**How politicians ought to talk about Europe:
lessons learned from experimental evidence.**

Konstantin Vössing

Department of International Politics
City University of London
Northampton Square
London EC1V 0HB

Office phone: +44 020 7040 0477
Email: konstantin.voessing@city.ac.uk
Email: konstantin.voessing@gmail.com
Web: sites.google.com/site/konstantinvossing

Introduction

Referendums about the political authority of the European Union offer campaigners the opportunity to establish issue links between Europe and other topics, which can be more or less closely related. Because of this, and also as the result of a long tradition of second-ordering European issues to national affairs (Reif and Schmitt 1980), the choices of voters in referendums over Europe are never entirely about the issue at hand (Hobolt 2005). This chapter focuses on the justifications that politicians use to explain their policy positions in a referendum about Europe. Policy justifications establish issue links between a policy and a political goal by claiming that the policy is instrumental for achieving the goal in question (see Figure 7.1). This can entail specific material benefits (e.g. economic growth) as well as abstract political goals (e.g. social justice). Alternatively, politicians may justify their position by pointing out norms that motivated them, such as party loyalty or religious conviction. In an entirely different explanatory strategy, politicians can also defend their position by using excuses (Bennett 1980; McGraw 2002). Theresa May has ended up doing this by arguing that the terms for Brexit are less than ideal but that there is no alternative. Issue links between policies and goals in policy justifications stem from strategic political action as well as habit and ideology. However, irrespective of politicians' motives, the issue links they deploy are a powerful tool for winning voters' hearts and minds. The Leave campaign, for instance, successfully issue-linked the policy of leaving the EU to the goal of controlling the influx of immigrants by proposing that Brexit would allow immigration to be curbed.

Figure 7.1: Policy justification (by impact)
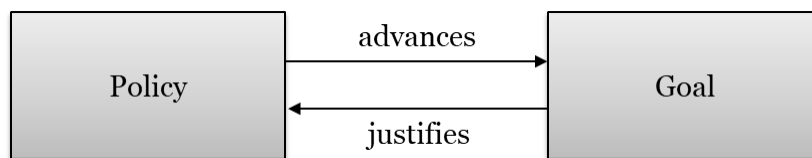
Policy justifications and the issue links they establish are a case of 'persuasive communication' (McGuire 1985). They have certain features that make them more or less effective for winning hearts and minds, that is, for changing or reinforcing people's attitudes. This chapter sets out five lessons that pro-Europe campaigners could follow when attempting to

win hearts and minds. The evidence I use to analyse political rhetoric and develop these lessons comes from laboratory experiments conducted between 2014 and 2018 with groups of people who represent the entire diversity of the German voting-age population. While opinions expressed in these experiments are not necessarily representative, the mechanisms of opinion formation and the lessons that can be derived are broadly applicable. The focus on Europhile politicians is not a normative statement. It is simply the result of experimental design choices. To keep the experiments as straigthtforward as possible, they all feature politicians justifying the extension rather than the reduction of European political authority.

Lesson One: Stop Believing in the Existence of a Rhetorical Silver Bullet

Referendum campaigns are about specific policy alternatives, typically broken down to simple dichotomous choices, such as 'Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?' (Remain versus Leave). Given the nature of the contest, campaigners will have no choice but to align themselves with one of two opposing alternatives, even if they privately preferred an in-between choice. This restriction is critical, as calibrating policy preferences in between opposite poles is a popular technique to enhance the persuasiveness of political rhetoric. However, this is not an option in referendum campaigns. Effective links between the pre-determined policy alternatives and other political issues are therefore crucial for political rhetoric to be persuasive in referendum campaigns.

Politicians might be tempted to believe, out of incompetence, habit, or conviction, that there is such a thing as an overarching winning formula – an issue link that can become the rhetorical silver bullet of the campaign, overriding all other policy justifications. Some campaigners stick to their presumed silver bullet because they are unwilling or unable to listen to their constituents or analyse their preferences. Others are over-socialised into certain habits and scripts of political communication they cannot easily escape. A third group of campaigners are ideologues so convinced of a certain issue link that they are oblivious to the more sceptical views of the world around them. Avoiding these mistakes is critical for boosting the persuasive effectiveness of pro-Europe campaigners. The unquestioned belief in a rhetorical silver bullet prevents an analytical and strategic approach to political communication. Most importantly, in the end it will fail to deliver.

The 'silver bullet' lesson is supported by experimental evidence. The experiments discussed in this chapter were conducted with groups of diverse participants that are representative of the range of the German voting-age population on all relevant demographic, social, political, and economic factors. Completing each experiment took about 20 minutes, and the protection of participants, including appropriate debriefing, is guaranteed according to the guidelines prescribed by an Institutional Review Board (IRB). The experiments were held in the experimental laboratory at the Institute of Social and Political Sciences at Humboldt University Berlin.

In one of the experimental studies, I randomly assigned participants to different versions of a mock newspaper article, which discusses a vote in the European Parliament (EP) on a resolution demanding the introduction of a Euro-tax. The article mentions Herbert Brueckner, a fictional member of the European Parliament (MEP), as one of the legislators who had voted in favour of the resolution. The MEP explains his decision using a justification. He says that he voted in favour of introducing the Euro-tax because he believes that it will help to achieve an important political goal. The experimental treatment consists of randomly assigning participants to one of five different goals said to be achieved by the Euro-tax policy: European identity, free markets, social justice, national economic benefits, or European economic benefits. These five goals were selected to cover a wide range of linkable issues, and to comprise intangible norms (the first three) as well as specific benefits (the final two). The mock article describes the Euro-tax as a measure that would not produce higher levels of taxation or greater government intervention in the economy, but instead shift fiscal authority from the national level to the European Union.[1] It is thus indicative and representative of the kind of question that voters are presented with in the typical referendum about European integration: do you support or reject the European Union having more or less political authority?

The participants in the experiment were asked to indicate how much they support the European Union (EU) on a feeling thermometer after they had read the manipulated newspaper article. The question reads as follows: 'We would like to know your overall view of the European Union (EU). We would like you to rate the EU on a "feeling thermometer". Numbers

[1] Comparable policies used in similar experimental studies include the delegation of political authority over employment policy to the European Union (Vössing and Weber 2016, 2017) or general assessments of the status and ramifications of European integration (Vössing 2015).

between 50 and 100 mean that you have a favourable opinion or "have warm feelings" about the EU. The higher the number, the more positive your feelings. Numbers between 0 and 50 mean that your opinion is unfavourable or that you "have cold feelings" about the EU. The lower the number, the more negative your feelings.' Analysis of responses showed there is no rhetorical silver bullet because none of the five justifications for more European integration dominates the others in its ability to change opinions. As shown in Figure 7.2, support for the EU does vary between the groups of participants that received different policy justifications, but the differences are small and not statistically significant. An ANOVA test of the effect of the categorical variable comprising the five policy justifications on EU support yields an F-value of only 1.27 (p=0.28), and post-hoc tests show that none of the differences in EU support between any combination of two justifications approaches standard levels of statistical significance. Even widely varying types of justifications, which suggest very different arguments about the consequences of European integration, do not automatically translate into varying levels of persuasive effectiveness.

Figure 7.2: Policy justifications and support for the European Union
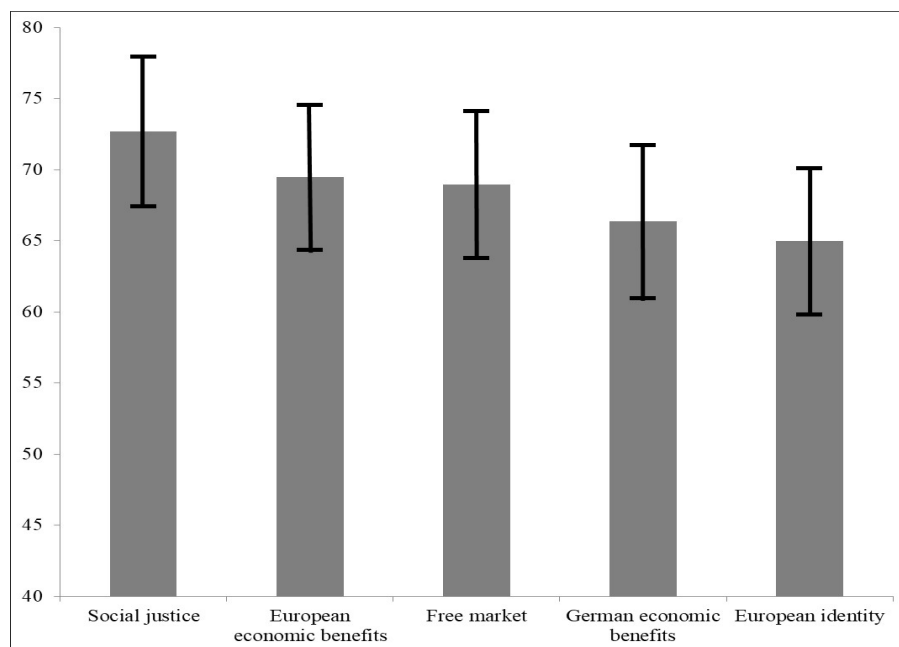
Notes: Graph shows mean values of support for the European Union on a feeling thermometer (0–100 scale) for different policy justifications used in the treatment article. The F statistic for the effect of the according categorical variable on EU support is 1.27 (p=0.28). None of the differences between the five justifications is statistically significant (p<0.05) in a post-hoc test (Bonferroni-adjusted for multiple comparisons).

Lesson Two: Know How Much Room for Manoeuvre You Have

People already have ideas and opinions about Europe before politicians start talking to them in referendum campaigns. Whether they like or dislike the European Union before the beginning of a campaign should be a powerful predictor of their views about the EU at the end of the campaign and their subsequent referendum vote. The extent to which pre-existing views of Europe will determine vote choices thus sets the boundaries of persuasion that campaigners have at their disposal. The size of the corridor and as a result the room for manoeuvre afforded to campaigners vary between specific referendum campaigns. The more the final vote depends on prior levels of support for the EU, the less impact a campaign has on winning (new) hearts and minds.

The exact amount of manoeuvring space – that is, the size of the effect of pre-existing views about Europe on the eventual referendum votes – can only be determined after the campaign is over. Moreover, the room for manoeuvre that defines a particular referendum is endogenous to the campaign. However, pro-European campaigners can still make educated guesses (or estimates informed by social scientific analysis) about the room for manoeuvre they can expect. Doing so makes it possible for campaigners to develop realistic strategies that take into account the malleability of varying groups of voters when they design and deploy rhetorical strategies.

In another study using the experimental procedures described above, I asked participants to express their views of the European Union before reading the manipulated newspaper article. Because this pre-treatment measure of EU support needs to be equivalent in substance but different in implementation compared to the post-treatment thermometer rating of the EU, I used a semantic association test adapted from Castano, Yzerbyt, and Bourguignon (2003) to estimate people's pre-existing EU support. Participants were asked to select five words that 'best describe their thoughts about the European Union' from a list of words that are positive (enthusiasm, satisfaction, trust, appreciation, approval), neutral (disinterest, indifference, detachment, aloofness, neutrality), and negative (uneasiness, irritation, distrust, anger, rejection). Every positive word listed by participants receives a score of +1, the neutral ones 0, and the negative ones -1. An estimate of people's pre-existing support for the EU is constructed by summing the scores and rescaling them to a scale from 0 (lowest level of pre-existing support for the European

Union) to 1 (greatest level of support). The average value for the 277 participants is 0.6 (with a standard deviation of 0.25).

Table 7.1: Policy justifications and support for the European Union

Model	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Pre-existing support for EU	52.9 (3.5) **	52.0 (3.5) **	50.4 (3.1) **	51.8 (3.6) **	52.0 (3.6) **	51.9 (3.6) **
Support for justifying goal		7.8 (3.2) **	6.2 (3.4) *			
Validity of justification			9.2 (4.0) **			
Party EU-issue ownership				3.2 (4.2)		
Party goal-issue ownership					-0.36 (3.6)	
Party identification						4.9 (3.5)
Constant	36.9 (2.3) **	33.1 (2.7) **	29.4 (3.1) **	35.4 (3.6) **	37.7 (3.2) **	35.0 (2.7) **
R^2	0.47	0.48	0.49	0.45	0.46	0.47
N	264	264	260	260	259	262

Notes: The dependent variable is support for the EU measured on a feeling thermometer (0–100 scale). Cell entries are non-standardised OLS regression coefficients and standard errors for independent variables measured on a scale of 0 to 1. See text for details on the measurement of these variables. Statistically significant coefficient estimates ($p<0.05$) are identified by **; marginally significant estimates ($p<0.1$) are identified by *.

The first model displayed in Table 7.1 shows that the pre-existing level of support for the EU has a large and statistically significant effect on the eventual level of EU support, which is recorded after the treatment is administered. Forty-seven per cent of the variance in support for the EU is explained by what people thought about the EU before they received the new information and the policy justification of the MEP that was embedded into the mock newspaper article. The other models shown in Table 7.1 include a range of additional variables related to the content of the policy justification and the party affiliation of the MEP. The effect of pre-existing support for the EU remains stable in all these model specifications. The effect sizes observed in the analyses are not necessarily good estimates of the specific room for manoeuvre politicians have in any given referendum campaign. Nonetheless, the results do show that there is such a thing as a confined corridor of persuasion, and that it is very robust and unaffected by new information and arguments.

Lesson Three: Issue Linking European Integration to Popular Goals

One key mechanism of persuasion that campaigners have at their disposal, issue-linking, does have the capacity to win hearts and minds. Referendum campaigners can choose from a wide range of political goals that could be achieved by the policy they support and issue-link European integration with popular goals. For instance, campaigners can argue that remaining in the EU has economic benefits. They can suggest that a constitution for Europe secures human rights, that the Maastricht Treaty allows people to travel seamlessly across Europe, or that the Treaty of Nice will facilitate the enlargement of the EU. Given the constraints on persuasion in referendum campaigns, successful issue links between European integration and popular political goals are of critical importance for campaigners.

In my second experiment, I asked participants how they felt about the various goals invoked by the fictional MEP to justify support for European integration in different renditions of the treatment article. Participants answered these questions before reading the article to avoid an undue effect of the experimental treatment on this explanatory variable. Support for each justifying goal was measured by exposing participants to three or four thematically relevant statements. Using standard five-point Likert scales, participants were asked to express their level of agreement with these statements. The variables identifying support for European identity, social justice, free markets, European economic benefits, and German economic benefits were constructed by averaging the scores for the relevant Likert-style questions and rescaling the values to a scale of 0 (lowest possible level of support) to 1 (highest level). For instance, 'we would all be better off if the government did not interfere with the economy' is one of the four statements that was used to measure people's support for the goal of free markets.[2] The variable identifying participants' support for a justifying goal used in the empirical analysis is determined in reference to the particular goal that was invoked in his or her treatment condition.

The second model displayed in Table 7.1 shows that the extent to which people like the

---

[2] A complete list of statements and other methodological details is available in an online appendix deposited on the author's website at https://sites.google.com/site/konstantinvossing/ and on his dataverse page at https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/vossing.

goal invoked in a policy justification has a significant and sizable effect on their acceptance of a justification for the advancement of European integration. The more people like a goal that politicians issue-link to European integration, the more they will favour European integration itself. The step from the lowest to the highest possible level of support for different goals used in justifications for European integration increases support for the European Union by 7.8 points on a scale from 0 to 100. This shows that campaigners can use issue links to transfer positive sentiments about goals from other issue domains to the domain of European integration.

Have politicians campaigning for Europe already learned the lesson of issue-linking European integration to popular political goals? Most of the protagonists of the Remain campaign in the recent Brexit referendum did not learn it, in stark contrast to their opponents. Leave campaigners claimed that voting to leave the European Union would allow the United Kingdom to re-establish full control over the country's borders and immigration policies. The issue link between European integration and immigration was a successful rhetorical strategy, as shown by evidence of the British Election Study survey analysed in Chapter 5.

The Leave campaigners also justified their position by arguing that 'voting to leave the EU will improve the quality of the National Health Service'. The claim that saving money by no longer paying into the EU budget would allow the UK government to invest more in the NHS was the second well-chosen issue link of the Leave campaign. The Remain campaign, by contrast, did not deploy a comparable popular issue link. Instead of invoking positive goals that would be achieved by remaining in the EU, the Remain campaign emphasised the negative consequences of leaving.

In addition to the Brexit case study, there is further evidence that pro-European politicians have a hard time issue-linking Europe to popular goals. Evidence comes from a quantitative text analysis of the speeches of the members of the European Convention during the debates about the drafting of a European constitution and speeches of members of the European Parliament during the plenary debates about open borders and the Euro crisis. The text analysis I conducted identifies more than 3,000 justifications used by politicians; 38 per cent of these justifications invoke goals allegedly achieved by European integration that qualify as *intangible norms*, such as democracy, human rights, and European values; 25 per cent invoke specific and measurable

policy outputs; and 34 per cent suggest that more European integration is needed to improve the *performance of EU institutions*.

I also conducted a survey experiment with 1,376 participants that is representative of the German voting-age population to see how popular the three different types of goals are. Justifications that invoke *intangible norms* feature an average level of support among German voters of 73 points on a 0- to 100-point thermometer scale. The reference to specific *policy outputs* receives an average rating of 59 points, and the goal of improving the performance of EU institutions has a popularity rating of 56 points. Thus, only 38 per cent of all justifications for European integration invoke the most popular type of goals. Most justifications rely on significantly less popular goals to justify support for policies of European integration. Europhiles in the representative institutions of the European Union could do a better job at issue-linking European integration to popular political goals.

Lesson Four: Use Valid Issue Links

The third component of a policy justification, in addition to the *justified policy* and the *justifying goal*, is the *causal issue-link* between them. Politicians need to consider whether their causal claim about the effect of a policy on a political goal is perceived as valid by voters, in order to influence public opinion.

The third model shown in Table 7.1 adds participants' views about the validity of the policy justification offered by the MEP to the two variables included previously. In order to evaluate the validity of the policy justification proposed by the MEP in the manipulated newspaper article, they were asked: 'regardless of whether you share this opinion or not, how valid did you find the justification offered by Herbert Brueckner for his decision (to support European integration)?' Participants recorded their judgements on a 7-point scale ranging from 'not valid at all' to 'entirely valid'. Their responses were then adjusted to a scale ranging from 0 (lowest validity judgement) to 1 (highest validity judgement).

The perceived validity of the justification has a sizable and statistically significant effect on support for European integration. Plausible justifications that establish valid causal

connections between an advertised policy of European integration and an issue-linked political goal increase support for the European Union. Implausible justifications, by contrast, diminish EU support. The change from the lowest to the highest judgement of validity accounts for an increase of 9.2 points in support for the European Union on a scale from 0 to 100 . This effect occurs while pre-existing views about the EU and individual levels of support for the goal are held constant. Individual judgements of the validity of the issue link are independent of the popularity of the goal and the policy between which the issue link is established.

Interestingly, model 3 also shows that including the validity variable diminishes the effect of goal support. The transfer of a justifying goal's popularity into positive judgements of the justified policy depends to some extent on the perceived validity of the issue link between policy and goal. The failure of Europhile referendum campaigners in the United Kingdom and elsewhere to deploy successful policy justifications is arguably rooted in the difficulty of devising justifications for policies of European integration that simultaneously issue-link European integration with popular goals and devise issue-links between justifying goals and the justified policy of European integration that voters perceive as valid. It is hard to find popular goals that can be plausibly issue-linked to policies of European integration. On the one hand, there is a wide range of political goals that are clearly achieved by policies of European integration, such as unified product standards and the efficient management of external trade relations. Yet these goals are technical in nature, and they are examples of measurable policy outputs, which receive low popularity ratings. The political goals that fall into the category of intangible norms, such as democracy, human rights, and European values, are highly popular. But it is much more difficult to show unequivocally that these goals are truly advanced by specific policies of European integration.

Lesson Five: Don't Expect Too Much of Your Party Label

In addition to talking about their positions, referendum campaigners also mention their party label, sometimes inadvertently and sometimes strategically, to sway voters. When parties make choices or express preferences, voters can evaluate these actions based on what they think about

the party. The party thus offers cues that voters can follow, for example when they form their own opinions about whether to like the European Union or when they decide how to vote in a referendum. A large body of research has shown that party cues are an effective vehicle of preference formation in various issue domains (Cohen 2003; Rahn 1993; Petersen et al. 2013). Party cues allow voters an easy short cut to forming opinions and making decisions that absolves them of the need to engage in extensive thinking about the issue.[3] They can simply rely on the party label and whatever they associate with it, allowing the party label to guide them towards their opinions and choices.

However, campaigners should not expect too much of invoking their party label in a referendum campaign. Notwithstanding differences in the clarity and strength of the signals parties in different systems provide to voters about European integration, mainstream parties all over Europe have traditionally avoided clear positioning on European integration due to pronounced within-party variation of opinions over the issue (Hix and Lord 1997; van der Eijk and Franklin 2004). This is why perceptions of competing party positions can be experimentally manipulated (Tilley and Wlezien 2008, Vössing and Weber 2016, 2017). Because voters are uncertain about mainstream party positions regarding European integration, they can hardly rely on party cues when voting in a referendum about a European issue (van der Brug and van der Eijk 1999; see chapter 5, McAllister and Rose, table 1).

Participants in my experiments were given randomly assigned information about the party affiliation of the MEP justifying his positive view of European integration. The assigned party label varies between the four parties represented in German parliament at the time. Figure 7.3 shows that none of the four parties is inherently better at producing support for the European Union. The F-statistic identifying the effect of the categorical variable 'party affiliation of the MEP' (F=0.43; p=0.73) is clearly low, and none of the between-group comparisons of any two party categories reveals statistically significant differences.

---

[3] Sometimes, as Petersen et al. (2013) have shown, voters will end up thinking intensely about the issue anyway, even after forming an opinion based on a party cue, especially when they feel the need to reconcile their partisanship with contradictory information about the issue.

Figure 7.3: Political parties and support for the European Union
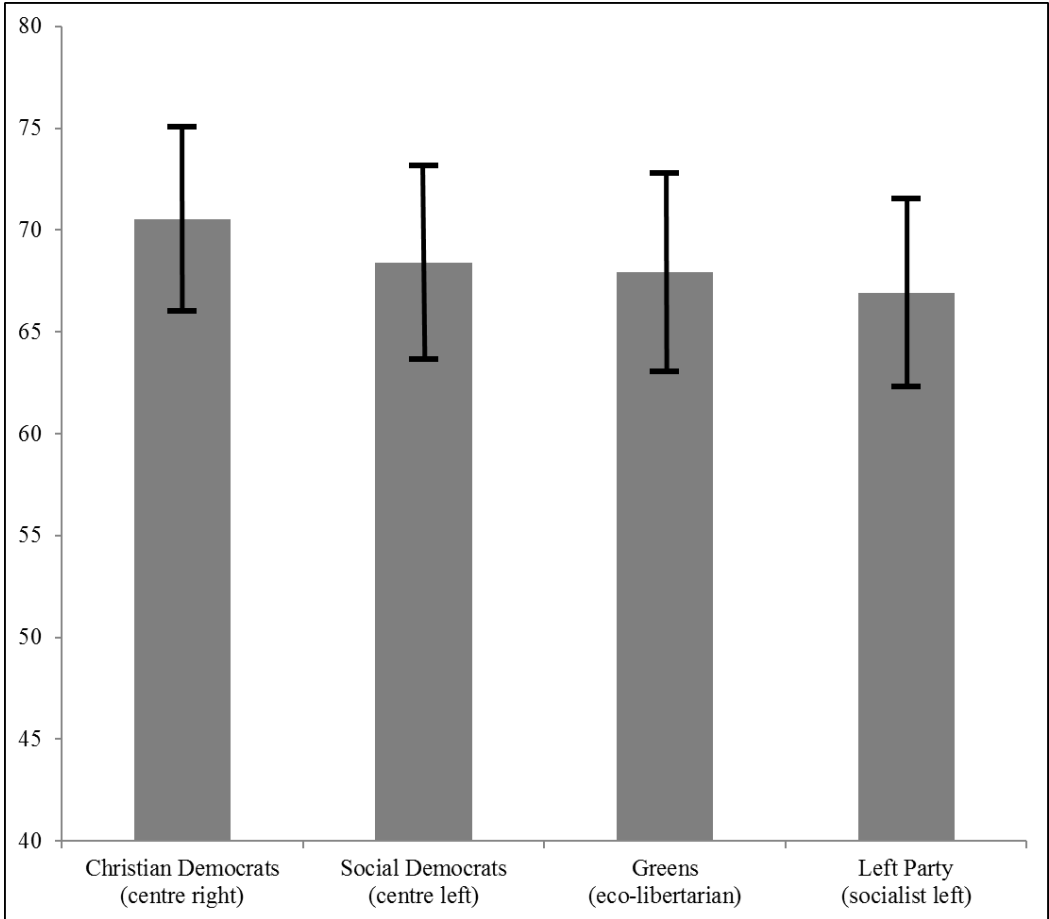
Notes: The graph shows mean values of support for the European Union on a feeling thermometer (0–100 scale) for different party labels assigned to the MEP who justifies his support for European integration in the treatment article. The F-statistic for the effect of the underlying categorical variable 'political party affiliation of the explainer' on EU support is 0.43 (p=0.73). None of the differences between the four party labels is statistically significant (p<0.05) in a post-hoc test (Bonferroni-adjusted for multiple comparisons).

Three additional empirical tests displayed in Table 7.1 provide further evidence that voters do not rely on party cues. To begin with, models 4 and 5 test whether parties have issue-related reputations that voters rely on when forming their opinions. Model 4 includes a variable identifying the extent to which people believe that a party 'owns' the issue of European integration. For this variable, participants were asked, before reading the treatment article, to indicate whether the party assigned to them supports European integration on a scale from 0

(does not support European integration at all) to 10 (supports it a lot) and replies were rescaled to a range of 0 to 1. Petrocik (1996) and Tresch, Lefevere, and Walgrave (2015) suggest that issue ownership identifies parties as authentic and credible representatives of claims. One might expect that perceptions of greater issue ownership would make voters more trusting in the party's views, including its position on European integration. However, no such effect occurs in the experiments. Model 4 finds that, while there is a correlation between a party's ownership of the European integration issue and participants' levels of EU support, it is not statistically significant.

Model 5 tests the effect of a different type of issue ownership. It includes a variable identifying the extent to which people believe that a party 'owns' the issue domain of the issue-linked goal invoked by the MEP. The conclusion here is even clearer than for ownership of the integration issue. Variation in parties' ownership of the issue domain of the goal with which they are aligned in a policy justification does not have a significant meaningful effect on opinions about European integration.

The most powerful party cue is rooted in the extent to which a voter has an identification with a political party that can be relied on when forming opinions about political issues (Rahn 1993; Cohen 2003; Petersen et al. 2013). From this point of view, greater identification with the party of the MEP justifying his position should increase support for the European Union. To test this expectation, I asked participants before reading the treatment article how much they liked or disliked the political party to which they were about to be exposed in the experiment.

Model 6 shows that, while identification with the party of the politician justifying a decision has a larger effect on support for the EU than the other party-related judgements, it still fails to achieve statistical significance when pre-existing attitudes of voters about the EU are held constant. By contrast, partisanship *is* significant when pre-existing attitudes are removed from the model (B=11.2, SE=4.6 p<0.05). These results show that while there is an an alignment between people's views of the EU and their party identification, it is not due to a cueing effect. For that to be the case, participants would have to adjust their opinions about Europe in line with their partisanship irrespective of the strength of their previous levels of support for the EU, and they do not do this.

This conclusion highlights the role that Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the Labour party,

performed in the Brexit controversy. Ardent Remainers attributed the outcome to Corbyn's merely lukewarm support for the European Union and the Remain campaign. However, the analysis of model 6 suggests that parties have only a very limited capacity to cue their voters on the issue of European integration. Insofar as this holds true outside the experimental laboratory, even clear support by the leader of the Labour Party for a Remain vote would not have led Labour identifiers to vote Remain in larger numbers. Political parties might have little influence to cue voters once a campaign has begun, but they can contribute in the long run. Had Corbyn and the Labour party provided clearer and stronger arguments in favour of European integration before the referendum campaign began, this could have convinced more of its supporters to vote Remain.

Conclusion

This chapter has used a series of laboratory experiments with diverse samples of participants to generate lessons for how politicians ought to talk about Europe to win hearts and minds in referendum campaigns. The experiments show that referendum votes about the European Union depend, more than anything else, on the opinions about Europe that voters already hold before the beginning of the campaign. Instead of seeking a silver bullet, referendum campaigners should be keen to listen to their constituents or use social scientific methods to understand the arguments they find convincing instead of relying uncritically on traditional but ineffective justifications. The experimental studies also caution that the room for manoeuvre by campaigners is restricted by the extent to which the preferences of voters are malleable.

Calibrating policy positions is not an option in referendum campaigns, given that they feature dichotomous choice alternatives. This is why the two most important mechanisms of persuading voters in referendum campaigns are related to the goals that campaigners invoke to justify their preferred referendum vote. My experimental studies emphasise the importance of invoking goals that are viewed as desirable by voters rather than concentrating on those that the campaigners find congenial. For a justification to be effective, voters need to believe that campaigners are advocating a good policy that can credibly have a positive effect on a desirable

political goal. Following these lessons individually is easier said than done, but a real dilemma emerges when campaigners try to follow several at the same time. Many goals that are plausibly achieved by European integration are not popular, and for many popular goals it is hard to show convincingly that European integration contributes to advancing them. The final lesson learned from the experimental evidence analysed in this chapter is to not expect much from the party label; it has very little power to sway people's opinions on European integration.

References

Bennett, W. L. 1980. 'The Paradox of Public Discourse: A Framework for the Analysis of Political Accounts'. *Journal of Politics* 42(3):792-817.

Castano, E., V. Yzerbyt and D. Bourguignon. 2003. 'We Are One and I Like It: The Impact of Ingroup Entitativity on Ingroup Identification'. *European Journal of Social Psychology* 33:735–754.

Cohen, G. 2003. 'Party over Policy: The Dominating Impact of Group Influence on Political Beliefs'. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 85(5):808-822.

Grande, E. and S. Hutter. 2016. 'Introduction: European Integration and the Challenge of Politicisation'. In S. Hutter, E. Grande and H. Kriesi (eds.), *Politicising Europe: Integration and Mass Politics*, pp. 3–31. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hix, S. and C. Lord. 1997. *Political Parties in the European Union*. New York: Macmillan

Hobolt, S. 2005. 'When Europe Matters: The Impact of Political Information on Voting Behaviour in EU Referendums'. *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 15(1):85–109.

McGraw, K. 2002. 'Manipulating Public Opinion'. In B. Norrander and C. Wilcox (eds.), *Understanding Public Opinion*, pp. 265–280. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

McGuire, W. 1985. 'Attitudes and Attitude Change'. In G. Lindzey and E. Aronson (eds.), *Handbook of Social Psychology*, pp. 233–346. New York: Random House.

Petersen, M., M. Skov, S. Serritzlew and T. Ramsøy. 2013. 'Motivated Reasoning and Political Parties: Evidence for Increased Processing in the Face of Party Cues'. *Political Behavior*

35(4):831-854.

Petrocik, J. 1996. 'Issue Ownership in Presidential Elections, with a 1980 Case Study'. *American Journal of Political Science* 40(3):825–850.

Rahn, W. 1993. 'The Role of Partisan Stereotypes in Information Processing About Political Candidates'. *American Journal of Political Science* 37(2):472–496.

Reif, K. and H. Schmitt. 1980. 'Nine Second-Order National Elections: A Conceptual Framework for the Analysis of European Election Results'. *European Journal of Political Research* 81:3–45.

Tilley, J. and C. Wlezien. 2008. 'Does Political Information Matter? An Experimental Test Relating to Party Positions on Europe'. *Political Studies* 56:192–214.

Tresch, A., J. Lefevere and S. Walgrave. 2015. '"Steal Me If You Can!" The Impact of Campaign Messages on Associative Issue Ownership'. *Party Politics* 21(2):198–208.

van der Brug, W. and C. van der Eijk. 1999. 'The Cognitive Basis of Voting'. In H. Schmitt and J. Thomassen (eds.), *Political Representation and Legitimacy in the European Union*, pp. 129–160. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

van der Eijk, C., and M. Franklin. 2004. 'Potential for Contestation on European Matters at National Elections in Europe'. In G. Marks and M. Steenbergen (eds.), *European Integration and Political Conflict*, pp. 32–50. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vössing, K. 2015. 'Transforming Public Opinion About European Integration: Elite Influence and Its Limits'. *European Union Politics* 16(2):157–175.

Vössing, K. and T. Weber. 2016. 'The Company Makes the Feast: Party Conflict and Issue Voting in Multi-Party Systems'. In A. Blais, J.-F. Laslier, and K. van der Straeten (eds.), *Voting Experiments*, pp. 43–66. New York: Springer.

Vössing, K. and T. Weber. 2017. 'Information Behavior and Political Preferences'. *British Journal of Political Science.* 49(2):533–556.