

# A dimensional analysis of REScEU 2016 survey data A summary

Francesco Visconti

This report presents the main findings of a dimensional analysis on a public opinion survey aimed at exploring the new conflict constellation within the EU and its consequences on the overall perception of the EU in the public sphere. The survey was conducted in the context of the project titled “Reconciling Economic and Social Europe: The Role of Values, Ideas and Politics” (REScEU) during the Fall of 2016. Six countries were covered: France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden (hereafter grouped as EU6). The questionnaire was administered to a sample of respondents, aimed at tapping popular attitudes towards EU solidarity and its various dimensions.

The sections of this report illustrate a set of items of the questionnaire, broadly related to the four conflict lines and their underlying substantive questions. More specifically, the first section evaluates the relationship between the Left-right dimension and EU integration. Next, each of the four conflicts is mapped separately. Finally, results from factor analyses to test the overall dimensionality of conflicts are reported.

<b>LEFT-RIGHT SELF-PLACEMENT AND EU INTEGRATION</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>THE FOUR CONFLICTS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1 - SUPRANATIONAL L-R CONFLICT</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2 - HORIZONTAL NORTH VS SOUTH: CROSS-NATIONAL SOLIDARITY VS. DOMESTIC RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3 - HORIZONTAL EAST - WEST: OPENING VS. CLOSURE</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4 - VERTICAL CONFLICT EU VS MEMBER STATES</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>FEARS QUESTIONS</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>FUTURE QUESTIONS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>FACTOR ANALYSES</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>SUMMARY TABLES FACTOR ANALYSES</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>BASE VARIABLES MEASURING CONFLICTS</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>FACTOR ANALYSIS WITH BASE VARIABLES MEASURING CONFLICTS WITH FACTOR FOR FEARS, FACTOR FOR FUTURES, L-R, EU INTEGRATION, EU IMAGE AND EU RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CRISIS</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>13</b>

## Left-right self-placement and EU integration

Here the most interesting issue to address is whether these two dimensions are orthogonal to each other or whether they conflate into a single dimension.

We find no significant linear association in France and Sweden; a negative relationship (left-wing more in favor of EU integration) in Germany, Italy, and Poland; and, a positive relationship in Spain (right-wingers more pro-integration than the left-wingers).

We do not find the inverted U-shaped curve (van Elsas and van der Brug 2015) between the left-right dimension and the EU integration one in any country specific regression.

Comparing results with those of Van der Eijk and Franklin (2004) we find that:

- 1) In France and Sweden the association between the two dimensions has vanished. In Sweden the Left was previously associated with preferences for lower integration, and the right in France.
- 2) In Germany, Italy, and Spain the strength of the association became stronger: the two dimensions were previously orthogonal in Germany and Spain; in Italy instead, preferences for more EU integration were associated with the right, while now with the Left.
- 3) Poland was not included in their work, but it has a significant association in line with the one in Germany and Italy.

These results suggest that in France and Sweden the two dimensions became orthogonal to each other and thus have a greater potential to structure party competition. Looking also at other conflict variables, in both countries the Left-right dimension better captures economic questions rather than cultural preferences.

In France the Left-right dimension captures better than the EU integration dimension items supporting policies of solidarity at the country or individual level (conflict 1 on market-making Vs market correcting EU; the vertical conflict item on helping citizens affected by severe financial crisis; the horizontal conflict on conditions for financial support from EU; access to social security benefits on behalf of foreigners; and, the future question on the introduction of an EU funded benefit scheme for people in severe poverty all over the EU). In all cases being more leftist is associated with being more in favor of solidarity.

In Sweden there are only three items correlating more strongly with the L-R dimension: the first supra-national conflict; and, the first and last questions of the vertical conflict (sanctions to MSs not complying with fiscal rules; and no citizen left behind). Right-wingers want more fiscal stability, more sanctions for those who do not comply with rules (even if weak strength) and don't want EU schemes to help people in poverty affected by severe financial crisis. All other conflicts, fears, and future questions are better captured by the EU integration dimension, with those that want more integration that are in favor of the introduction of social policies at the EU level, and of a more open EU.

Italy and Poland are more similar to Germany, with the main difference being that in Poland most items are associated with EU integration, while in Italy (and to some extent in Spain) we have identity questions (fears of loss of national identity and culture and of a weakening of national democracy) that are more strongly associated to the Left-right dimension contrary to what Kriesi et al. (2008, 2012) would expect.

## The four conflicts

### 1 - Supranational L-R conflict

The first conflict revolves around the policy priorities and overall mission of the EMU and pits the supporters of a neo-liberal project, centered on market making and monetary/fiscal stability against a euro-social, growth/employment-oriented project, supported by public investments and accompanied by a stronger social dimension. In all six countries this conflict is captured by the L-R self-placement question: this suggests that the question taps a supra-national left-right conflict, and that the Left-right dimension maintains an economic face orthogonal to preferred levels of EU integration. Results from multivariate analyses suggest that there is indeed a statistically significant relationship in each country between being in favor of an EU active in social protection and welfare for all EU citizens, and self-placement on the Left side of the ideological dimension.

### 2 - Horizontal North Vs South: cross-national solidarity Vs. domestic responsibility

The second line of conflict has to do with the issue of fiscal stability and, ultimately, cross national transfers, and the major divide here is rooted in both economic interests and highly entrenched cultural worldviews and mainly runs from North to South.

In France the association with L-R is stronger compared to EU integration (leftists more pro-solidarity), while in Italy preferences on cross-national solidarity/responsibility are transversal to both dimensions (L-R and EU integration). In the remaining countries the variable is captured better by the European dimension in the expected direction (the more people favor a further strengthening of EU integration, the more they are in favor of greater cross-national solidarity), with Germany and Sweden the countries with a strongest relationship. This result suggest that the EU dimension is not only cultural but captures also economic aspects better than the L-R dimension in some countries.

Looking at country models, Italians and Spaniards are (statistically) more in favor of cross-national solidarity compared to Germans. This points to the fact that we are correctly capturing a North-South conflict. Polish respondents emerge as even more in favor of domestic responsibility compared to Germans.

In Sweden people whose economic condition has worsened are much more for domestic responsibility, while (even if weakly significant) in Italy the opposite is true and would prefer more European solidarity.

### 3 - Horizontal East - West: Opening Vs. Closure

The third line of conflict has to do with free movement, solidarity vis-à-vis outsiders and, more specifically, access to domestic welfare on the side of other EU nationals.

On access to the job market, in all countries there is a stronger association with EU integration rather than with L-R: with those in favor of more integration being also more in favor of an open job market. The strongest relationship is found in Germany and Sweden, while in Poland and Spain we find the lowest levels of association with both L-R and EU integration dimensions, which could be related to the two countries being net sources of emigration.

Looking instead at the access to social security benefits more mixed results emerge: a stronger association with L-R in France, Italy, and Spain (right-wingers pro-closure); with EU integration in remaining countries (anti-integration going with pro-closure). In Germany not much difference between L-R and EU integration, and in both cases among highest coefficients: again, a signal of how the two dimensions are intertwined in the mind of Germans. Poland only country with no significant coefficient of association with L-R.

The conflict is captured by both dimensions according to country specific contexts.

#### 4 - Vertical conflict EU Vs Member States

The fourth line of conflict concerns the “powers of Brussels” vis-à-vis the defense of domestic models and practices, especially in the social sphere. There are four items capturing this conflict:

- qa2\_1 - Clear and strict sanctions should be applied to Member States who fail to comply with EU rules on deficit and debt.
- qa2\_2 - Decisions on EU external borders control and the status of extra-EU immigrants and refugees should be made in Brussels.
- qa2\_3 - The EU should equip itself with a budget large enough to provide substantial financial help to Member States facing a sudden rise in unemployment rates.
- qa2\_4 - In case of a very severe financial crisis in a given Member State, the EU should make sure that no citizen of that state remains without means of subsistence (food, shelter, essential medicines etc...).

In all countries a factor analysis highlights that the four items load positively on a single factor; only exception being Germany where no factor capturing common variance emerges.

The first and fourth questions return mixed and weak results, meaning that they are both transversal to the two dimensions (L-R and EU integration) according to country logics.

Instead, the second and third (immigration policy decided in Brussels and an EU budget to face sudden rises in unemployment) have a stronger association in all countries with the EU integration dimension. This suggests that the latter captures this new cultural aspect better than the traditional Left-right dimension also in countries (France and Sweden) where the two dimensions are orthogonal to each other; moreover, over the EU6 countries there are also economic policy preferences that are captured by the EU dimension better than the Left-right.

A multivariate analysis using as dependent variable a factor extracted from the four variables (higher values of the factor mean more disagreement on delegating powers to the EU on the policies considered) reveals a stronger association with EU integration variable rather than with the L-R self-placement (L-R significant in France, Poland and Spain and weakly in Sweden); with Spanish, Italian, and Polish respondents that tend to be more in favor of the delegation of powers to the supra-national level compared to Germans (while Swedish and French not significantly different from Germans).

#### Fears questions

There are four questions measuring fears associated with the process of European unification: (1) on the loss of jobs and social security; (2) on the loss of national identity and culture; (3) on a growing share of income paid into EU budget; (4) on a weakening of national democracy. For EU6 and for all

six countries taken separately polychoric correlations between each combination of fears have a high level of positive association; and a unique factor emerges from factor analyses.

Apart from the third item that is captured in all countries by the EU integration dimension, for all other items results are mixed.

In all countries the fear of paying a growing share of national income into the EU budget reveals that the less you are afraid and the more you are pro integration. There is therefore another "economic" item captured by the EU integration variable. Association with L-R is negative (more right-wing more afraid) in all countries and not significant in Spain, but greater than 0.2 only in Italy.

The fear of losing jobs and social security is not related to any of the two dimensions (as in Poland and Spain), or is related with EU integration (remaining countries). According to the country this item is captured by different logics.

The two cultural fears (of losing national identity and of a weakening democracy) have a stronger association with EU integration in France, Germany, Poland, and Sweden: fearful citizens wanting less integration. Results in these countries go hand in hand with Kriesi et al (2008; 2012), while in Spain and Italy instead these two cultural items are better captured by the Left-right conflict.

## Future questions

This question tries to catch the policy preferences of respondents for the EU of the future on five different aspects of further integration:

- an increase in the EU budget for economic and social investments (qb4\_1);
- the introduction of common European bonds (qb4\_2);
- the introduction of a EU funded benefit scheme for people in severe poverty all over the EU (qb4\_3);
- the introduction of a common EU fund compensating national governments and local communities for the costs related to immigration from other EU member states (qb4\_4).
- the introduction of common EU social insurance schemes (such as healthcare, unemployment or pensions) that cover intra-EU migrant workers (qb4\_5).

Also in this case there is a good level of homogeneity of responses in each country, with a single factor capturing most of the variance of the five variables.

Apart from one exception (introduction of an EU funded benefit scheme for people in severe poverty, that in France is captured by the Left-right dimension), all five items are better captured by the EU integration dimension in each country.

An increase in the EU budget for economic and social investments has a stronger association with EU integration in all countries; this constitutes another economic aspect captured better by EU integration compared to L-R, regardless of the orthogonality between the two dimensions.

The introduction of common European bonds has a stronger association with EU integration in Sweden, a rich Northern country not part of the Eurozone, and thus less prone to more economic integration.

The introduction of a common EU fund compensating national governments and local communities for the costs related to immigration from other EU member states has a stronger association with EU integration in all countries, once again stressing a cross-national culture nature of EU integration.

The introduction of common EU social insurance schemes (such as healthcare, unemployment or pensions) that cover intra-EU migrant workers has a stronger association in all countries with EU integration. EU integration association greater in Sweden.

The introduction of an EU funded benefit scheme for people in severe poverty all over the EU has a stronger association with EU integration in all countries but France (even if also in France is significant the association with EU integration). The greater correlation coefficients are found in France with L-R and in Sweden with EU integration, the two countries where these two dimensions are orthogonal to each other. Once again meaning that country specific factors influence the structure of the political space. It is interesting that even in a country like Sweden that did not suffer from the economic crisis, the EU integration dimension is the one capturing better the preferences on this item. This somewhat goes against findings of Katsanidou and Otjes (2016).

## Factor analyses

An exploratory factor analysis on the eight conflict items only extracts one factor per country. The first conflict does not load in any of the country; this suggests that the factor extracted in each country has a stronger association with EU integration.

France, Germany and Sweden are pretty similar, with the factor loading positively on all variables apart from the first conflict; in Germany and Sweden also the first item of the fourth conflict (sanctions for countries that do not comply with deficit and budget rules) does not load on the factor. Instead in Italy and Poland the extracted factor is positively related only to the four items of the vertical conflict. Finally, in Spain only three variables loads together in the factor: restrictions to social benefits for foreigners (conflict 3), and the last two items of the vertical conflict (introduction of EU budget to deal with sudden rises of unemployment in a country; and the EU should make sure that in case of financial crisis no citizen of a MSs should remain without means of subsistence). In all countries the latent factor extracted is associated with the EU integration dimension.

A second factor analysis was performed with the inclusion of another set of variables: a factor variable for fears and one for future questions, one for EU image (shared space or sinking ship), a binary variable for EU responsible for the crisis, and the L-R and the EU integration dimensions. Here two factors emerge in each country. Apart from Spain, that has a peculiar space, the remaining countries return similar factors:

- one factor capturing the vertical conflict items and the future factor (in Poland and France loads also on EU integration);
- a second factor capturing the opening versus closure conflict, the fears and the EU image variable (in Germany and Italy both L-R and EU integration loads).

Spain has a different "space": the first factor is similar to those of other countries tapping vertical conflict and the future factor; the second factor instead loads on the vertical conflict variable on the delegation of the immigration to the EU, on EU image, and on EU integration.

## Conclusion

Comparing our results to those of van der Eijk and Franklin (2004); Kriesi et al. (2008; 2012) and Otjes and Katsanidou (2016) we find a more mixed pattern:

- Looking at the association between left-right dimension and EU integration we find a negative relationship (left-wing more in favor of EU integration) in Germany, Italy, and Poland; and, a positive relationship in Spain (right-wingers more pro-integration than the left-wingers). In all these four countries the association has become stronger compared to previous analyses. Instead, in France and Sweden the two dimensions have become orthogonal to each other.
- The Left-right dimension captures mainly economic items (supra-national objectives of fiscal stability versus social protection; no citizen left behind by EU in case of financial crisis; conditionality and solidarity of financial support; access to social security benefits for foreigners), apart from Italy and Spain where it taps also the fear for the loss of national identity and culture, and of a weakening of democracy.
- Indeed, in Italy (and to some extent in Spain) we have some identity questions (fears of loss of national identity and culture and of a weakening of national democracy) that are more strongly associated to the Left-right dimension contrary to what Kriesi et al. (2008, 2012) would expect; while in remaining countries they are more related to the EU integration dimension. This finding somewhat supports the one of Otjes and Katsanidou (2016) who found that "in the Southern European debtor states economic and European issues are merging as a result of strong European interference in their economic policy [, while in] the Northern European creditor states a second relevant dimension focuses on cultural issues."
- With the exception of the first conflict (market-making Vs. market-correcting) that is always captured by the left-right dimension, the EU integration dimension does not only capture cultural items, but also economic aspects better than the left-right dimension. Most interestingly this happens also in countries with orthogonal left-right and EU integration dimensions (like in Sweden), and in Germany or Italy where the two dimensions tend to conflate into one.
- Thus, the EU integration has become a "super-issue" not only in Southern European countries where the economic crisis and austerity politics have introduced economic aspects into the European dimension, but also in a rich Northern country not particularly affected by the crisis and not in the EMU like Sweden (and where EU integration remains orthogonal to the left-right dimension).
- Therefore, we find a more complex pattern compared to both Kriesi et al. (2008, 2012) and to Otjes and Katsanidou (2016). This means that country specific factors influence the structure of the political space; the usual suspects are immigration; whether the country was affected by the economic crisis; whether it is part of the Eurozone or not; whether there are specific party cues conflating the dimensions party cues; and which are the incumbent governments that applied austerity measures.
- In support of Kriesi et al. (2008, 2012) we find that EU integration captures some new cultural aspects (for instance the two cultural fears of losing national identity and of a weakening democracy have a stronger association with EU integration in France, Germany, Poland, and Sweden: fearful citizens wanting less integration) better than the traditional Left-right dimension also in countries (France and Sweden) where the two dimensions are orthogonal to each other. In contrast to Kriesi et al. model we find also economic issues more associated with EU integration.

- Another interesting result is that we do not find different directions in the relationship between EU integration and questions on solidarity: we might expect EU-antagonists of having different ideas in different countries (against solidarity in Northern countries, and pro in Southern countries); instead, we find instead the association going in the same direction (those against EU that are also against solidarity and vice-versa) in Italy, Spain, Germany and Sweden.

## Summary tables factor analyses

Base variables measuring conflicts

Only factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 are reported.

<b>Variables</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Poland</b>	<b>Spain</b>	<b>Sweden</b>
Conflict1_supranational_L-R	-0.2065	-0.03	-0.128	-0.183	-0.167	-0.208
Conflict2_Solidarity_Vs_Responsibility	0.3713	0.402	0.217	0.196	0.273	0.371
Conflict3_Restrictions_Job_market	0.3085	0.511	0.105	0.166	0.27	0.428
Conflict3_Restrictions_Welfare	0.3963	0.459	0.099	0.245	0.39	0.503
Conflict4_sanctions_fiscal_policy	0.3649	0.002	0.324	0.539	0.25	0.297
Conflict4_immigration_policy	0.4759	0.32	0.338	0.52	0.265	0.412
Conflict4_EU_budget_unemployment_rise	0.6847	0.428	0.709	0.678	0.667	0.585
Conflict4_no_citizen_left_behind	0.5898	0.358	0.712	0.657	0.667	0.61

Factor analysis with base variables measuring conflicts with factor for fears, factor for futures, L-R, EU integration, EU image and EU responsible for the crisis

Only factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 are reported; orthogonal rotation.

Variable	France		Germany		Italy	
	Factor1	Factor2	Factor1	Factor2	Factor1	Factor2
Conflict1_supranational_L-R						
Conflict2_Solidarity_Responsibility	0.381					
Conflict3_Job_market	0.645		0.665		0.509	
Conflict3_Welfare	0.597		0.600		0.359	
Conflict4_sanctions_fiscal_policy		0.551				0.384
Conflict4_immigration_policy		0.603		0.519	0.374	0.362
Conflict4_EU_budget_unemployment_rise		0.611		0.515		0.721
Conflict4_no_citizen_left_behind		0.418		0.461		0.687
fearEU6	-0.442		-0.552		-0.545	
futureEU6	0.458	0.451		0.492		0.443
EU image	0.633		0.516		0.624	
EU responsible crisis						
L-R self-placement			0.449		0.417	
EU integration	-0.362	-0.410	-0.553		-0.581	

(continued)

Variable	Poland		Spain		Sweden	
	Factor1	Factor2	Factor1	Factor2	Factor1	Factor2
Conflict1_supranational_L-R						
Conflict2_Solidarity_Responsibility					0.371	
Conflict3_Job_market		0.492			0.530	
Conflict3_Welfare		0.532				
Conflict4_sanctions_fiscal_policy	0.611					0.480
Conflict4_immigration_policy	0.572			0.448		0.493
Conflict4_EU_budget_unemployment_rise	0.591		0.653			0.466
Conflict4_no_citizen_left_behind	0.468		0.727			0.448
fearEU6					-0.502	
futureEU6	0.519		0.590		0.398	
EU image		0.496		0.441	0.574	
EU responsible crisis						
L-R self-placement						
EU integration	-0.364			-0.543	-0.605	

Table reports whether each item has a stronger correlation with L-R self-placement or Eu integration.

Dimension	Variable	France	Germany	Italy	Poland	Spain	Sweden
Supranational Left-right	qa1: Fiscal stability Vs Social protection	Left-right	Left-right	Left-right	Left-right	Left-right	Left-right
Vertical EU Vs MSs	qa2_1: Sanctions to MSs that don't comply	EU integration	Left-right	EU integration	EU integration	Left-right	Left-right
Vertical EU Vs MSs	qa2_2: Immigration policy decided by EU	EU integration					
Vertical EU Vs MSs	qa2_3: EU budget to give financial help to unemployment rise	EU integration					
Vertical EU Vs MSs	qa2_4: no citizen left behind by EU in case of severe financial crisis	Left-right	Left-right	EU integration	EU integration	Left-right	Left-right
Horizontal N-S Solidarity Vs. Responsibility	qa4: Conditions for financial support from EU	Left-right	EU integration	Left-right	EU integration	EU integration	EU integration
Horizontal E-W Opening Vs. Closure	qa3a: Access to EU job market	EU integration					
Horizontal E-W Opening Vs. Closure	qa3b: Access to social security benefits	Left-right	EU integration	Left-right	EU integration	Left-right	EU integration
Fear	qb1_1: Fear: Loss of jobs and social security	EU integration	EU integration	EU integration			EU integration
Fear	qb1_2: Fear: Loss of national identity and culture	EU integration	EU integration	Left-right	EU integration	Left-right	EU integration
Fear	qb1_3: Fear: Growing share of income being paid into the EU budget	EU integration					
Fear	qb1_4: Fear: A weakening of national democracy	EU integration	EU integration	Left-right	EU integration		EU integration
Future	qb4_1: Future: An increase in EU budget for economic and social investments	EU integration					
Future	qb4_2: Future: The introduction of common European bonds	EU integration					
Future	qb4_3: Future: The introduction of a EU funded benefit scheme for people in severe poverty all over the EU	Left-right	EU integration				
Future	qb4_4: Future: The introduction of a common EU fund compensating national governments and local communities for the costs related to immigration from other EU member states	EU integration					
Future	qb4_5: Future: The introduction of common EU social insurance schemes that cover intra-EU migrant workers	EU integration					

Note: in yellow if difference between correlation coefficients is < 0.1. Empty red cells if none of the coefficients is statistically significant.

## References

Kriesi, H., Grande, E., Lachat, R., Dolezal, M., Bornschieer, S., & Frey, T. (2008). *West European politics in the age of globalization* (pp. 359-366). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kriesi, H., Grande, E., Dolezal, M., Helbling, M., Höglinger, D., Hutter, S., & Wüest, B. (2012). *Political conflict in western Europe*. Cambridge University Press.

Otjes, S., & Katsanidou, A. (2017). Beyond Kriesiland: EU integration as a super issue after the Eurocrisis. *European Journal of Political Research*, 56(2), 301-319.

Van der Eijk, C., & Franklin, M. N. (2004). Potential for contestation on European matters at national elections in Europe. *European integration and political conflict*, 32-50.

Van Elsas, E., & Van Der Brug, W. (2015). The changing relationship between left–right ideology and euroscepticism, 1973–2010. *European Union Politics*, 16(2), 194-215.