Population Believing that Membership in the EU is a "Good Thing," a Comparison High and Low Unemployment Countries Before and After the Economic Crisis

	Year	**High Unemployment Rate**	**Low Unemployment Rate**
Before the Economic Crisis	2006	56.51%	51.20
	2007	62.56	43.5
	(Average)	**59.54**	**47.35**
	2008	--	--
After the Economic Crisis	2009	60.37	46.88
	2010	49.04	33.60
	(Average)	**54.71**	**40.24**

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey, Spring Waves 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010

Instead, citizens are more concerned with the financial relationship between the EU and their country. The European Commission allots almost 50 percent of EU total spending to economic growth in member states, specifically in job creation (European Commission 2014c). Therefore, countries that benefit from EU financial aid disbursement in the area of job creation are more likely to support membership in the institution because of these benefits. The comparison conducted in table 6 supports this claim.

Another aggregate-level economic indicator that is included in this analysis is GDP annual growth. Figure 1 demonstrates that in 2009 every country in the sample was negatively affected. The Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) were hit the hardest with the steepest drop in GDP annual growth to -14.1 percent in Estonia, -18 percent in Latvia, and -14.7 percent in Lithuania. Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic all fell within -6.6 and -4.5 in growth in 2009, and Poland, Malta, and Cyprus never fell below -3 percent. In fact, Poland never experienced negative growth even after the onset of the economic crisis in the fall of 2008. Because GDP is the best measure of the living standards within a country, this variable as a measure of national-level economic satisfaction at the individual-level, besides household economic prospects, is the most telling of public approval of the economy and government (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993). Eichenberg and Dalton (1993) establish a clear differentiation between what unemployment and GDP measure regarding how the public is affected—the former measures economic hardship and the latter measures economic well-being.

How salient are GDP annual growth rates to the general public? In order to measure the effect of this variable on public opinion, Eichenberg and Dalton (1993) look at the net return from the EU budget in each country and calculates that return (benefits minus payments) as a percentage of the country's GDP. For the purpose of this study, I will revert to the main independent variable—national level economic prospects. Because this thesis seeks to measure public opinion in its most reliable and accurate form, it necessary to rely on how individuals perceive the health of the national economy and how these perceptions affect attitudes. A discussion of this variable in the individual-level analysis has already taken place. This section will examine public opinion in each country through a means comparison and measure the results in conjunction with the GDP annual growth rates for each country in 2009 and 2010. T-test statistics will also be employed as a measure of a 95 percent probability that the true population means fall within a certain set of boundaries while maintaining significance.

First, I will discuss the results from the two sample t-tests with unequal variances for 2009 and 2010. Because hypothesis 4 is concerned with comparing public opinion across the sample following the economic crisis only these two years will be examined. Measuring the effect of national-level economic prospects on opinions towards membership in the EU, the t-tests only consider the lowest value on the independent variable 1 (worse), and the highest value 3 (better). Again, these values indicate whether the respondent believes that national economic conditions will become worse in the next twelve months or better. In 2009, the mean for the "worse" category in the entire sample is 2.28, and the "better" category is 2.58. The mean difference for 2009 is -0.31 and is significant with the difference in the 95 percent confidence interval falling between -0.329 and -0.283. The null hypothesis that individuals with different values on national-level economic prospects will not vary in opinions towards membership in the EU can be rejected; this hypothesis can also be rejected for 2010. Individuals in this model year, who believed that the national-level economic prospects would be worse in the next twelve months demonstrated a mean of 2.12 on the dependent variable; individuals who believed that it would get better had a 2.53 mean score on opinions toward membership in the EU. The relationship in 2010 is also significant with the difference in the 95 percent confidence interval falling between -0.383 and -0.335; the null is again rejected. From this analysis it is obvious that in 2009 and 2010, individuals who believed that the national economic situation would get worse held more negative evaluations of the institution compared to those who believed it would get better. To further argue and find support for hypothesis 4, a means comparison for each country will be conducted.

Based on the results presented in figure 1, a clear trend is not apparent in the sample that supports hypothesis four. The fourth hypothesis, which claims that countries with significant decreases in GDP growth during and after the economic crisis will have more positive evaluations of membership in the EU, is not substantiated. For example, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania all experienced significant decreases in GDP growth—greater than any of the other countries in the sample. However, it is clear that Latvia has the lowest means for support of the institution. Estonia and Lithuania have more comparable trends but still do not represent the highest mean approval of membership in the sample. Immediately following the economic crisis in 2009, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia maintained the highest mean in approval of the institution with scores of 2.83, 2.83, and 2.82, respectively. Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, and Malta came in with the second highest mean scores of 2.71, 2.71, 2.74, and 2.75, respectively.

The countries with the lowest mean scores in 2009 are Latvia and Slovenia with scores of 2.25 and 2.48, respectively. In 2010, as the economies of these countries continued to be negatively affected, Poland (2.78) and Slovakia (2.80) continued to garner the most positive sentiments towards the institution. Bulgaria (2.64), Estonia (2.64), Lithuania (2.60), Malta (2.66) and Romania (2.67) also had overall positive feelings towards membership in the EU. The countries with the lowest mean scores in 2010 are Cyprus (2.26), Latvia (2.35), and Slovenia (2.41). Figure 9 and the mean scores discussed in this section are focused on the citizens who believed that the national economic prospects for the next twelve months were good. The logic behind the argument made in hypothesis four is that citizens in countries that experienced the worst effects of the economic crisis in terms of GDP annual growth would find security in membership in the EU and the economic support that the institution can provide through the various financial programs discussed in chapter two. Figure 10 examines the response of citizens who view national economic prospects getting worse in the next twelve months and their opinions on membership in the EU.

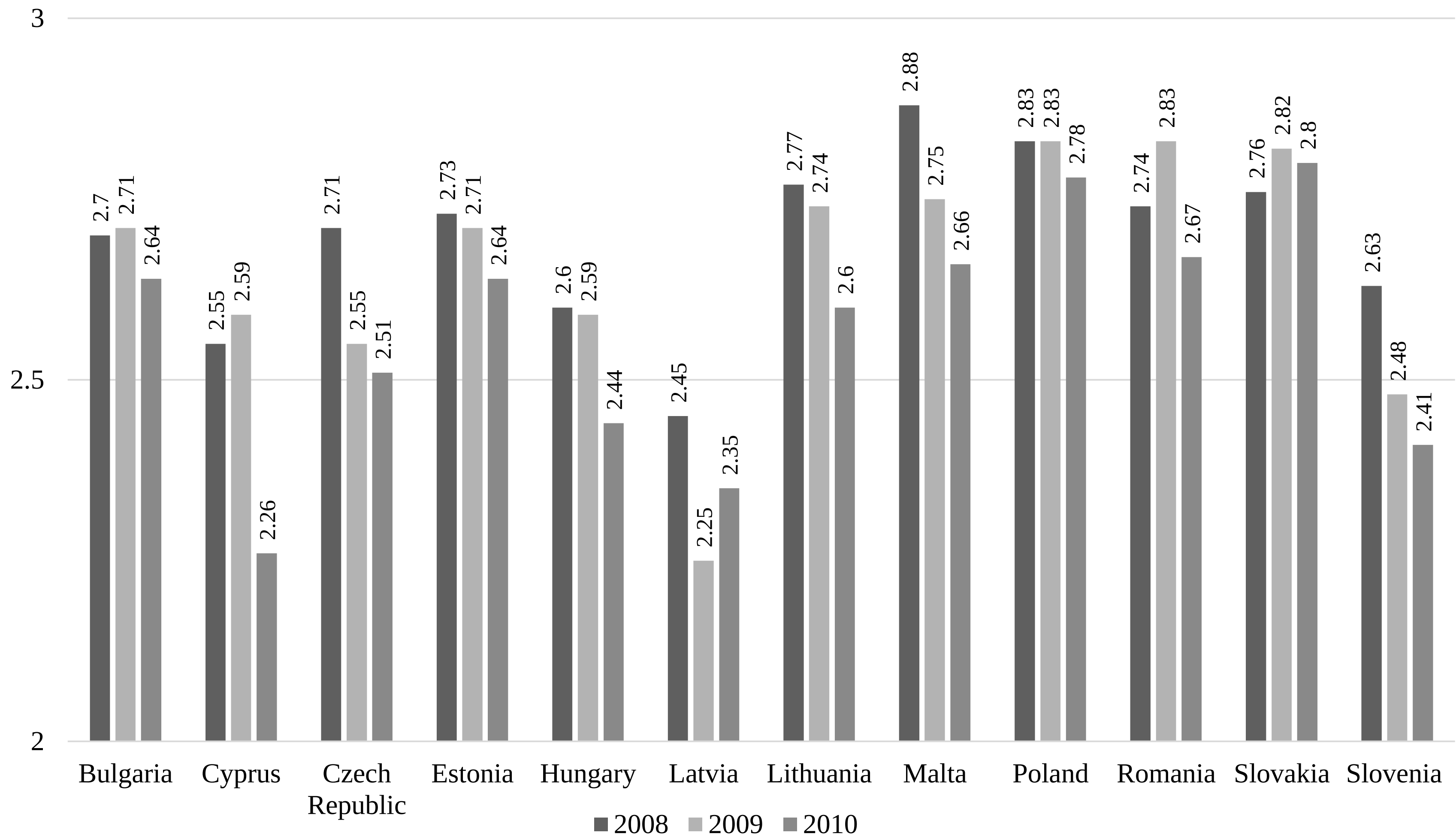

Figure 9. Means Comparison of Positive Prospective National Economic Evaluations and Membership in the EU
Note: 1 = "Worse" 2 = "Same" 3 = "Better" for dependent variable on y-axis
Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey, Spring Waves 2008, 2009, and 2010

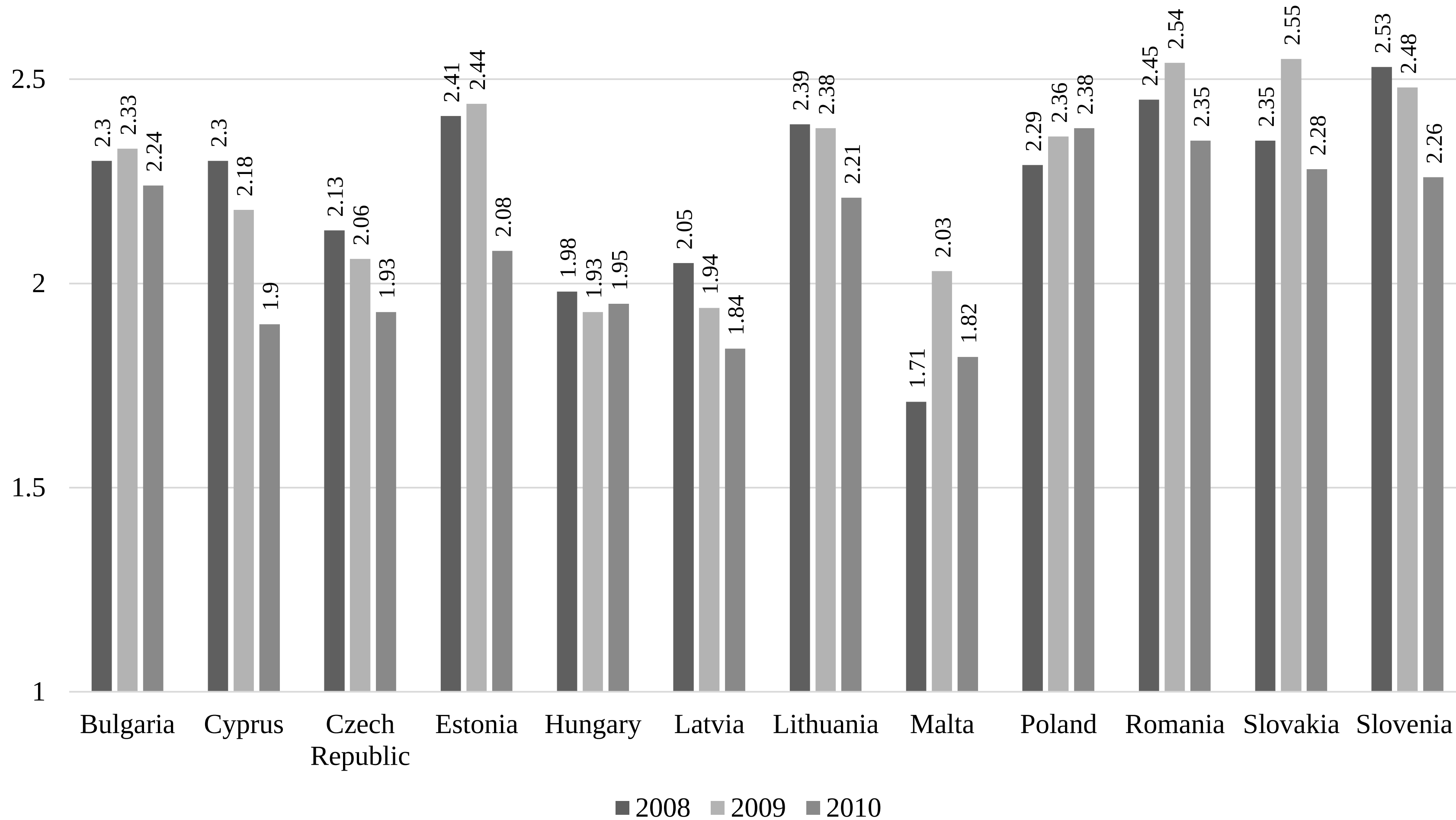

Figure 10. Means Comparison of Negative Prospective National Economic Evaluations and Membership in the EU
Note: 1 = “Worse” 2 = “Same” 3 = “Better” for dependent variable on y-axis
Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey, Spring Waves 2008, 2009, and 2010

These findings, while they do not support my hypothesis, do give argument to the prospective voting model. Instead of punishing the incumbent government (the European Parliament) through retrospective economic evaluations, citizens evaluate policies proposed by the EU to address the economic decline, and through a rational actor approach decide to turn away from the institution if the policies will not benefit themselves or their country. Blame attribution could have led citizens in CEE to point a finger at the EU as a cause of the economic hardships experienced in each member state. If citizens believe that the EU is to blame for the economic decline, they will begin to feel as though membership is a negative thing and that their country would be better off functioning independently in economic terms. European citizens as rational actors conduct cost benefit analyses of integration and membership in the EU (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993). It then goes to reason that member states that experience significant economic losses will punish the institution and a decline in support will become apparent.

The final aggregate-level political indicator of support to be examined is political party power in national parliaments. Table 4 indicates that individual level political ideology is significant in all five model years. Although the variable does not account for a large percent of the variation in the dependent variable, it is still important to analyze. Cyprus, Lithuania, Malta, Slovakia, and Slovenia, in all five model years experienced parliaments ruled by center-left coalitions. The Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, and Poland maintained center-right parliaments; and Bulgaria, Estonia, and Romania experienced shifting party power over the five model years. Whether the causal arrow is from citizen-level political ideology to national-level parliamentary make-up, or if political party power affects individual-level political opinions cannot be determined. An observation of these two factors should indicate whether citizens in a specific country tend to be pro-EU or eurosceptical.

The literature identifies that political ideology and party allegiance correlate with opinions towards membership in the EU (Ehin 2001; Inglehart, Rabier, and Reif 1991). Citizens who identify with center-right conservative parties are more likely to support integration and membership in the EU than those that hold center-left liberal political beliefs (Ehin 2001). Based on political party power, citizens in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, and Poland would be overall more supportive of membership in the EU compared to Cyprus, Lithuania, Malta, Slovakia, and Slovenia. The remaining countries in the sample should demonstrate varying opinions towards membership in the EU.

Table 7 presents findings that support the literature regarding conservative and liberal political ideologies as an indicator of support for membership in the EU. Citizens who identify with left-of-center ideologies on average garner less supportive opinions toward membership in the EU compared with right-of-center individuals. Economic policies and conditions can explain this trend. Center-right policies support free-market economics and free-trade, which are concepts that are promoted by the EU. Center-left economic beliefs are grounded in market control and regulation by the government. The means comparison results presented in table 7 follow the conventional wisdom. However, in an examination of political parties on individual-level ideologies, the effect might not be a strong one.

Table 7. A Means Comparison of Center-Right and Center-Left Controlled Parliaments: Individual Ideology and Membership in the EU

Center-Right Controlled Parliament	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Left	2.31 (25.0%)	2.04 (22.3)	2.23 (33.1)	2.04 (29.4)	1.98 (28.4)
Center	2.44 (33.8)	2.27 (34.4)	2.32 (34.4)	2.19 (37.7)	2.08 (37.7)
Right	2.51 (41.2)	2.55 (43.3)	2.53 (32.6)	2.58 (32.9)	2.32 (33.9)
Center-Left Controlled Parliament	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Left	2.20 (34.5)	2.07 (30.3)	2.22 (42.8)	2.18 (46.3)	1.95 (40.8)
Center	2.49 (28.6)	2.39 (34.7)	2.42 (26.8)	2.31 (25.3)	2.10 (27.0)
Right	2.52 (37.0)	2.70 (35.0)	2.55 (30.4)	2.10 (27.0)	2.20 (32.3)

Notes. Frequencies are reported in parentheses under the mean scores.
Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey, Spring Waves 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010

In 2006 and 2007, countries that were dominated by center-right political coalitions in parliament demonstrated an electorate with congruent beliefs. Notwithstanding, in 2008, 2009, and 2010 the majority of voters identified with the center of the ideological spectrum. Many factors within government could have caused this shift: restructuring of coalitions and party platforms, elections held before the normal expiry of office, etc. The opposite trend can be observed in an analysis of governments that are dominated by center-left political coalitions. In

2006 and 2007, the majority of voters in these countries identified with the center-right on the ideological spectrum. Yet, in 2008, 2009, and 2010 many respondents identified with left ideologies. This change in political identification can be explained by the economic downturn. When the economy is doing poorly, people tend to favor greater redistributive policies and market control. It is important to note the somewhat even distribution of respondents on the ideological response question. About one-third of the population in each year identified with left, center, and right ideologies in each case. Therefore, it is difficult to make grounded claims that political parties influence the values of the electorate to any specific extent.

All in all, strong evidence for hypothesis five is not apparent in the results. Countries with political party power that is right-of-center in ideology do not, overall, garner more positive evaluations of membership in the EU compared to those that have coalitions dominated by left-of-center political ideologies. While individual-level ideologies proved to be significant and cause variation in public opinion toward membership in the EU (made evident by the ordered logistic regression presented in table 4), the effect of political party power is not as apparent.

In conclusion, this multivariate analysis substantiated six of the eight hypotheses set forth in this thesis. The results from the analysis on GDP annual growth rates and political party power deserve further attention and analysis in future studies.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Since the creation of the EU in 1957, two enlargements have taken place introducing twenty-two countries to the original six members of the organization. Currently, five countries—Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Turkey—are in the pre-accession phase and there are plans to introduce three more—Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo—as potential candidates for membership. It is clear that the main goal of the organization continues to be further enlargement in order to secure economic and political stability within the region and create lasting peace in Europe. As a democratic institution, it is important to consider public opinion and approval of the governmental body for many reasons. Without public support, democratic institutions cannot thrive. Multiple scholars have studied public approval of government for this very reason in order to identify indicators of public support for government entities (Anderson 2000; Dahl 2000; Duch 2001; Duch and Stevenson 2008; 2010; Fishkin 1995).

This research has shown that public opinion towards membership in the EU did indeed shift in a negative direction following the economic crisis. Findings from the means comparison analyses of three aggregate-level economic indicators—Eurozone status, unemployment rates, and annual GDP growth rate—illustrated trends that suggested support for hypotheses two and three. Countries that are euro-sharing, overall, garnered more positive evaluations of membership in the EU after the economic crisis. Also, countries with significant increases in unemployment rates after the economic crisis maintained more positive evaluations of membership in the EU compared to countries with lower unemployment rates. The implications for these findings are numerous.

In the aggregate, national-level economic decline affects public opinion in positive and negative directions. Depending on the strength of a country's economy, a global financial crisis can have a more significant effect in one nation compared to another. The relationship between the member states of the EU is unique in many ways. Economically speaking, the twenty-eight members have a relationship that no other group of countries in the world has. Member states of the EU share a very expansive and liberalized market, and an economic welfare system of a sort. The European Development Fund, Structural and Cohesion Funds, and the European Social Fund, all provide economic support for the EU's members. While the budget is developed from import duties on goods from outside of the Union, member states also pay in a percentage of their gross national income (GNI)—specifically 0.73 percent—which accounts for two-thirds of the overall budget (European Union 2014). Therefore, countries with higher GNI contribute more to the budget than those with weaker economies. Because each member state of the EU has a unique relationship with the institution economically, it is important to consider various economic indicators of growth on a case by case basis, which is what Chapter 2 of this thesis accomplished.

In a consideration of what declining support for the institution means for policy implications, one can look at the 2014 EP elections as a result of shifting sentiments. The recent election resulted in eurosceptics winning top seats in the UK and far right parties taking the fore in France (BBC News Europe 2014). The platforms on which these parties have established themselves focus on cutting back the powers of the EU, or "[abolishing] it completely" (BBC

News Europe 2014). Rising euroscepticism in the region is attributed to the economic and political fallout in the region since the 2008 global economic crisis. While the older member states are developing feelings of discontent towards the institution—specifically France, and the UK, and also Spain, Portugal, Ireland, and Greece—newer member states are also beginning to shift opinions in a similar direction. The difference between these two groups of nations, is that the newer member states still rely on the economic support provided by the EU to get through the financial crisis. Perhaps then, the sentiments in the older member states are more negative because of the support that their economies have to provide for the even weaker economies (the newer, post-communist member states)—future research can explore this possibility. Regardless of which countries are more critical of the institution at this point, the reality is that public opinion is continuing to shift in a negative direction. The rise of eurosceptical MEPs is indicative of declining support for the powers of the institution.

The original goal in creating the EEC was to establish a community that was economically connected and that would foster peaceful cooperation in all affairs. Thus far, the EU has been successful in maintaining accord in the region. However, recent events in Ukraine have also brought light to the importance of economic cooperation and support of EU functions. During the fall of 2013, President Viktor Yanukovych of Ukraine refused to sign an Association Agreement with the EU which resulted in widespread public discontent and street protests. Originally peaceful in nature, the protests and street riots quickly turned violent in the capital as a majority of the public supported their country's relations with the EU (AP 2014). Many of the economically weaker member states rely on the EU for financial support; this is true mostly for post-communist member states that have growing free-market economies and young democratic institutions, as stated previously. The example given of the EU-Ukraine relationship is intended to demonstrate how important public opinion regarding membership (or even solely a relationship) in the EU is. For the citizens of post-communist Europe, the EU provides an economic safety blanket and support for development and growth. If, for any reason, faith in the institution declines, the results at the citizen level could be disastrous. In the case of Ukraine, the opposite issue is apparent—but the example goes to demonstrate how powerful public opinion in regard to the institution is. Examining these recent events—the 2014 EP elections and the uprising in Ukraine—gives credence to the claims in this thesis that negative shifts in public opinion in EU member states resulting from the global economic crisis could destroy the legitimacy of the institution and ultimately result in its demise.

APPENDIX A: EUROBAROMETER QUESTION WORDING

Note: The question wording of the dependent variable is consistent across all five surveys employed for this thesis. The variable number is reported for each survey year before the listed question. The surveys used for this thesis were the Eurobarometer Public Opinion Surveys 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4.

EU Membership Good/Bad 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4, respectively: v93, v123, v407, v205, v206

"Generally speaking, do you think that (OUR COUNTRY)'s membership in the European Union is…?"

1 A good thing
2 Neither good nor bad
3 A bad thing
4 DK
5 Inap.

Recoded:

1 A bad thing
2 Neither good nor bad
3 A good thing
4 and 5 omitted

Expectations: National Economic Situation 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4, respectively: v75, v85, v90, v120, v123

"What are your expectations for the next twelve months: will the next twelve months be better, worse, or the same when it comes to the economic situation in (OUR COUNTRY)?"

1 Better
2 Worse
3 Same
4 DK
5 Inap.

Recoded:

1 Worse
2 Same
3 Better
4 and 5 omitted

Expectations: Household Financial Situation 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4, respectively: v76, v87, v91, v121, v124

"What are your expectations for the next twelve months: will the next twelve months be better, worse, or the same when it comes to the financial situation of your household?"

1 Better
2 Worse
3 Same
4 DK
5 Inap.

Recoded:

1 Worse
2 Same
3 Better
4 and 5 omitted

EU Fears: Loss of National Identity 65.2: v136

"Some people may have fears about the building of Europe, the European Union. Here is a list of things which some people say they are afraid of. For each one, please tell me if you, personally, are currently afraid of it, or not: the loss of national identity and culture."

1 Currently afraid of it
2 Not currently afraid of it
3 DK

Recoded:

3 omitted

EU Fears: Loss of National Identity 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4: v141, v229, v233, v288

"What does the European Union mean to you personally?"

-Loss of our national identity

0 Mentioned
1 Not mentioned

Recoded:

1 Mentioned
2 Not mentioned

Trust in Institutions: EU 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4, respectively: v91, v164, v215, v219, v273

"I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it."

-The European Union

1 Tend to trust
2 Tend not to trust
3 DK

Recoded:

1 Tend not to trust
2 Tend to trust
3 omitted

APPENDIX B: SUMMARY STATISTICS

2006 Summary Statistics on Dependent Variable

Country	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Cyprus	498	2.35	0.749
Czech Republic	1,052	2.43	0.660
Estonia	960	2.43	0.650
Hungary	986	2.39	0.666
Latvia	992	2.21	0.686
Lithuania	965	2.51	0.684
Malta	493	2.26	0.767
Poland	975	2.50	0.624
Slovakia	1,040	2.48	0.615
Slovenia	1,011	2.49	0.611

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey 65.2
Note: Bulgaria and Romania gained membership in 2007

2006

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Membership (v93)	8,972	2.32	0.669	1	3
National Level Economic Prospects (v75)	10,331	1.94	0.754	1	3
Age (v3311)	11,217	46.97	18.34	15	95
National Identity (v136)	10,431	1.62	0.486	1	2
Economic Winner/Loser Status (v76)	10,822	2.04	0.674	1	3
Individual Political Ideology (v3304)	7,912	5.50	2.39	1	10
Gender (v3310)	11,217	1.59	0.492	1	2
Trust in EU (v91)	9,590	1.68	0.467	1	2

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey 65.2

2007 Summary Statistics on Dependent Variable

Country	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Bulgaria	951	2.51	0.644
Cyprus	492	2.26	0.739
Czech Republic	1,029	2.32	0.687
Estonia	981	2.61	0.605
Hungary	976	2.19	0.723
Latvia	987	2.22	0.687
Lithuania	984	2.58	0.622
Malta	488	2.34	0.769
Poland	971	2.63	0.589
Romania	980	2.64	0.590
Slovakia	1,087	2.56	0.609
Slovenia	1,009	2.47	0.654

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey 67.2

2007

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Membership (v123)	10,935	2.46	0.672	1	3
National Level Economic Prospects (v85)	10,454	1.98	0.778	1	3
Age (v549)	11,264	47.13	18.14	15	97
National Identity (v141)	11,264	1.91	0.289	1	2
Economic Winner/Loser Status (v87)	10,919	2.06	0.688	1	3
Individual Political Ideology (v542)	8,037	5.64	2.43	1	10
Gender (v548)	11,264	1.59	0.491	1	2
Trust in EU (v164)	9,809	1.71	0.452	1	2

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey 67.2

2008 Summary Statistics on Dependent Variable

Country	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Bulgaria	952	2.45	0.642
Cyprus	498	2.38	0.734
Czech Republic	988	2.34	0.678
Estonia	976	2.52	0.627
Hungary	954	2.10	0.727
Latvia	973	2.13	0.665
Lithuania	974	2.53	0.654
Malta	490	2.44	0.725
Poland	959	2.59	0.609
Romania	951	2.61	0.614
Slovakia	1,063	2.49	0.615
Slovenia	988	2.42	0.677

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey 69.2

2008

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Membership (v143)	10,766	2.42	0.678	1	3
National Level Economic Prospects (v90)	10,462	1.79	0.769	1	3
Age (v768)	11,160	47.42	18.08	15	98
National Identity (v229)	10,160	1.90	0.299	1	2
Economic Winner/Loser Status (v91)	10,864	1.95	0.709	1	3
Individual Political Ideology (v761)	8,293	5.69	2.52	1	10
Gender (v767)	11,160	1.57	0.495	1	2
Trust in EU (v215)	9,565	1.71	0.454	1	2

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey 69.2

2009 Summary Statistics on Dependent Variable

Country	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Bulgaria	962	2.46	0.633
Cyprus	497	2.27	0.768
Czech Republic	1,069	2.25	0.695
Estonia	974	2.54	0.620
Hungary	960	2.10	0.748
Latvia	980	2.02	0.707
Lithuania	966	2.49	0.669
Malta	487	2.45	0.718
Poland	958	2.52	0.643
Romania	955	2.63	0.607
Slovakia	1,044	2.61	0.555
Slovenia	997	2.35	0.705

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey 71.3

2009

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Membership (v205)	10,849	2.39	0.695	1	3
National Level Economic Prospects (v120)	10,693	1.73	0.749	1	3
Age (v666)	11,245	47.22	17.96	15	94
National Identity (v233)	11,245	1.92	0.274	1	2
Economic Winner/Loser Status (v121)	10,875	1.88	0.665	1	3
Individual Political Ideology (v759)	8,059	5.65	2.51	1	10
Gender (v665)	11,245	1.58	0.494	1	2
Trust in EU (v219)	9,929	1.64	0.481	1	2

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey 71.3

2010 Summary Statistics on Dependent Variable

Country	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Bulgaria	942	2.41	0.640
Cyprus	500	2.05	0.791
Czech Republic	1,006	2.13	0.678
Estonia	976	2.45	0.624
Hungary	997	2.22	0.699
Latvia	970	2.05	0.681
Lithuania	974	2.36	0.722
Malta	488	2.20	0.796
Poland	967	2.54	0.645
Romania	978	2.50	0.694
Slovakia	1,021	2.52	0.624
Slovenia	990	2.23	0.717

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey 73.4

2010

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Membership (v206)	10,809	2.32	0.705	1	3
National Level Economic Prospects (v123)	10,532	1.88	0.758	1	3
Age (v556)	11,128	46.60	17.98	15	94
National Identity (v288)	11,128	1.90	0.301	1	2
Economic Winner/Loser Status (v124)	10,739	1.93	0.652	1	3
Individual Political Ideology (v548)	8,007	5.70	2.46	1	10
Gender (v555)	11,128	1.55	0.497	1	2
Trust in EU (v273)	9,937	1.60	0.490	1	2

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey 73.4

APPENDIX C: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS

Bulgaria

Membership – Good/Bad	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Bad	78 (8.20)	78 (8.19)	73 (7.59)	79 (8.39)
Neither	313 (32.91)	365 (38.34)	374 (38.88)	401 (42.57)
Good	560 (58.89)	509 (53.47)	515 (53.53)	462 (49.04)
Total	951 (100.00)	952 (100.00)	962 (100.00)	942 (100.00)

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Surveys 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4
Notes: Percentages are reported in parentheses below frequencies

Cyprus

Membership – Good/Bad	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Bad	83 (16.67)	87 (17.68)	75 (15.06)	97 (19.52)	145 (29.00)
Neither	160 (32.13)	191 (38.82)	158 (31.73)	167 (33.60)	187 (37.40)
Good	255 (51.20)	214 (43.50)	265 (53.21)	233 (46.88)	168 (33.60)
Total	498 (100.00)	492 (100.00	498 (100.00)	497 (100.00)	500 (100.00)

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Surveys 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4
Notes: Percentages are reported in parentheses below frequencies

Czech Republic

Membership – Good/Bad	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Bad	100 (9.51)	130 (12.63)	116 (11.74)	159 (14.87)	174 (17.30)
Neither	404 (38.40)	435 (42.27)	418 (42.31)	489 (45.74)	527 (52.39)
Good	548 (52.09)	464 (45.09)	454 (45.95)	421 (39.38)	305 (30.32)
Total	1,052 (100.00)	1,029 (100.00)	988 (100.00)	1,069 (100.00)	1,006 (100.00)

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Surveys 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4
Notes: Percentages are reported in parentheses below frequencies

Estonia

Membership – Good/Bad	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Bad	85 (8.85)	62 (6.32)	70 (7.17)	66 (6.78)	69 (7.07)
Neither	374 (38.96)	263 (26.81)	328 (33.61)	320 (32.85)	400 (40.98)
Good	501 (52.19)	656 (66.87)	578 (59.22)	588 (60.37)	507 (51.95)
Total	960 (100.00)	981 (100.00)	976 (100.00)	974 (100.00)	976 (100.00)

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Surveys 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4
Notes: Percentages are reported in parentheses below frequencies

Hungary

Membership – Good/Bad	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Bad	101 (10.24)	178 (18.24)	207 (21.70)	224 (23.33)	159 (15.95)
Neither	395 (40.06)	430 (44.06)	440 (46.12)	414 (43.13)	463 (46.44)
Good	490 (49.70)	368 (37.70)	307 (31.18)	322 (33.54)	375 (37.61)
Total	986 (100.00)	976 (100.00)	954 (100.00)	960 (100.00)	997 (100.00)

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Surveys 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4
Notes: Percentages are reported in parentheses below frequencies

Latvia

Membership – Good/Bad	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Bad	150 (15.12)	148 (14.99)	161 (16.55)	236 (24.08)	200 (20.62)
Neither	481 (48.49)	473 (47.92)	527 (54.16)	490 (50.00)	518 (53.40)
Good	361 (36.39)	366 (37.08)	285 (29.29)	254 (25.92)	252 (25.98)
Total	992 (100.00)	987 (100.00)	973 (100.00)	980 (100.00)	970 (100.00)

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Surveys 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4
Notes: Percentages are reported in parentheses below frequencies

Lithuania

Membership – Good/Bad	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Bad	105 (10.88)	70 (7.11)	87 (8.93)	95 (9.83)	141 (14.48)
Neither	267 (27.76)	274 (27.85)	282 (28.95)	301 (31.16)	339 (34.80)
Good	593 (61.45)	640 (65.04)	605 (62.11)	570 (59.01)	494 (50.72)
Total	965 (100.00)	984 (100.00)	974 (100.00)	966 (100.00)	974 (100.00)

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Surveys 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4
Notes: Percentages are reported in parentheses below frequencies

Malta

Membership – Good/Bad	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Bad	97 (19.68)	89 (18.24)	68 (13.88)	65 (13.35)	115 (23.57)
Neither	170 (34.48)	143 (29.30)	138 (28.16)	140 (28.75)	159 (32.58)
Good	226 (45.84)	256 (52.46)	284 (57.96)	282 (57.91)	214 (43.85)
Total	493 (100.00)	488 (100.00)	490 (100.00)	487 (100.00)	488 (100.00)

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Surveys 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4
Notes: Percentages are reported in parentheses below frequencies

Poland

Membership – Good/Bad	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Bad	68 (6.97)	55 (5.66)	62 (6.47)	78 (8.14)	81 (8.38)
Neither	356 (36.51)	251 (25.85)	266 (27.74)	304 (31.73)	280 (28.96)
Good	551 (56.51)	665 (68.49)	631 (65.80)	576 (60.13)	606 (62.67)
Total	975 (100.00)	971 (100.00)	959 (100.00)	958 (100.00)	967 (100.00)

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Surveys 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4
Notes: Percentages are reported in parentheses below frequencies

Romania

Membership – Good/Bad	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Bad	57 (5.82)	66 (6.94)	65 (6.81)	114 (11.66)
Neither	241 (24.59)	240 (25.24)	221 (23.14)	305 (31.19)
Good	682 (69.59)	645 (67.82)	669 (70.05)	559 (57.16)
Total	980 (100.00)	951 (100.00)	955 (100.00)	978 (100.00)

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Surveys 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4
Notes: Percentages are reported in parentheses below frequencies

Slovakia

Membership – Good/Bad	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Bad	67 (6.44)	68 (6.26)	68 (6.40)	36 (3.45)	71 (6.95)
Neither	407 (39.13)	339 (31.19)	410 (38.57)	340 (32.57)	352 (34.48)
Good	566 (54.42)	680 (62.56)	585 (55.03)	668 (63.98)	598 (58.57)
Total	1,040 (100.00)	1,087 (100.00)	1,063 (100.00)	1,044 (100.00)	1,021 (100.00)

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Surveys 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4
Notes: Percentages are reported in parentheses below frequencies

Slovenia

Membership – Good/Bad	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Bad	62 (6.13)	90 (8.92)	106 (10.73)	134 (13.44)	167 (16.87)
Neither	393 (38.87)	352 (34.89)	358 (36.23)	381 (38.21)	429 (43.33)
Good	556 (55.00)	567 (56.19)	524 (53.04)	482 (48.35)	394 (39.80)
Total	1,011 (100.00)	1,009 (100.00)	988 (100.00)	997 (100.00)	990 (100.00)

Source: Eurobarometer Public Opinion Surveys 65.2, 67.2, 69.2, 71.3, 73.4
Notes: Percentages are reported in parentheses below frequencies

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